THE STORY OF MY LIFE

BY

BHAI PARMANAND, M. A.

TRANSLATED FROM THE HINDI

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AND PART II

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The story of his early life and education, his trial and sentence, and his exile "Across the Black Water," written by Bhai Parmanand himself appeared in Urdu and has been translated into Hindi. It is from the latter that the present translation has been made. Except for the omission of some verses, a full and more or less literal translation has been made. The translator must crave the indulgence of the learned author and of his readers if he has failed to do justice to the original. It may also be necessary to add that the frequent interposition of Bhaiji's valuable reflections on men and things imparts to the narrative the character of being a little discursive,—the more so in a translation, which, after all, can rarely reproduce the effect of the original.

N. S. IYER.

The thanks of the Central Hindu Yuvak Sabha are due to Prof. Sant Ram Grover, Mr. Manindranath Das Gupta B. A., B.L. and Mr. Ram Piyara Dudeja B. A. for their valuable help and willing co-operation in going through the manuscript and correcting the proofs.

Indra Prakash
General Secretary
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Lahore.

FOREWORD

The privilege is given to me by my young friend, Mr. Indra Prakash, General Secretary of the Central Hindu Yuvak Sabha, Lahore, to pen a few words of introduction to the revised and enlarged edition of 'The Story of My Life', by Bhai Parmanand; and though conscious of my own limitations, I cannot but accept it, for nothing ever gives me greater pleasure than an opportunity to pay my debt of gratitude to Bhaiji who, consciously as well as unconsciously, has influenced the lives and thoughts of thousands of young men.

I first met Bhaiji, through the kindness of an esteemed friend, when I was a student and the impression this first meeting left on me is still deep and vivid and fresh. In his presence I feel entranced. So great was the spell wrought on me by his powerful and magnetic personality that I came to have the same feelings of veneration and devotion towards him as one has towards one's guides and mentors. Yet in spite of the fact that I felt so humble in his presence, I realised that I had met a man to whom I could turn, without the least fear or hesitation, for friendly advice. Thus at the time of our very first meeting, while he over-awed me by the incalculable force of his highly endowed personality, he also won my confidence by the native kindness of his heart. But this has not only been my experience; similar has been the experience of many, many people. For

no one can deny that there is something in Bhaiji that draws people on towards him. But what that something is is not easy to analyse and describe. Is it his noble physical presence that reminds one of the Roman warriors of yore— the massive build, the high intellectual forehead, the bright, flaming eyes, the chin that denotes determination ? Is it the essential kindliness of his nature that, in spite of occasional exhibitions of temper, remains the bed-rock of his character ? Is it his intellectual honesty that is never afraid of calling a spade a spade ? Is it his undaunted courage that makes him express his opinions in the most outspoken and vehement manner ? Is it the transparency of his nature that makes him dispense with all the polite lies and graces of so-called diplomacy? Is it his singleness of devotion that makes him scoff at all kinds of expediency and opportunism ? Is it his blameless character that has always looked with scorn on pelf and power and has always been proof against those temptations which have been the ruin of so many noble natures ? Is it his love of fierce independence that will not let him explore any avenues of compromise ? I think it is all these and yet there is something more.

Bhaiji has always been a student of history and its lessons have sunk deep in his heart. For he does not look upon history merely as a subject of academic interest but as something of practical value. He thus applies his knowledge of the past to the affairs of the present day, thereby having an advantage over the many politicians of to-day whose knowledge of affairs is gleaned mainly from the daily newspaper that happ-

ens to be the organ of their party or clique. He is also a much-travelled man and has seen life in both the hemispheres with his own eyes. He has thus a first-hand knowledge of the different kinds of institutions-political, social, religious and economic in many countries of the world. Furthermore he has always been a vigorous exponent of his ideals. To carry these into practice he has deemed no sarifice too great. Exile, arrest, imprisonment, forfeiture of property, and even a death-sentence ; all these have been his lot. Yet these have not made him abjure the causes he holds so dear. All these things show how deeply he loves Mother India.

I believe there are no two opinions about Bhaiji's patriotism. Even those who have differed from him with regard to his policies and methods, have paid an ungrudging and unqualified tribute to his love for his Motherland. They have all agreed in saying that whatever he has done or said has been inspired by the noblest of motives. His record of public service has thus been blameless and splendid. He has toiled and suffered for his country all the days of his life. His name is therefore enshrined in the hearts of his grateful countrymen.

On a final analysis it will be found that very few patriots have been as vigilant guardians of the rights and privileges of the Hindus as he. On this he has concenterated all his attention for some time past and by his work in this field, I believe, the posterity will judge him. Proud of the past glories of the Aryan culture, fully conscious of

the part that the Hindus have played in civilising mankind, it has been his aim to make the present-day Hindus worthy of their ancestors. He has therefore set about his mission in right earnest and through the spoken as well as the written word has sought to enlighten the people about it. He will thus be remembered for many, many years to come as an ardent missionary of the Aryan culture. At the same time, with the zeal of the missionary he has combined the ardour of the reformer. To do away with the social inequalities among the Hindus he initiated a movement, the object of which is to obliterete the artificial barriers between the so-called high-caste and low-caste Hindus. There are many other things also which he has done to consolidate the Hindus and to make them understand the true import of the word, fraternity. All this has not meant for him smooth sailing. He has been misunderstood, misrepresented and even denounced. But he is always true to his convictions and can always be expected to do only what is right.

Above all he has stood before the public as a gallant defender of the rights of the Hindus. His evidence before the Joint Select Parliamentary Committee, his public utterances, his work in the Legislative Assembly bear ample testimony to his solicitude for the welfare of the Hindus. He has not merely exhorted the Hindus to unite ; he has also warned them against the impending dangers. It has really pained him to see that the Hindu majority in the Central Legislature has been reduced to an ineffective minority ; and he was the first

person to protest against it and to mobilise public opinion against this iniquitous measure.

The record of the life of such an eminent person, patriot, reformer and nation-builder, cannot but be inspiring. This gains further in interest when we remember that it has been done by the gentleman himself. I believe 'The Story of my Life' is one of the most moving and absorbing books I have ever read. It unfolds the story of Bhaiji's life graphically. And yet the author has done his work without any attempt at adorning the tale or pointing a moral. He has described the events as they have occurred and set down his thoughts and observations as they have suggested themselves to him. By doing so he has struck a note of sincerity that goes home. This is especially true of the chapters that Bhaiji has added, at the request of many friends and admirers, to make the story up-to-date. Nobody can go through these without becoming aware of the fact that Bhaiji has been able to do his public work at the cost of much personal comfort and by sacrificing the happiness of those most dear to him. For instance, his letter to his beloved wife when she lay on her deathbed shows how his devotion to public work was many times at variance with his duty to his heroic wife who had suffered so much for his sake. But this also shows how he has always placed duty first and everything else afterwards. The revised addition of the book is, in this sense, a more revealing document. It throws light not only on the public life of Bhaiji, but shows him also as a man of deep affections and of strong personal attachments. With-

out this glimpse-into his life, I am sure, the knowledge of the man must remain patchy and imperfect. We are therefore thankful to him for letting us into the secrets of his heart.

I trust the book will have a particular appeal for the young. In it they will find much to satisfy their curiosity and to stimulate them to noble endeavour. They will learn from it many things, but chiefly the secret of a noble personality. The book will thus be a clarion call to their patriotism. It will ask them to live nobly and to strive ceaselessly—for their Motherland. I think in this, and this alone, will consist the justification of the book. It is only the narrow-minded and the short-sighted that will seek to justify the publication of this book at this time on some other ground.

Diwan Chand Sharma.
President
The Central Hindu Yuvak Sabha,
Lahore.

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INTRODUCTION

"The bird that flies free amidst mountain and forest, what does it know of the sufferings of the cage ?"

We have read in tales of fiction, in the accounts of historical writers and travellers and in the chronicles of imperial dynasties, how some of the greatest patriots and benefactors of mankind had to spend their days in prison or die a death of lingering tortures. We recall Gladstone's voice of protest against the terrible dungeons of the King of Naples. We have also read heart-rending tales of suffering in the cold prisons of distant Siberia. But little did we imagine that here, before our very eyes, should we see that same inhuman treatment meted out to men whom we acknowledged as the rulers of our hearts, men who lived for their nation and had sacrificed their all at the altar of their God and Country. Who could believe that these wretched eyes would see such treatment ; these miserable ears hear and these afflicted hearts bear it and still be whole ?

In the dark and bloody days of 1915, when Bhai Paramanand was arrested, the Punjabis were so cowed that no one dared raise a voice of protest. And even if any dared, who was there to listen ?

"From every leafy bough were plucked the chosen flowers ; the gardener's pitiless heart was like a piercing shaft to the cuckoo."

Whenever we think of the Andamans, there rises before our eyes the picture of a dreadful land, enveloped by the black ocean covered over with dense jungle, in the centre of which is a huge *bastille* built of massive stones and in that *bastille,* hundreds of cells from the chimneys of which are constantly emitted the fumes, not of fire, but of the burning hearts of men.

Inside those cells are being ground down the lives of young patriots, who, if they had not had the misfortune to be born in this land, would have been the ministers of free nations, the leaders of vast armies, or the heads of large educational organisations. My hand shakes and my heart begins to flutter as I think of those innocent and unoffending prisoners who lie there bound hand and foot counting out the days of their miserable existence. I cannot imagine their sufferings as I have not reached the stage where one is fit to enjoy such tortures. How, indeed, can a man who is free figure to himself the state of one who is shut up in a cage ?

Colonel Wedgwood, the well-known member of Parliament, was also startled when from the lips of Bhai Paramanand himself he learnt the frightful condition of the British Government's convict settlement in the Andamans. He has in the columns of the *Daily Herald* given expression to his views about the state of that land of sin.

"One of those white-dressed men with a soft voice and a saint-like face got into the train with me at Lahore and began soon to tell me how he had lived five years in the Andamans and what that place was. He had been a political prisoner and before that a Professor

of History at Lahore University. He had been released under the Royal clemency last December.

"What he told sounded like the truth because of the absence of passion and the dead-quiet voice. I think it is true because the Government of India have had a special report on the Andamans and they seem anxious about it. It is not published.

"There are between 12,000, and 13,000 prisoners in the Andamans. Some go quite young and none are sent who are not strong and under 40 years of age. The death-rate is twice what it is in other Indian gaols where all sorts are sent and no Indian jail is a health resort. When once prisoners get malaria or dysentry they cannot shake it off in that climate. But he passed over the climate and the food as though these things must happen. It was the real hell he wanted to explain to me."

Col. Wedgwood then goes on to describe the terrible picture of normal degradation and vice which prevails there; how Burman lads are used as prostitutes and such other hellish vices are practised to the knowledge of the authorities. He goes on :—

"One may mention too that small wages are paid to the convicts, so that gambling and the payment of debts are added to the hell. Extortionate bribery, both of gang-masters and of warders, is the rule and inability to bribe is no excuse when you can sell yourself for any infamy.....There still lie rotting more than 50 political prisoners whom even the royal clemency has failed to liberate.

"The man with the quiet voice told me how he had tried to starve himself to death and how a decent Scottish doctor had saved him. It appears from the man's tale that he wrote a "History of India" which Sir Michael O'Dwyer's government considered seditious. He told me that was his crime ; it may or may not have been ; it is immaterial. All he asked now was that I should help to free his comrades.

"Hospitals and prison-doctors relieve all horrors and one may be thankful that the patriot Ganesh Savarkar, after 10 years of this hell, is now permanently in hospital awaiting his end—a release from this world to one where there are no tyrants, no prisons, but a goodly company of men like himself who have gone before."

Mr. Andrews also was roused to indignation by the state of things disclosed in this letter and wrote very strongly against the continuance of the settlement.

The story of this dreadful jail life is now presented to our readers, written by the hands of the god-like Bhai Paramanandji himself. What is this story but a vivid picture of the goodness, utter simplicity, outspokenness, truthfulness, patience, and self-sacrifice of Bhaiji, and of the reward he obtained for these qualities. We see in these pages—as indeed everyone already knows—what a devoted follower he is of the Vedic religion, how from his very boyhood he was attached to the Arya Samaj, with a devotion so pure and sincere that all the misfortunes and vicissitudes in life which subsequently befell him could not shake it, but left it unchanged and

unchanging. From his earliest years he made the cause of the Arya Samaj and the Vedic religion the object of his life, entered life with that single aim and devoted the valuable years of his youth to 'carry on' the mission of Swami Dayanand Saraswti. As a life-member of the Lahore Dayanand College he took on himself the missionary work of carrying the message of the Arya Samaj to every part of his own native Punjab and to Madras, Burma and even distant Africa. The enthusiastic labours of this promising young man, who had the power of drawing all hearts to himself, drew on him the attentions of the Punjab Government which resolved to put an end to these activities. The Government says that he was arrested because he was suspected of working against it; but our own belief is that he was thus treated because of his vigorous propaganda for the Arya Samaj. He was against false creeds; his very ability and talent brought on him this suffering. We are reminded of the poet's prayer :

"The sweetest, the most lovely and most virtuous Sita fell into Ravan's hands ; may the Creator not give us superlative excellences."

That his very virtues were responsible for bringing these misfortunes on him is indeed true and was practically admitted at the trial by the Government Advocate, Mr. Bevan Petman. He advised the Punjab Government to withdraw the charge against Bhai Paramanand, and in his concluding speech made it quite clear that the case against him was a very weak one. But it was immaterial to a government which had

already resolved to erect this god's temple in the Andamans.

His arrest created a sensation in the whole country ; a death-like calamity faced the Arya Samajists. But I have no hesitation in acknowledging the great injustice which the Samaj was guilty of on that occasion, when it not only did not express any special sympathy with its brave missionary but shrouded itself in cowardly darkness.

The story of the painful days of his exile from the motherland and the incidents connected with the life of his family during this period—so full of pathos and suffering—must melt to tears even the hardest heart. What man who has a heart to feel can read the tender account given by the saintly Mr. Andrews of the home and family of Bhai Paramanand without shedding hot tears of compassion ? Let me recall to memory the relevant portions of Mr. Andrews' letter.

"In the densely croweded city of Lahore there are innumerable narrow streets which never appear to receive the light of the sun into their lower rooms. In such a narrow street and such a sunless room I saw recently the wife of Bhai Paramanand and his two young children early in the morning.

"The room was of the smallest dimension—cold and dark. It seemed to be her only home. It was indescribably poor, and she herself was nursing on her lap her sick child, while the elder child was sitting by the mother, wan, and listless, and pale.

"The child in the mother's lap had fever, and the mother herself told me how her eldest child had died of

this only six months ago. It was easy to see from the dark ill-ventilated room and the poverty-stricken condition of the family, how the eldest daughter had caught the disease. When the mother told me how the youngest child in her lap had each day a low fever, I greatly feared that the disease itself had already spread to the other members of the family.

"I found out on enquiry, that the wife of Bhai Paramanand had been living recently on the scanty pay of Rs. 17 a month which she obtained by teaching in an Arya Samaj Vernacular Primary School. Bravely she struggled to keep her independence, but what a struggle it had been! For more than four years she had kept her home together going out each day to the school, in order to earn sufficient for herself and her family to live on. She used to take her children to the school for there was no one to look after them if they remained behind.

"Bhai Paramanand's wife, at the time of her husband's arrest, was deprived of everything she had—even the small household utensils which mean so much to a woman who has cleaned them for use day after day. There is an utterly barbarous law which disgraces the Indian Penal Code, that, for certain political offence the wife and children must be reduced to beggary by 'forfeiture of property,' if the husband and father is found guilty. This 'forfeiture' of property ought to have been cancelled as punishment a centuay ago. It is a relic of the Dark Ages. But still it lingers on, badly and brutally unmodified; and in this case it was

evidently administered with all the harshness of an unscrupulous police administration.

"Even this vindictive punishment, unworthy of a civilized Government, was apparently not sufficient. The poor woman told me, in her own simple words, how in her pitiful struggle for an independent livelihood she had tried to get admitted for training as a Vernacular Teacher, into the Lahore Normal Training School classes; but she had been refused even this request because of her husband.

"One single personal possession belonging to Bhai Paramanand she still treasured. Some illuminated addresses of welcome from the Indian citizens of South Africa which had been presented to her husband during his visit had been handed back to her from the D. A.-V. College after the 'forfeiture of property' had taken place. I read the names of the cities in Natal which he had visited and I could easily picture to myself the presentation of these addresses and the pleasure they had given. Mr. Gandhi has told me how noble was the character of his message.

"Personally, I have never met Bhai Paramanand; but from all that I have heard of him, I should be proud to meet him.

"I believe him to be absolutely innocent of any deeds of cowardice or meanness. If he held at any time extreme revolutionary views (I have not the full evidence before me and cannot say whether this was proven) yet it is as clear as the day to me that his whole character was transparently honest. His political

opinions such as they were, were those of an idealist, not those of a sordid and bad nature. His historical conclusions were those of a student and a scholar, with the natural bias of an ardent patriot. Historical and political truth can never be reached by penalising honest opinion.

"I have seen Bhai Parmanand's letters written from Port Blair prison in the Andaman Islands. There is the true ring of a noble character in these also. Furthermore they reveal of clarity of intellectual vision and deeply religious mind. Throughout the whole series there is not one word of meanness or hate, nor is there a single phrase that is not brave and generous and true. In the jail he has found an inward peace and joy which no imprisonment can take away.

"The thought has come home to me again and again while reading these letters—how futile, how stupid, how insensate it is to keep one of the brightest and keenest intellects in modern India, a man with such noble qualities of mind and heart, imprisoned along with the lowest criminals for the rest of his life and engaged in the useless, senseless and meaningless occupation of grinding and grinding and grinding, hour after hour, at a mill. God has given such precious mental gifts as his to enrich our human nature; and this is all the use that man can make of them!

"As if this was not futility enough, the Government must go on still further to punish him through his helpless wife and little children by forfeiture of all his property. Can civilization devise no better use than this

a political idealist? We have got rid, long ago, of e thumb screw and the stake; but have we even as et considered the question of mental torture at all? There is a story, which I have heard from an authentic source that has haunted me ever since,—how, at the time of a visit of one of the highest officials to the Andamans, a prisoner who was a political idealist and revolutionary, with his nerves reached beyond human endurance implored the visiting official to send him to be hanged. That fate would be better than a life-long torture.

"We know that a Prison Commission appointed by the Government of India is inspecting the prisons of the world. I fervently hope that their very first recommendation will be the abandonment of the Andamans altogether. Meanwhile the utmost consideration should be given by the Government to the cases of those whom the authorities have sent, for political reasons to such a place.

"The trial of Bhai Paramanand was conducted in the year 1915 in wartime under the Defence of India Acts. The evidence against him was so slight that Mr. Bevan Petman the Government Advocate advised the Punjab Government to drop his case altogether. I believe this is literally true, that he would never have been condemned at all, if he had not been so sincere and open in his statements during his trial. I know personally that Sir Ali Imam, the legal member of Council was greatly troubled and exercised in his mind about his case, as to whether on legal grounds he could possibly advise his release. From first to last, all through his

life Bhai Paramanand seems to have been nobly careless about protecting himself against suspicion. The spies and informers in America, who were used by the Punjab Government were for this reason able to incriminate him.

" The Great War, under stress of which Bhai Paramanand was condemned to transportation for life with forfeiture of property, is now at an end. The Punjab Government authorities will soon have an opportunity, which I understand the Imperial Government has already sanctioned, of revising the sentences of those political prisoners who were convicted during the war. There is no one of these whose release would give more universal satisfaction than that of Bhai Paramanand."

In giving expression to these sentiments Mr. Andrews was undoubtedly voicing the feeling of the 300 millions of the people of India. At last even the heart of the Gevernment melted. As how indeed could it help doing when it was being assailed by silent sighs—more powerful than weapons of steel, more specially those sighs which were heaved by burning and afflicted hearts? While this was working on one side, the news of the dark and bloody occurrences of the Punjab had reached the very throne of London and a general amnesty had to be proclaimed in order to mitigate the effects of the ' errors ' and atrocities of Dyer and O'Dwyer.

The universal cry that went up from the hearts of all Indians on reading this proclamation was one of joy that they should once again see their martyr. The Arya Samaj would once more take into her lap her true and

valiant son and Bhai Paramanand would again be free to minister to the needs of the suffering.

The hope rose and fell several times and the state of men's minds and of the press during these days in India was indeed wonderful. At last the auspicious hour arrived when the dream came true and those hopes and expectations were realised. In the year of grace 1920 Bhaiji once more laid foot on the shore of Madras, reached his own Lahore and plunged the country in a flood of rejoicing. We received the news with a shock—it seemed too good to be true. The events of the last five years passed before our mind like so many scenes on the stage. There was not a newspaper in the land which did not rejoice to hear the glad tidings. Poets gave vent to their feelings of joy in natural outbursts of song, while others turned their thoughts towards him through the less exalted medium of prose.

All these were but manifestations of the universal love and veneration which were entertained towards Bhai Paramanand—and this not only in India but even in distant Africa. When the news of his release reached them Mr. G. Williams wrote to him from South Africa in the words of affectionate greeting:—

"I am overjoyed at the news of your release. By having gone through this suffering and pain you have only made yourself the stronger and freer to complete the work which is so near to your heart.

"It was in the year 1905 that I had the good fortune to see you and it is my strong wish that I should make the journey to India to see you once more and pay my

respects to you. Fifteen long years have passed since we parted. There have been vicissitudes in my life as in yours, but I am still following the path chalked out by you, my *guru.* This European form I have assumed in this birth has been to me a source of pain and of many difficulties. After the struggles of this life I am sure we shall meet in that land where are no partings, but an eternal comradeship. But I am eager to have your *darshan* even before the end. You will kindly write to me which month is suitable for Europeans to come to India and which ship.

"I am writing this short letter to congratulate you on your release. I have before me as I write your photograph of 1905. All others in Africa are likewise overjoyed."

The very first day when I went to pay my respects to Bhaiji after his release and learnt his pathetic and heart-rending story I was astonished to see that though he was innocent and his innocence had been rewarded with such cruel punishment there was in his mind no feeling of loathing for O' Dwyer and no complaints against his government. At such a moment how readily did we see how great was this soul, how high this god-like personality whom passion or prejudice, greed or ignorance could not move and who, far from entertaining any feeling of hatred towards his deadly enemy O'Dwyer, was full of love and tenderness. During his stay in jail he had ascended the steps which alone lead a devotee to the feet of the Almighty.

To keep one's mind free of anger and sorrow in jail,

and much more so in a jail whose iniquity defies description, is the achievement of a great soul. We see the proofs of this in the letters which once a year Bhaiji used to write from jail. Of these letters Mr. Andrews, in the course of an article on Maharshi Dayanand in the *Arya Gazette* says:—

"At that time, when I had written down all I had in my mind, there came into my hands a bundle of valuable letters, written from the jail in the Andamans by Bhai Paramanand. I am convinced that he was confined in jail on false charges. These letters had been written at intervals of a year—it being the rule in this jail to allow only one letter a year to near relations. I wish from the bottom of my heart for the complete destruction of the jail in the Andamans; for I have on many an occasion had very painful experience of the beastly treatment of convicts in the jail. These letters of Bhai Paramanand were the more valuable to me as they had been written after much thought and concentration in a peaceful state of mind. They were not written in chance moments of leisure snatched from the hurry and confusion of the life of work and struggle which every one of us is obliged to live in these days. What he wrote in these letters of Swami Dayanand had presented itself to his mind as a real and vivid picture. It was to me a great delight and placed before me the very picture of Swami Dayanand which I should have wished to draw."

One day, in the course of conversation he told me, "The events of the world have now lost for me their joy

and sorrow." When I requested to be initiated into the great truth which is able to take a man above joys and sorrows he said, "Five years of solitude are needed for that, in the course of which one is obliged to break one by one every bond of worldly attachment and desire."

Talking of death he said one day that it was not a fearful thing but very beautiful, more especially for youths who have prepared themselves for it.

It is the personal experiences of this god-like person, conqueror of death, that we find recorded in the following pages. He courted suffering for his God and Country and spent a large portion of his life either in their service or in jail for that sevice. Let us remember as we read these pages that we too have something to learn from them, that we too must shape our lives according to the great principles which there greet us.

KHUSHAL CHANDRA KHURSAND,
Editor, "Arya Gazette."

THE STORY OF MY LIFE

I

AT THE NAOLAKHA POLICE STATION

It was evening. Four days had elapsed since my house was searched. I was strolling with a dear friend on the open maiden near the Fort.

In a trembling voice my friend began to say, "I am very much grieved. There is rumour abroad since the last three or four days that you will be arrested. Wherever you go the police are watching your movements. People say that your house is already being guarded."

I laughed and said, "They may arrest me. Where is the occasion for regret in that?"

"You may feel unconcerned, but my heart is sinking like a potter's kiln," my friend added.

"What will they do if they seize me? What harm have I done?"

"You may not have done any harm, but the Government is in a nervous state. (The war was then raging and every day brought news of the Germans advancing on Paris, the fall of which seemed imminent.) They consider you very dangerous and will give you the severest punishment."

"Is there any punishment severer than death? A man can die but once ; why should he fear then?" I added.

Tears sprang into my friend's eyes. "Why do you torture me like this?" he said. "Our heart cannot bear your separation. Where, then, could we see you again?"

"But what can I do?" I asked.

"You should see the Deputy Commissioner or some other high official and remove all misunderstandings."

"On what pretext could I go to meet them? I have not at all been in the habit of seeing these officials, and should not know what to tell them, if I went."

"No, no, you must go," my friend persisted.

"Very well, let me see," I replied and we parted.

I was sitting at home the next morning. Two young friends came to see me and as soon as they came, they began to say, "You should flee from here. Three or four of us will accompany you."

"Why should I flee, and to whom should I go and where?" I asked. "It is a thousand times better to acccept death than to pass one's life in flight. Wherever I should go fleeing every new face that I see would only rouse up alarm lest I should be followed and detected. Rather than live in constant dread of every man like that, it is far better to face the cause of alarm itself."

They went away disappointed. It was about ten o'clock. I was taking my meal when my wife, looking towards me, said, "You look gloomy to-day. What's the matter? Why don't you speak?"

"This is probably the last meal I shall eat at your hands," I said.

"Why, what has happened?" she anxiously queried.

"What had to happen has happened. That's enough for you."

She was concerned and confounded. I myself knew nothing of what was going to happen. Finishing my meal I came downstairs and had just sat down in my room when a *tonga* drew up outside. I went out and saw that it was an old classmate, a vakil, who had come to see me. It was a very affectionate meeting after a long separation. I took his luggage inside and we had just begun conversation when another *tonga* arrived which contained two high officers and another person with them. They told me that I should go with them and that if I wanted to bid farewell to those at home I might do so.

"I have nothing to say, only to take leave," I said. So I went upstairs and bidding farewell, went with them in the *tonga*. It was driven very fast along the road leading to the railway station so that nobody might see us.

At last we entered the police station at Naolakha. My thumb-impression was taken and I was shut up in a small room—one on the left hand side immediately one enters the building. Outside, two sentinals were posted, instead of one, with fixed bayonets.

A mat was lying in the apartment. There was no way for light to enter. The door was fastened with a very strong lock. The room was bare but for an old and cracken night-pot in a corner, in which I was allowed to answer calls of nature.

Why I was kept shut up here I did not know; nor did I ask anybody. Towards evening I was given two

loaves of bread and some *dal,* which I ate and lay down.

The night passed and it was morning. Though the sun was well up in the heavens darkness reigned in my cell. That day also my food was served to me inside the cell as before. What the thoughts are which rise up in a man's mind in such a condition depends on the state of his mind. A weak-hearted person creates out of his own fancy all sorts of ghosts and hags in the darkness and shudders with fright of them; a strong man would probably boil with indignation and resolve to take sweet vengeance. But in me, lying alone in that dark hole day and night, were no feelings either of fear or of anger. True, the thought did arise sometimes as to what sort of evidence was being manufactured to prosecute me. Persons who had come back from America had no doubt met me; but I had taken no part in their work, whatever it may have been. Day and night I lay unconcerned with and oblivious to the joys and sorrows of the world. After seven days a British Police officer came and asked me if I was doing well. "Yes, I am well," I answered and he went his way. Time passed in this fashion—sometimes sitting, sometimes lying on the mat and in eating the loaves supplied from the baker's shop.

In front of me was another cell in which other persons were sometimes kept. But they used to go away after a day or two. I could not talk to them but I sometimes used to hear scraps of their conversation. Most of the occupants of that cell were Sikhs who had retured from Ameriea, China and other lands, whom the police was taking from place to place for purposes of

inquiry. On some nights drunken persons would be brought and confined in that cell for twenty-four hours. One night a Jat Sikh was brought and shut up there. On getting up in the morning he drank a huge quantity of water. At ten o' clock at night the police wished to send him out as they could not confine a person at the Thana for over twenty-four hours. But the man would not go. His village was far away, he said. Where could he go at that untimely hour? Why had they brought him there? Finally, they gave him a bed and he slept outside in the Thana.

One day a young woman who had suffered her term of imprisonment in the women's gaol was brought there to be sent back to Delhi. The clothes which covered her were made up of a thousand rags. The policemen asked her for what offence she had been convicted. She told her story: she had formed an illicit connection and had attempted to do away with her lawful hasband, for which she got three years' imprisonment.

Just at that moment an old barber woman was brought in custody. The charge against her was that, being in the habit of going to the house of a gentleman who was her neighbour, she abducted his daughter and removing all her jewels pushed the girl into a well. She told the police that her husband was her accomplice in this. He was also arrested and brought there. He was alternately threatening and cojoling her not to implicate him in the affair.

"Why do you wish to marry another wife, in my absence?" she asked.

One day a notorious offender was brought in custody

from Baghbanpura. He had broken into a house at night and committed theft. The police were beating and intimidating him. In their presence he would say that he knew nothing about the affair, but left to himself in the cell of the lock-up he would boast of his achievements.

Sights like these were passing before my eyes day and night. I had, however, no opportunity of exchanging words with anybody. I used to hear all this sitting silently by myself in my lonely cell. Whenever new prisoners were brought in they would point to me and ask why I had been arrested. For several nights there was with us in the jail a Fakir, who, going by mistake into the compound of an Englishman's bangalow, had been handed over to the police on the charge that he too had a hand in a secret conspiracy the object of which was to do him some injury. Sometimes he would weep sometimes sing and sometimes abuse the English. Several sadhus were also brought there under arrest on the charge of being vagrants.

II

THE DISTRICT JAIL

Several days had passed in this manner in that dark hole in the lock-up, when one day, abruptly, a Sikh officer of police came to me and said, "Why are you content to remain in this unfortunate condition? Why not make a confession of all you know?"

"This is the first time the question has been put to me," I answered. "Who wants what kind of information from me?"

"It is already late," he went on, "a man at Ludhiana has divulged everything about you—that you are a big leader. You would have seen that Kartar Singh has also been arrested."

One or two days before this there was great excitement at the police station at night when three persons had been brought under arrest from the railway station. There were English officers of police with them. The men at the Thana were saying that Deputy Inspector-General Tomkin had himself arrived there; highly dangerous persons had been arrested. Dangerous they certainly must have been since, for the first time, I was removed from my cell in the lock-up and placed with other men in another room while the three new arrivals were confined in the cell I had just vacated. They, however, were cheerful and smiling and one of them—a youth of eighteen—was addressing the Deputy Inspector-General by his bare

name. In addition to handcuffs these three had on their legs heavy fetters which were fastened outside the doors. It was past midnight. All were asleep. The sentinal also sat down to rest. I got up and looked and lo! it was Kartar Singh whom I had once met in America.

The Sikh officer resuming, continued, "Once a jackal was caught in a trap. Being very cunning it said to its captor, 'If you don't heed just one thing that I say *Pralava* will certainly be upon you.' 'What is that?' he inquired. The jackal replied, 'I shall only mention it when you set me free and yourself go and stand at a distance.' After thinking over it for some minutes the man agreed. The jackal walked some distance and shouting 'The Devil take you' ran away. To save one's life in any possible manner is a virtue—you are certainly knowing enough to see that."

I listened to this sermon and gave a short answer—"Sorry, I am not a jackal". After keeping me a month in the greatest suspense, here was held out to me on the one hand the fear of Death and on the other the chance of saving myself in this manner!

The next morning the cell was opened and two policemen took me in handcuffs to the office-room in the Thana where a Musulman officer was sitting. As soon as he saw us he rebuked the policemen saying, "Why have you put on handcuffs? Remove them at once." I went inside. He pushed a chair towards me and pressed me to be seated. As I took my seat he said, "I have to ask you two or three questions. I hope you will answer them."

I wanted, to know in what capacity I was being asked those questions. If I was free, I said, I would certainly answer them to the best of my knowledge; but if I was a prisoner, they might frame charges against me and I would answer in a court of law.

On this he laid aside his pen and paper and said, "Very well, let him bathe; he is to be taken to the gaol."

Handcuffs were slipped on one of my hands and I was taken to the pipe and told that I might bathe and wash my clothes. After one complete month I took off my clothes and washed them and also poured water over my body. My wet clothes had hardly had time to dry before a closed carriage and a police guard arrived to take me. I was seated in it along with one or two Hindu sub-inspectors or sergeants, the rest of the policemen taking their seats outside. The carriage moved on towards the gaol. Through the chinks in the carriage I looked on, as we passed, at the people in the streets the trees and other familiar objects, all of which I was probably seeing for the last time. After making many circuits the carriage finally drew up at the jail gates. Before this I had heard much about the jail, but a feeling like that of wonder or bewilderment came upon me now as I actually beheld the huge iron gates.

We entered and I was taken to a room inside where a subordinate officer of the jail made a complete search of my person, removing even socks and shoes. I was then led further inside and confined in one of the cells in the line of prisoners' cells. Prisoners condemned to be hanged were kept in this line. In the remaining cells were several persons involved in my own case, one

or two among whom recognised me. There was a kind of raised platform of mud to sleep upon, which they called *'khaddi'*. Two worn out blankets were lying here. There was a night pot in a corner and two earthernware cups in which meals were served. The jailor walked up and down the line of cells. This cell was in some rsepects better than that at the Naolakha police station. A person inside it could, by speaking in a loud tone, converse with the inmates of the adjoining cells. The jailor always tried to prevent this and made rows with the prisoners every now and then about this; but he alone was no match for the fifteen or sixteen persons who were confined to this line of cells. When he altercated with one the rest would make a huge noise and he would have to go about from room to room meeting ceaseless remonstrance. Finally he had to give up the task as hopeless and only requested that the talking may not be too loud, lest some official of the jail should hear it.

Towards evening a Sikh warder—came to see me. "The blankets are somebody else's" he said, referring to the blankets in the cell, and ordered fresh ones to be supplied. Those who were accompanying him gave me two other blankets and took away the old ones.

Soon afterwards, two prisoners and some jailors brought us our food. They handed me water in one cup and *dal* and bread in the other and passed on to the next cell. The bread was made of the flour of Indian corn (*Jow*?), in which the greater portion was sand. The *dal* was awfully rotten. I put only a single piece

of bread into my mouth; it was impossible to eat more. I washed my mouth with water and sat down. It was now dark and there was the fear of spending the night with an empty stomach. I spread the blankets on the floor and had only just laid myself down to rest when my whole body was covered over with lice. Both the blankets, I found, were bristling with vermin. Nothing could be done then; so, I threw the blankets aside and lay down on the bare floor of the *Khaddi*. Many lice were however still sticking to my body. All my subsequent afflictions in jail were nothing as compared with the experience of that first night. There is, however, one good quality about time, it never lingers. One has therefore the consolation that it is always moving on.

We remained in this jail for two or three weeks, spending days and nights with that same diet and the same blankets, The *Havaldar* would come in the morning with the scavenger who would clean the night pot. He would open the cells one by one so that the occupants might not see one another. Besides the ordinary meals served twice a day (of which a portion would remain unconsumed) we used to get at midday a loaf made of two ounces of gram flour. This was free from sand and husk and was the only thing to which we looked forward with pleasure the whole day long. To remove the lice from the blankets was a recreation during the day time. During all this time, however, owing to confinement in separate cells, we had no opportunity of meeting the other prisoners and knew nothing of what was taking place in the jail except our own unfortunate lives.

III

THE CENTRAL JAIL

Great attention is paid in jail to one thing—that whatever is to take place should come to the prisoners as a startling surprise. This is supposed to have a salutary effect upon them. We had hardly spent a month in the District Jail when, one day, a police guard arrived bringing handcuffs with them. Each prisoner was led out of his cell, handcuffed and taken to the jail gate, where, after the usual counting and checking, the jail authorities handed over charge of us to the police. We were about twenty in number. We were made to stand in a line; policemen, with fixed bayonets, were on both sides of us We moved to a short distance and came to the gate of the Central Jail which, in Lahore, is styled the "Big jail." The huge iron gates with bars opened to admit us. At the portico the police handed us over again into the charge of the jail authorities.

We were taken inside and confined to the line of cells numbered fourteen. There are two yards in the jail with eight blocks in each yard. In each block are several lines of cells bearing numbers. In the line number fourteen there are several separate cells, and it was in these that we were kept.

This portion of the jail viz., line 14 series, is the place

intended for the confinement of persons accused of capital offences and of hardened criminals. There is a set of cells inside this section specially set apart for notorious offenders and consequently called "Badmash Line." There are about eight cells in it, and it was to one of these that I was confined. In the adjoining cells were prisoners who had reputaion in the jail for being big *badmashes.*

During my stay here I felt I was in a new world altogether. The two months spent in police-custody and in the District Jail were a sort of half way house, a stage of preparation, for entry into a veritable Hell. But though this was Hell itself there was some of freedom in it—in the opportunity (or the misfortune?) of seeing the forms and hearing the talk of the inmates of this Inferno. In the police lock-up life was an eternal round of solitude and darkness. In the District Jail one could *see* the forms of the officers and attendants of the jail when they came to clean the cells or bring food, though there was no opportunity of exchanging words with them. Here now was the opportunity of living in the very company of those who had declared open war against the jail administration and whose sole occupation—day in and day out—was to abuse the jail people and one another. There was, however, one virtue in them, the spirit of hospitality in a greater or less degree. Regarding overselves as new arrivals to jail, or perhaps, because the charges against us were of a political character, they used to show us some respect. It would seem that they were somehow or other getting exaggerated reports of the disturbances in the Punjab. They knew too that the English had got to do with a very powerful antagonist in

the Germans, and that it was for this very reason that some people in the land were attempting to create disaffection and were being arrested and imprisoned by the Government. Naturally, the sympathies of these challengers of the law were entirely with the victims of the Government's wrath or fears.

Though these people were abusing the British Government and the officials of the jail, this was with them a matter of daily routine and had no particular connection with their mental state or feelings. The duties of life, and in fact whole philosophy of existence, were to them summed up in their daily routine of work. Just as the ordinary man immersed in concerns of the world, never pauses to reflect that these are but transitory and unreal—so many bonds from which he should free himself—these miserable beings never bestow a thought on the time when they should once more be free! Their terms of imprisonment were in most cases long and many among them were such as would in the usual course be back there again the moment they were set at liberty. Jail, was to them their home, nay, their whole world. We may call it Hell, but to them it was their elements. So perhaps does this world of ours appear to some higher power watching it from above.

Inside the cells there is a raised platform for sleeping. On one side there is a millstone at which the prisoner grinds his allotted measure of corn into flour standing. Ther are also two iron bowls in each cell and an earthen ware night pot in a corner. Soon after getting up in the morning the *Langri* comes along bringing victuals. He gives two loaves of bread made of gram—under weight and

ill baked, and a spoonful of vegetables, which, for the most part, is made up of leaves and stalks. Except in this block the prisoners are accommodated in barracks in which 60 or 70 persons can sleep. They have also got separate privies in which the prisoners have all to finish answering call of nature in a few minutes time on getting up in the morning. And then they are made to sit down in rows in the jail yard for the distribution of bread.

In these barracks a convict keeps guard with a lamp for 3 hours. But the system of keeping ward in No. 14 series is peculiar. Every third hour a new sentinal comes to keep watch and going to every cell calls out "Give the word". If the prisoner inside happens to be asleep and makes no response he repeats the question in a shriller voice and accompanies it with a loud knock on the door. If there is still no response he has recourse to other means to wake the prisoner and satisfy himself that he is alive and not dead. All this is necessary as he has to make reports at short intervals that all is well. Specially selected Pathans were employed for this duty in our ward and they carried out their duties very strictly indeed. The result was that every night there was abusing and quarrelling with some one or an other of us and by waking us every three hours, care was taken to make us miserable and keep up the whole night.

In the morning, irrespective of whether we had finished our meals or not, sacks of wheat were ready for grinding. Every convict would take his wooden cask, would bring back his eighteen seers of wheat and begin to grind. This was the hard labour for the day imposed by the Government, which had to be

finished by three o'clock. Some strong fellows would do this work in three or four hours, but the rest of them—weak and thin—would have to be at it the whole day. Each would grind in his own cell singing songs or cutting jokes with the occupants of the adjoining cells or abusing one another. There were also many, who, not being able to appease their hunger with the two loaves given to them, used to devour the flour as they ground and add sand to make up the weight. Many convicts would not be able to give the full weight, for default they would be taken before the superintendent and punished.

As soon as they finished their labour they began to play at dice among themselves. Their property consisted of a few annas or rupees and the place for keeping this is in their throats. They have a cavity there for holding the coins. In order to form this cavity a metal bail to which a string is attached is placed in the throat and the string is kept in the mouth or between the teeth to prevent the ball going down. After several days practice a cavity is thus formed. Many men had formed such a cavity, as it was considered very useful. Sometimes there is also danger in this. One of the men began to practice holding the ball in his throat. But the ball went down into his stomach. He was affected by the poison. For over two months he disregarded the symptoms of disease, but in the end he was laid up and obliged to go to hospital. There too, he lay in a helpless condition for a long time and, yet, would not disclose the real cause of it all, out of sheer obstinacy. In the fourth month it became known that he was practicing this ball keeping habit. When the doctor questioned him about it he

however, stoutly denied the fact. Purgatives were given, but had no useful effect. When the doctor was convinced that there was poisoning from this cause he made the patient lie down on his chest and administrated enema, when out came the ball. But the man had become so weak by that time that he died of the effect of poisoning. This is the pouch in the mouth by which conjurors generally make a feint of swallowing balls. They can hold one or two small balls in their throats and when exhibiting their tricks they bring these out and make it appear that the ball which they have made to disappear comes out of their mouth.

Those among the convicts, who gamble, stake either their money or their clothes or the loaves of bread they get. When they lose their bread in this fashion they often live for days together on the gram they get at mid-day.

In the evening, after bread is distributed, the cells are locked up and the men lie inside singing or talking or abusing one anothor in very obscene language till late in the night. These are pastimes and pleasures of their lives.

Once a week, in the morning, the superintendent makes a round of inspection of all the wards, which is called "holding a parade". A whole hour before this a convict warder goes round shouting "Get ready for the parade". Then comes the sergeant shouting, in his turn, "Form the parade!" "What have you been doing all this while?" A few minutes afterwards the clerk of the jail comes along repeating the same cry and looks to the neatness of

the cells and jail yard. Then comes the Deputy Jailor, and after him the Superintendent himself, followed by a crowd of prisoners, attendants and so forth. The Jailor comes with him, walking in front. Every convict stands behind the bars at the door of his cell, holding his ticket in his hands. If anyone has a complaint to make he does so with a *salaam*. The Superintendent stops a minute to listen, gives answer and passes on. As they go the Jailor makes his report about every one of the prisoners. This is a sort of regular drama which is enacted in the Jail every weak, being intended to enable every prisoner to make his needs or complaints come to the ears of the Superintendent. Whenever any one wants to write a letter he gets permission from the Superintendent when on his round.

IV

THE 'STAR'—CHAMBER IN JAIL

A long time thus passed in the Naolakha Jail, the District Jail and the Central Jail. But, even then, I did not know what was the offence for which I had been arrested, or what it was that I had done for which charges would be framed against me. At last, one day, Lala Ragunath Sahay, in the capacity of a Vakil, came to see me. From him I learnt that a new law was being enacted for us called the Defence of India Act. We were to be prosecuted under that Act and our trial would take place in the jail itself. A special tribunal of three commissioners was to be appointed to try us, against whose decision no appeal would be allowed.

When the war broke out the Sikhs and other Indians who were working in America returned to their motherland in large numbers in order to dissuade their countrymen from participating in the war or assisting England. They made use of this occasion for achieving liberty. A considerable number of them had been arrested as soon as they landed and shut up in jails in Multan and other places. Even after confinement in jail for several months, and subjection to police oppression, they disclosed nothing on which charges could be framed against them. But some among these had evaded arrest by disguising themselves, or by some other means, and a few had been let

off after being arrested. These now began to go about from place to place creating trouble. When they began to be caught some among them turned approvers. The first among these was a man named Nawab, the only Mussulman who had come in this set from America. All his expenses, too, had been met by them out of their common funds. He had already acted as a spy in America and seems to have come back with a special motive. He carefully kept in mind all the details of what had taken place on the voyage, and as soon as he arrived, began to disclose everything to the officials, while at the same time, as a Mohammedan, he was pretending to co-operate with his fellow countrymen in the capacity of 'leader'.

Through this Nawab the police were kept informed of everything in connection with these persons who had returned from America. Whenever some noted person was arrested, the Police would astonish him by revealing all his secrets. There is this one great danger in all secret plots ond conspiracies, that it is not always possible to distinguish cowards from the brave, and the treacherous from the true, and this one weakness spoils the whole game. Every one boasts of his courage, and thinking himself quite safe, is ready to say or do anything. But as soon as he gets wind of the fact that the Police have unearthed the secret conspiracy his vaunted bravery disappears, and, seeing his life in peril, he purchases safety for himself at the price of turning an approver and betraying his companions. Having himself been caught in the trap, he thinks he can only escape in this manner by giving away his erstwhile confederates.

In the Central Jail we were used to be allowed, one or two at a time, and separately—to go out for a walk—for 15 minutes in the mornings. The head-warder of the Jail used to be with us to keep guard. It became known to me then that several persons who had been kept confined in many separate jails in the Punjab were being brought to the Lahore Jail. The head-warder used to tease us and try to make us put up with the indignities practised in the jail. He would say that he was 'training' us for the jail-life. He had spent his life from his very childhood in the service of the jail, and though he was a bad man, he would sometimes tell us the truth. Once he told me that there was just one way of oppressing the convict in jail; to prevent him from doing what he whished to do and make him do what he did not like. If he stands up, make him sit down. If any one sits, make him stand up; if any one looks up, compel him to cast his eyes down.

Some days passed. Then, one day, we were taken handcuffed out of our cells and made to sit down on a grassy plot. We were wondering what was to happen next, when the gates opened to admit a captain of police and an Indian officer, who came towards us. There was also another person with them—one of those who had been associated with the Indians who had returned from America. He hung down his head in shame, had a dejected appearance and was stooping. We were all ordered to stand up, and then we knew that this man was a witness for the prosecution and was being brought to identify us. He would stop before each one of us and say whether he could identify him or not. Some he

recognised, pointing out that at such and such a place he was with him. This was the first occasion when all of us chanced to come together and see one another. I saw two or three in our midst whom I had met once or twice in America. One of them was Pandit Jagatram who was a student in the Dayanand College for sometime. He had come to me in Lahore and given me some gold dollars of America which I had changed for him, giving the notes to himself or Amar Singh. He had been arrested at Peshawar on a charge of vagrancy. On being questioned as to the notes he said that he had got them through me. He was sentenced to three years rigorous imprisonment on this charge and after being made to grind flour at Peshawar for a long time was brought to Lahore, where, as a convict, he was being made to do the same hard labour.

Then identification parades began to be held every alternate or third day, and we found that the number of approvers had mounted to over a dozen. And the process of identification too was strange indeed! The approver would walk on in front followed by the Police and the officers of the jail. When he came to any one he knew he would say what he knew which would be noted down. The approver Amar Singh recognised me and said that he had taken either rupees or notes from me, and had asked me about Jagatram's case.

This was true enough. But one day Mula Singh was brought forward to identify us. He went past me, seeing every one, and had passed some eight or ten other persons in front of me, when, suddenly, he turned back

and came to me and said that he knew me. There was some confusion. For, why did he not say so at the outset? He came back and began to say, "This is Bhai Parmanand." I at once drew the attention of Mr. Patman, the Government Advocate to the fact that this man had been directed back to me. Then the Superintendent intervened, saying, "Shut up".

"This is indeed wonderful !" I observed. "This man goes past me and does not recognise me. After looking at some other people, why should he suddenly think of me?"

The Superintendent—"This is all your damned cleverness, it will be so."

I only replied that my protest might be noted. Another day, the policeman Kirpal Singh came to identify us. He looked at all of us once and said nothing about me. He was brought a second time to look at us, and then he said that he had seen me. I asked, "Where?" "At your house," he said. Both of these people were lying as regards me ; if they had known or seen me surely their attention would have been drawn to me on the very first round.

These things were preliminary We soon learnt that a court room was being constructed inside the jail out of block 15, which was joined to block 14. A platform was built for the commissioners. There was also an enclosure for the prisoners. Arrangements were made to instal electric fans in the court-room. At this time our friends and relations used to come to the jail to see us. They would come and put in petitions in the morning The superintendent would come at 10 or 11 o' clock.

Some one or other of us would have to be taken there and the man incharge would come to take us one by one. We were made to stand behind iron railings on the verandah. Those who had come to see us—men, women or children—would stand outside the railing and talk to us. What had to be said, would all be said in five minutes, then the interview would be over. The afflicted hearts, unable to utter anything, would be separated. Every day some one or other of us would have a visitor, and, when he came back from the interview, would give the others some news he had had of his house or village or anything else. The information, however trifling or insignificant in itself the thing might be, would be passed on from one cell to another and would be the subject of their thoughts. It was at such times that onerealised in all its completeness the truth that man is a social animal. We are in the habit of exchanging ideas with others in order to spend our time and this habit becomes our nature. The happiness of our life begins to depend on our being able to know of the doings of other people and giving our opinion thereon.

Our days were thus spent in hearing about the happenings in the jail and in exercising our wits about the matter which came to us from outside sifted through the jail bars. Unexpectedly, one day, some sixty policemen, bringing hand-cuffs with them, came and ranged themselves at the cell doors. Some time before ten o' clock they took us out of the cells, fastened hand-cuffs on each of us, and, after counting, took us inside the court-house. We were placed in the railed enclosure and the

police took up their position on all sides of us at the doorways. There were a large number of vakils in the court. Some were vakils for the prosecution, while there were about half a dozen others who had been engaged by the Government to defend the accused. As the trials were to take place inside the jail, and people from outside were not admitted, the Government thought it expedient to engage vakils for the accused, so as to avoid all suspicion of lawlessness or irregularity in trial. Lala Raghunath Sahay was my vakil. There were nearly 64 accused persons on the list, of whom some four or five could not be arrested, though there was the hope of catching them. Two were actually brought arrested at an early stage of the trial and witnesses were examined again, for and against them.

By this time the three Commissioners arrived—two Englishmen and the third Pandit Shivnarayan, vakil of Lahore. The Public Prosecutor in opening the case spoke for two or three days and placed the facts of the case, from the Government's standpoint, before the court. In this account I was pointed out as the leader—in the absence of Har Dayal—of a huge and terrible conspiracy against the Government, the foundation of which had been laid when I was in America. On my return also t had done everything in this connection. After this noted approvers like Amarsingh, Mulasingh, Jwala Singh and Nawab Khan gave lengthy and detailed depositions, which occupied several volumes of printed foolscap.

All the proceedings of the case in 1910 were again

given in evidence against me. Lala Raghunath Sahay objected that that case having been tried already; the proceedings could not again be given in evidence against me, but the objection was overruled.

The publication of my 'History of India' was a big charge against me on the ground that it was also printed and published in pursuance of the conspiracy. The court sat from 10 A. M. to 4 P. M. every day. Some four or five hundred witnesses were called for the prosecution in the course of a month. Many among us were indifferent to the result of the trial, though every one could see that we were in the position of "dumb-drived cattle," only waiting for the butcher's knife to end their earthly existence. But, viewed from the ordinary standpoint of the world, we were happy. We were allowed to sit and talk together. Indeed, several in our midst went on talking the whole day, and the court was often obliged to compel them to be silent. Oppressed by the heat some used to sleep the whole day. But some were also paying attention to the course of the trial. After 12 o' clock we were given a small loaf of parched gram which was the most important portion of our food, and our tiffin. In comparison with our rotten bread this gram was to us more tasteful and sweeter than a tiffin of milk and sweetmeats.

The vakils engaged for us by Government used to cross-examine the prosecution witnesses ; and sometimes all would burst out laughing at the stupidity of the witnesses. At the end of the month the court took a holiday for 15 days. Four or five of the accused were

discharged and charges were framed againts the rest.

The framing of a charge against me alone was delayed till after the holidays. Then our witnesses were called.

One other incident in the course of the trial is worth recording. A witness for the prosecution was indentifying the accused in the jail when the Government Vakil interfered. At this Bhai Jwala Singh amongst us loudly exclaimed, "What business is it of yours? Why do you interfere?" This was taken as contempt of court and Jwala Singh was given thirty lashes, the usual punishment in the jail. The news of this spread among the accused at night, and the next day we withdrew our vakils saying they need not defend us, as there was no hope of getting Justice.

In the following chapters, t shall give a short account of the events of my early life, before resuming this narrative. This will throw light on the whole of the subsequent developments.

V

MY THOUGHTS

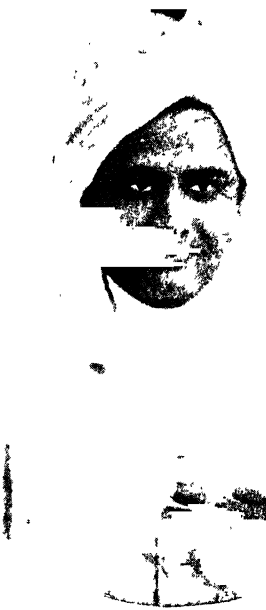
In the olden days in India, boys used to be invested with the sacred thread in their eighth or tenth year, with this idea, viz., that at that stage the boy had attained the age of discretion and that this sacrament was a sort of second birth. I seem to have attained the age of discretion in my fourteenth year, when I was reading in the second middle class in a school at Chakwal. Sometime after I had an attack of fever which is the only illness I remember having during the whole of my life. It left me very weak for some months. It was at that time too that my mother passed away, after a childbirth and I was obliged to perform her obsequies, which made my sad heart more desolate. When I was restored to health I had occasion to hear the tenets of the Arya Smaj, and they impressed me as being true. Indeed, the effect of this upon me was so strong that while other boys were at their books, preparing for examinations, would be immersed in the study of Swami Dayanand Saraswati's *Satyarth Prakash* and Pandit Lekhram's works. I wrote to Lala Hansraj to send a preacher there, and the next year the Samaj was established there. Almost all the boys of my section, including even the Mussulman boarders of the boarding-house, used to attend the Samaj meetings and pay subscription.

The Headmaster used to consider me the best of the pupils in the matter of studies, but soon the Samaj had effected a complete change in this respect. Henceforth, the Arya Samaj itself was the subject of my studies. After passing the middle examination I entered the D. A. V. School at Lahore. At this time a class was opened in the college for the teaching of Sanskrit Grammar (Panini's *Ashtadhyayi*) and the Vedas. It did not seem to me proper that I should continue in the school. So, without the consent of my house-people, I joined this class. But my star was not favourable for this. That same year the seeds of dissension were sown in the Samaj. The Sanskrit class was separated from the college and, after some time, was discontinued. So, I was stranded. I was neither in one class, nor in the other. I had to make the best of the situation. There were one or two months still left for the Entrance Examination. I sat for it and, luckily, passed.

The next year it was my idea to join the Medical College, so as to fit myself to serve the Samaj as a missionary. That year the Arya Samaj split up into two camps. Lala Hansraj was in great need of workers. The Dayanand College itself was in narrow straits. So for two years I went about from place to place and advocated the cause of the College in the schools. After passing the F. A. I remained at Jodhpur for a year and founded the Rajput School. But owing to the opposition of the state the work had regretfully to be dropped. Meanwhile, the B. A. examination was near at hand, and

I sat for it. After passing the B. A., the question of marriage came up. After much thought I arrived at the conclusion that there are many dangers in the path of a young man doing work as a bachelor, and so married. The next two years were passed as Head-master of the Anglo-Sanskrit School at Abbotabad, There I entertained the idea of taking the degree of Master of arts, and with this object studied for a year at Calcutta. But I was only able to take the M. A., of the Punjab University in 1902. After this I joined the Dayanand College as a Professor.

I had been engaged in the work for hardly three years when a letter came from the Indian settlers in Africa requesting the services of a preacher. During these three years, in the vacation, or at other times, I had spoken in almost every important town in the Punjab in connection with the Arya Samaj. Lala Hansraj was of openion that I alone could go. I consented. A cablegram was at once sent and I began to get ready for the voyage. On my way I gave a lecture in English at the Samaj in Bombay. They bade me farewell with great cordiality and I went on board the ship. The Indian Ocean is very boisterous in the month of May. For the first few hours I was all right; then I went and lay down in my cabin. My mind was in such a whirl that I soon lost all consciousness. After six days the ship came to anchor in the harbour and I got up. Having been without food or drink during all these days, I was too weak even to walk. I thanked God that land was again in view. Alighting from the steamer I found myself



Bhai Parmanandji
(as Vedic Missionary in Africa.)

in a Negro-town. I went in the direction of the post-office. The Postmaster turned out to be a friend. He arranged for my food and other conforts. The next day we reached Mombassa. The Arya Samajists of the place came on board and took me ashore. I delivered some lectures at Mombassa in connection with the Samaj. From there it is three hundred miles by rail to Nairobi. I went to stay at Nairobi for some time and delivered lectures there also.

Next I took the steamer to Durban and arrived there after three weeks. For some months I was engaged in touring through the principal places in Natal, Transvaal and Cape Colony giving lectures. A large number of whitemen used to attend these lectures. At the hands of my own countrymen I received everywhere the warmest welcome, and as some return to the Dayanand College they collected and sent Rs. 7000 or Rs. 8000. After finishing my work I was desirous of visiting England before returning home.

It was during my lectures at Durban that I had the good fortune to meet Mahatma Gandhi. He took the chair at one of these lectures. Subsequently I stayed nearly a month at his house at Johannesburg (in Transvaal). His simple life and asceticism left a deep impression on me even then. He also wrote letters to England on my behalf to his friend Shyamji Krishna Varma and two English friends. I took steamer from Cape Town and after a voyage of 3 weeks landed on English soil.

Because of being free, England is a sacred land, and as soon as one lands there one feels that one is in a pure and

free atmosphere. This freedom permeates all the aspects of English life—social and political; everyone has this fact brought home to him at some time or other. This was the time of the awakening in India, during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon. It was at this time too that the great Russo-Japanese War ending in the victory of the Japs took place. This awakening in India had produced a powerful effect on the Indian students in England. Shyamji Krishna Varma opened an 'India House' and set on foot a regular Indian propaganda. Savarkar and Har Dayal also were great apostles of this new movement.

I stayed sometime at the 'India House' and also spent some days at Oxford and Cambridge. After much thinking I decided to spend some months in London and make an independent study of the true history of India at the British Museum Library. As I gathered the real facts of that history the conviction grew upon me that the existing books on the subject had been written with an object. In all of these the people of the country have been treated as 'inferior' and of a low order of civilisation and the real causes of their rise and fall, and their present condition have been purposely kept back. The name 'History of India' has been given to an account only of the victorious invaders of India and of their achievements.

I would go to the British Museum early in the morning and return in the evening. In the course of such studies for a year and a half I gathered material for a history of India, and out of these sources

wrote a thesis for the M. A., degree of the London University on "The rise of British Power in India." The professor of King's College was examining this ; but the University deputed two Anglo-Indians to look into my work, who did not approve of it.

It was now the beginning of 1908. In May of the previous year was the 50 th anniversary of the Great Mutiny of 1857. Seeing the new movement in India several of the London papers began to throw out suggestions that just as the Great Mutiny had marked the centenary of the Battle of Plassey, the 50th anniversary of the mutiny would be the occasion for some new disturbance. The wave of *Swadeshi* and *Boycott* spread from Bengal to the Punjab. The Government's new law regarding the land and irrigation taxes had also created discontent in several districts. As early as the 11th May the Government smelt danger. It had about this time secretly arrested Lala Lajpat Rai and Sardar Ajit Singh and confined them to Burma. All this had its effect on people in India, but on the Indian students in England it produced a deep and profound impression. I was personally connected with Lala Lajpat Rai. He would keep me informed of the state of the country from time to time. I was very much pained at the news of his deportation. Several meetings were held in London, at which I also spoke.

In Bengal the net result of this repressive policy was the conviction that the Government would not tolerate open political agitation, and was even prepared in case of need to deport persons without a regular trial.

The people must arm themselves with some weapon to meet this repression. The Russian Nihilists had resorted to the use of the bomb and Bengal also accepted the bomb as its last weapon. A man was specially sent to London to learn all about bomb-making. Already there was a party there with similar ideas. The two met and the secret of bomb-making was learnt from the Russians.

I was of course aware of the prevalence of such views in London and Paris, albeit I had been cautioned by friends at the India office not to have anything to do with the people holding them. And staying in London I was not the victim of fear or cowardice such as should make me afraid of meeting anyone. But although I had no objection to meeting them, my object in life was fixed and clear—to work in the Dayanand College. Even while I was in England I was receiving help from the college and it was impossible that I should take part in any such destructive propaganda as would unfit me for work in the Samaj.

No doubt in the course of my historical studies a change had taken place in my views, viz., that the system of English education had been designed to destroy our national consciousness. After reading the arguments of the Education Committee of Lord William Bentinck I came to the conclusion that, just as the victorious nations of the world, such as the Romans and the Arabs, had by propagating their language and literature in the countries they had conquered wished to destroy their nationality and assimilate them to themselves, the English in

India had with the very same object promoted the study of the English language and literature in India.

Lala Har Dyal was studying at Oxford and we occasionally stayed at each other's. He was my acquaintance at Lahore. I had stayed sometime with him when I first reached London. I expressed my thoughts to him and found him in entire agreement with me. But further thinking about this matter made him take an even more extreme view. His wife was also staying with him and his expenditure was very heavy. Nevertheless he declined to accept a Goveanment scholarship and also declined all University scholarships. I was telling him that in his then condition he should finish his education; his professors were also saying the same thing. But having once made up his mind he would not budge an inch from his position. He would say that these degrees are for us just what the degree of Pandit would be to an Afghan, whom, after conquering Afghanistan, we had brought to Benares for education. He left off everything and went back to India. At Lahore he wished to establish a Mutt for propagating his view. He began to advise students to leave off their studies and lawyers to abandon their practice. Sometime afterwards I too returned to India and straightway busied myself in my work. What there was of political thoughts in my mind I tried to forget as best I could, so that my work for the Samaj might proceed unhampered. About one thing, however, I was firm. I never was afraid of meeting or exchanging

views with anybody. This was a grave crime in the eyes of the Government.

I thought very highly of England and the English people. I thought and still think that in individual character and behaviour the English people probably excel all other nations of the world. The freedom and comfort with which one can stay in England are not to be found in any other country. I consider it a great misfortune of ours that our political connection with such a fine race should be so unnatural that we should always be thinking each other to be in the wrong. But this is not the fault of any individual Englishman. The English nation is as much a slave to its ancient history and traditions as we are, it cannot rise above them. English boys and girls are better trained in good manners than any others. I shall never forget the instance of a ten-year-old English girl, who meeting me in the London streets one day with a turban on my head (it was the second day of my arrival in London and I had not yet purchased a hat) at once stopped and stretching out her hand towards me said, "Would you like to shake hands with me"? "With great pleasure," I said laughing. We shook hands and she went away laughing to school.

Foreigners think differently of England for different reasons. But the one impression which I shall always carry in my mind is that the social life and manners of the English people are so refined and easy that one feels more happy there than anywhere else in the world.

On my return I resumed the work of the Samaj as

before. It was my wish that the Dayanand college should shape its own educational system independently of the University, and particularly in the matter of introducing vernaculars as the medium of instruction. This, however, would take time to materialise. So, meanwhile, I endeavoured to place the Ayurvedic department of the college on an independent footing. I spent the vacation of 1908 in Burma, so that side by side with propaganda I might also collect funds for this purpose. On my return there was a theft in my house and all my belongings and particularly all the manuscripts containing the material for the "History of India" were lost. This caused me even more pain and sorrow than my arrest and impriosnment. Not only were my efforts wasted and money lost but it seemed impossible to recover the lost manuscripts. Strange indeed is the life of man ; he proposes something but what happens is something quite different.

VI

THE SEARCH AND ARREST

It was in 1908 in Calcutta that the first bomb-outrage took place, which gave the clue to the secret conspiracy and the arrest of several persons. Till then the spirit of Bengal was rising. Various kinds of societies had been formed which were the agents for the carrying out of a revolutionary propaganda. The most notable of the incidents connected with this organisation was the shooting with a pistol, inside the jail, of the approver Gosain for which the names of Kanhai Lal Dutt and Satyendranath Bose will always be remembered. The Punjab Government was put on its guard and Lala Har Dyal left the country for good and set up his flag in London and Paris.

I had been staying in a house in Lahore for over a year; but in the college vacation in 1909 I left that house with the idea of going on a tour to Madras, which would not be over till after the holidays. I spoke at Ahmedabad and from there, passing through Poona and Banglore, reached Salem and began a systematic tour. I toured through and gave lectures on religious subjects in all the principal towns of the Presidency, staying as much as eight or ten days in important places. In Madras I stayed for over two

weeks and gave several lectures and also founded the samaj. But from there the police began openly to follow me. I passed through Masulipatam, Rajahmundry, and Hyderabad and reached Lahore, about the 1st of November, after five months of absence.

When my house had been vacated it was rented by Sardars Kishen Singh and Ajit Siagh who made it the head-quarters of the *Bharat Mata.* After staying some time in the house, Sardar Ajit Singh came to know that the Goverment looked upon the movement with disfavour and would arrest him. With his companion Sufi Amba Prasad, he therefore left Lahore and fled to Persia via Karachi. It was now about a month after this flight that Sardar Kishen Singh too did not wish to continue to live in the house as it would be watched by the police. On my return I was in need of a house. S. Kishen Singh sent word that he would be leaving the house and that I could take it up if I wished. So I sent for the keys the very next day and began to transport my things into it. Sardar Kishen Singh had gone out for two days leaving his things in the house itself. The police who were on the look out for Ajit Singh saw in me another victim. On the 5th November when I was at college a police guard was placed near the house and the house was locked up. When I returned from college and saw the state of things I went and saw the Superintendant of Police and natuaally tried first to convince him that the shutting up of the house was improper. But the police had been very clever; they had taken the contract of lease from the landlord,

the lease which was in the name of Sardar Ajit Singh. I told them that I had rented the house from him. But were Ajit Singh's belongings still not in the house? I had to admit they were. So the search must be made.

Sardar Kishen Singh returned in two or three days and the search began. The search started from the place where my own things were lying. Most of them were things brought from London, and there were also letters received from London. Along with the letters were sheets of paper on which, while there, I had put down some of the thoughts which were regularly occupying my mind. Some letters and other things which had arrived in my absence had been awaiting my return. Among these was one in lithograph which on examination I suspected to be in connection with bomb-making. But I had indifferently left it lying about. I was reflecting what I should say if questioned about it, I made up my mind to speak out the truth. But imagine my surprise when, during the search, letters and papers began to come out of my desk which had been addressed to Sardar Ajit Singh by his friends. There was also the account written in his own hand of the exile in Mandalay. I naturally charged the police with having mixed up these with my papers. As each of these papers appeared I stated that I did not know whence it came. I gave the same answer when the lithographed letter came out. I knew it was a lie, and if it were alone I would never have resorted to this.

In addition to these were some letters written

to me in London by Lala Lajpat Rai from India. The thoughts jotted down by me on the sheets of paper were broadly speaking, on two subjects, One was "What should be the future constitution of India?" On this I had written that the seat of the Central Government should be at Delhi and Simla. There should be a separate chamber for Indian princes,—like the House of Lords—the President of which should be the ruler of a state like Nepal. The second topic was the relation between Hindus and Musulmans. At that time it was impossible for me to anticipate the present unity. My idea was that the territory beyond Sindh should be united with Afghanistan and the North West Frontier Province into a great Musulman kingdom. The Hindus of the region should come away, while at the same time Musulmans in the rest of India should go and settle in this territory.

That day I took leave of the college for the last time and went home. Another calamity thus befell the Samajists on the side of the college. Previously in 1907 when Lala Lajpat Rai was deported they had been much agitated. Their moral strength had been tested. They had nothing to do with Lala Lajpat Rai's political work—everybody knew this. These people were afraid of their own minds, and they went and fell at the feet of Power. Gurus had been tried before; but in those days the Kshatriyas of the Punjab had more spiritual strength. Now everything was changed. Moral force had bowed its head before physical might. Indeed that moral force had wholly disappeared. The second

trial of strength was in the case against me in 1910. The Government's demand was that he who was not with it was against it. The Samaj decided to be with the Government and before the case began gave me my discharge.

For a month I remained quiet at home. That year the Congress was to be held at Lahore. When it was over I got information in my village that somebody had come to make enquiries about me there. I went to Lahore. Even as we reached the station I saw that a police-guard was in readiness there. I went out and was going towords a *tonga* when Rahmat Ullah, officer of police, came to me and said: "You must come with me in the carriage. You are in our custody." "Very well," I said; "I can save the *tonga* fare." I went to him and the police arranged themselves in front and behind and we arrived at *Delhi Gate* police station. On the way he told me that I had been arrested under section 110 of the Criminal Procedure Code. I expressed surprise as to how they came to know of my arrival. It appears that the man who had gone to my village had followed me and had sent a code message. At the *Kotwali* (police station) I bathed and breakfasted and then appeared before the court. I sent word to Lala Raghunath Sahay, my Vakil, and he came and applied for bail on my behalf. I was ordered to furnish five sureties of the sum of Rs. 15000. This was arranged for, I was released and I took up lodgings in a hotel near the Mori Gate paying seven or eight rupees a month.

The case took more than three months; a special

magistrate had been deputed to hear such cases. The Government was under the impression that I was from the very beginning opposed to it and had worked against it, not only in Burma and Madras, but also in Africa. It was therefore necessary to get the depositions of all those persons in these places whom I had met or who had attended my lectures. Lala Raghunath Sahay was indefatigable in his efforts on my behalf. Later on Lala Durgadasji came to assist him. I was finally ordered to furnish security for keeping the peace for three years, in default to suffer rigorous imprisonment. I was of opinion that for every public worker in this country it is not only useful but absolutely necessary to go to jail. I did not therefore wish to furnish security. But the Magistrate pressed me to do so; and several friends also thought this was the best thing to do, and I had to give up my idea. It might be that if I had elected to go to jail then I might have been spared going there later on... Man is a victim of circumstances. He falls into the delusion of thinking that he is the real doer, while, as a matter of fact, Time is a great motive agent of our acts although they seem to be out of our own free will.

After the trial was over I had occasion to stay for four months in the country. This was the first time after twenty years that I had an opportunity of being constantly in villages for such a long time. I had no work to do and there was also the society of the village folk. They were engaged in discussing the problem of equality and difference among the castes of the community. At first I simply tried to educate them on these

matters, but the constant hearing of their disputes had its effects on me. Thereupon I began to help the party which I thought was in the right. Then one day one of the opposing party said to me, "We all considered you a patriot and a righteous man, but now you are entering into these squabbles with great zest." This remark made me to reflect on my own past life. I realised the truth that man by himself is not *great.* It is opportunities and circumstances, great or small, which make him also great or small. He is largely the creature of circumstances and surroundings.

One more matter which I forgot to mention may be here noticed. After the theft in may house I would not for a long time be reconciled to the loss of the material for my history of India. My friends, however, were advising me to write the history in Urdu out of what I remembered of the facts I had gathered, assisted by the ordinary works on the subject. I took up the suggestion and wrote some small booklets. Some of these I sent to a friend for revision and some were with me. When the search took place the police removed these also. I may mention here one or two other facts to complete the story of this book. On my way back from America I came to London, where I had to stay sometime to make some purchases. Whenever I had leisure I wrote down the remaining portion of the book. On my return to India Lala Pindi Das took one or two copies of these with a view to putting them in order for publication. Being in Urdu lot of time was taken in writing and printing.

Meanwhile the war broke out, and the Government wished to make out that the book was printed to further the secret conspiracy. This was, of course, not true. There is nothing against the Government in the book. My object was to write a history of the life of the people; and consequently the doings of their rulers came in only for a short notice, the events in the lives and fortunes of the people claiming my first attention.

VII

THE ROOM IN MARTINIQUE

After sometime I was tired of the life in village. Now it had become very difficult for me to work for the Arya Samaj or any other public cause. Not only was I suspected by the Government but the people themselves were so much afraid that they did not like to meet me. In those days the Swadeshi movement was still strong. So I thought I would go and fit myself to take part in the industrial advancement of the country. And I chose pharmacy for my line. As this industry is taught well only in America I resolved to go to America to learn it. From Bombay I took a third class passage in a French steamer and reached Paris *via.*, Marseilles. My idea was to go America from France. There I learnt that Lala Har Dayal despairing of achieving his object by his political work in Paris had gone and lived sometime in Algeria so as to lead a life of poverty and spend his days in the practice of asceticism. But Muslim society appeared to him a dreadful thing and he returned to Paris, and with the same object as before went to live in the Island of Martinique among the West India Islands.

According to my intentions I took a second class berth in a Dutch steamer, the *Amsterdam,* to New York. There is great competition among the steamer-lines

between Europe and America and in consequence one can command every sort of comfort and convenience in these vessels. There were several hundered persons in the second class. There were some two or three hundred chairs and tables in the dining hall. Before meals the band used to play regularly in the hall. There were also arrangements for various kinds of games on board ship. In each class hundreds of travellers made one another's acquaintance almost the very next day after starting, and tournaments were set on foot for various games. The majority of the men, women and children were German, Austrian, Dutch or French who could not speak English and who were therefore very eager to learn it. Even on board ship they were making efforts to learn and speak English. Many rich persons make the voyage between Europe and America for relaxation or for reasons of health. This is the reason why every attempt is made to make them happy and comfortable during the voyage.

On the evening of the seventh day we reached New York. There were many transport services each connected with a particular hotel. I wished to spend the night in some hotel near by, but those people took me to one several miles distant, so that I had to pay a large sum for night charges. A new arrival in a foreign land naturally shrinks from kicking up a row, and these fellows can readily pick out the new arrivals.

I had arrived late in October. I went straight to Philadelphia. There the term had commenced some two months before. So I went back to New York and tried to get admitted into the Pharmacy college there. But it

was late even there. I happened to meet the Chaplain of the Columbia University chaple and he invited me to dinner. His wife had also taken a degree. He took the trouble of writing to the proprietors of pharmaceutical establishment to find employment for me throughout the year. But as the motive behind this was missionary I did not wish to be under any obligatons to him.

My stay in New York showed me that as regards social intercourse the United States of America is no happy land for the 'coloured'. There was very great difficulty in getting lodgings. Though I was not dark in complexion, landladies as soon as they saw my form would seek pretexts for refusing accomodation in spite of the placard exhibted outside that rooms were to let. Lodgings which in a English town or village could be had in a few minutes' enquiry, had in America to be sought for days. In the hotels, even in the restaurants, the contempt for colour is transparently seen. It may be that the same feelings really exists in England ; but the good manners of the English people never allow them to exhibit it to the world.

As against this, however, there is in the United States of America, another school of opinion, which, owing to the teachings of Theosophy or of Swami Vivekananda is very courteous, and being in love with Hindu religion and philosophy, not only does not treat Indians with contempt but exhibits towards them great affection and regard. This school would have gathered great strength in the United States if the successors in the work of Swami Vivekananda had been

men of high character and self-sacrifice. Far from this being the case the actual state of things was so bad that when I went to the office of the Vedanta Society I could see that the "Swami" did not even like to see Indians.

I decided that I would spend the last year in touring through British Guiana and other lands. In Africa I had learnt that a considerable number of Indian labourers used also to go to South America. So I took steamer from New York to British Guiana. It was a steamer going south after stopping at the West Indian Islands ; so I saw these Islands as we passed. These are for the most part inhabited by the desccendants of Negro slaves, who had been brought like beasts for traffic from the coast of Africa. Their original inhabitants called "Red Indians" have almost become extinct, or where the Portuguese or Spaniards held sway, got mixed up with these whites and formed a hybrid caste called "Creoles" or "Mulattoes."

On the sixth day we reached Port De France in Martinique, where the steamer stopped for a day. I knew that Lala Har Dyal was there and wishing to meet him went into the town. After several hours' enquiries a Negro lad who could talk some broken English took me to a Negro woman who was living alone and had rented the upper chamber of her house to Lala Har Dyal.

He was not at home when I called but had gone to the hill near by for practising asceticism. The Negro lad knew where he used to go and went to call him. Lala

Har Dyal came in very much agitated at the news that some one was enquiring for him. His colour, however, at once changed on seeing me. In such a far off land where the very sight of an Indian face was so rare, he had the pleasure of welcoming a friend! As the steamer was leaving his first act was to go on board and bring back all my things, so that I had to stop there nearly a month till the arrival of another vessel.

Lala Har Dyal wished to found a new faith and he had chosen this place for preparing himself by discipline and study for his great mission. The climate of these islands is warm; only the minimum of clothing is needed, and the quantity of food required to support life is also very small. House-rent was very low. Fruits, like the cocoa-nut, were very cheap; and a man could live on fruits alone. Lala Har Dyal was spending very little and his life at this time was verily a life of asceticism. He used to sleep on the hard ground, eat some boiled grain or potatoes and be engaged the whole day, except for a short time devoted to study, in meditation. When I asked him he said that he wished like Buddha to give a new religion to the world, and was preparing himself for it. I too began to live according to his plan. We slept side by side on the bare floor and ate the same food, with this difference that I began to add salt and chillies to my dietary, on which he remarked that I could cook much better than he.

My own view is that all the religions and creeds are a kind of fraud upon mankind. The German Emperor Frederick the Great mentioning the names of three of the

world's greatest prophets used to say that the world had been deceived by three great imposters. I contended that by adding one more fraud to those already existing he would only multiply the number of creeds, Would it not be much better for him to go to America and propagate the ancient culture of the Aryan race ? The work of Swami Vivekananda had had excellent results which, however, were declining day by day. After many days' discussion Har Dyal agreed that he would go to Harvard University and in one or two years' time make it the centre of the new work. But he was not prepared to accept the conclusions of the Vedantic school. "Very well," I said,-"if not Vedanta, let it be Sankhya. The main thing is to impress on people's minds the spiritual dignity of Aryan Philosophy and to recall to memory the examples of self-sacrifice of the ancient Aryan sages and saints."

I sailed by the next ship to British Guiana and he went to Harvard. He stayed there sometime. But the climate there is cold and he had been accustomed to a warm climate. Sardar Teja Singh who had gone there to take his degree after staying some time in California, told him that California would suit him better. So he went and stayed in California for some months. The old ideas, however, again got the uppermost in his mind and he left California and went to Honolulu to practise his ascetic life. I was informed of all this by means of his letters in British Guiana.

The third day after sailing, my steamer dropped anchor at George Town, the Capital of British Guiana.

I took down my luggage from the ship and went ashore. Here also, as in the United States the customs authorities are very strict in examining one's luggage to see that there is no evasion of the customs duties. The examination finished, I did not know where to go. I had no acquaintances here. There was a road and a tramcar plying along it, but what use was it without a place to go to? So I asked a Negro missionary where the Indian labourers lived? He said that he was going in that direction and would take me there. So we went and took our seat in the tramcar. I guessed that he wished me to pay his fare also, which I did. After going a mile or two outside the town we got down. Walking on a short distance we came to a line of small houses with a canal in the middle and rows of houses on both sides. He told me that Hindus lived in this quarter. He took me to a small temple of theirs. There was a big room-like structure inside an enclosure. An idol-like thing lay in one part of it and two or three mats were spread in the remaining portion. It was night and I therefore went and placed my bag there. An Indian priest with his hair grown long presently came and asked me where I had come from and who I was. I said I was a Brahman and had come from the mother-land. He then asked if I had come as a cooly and if a new steamer had arrived? I replied that I had come just as I was.

He said no one had come like that till then from the mother country. Evidently he did not like my stopping

there. But where could I go even if I wished to ? So I lay down there hungry and slept. In the morning, as soon as I got up I took off my hat and trousers and wore a *dhoty* and turban. One or two poor-looking persons came and began to talk to me. One of them was some what intelligent and used to read the 'Venkateshwar' newspaper of Bombay. He brought me some rice at meal-time which I good-humouredly ate. For four or five days I used to sleep on the mat in the same place and eat rice and *dal.* Those people would go out to work the whole day and return at nightfall, when they would converse with me. This was the quarter of the free labourers. I enquired of them if there was any educated and well known Indian in the locality ? Yes, they said. There was the doctor; he had become a big missionary. There were also merchants, but most of them were Christians. I asked if there was any such Hindu. Yes, there was a Hindu shopkeeper also. So I went to see him. I told him that I wished to deliver a lecture there and would be much obliged if he would arrange for it. "How can I believe that you are able to lecture ?" he asked. He too could talk in English, but he had never seen an Indian give a lecture. He had been born there. During my exile in the Andamans this man, Bihari Shaw came to India, called at my house and saw my people. He took me with him to some Indian Christians and communicated my intention to them. There was among them a doctor who was educated in London. He was much pleased at the suggestion and readily arranged for the lecture.

He rented the Town-hall, for a night at a cost of $ 20 and published notices in the newspapers that a Pandit had arrived from India and would deliver a lecture. Indians flocked in thousands from distant villages. A large number of white men also attended. After the lecture that gentleman took me to his house. I toured and gave lectures throughout the colony. The Christians were much perturbed. One special feature that I noted in Africa was that, whatever their political grievances might be, the Indian immigrants owing to the constant arrival of Hindu and Musulman traders from India stuck to their own faith. In British Guiana, on the other hand, political grievances were fewer, but the great majority of educated people had turned Christians. Boys and girls were in need of elementary education and the state placed all funds in the hands of the missionaries and all schools were inside the churches. To put a stop to this I opened a Hindu school. About a thousand dollars were collected as subscriptions for it; a Brahman gave his house gratis. He had gone out as a labourer and grown rich.

The people were saying I should continue to stay there. A year had passed. Lala Har Dyal had written to me that no fees are levied in California University and also that there are a large number of Indians there. From. British Guiana I went to Trinidad and lectured there for some time. In both of these islands the Indians constitute the main part of the population, and number about a lakh, or a lakh and a half. The whites and Negroes would be about a half

of this. Some twenty thousand Indians are also to be found in Jamaica and a similar number in the Dutch as well as in French Guiana. If they remain in the Hindu faith, they are ours; if not, they are far too remote from us.

VIII

FROM SANFRANCISCO TO LAHORE

The people of the country I have just described were asking me to stay with them for all time, but I could not accede to their request, I told them that I had pointed out the path along which they should move. Moreover I had written to London and a Hindu doctor had arrived in George-town. While I was there his practice throve well and his conduct was also very good. So I entrusted the whole work there into his hands and myself returned to America, arriving at Sanfrancisco straight from New York—a journey by rail of four days. I knew the address of the College of Pharmacy and was going in that direction in a tramcar. There was no room in the tramcar and I was standing. Seeing this a gentleman rose from his seat in the car and offered his seat to me. I at first declined it, but, as he would not take any denial, I sat down. He began to question me. "Was I a Swami ?" " I am a religious preacher, certainly, but not a Swami", I replied. He then gave me his card and address and said that I should not fail to call on him. Thus it was that I became acquainted in Sanfrancisco with a doctor who was a great lover of Hindu Philosophy.

I joined the college. My friend, the doctor, gave me the address of a house where I was able to get

comfortable lodgings. California is indeed one of the nicest states in the Union. The climate is neither too hot nor too cold. In Sanfrancisco the thermometer is between 70 and 72 degrees throughout the year. All sorts of grain and fruits can grow there. The soil is very fertile. Children grow up very quickly in this climate; a child begins to walk about in a year and some even begin to talk. Physical development is very fast, and takes place more rapidly here than in other countries.

In California, boys and girls are in the beginning very intelligent and imaginative. But after a time the thought of earning dollars kills their imagination. In America great interest is manifested in the matter of schools. Even in areas which have not yet become populated the lay—out—plans show places reserved for the construction of schools. Indeed, schools in America occupy the place which is assigned to churches in Europe. Not only education is given free in schools, but boys and girls get even their books and other requisites free from the state. In California boys and girls study together in schools. In the universities of western America no fees are charged for the study of arts. The number of girls in schools is nearly always epual to, if not in excess of, the number of boys. In schools as well as in the universities one remarkable feature is the desire of the students to earn their way even while engaged in studies, so as not to be a burden on their parents. The population is yet not very dense and both boys and girls can earn a decent wage by working two or three hours daily in shops, houses or factories, and thus maintain themselves. It is not,

however, quite so easy for Indian or other foreign students to get work. The state University of California is in Berkeley, between which and Sanfranciso is a gulf, across which steamers ply every two minutes.

Everywhere in the United States of America the feeling of equality of man is found in a high degree. On the American railways there is only one class, and in every carriage are arranged chairs with velvet cushions, each to accommodate a single individual. Consequently there is no scramble for seats. It is, however, in the western states of the Union that this principle of equality is carried to perfection. In colleges, for instance, even the attendants are paid the same salary as that which professors start with, the only difference being that the latter attain honour and name by the education they impart. It is also to be observed that students do not pay any special deference to their professors; in answering the roll-call they are not in the habit of adding "Sir" to their response; a mere "yes" is considered sufficient. In addressing letters it is considered a waste of time and energy to add the usual "Mr." or "Esquire" to the name. The very name is often half contracted. No doubt there is a feeling of hostility and contempt towards "colour". But even this is less marked here than in the eastern states. As an instance of this I may mention one of my own experiences While in Sanfrancisco, I had to attend one of the High Courts for some days in the character of an interpreter. An Indian labourer working on one of the railways was accidently run over by a train and

died. His companions filed a suit against the company claiming some thousands of dollars by way of compensation for his wife. I used to go in order to interpret their evidence. A long time after that I was walking along the street one day casting curious glances here and there when the very Judge who presided at the trial came down from the house and taking me home kept conversing for a long time.

Between eight and ten thousand Punjabi Sikh, Hindu or Mussulman labourers had come as labourers to this State. These people originally went to China, either in the army or in the police force. From there one of their number had by chance gone to America, written encouraging letters to his comrades and in the course of some years, drawn many more to the same land. These people mostly worked in the fields in the country, and having to do with white—men day in and day out, came to regard themselves as their equals. After staying a few years in the United States the thought of the unequal status of India disappeared from their minds and they too began to regard themselves like the rest of mankind, with self respect and dignity. These people seldom lived in the towns. Indian students at the Universities, whenever they got a chance, used to go to these people for work and bring back some money. I, too, during the holidays went with a party to pluck flowers. We used to get $2\frac{1}{2}$ dollars (Rs. $7\frac{1}{2}$) a day; but the work lasted only a month. The next job was more difficult and I had to come away.

Sometime again I went to see my friend, the

doctor. He used to invite a number of his friends, as well as myself and we kept discussing or conversing for a long time on religious subjects. Almost all students of the College of Pharmacy, after attending at college till 12 o' clock, used to work during the day or the night in drug stores. This doctor used only to practise, but a friend of his, another doctor, had two shops. My friend spoke to the doctor and got me work in his shop. At first I was new to the work. I used to remain in a room inside the shop and I was paid ten dollars for pocket money in addition to free board.

A few months after my arrival in Sanfrancisco Har Dyal returned from Honolulu. I tried to free his mind of delusions and set him at some real work. With the help of the doctor a hall was hired and I arranged for his delivering lectures on Hindu Philosophy. After that the Indian Students of Berkeley University also arranged for his lectures at the University on these subjects. His language, his eloquence and talent were indeed wonderful and his reputation spread so far that the professor of Sanskrit, at Berkeley University became his admirer and recommended him for the post of professor of Sanskrit and Hiudu Philosophy at the neighbouring University of Stanford. Har Dyal went and saw the President of the University and, as he offered to work without any salary the President at once appointed him to the professorship and Har Dyal took up his work there.

Stanford is fifty miles away from Sanfrancisco and we very seldom met. But I knew that in a very short

time Lala Har Dyal had by his high attainments, simplicity, and capacity for sacrifice, earned for himself, both at the university and in the eyes of the press in California, unusual respect and admiration. The newspapers referred to him as the "Hindu Saint". During his stay there, however, his thoughts again began to take a new turn and this time it was in the direction of socialism and communism. Lala Har Dyal indeed never occupied a middle position ; he was always going from one extreme to another. Almost immediately from communism he had passed to anarchism. Both at the University and outside he soon started an open compaign against the institutions of marriage; property and government. There were a large number of lady students in his classes and complaints reached the ears of there parents of the President as to these matters. I had a talk with Lala Har Dyal. I was of opinion that he should keep his anarchist theories to himself, or, if he considered it necessary, write a book on the subject after maturing his views for some years. But he said that he could not suppress his thoughts and would rather leave the University.

He began openly to preach anarchism. Leaving the University he came to Sanfranscisco. As our views did not agree I did not take any interest in his work from that time. He won over the Indian students to his side in this work and also began to cultivate greater intimacy with the Sikh population.

In May 1913 I obtained the degree of the University and thought of returning home. Lala Har Dyal came

and told me that some Indians in Portland (St. John] wished to form a committee and decide how best they could serve their motherland and that I could take that route on my return journey. I went with him and stayed there two days and a night. My view was that funds should be collected to start free boarding houses for Indian students at two or three of the Universities and every year a special fund should be raised by subscriptions in America for their education. Lala Har Dyal on the other hand, favoured the idea of setting up a press and running a newspaper to do political propaganda. Though I did not agree to this, it was immaterial what I thought about it as I was not going to stay there. I came to New York and from there took boat to England.

From this time, until I was tried, I had no knowledge of the doings of Lala Har Dyal in America but the Britsh consul at New York was fully informed of his movements. He also knew well that I had come away from America. I was suspected even before, and it was while I was in London that the newspaper "Ghadar" made its appearance in America. It was my intention on my return to Lahore to start a factory for the manufacture of drugs according to western methods, and the materials and the machinery which were necessary for this purpose I wished to purchase in London. So I had to stay there some months and during that period I was subjected to much annoyance by the secret police.

On my first journey to Europe, I had taken an Italian boat and so had had an opportunity of seeing the famous

sea-port towns of Italy—Genoa and Naples. This time I saw Geneva, the famous city of Switzerland and one of the most lovely spots in Europe. There I had the good fortune to meet Sardar Ajit Singh. He had acquired a thorough mastery of the French language and, as he also knew English, he earned his living as a tutor.

Passing through Paris I booked passage by a French steamer and reached Bombay at the end of December 1913. Our steamer remained at a distance of some miles from the harbour and another small steamer came to take us ashore. In my own steamer I had seen a high police officer and some secret police. This officer came and began to talk with me on various topics. At last we landed on shore from the smaller boat.

At the harbour some Punjabi friends had assembled to welcome me with garlands and they said that the man who talked with me was an importannt police offfcer. At the custom house all luggage had to be examined and passed. The custom officer passed my luggage; another gentleman was standing near it. The luggage which was actually lying near me, he began to examine with great care. When the owner of this luggage turned up the Customs Inspector asked him in an agitated manner, "Is this your luggage.?" "Yes," he said. The Customs officer was terribly alarmed and confounded. Turning towards me he asked. "Where are your things?" "They have already been passed," I replied. At this he was even more upset and in a plaintive tone said to me, "I shall be severely punished for this. I have made a huge blunder. It was your luggage that was to be specially examined." "You

need not feel sorry," I said. "You can come outside and look through it carefully again." For two hours he was engaged in looking into my bags and trunks. Later on the police received a report that all was satisfactory.

When at last my friends and myself took a carriage and started on our way, the police were following behind in another carriage. I said, "Let them pass." Our carriage slowed down a little. Theirs moved on in front. I changed my own carriage, took another and instead of going home drove to a hotel. It was night time. The next morning the police officer came down to make enquires. On seeing me he plainly confessed I had confounded them the whole of the previous night. From that time I was subjected to this illegal watch by the police. After two days' stay I started for the Punjab. During the whole journey there was the usual police guard in the next compartment and, at short intervals there was a change of guards. At the bigger stations the Superintendent of Police himself used to come and see things for himself. At one station a Mahratta Sub-Inspector of the C. I. D. entered our compartment. My companions treated him with rudeness and incivility for which, however, I expressed my regret.

From Delhi a special Sub-Inspector accompanied me to Lahore. Some friends had come to meet me at Lahore Railway Station. To them I jestingly said that this gentleman was my attendant. Thereupon with folded hands he said "We have spent two sleepless nights keeping awake at the station on our account. I

Bhai Parmanandji
(on his return from America.)

may tell you that it will be better for you to go and see the Lieutenant Governor."

I simply replied, "I have nothing to do with the Lieutenant Governor. I dare say he will send for me when he wants me and will find me sure enough." It is just likely that this remark was reported

IX

"THE KOMAGATA MARU'

It is only in America that the word 'Hindu' is correctly used to denote the inhabitants of Hindustan, be they Hindu, Sikh or Musulman by religion. The name 'Hindu' was given to the people of our land by foreigners like the Persians and the Greeks and it is still used in this sense in America. Once an American friend asked me "Are all Hindus Musulmans."? He had asked one or two Musalmans about their religion and they had stated it to be Islam, and this had given rise to the doubt in his mind whether all 'Hindus' (meaning Indians) were Musulmans,

Lala Har Dyal had correctly felt the pulse of the Indian Labourers in the United States. His purchasing a press and starting the 'Gadar' newspaper in Urdu and Hindi filled with articles directed against the British Government or advocating the equality of mankind opened the eyes of his compatriots to their real situation Young men flocked to work under him, thousands of dollars poured in by way of subscriptions. It was at this critical moment that the famous incident of the *Komagatv Maru* took place.

In the British colony in Canada the feeling against the immigration of Indian labourers had been growing

in strength for some years. But as the Government did not, for fear of their governments, dare to exclude other Asiatic immigrants such as the Chinese and the Japanese, they knew not of a device to exclude the people of Indian alone. At length they hit upon a plan. Indians going to Canada generally first went to Hongkong and and then took a passage on some American ship. There were no steamers going direct from Calcutta to America Now the Canadian Government passed a law that immigrants to Canada from any country should have voyaged in the same ship direct from their own country. Many Indians who wished to go to Canada were turned back under the provisions of this statute. A large number of them had gathered in Hongkong—men who wished to go to Canada but could not think of a plan which would enable them to land on Canadian soil. Many among them had sold their lands to go abroad. A happy idea of overcoming all their difficulties occurred to one Sardar Gurdit Singh. He communicated his plan to them and chartered a Japanese ship in which he first took them all to Calcutta. From there they sailed straight to Vancouver. The Canadian authorities were alarmed at the sight of several hundred Hindus coming together to settle in their land and prohibited the ship from entering the harbour. For several days a struggle went on between the immigrants desirous of landing and the authorities bent upon excluding them. The people in the ship began to hurl blocks of coal at those on the shore, by which some of them were injured. Then the Canadians brought out cannon and threatened to blow the ship to pieces.

Thereupon the Indians in Vancouver and its neighbourhood got ready to loot the city and there was no army in Canada which could come to its rescue. Finally, those on board ship finding themselves in narrow straits, decided themselves to sail back home. Their provisions had been exhausted. They made it a condition of their return that the Canadian Government should meet the expenses of the voyage and compensate them for their losses. This was agreed to. They were supplied with all that they wanted. But the thought of this treatment at the hands of a British Colony had made a deep wound in their hearts, which could not easily heal. The steamer sailed back to Calcutta and dropped anchor at Budge. All the immigrants landed. The police had been sent there to prevent these people from going to Calcutta and to send them instead back to the Punjab. This made them distrustful—the more readily as their hearts were already sore. They refused to go forward. The military were sent for and rioting took place in which several persons on both sides were killed and several more wounded. Many who had fled wandered from village to village in Bengal seeking refuge. Many were also arrested.

The news of this occurrence produced a deep impression on the minds of the Indians in America. In the meantime the American Government also attempted to arrest Lala Har Dyal. He had fled to Europe, but had left his work in the hands of his companions, which made them the more zealous in their cause. Then the war broke out and, though it was not known to us.

American newspapers gave publicity to the fact that Indian regiments were going to be taken to the theater of war. The 'Gadar' at once started a campaign urging all Indians to return to their homes and prevent their countrymen being taken out to fight abroad. Hundred of such people poured into India from every home-coming ship. There were old men in their ranks who had earned large fortunes in America and now come back leaving them in the hands of others. There were also among them 'Jacks' whose sole occupation had been to earn and drink and who had not saved a pie. They now left off their life of pleasure, and took ship in a burst of patriotism. *En route*, wherever the steamer stopped, at Hongkong, Singapore, Rangoon,—they would go on shore and stir up the Indian soldiers against the Government. One regiment in Singapore which was to be sent to the front was won over to their views and its officers refused to go to the front. The riot grew into a rebellion in which the blood of hundreds was shed, including white men, and which was only finally suppressed with the aid of Japanese troops.

Hearing all these things in the course of my sessions trial I was often reminded of the story of the child who said to his mother, "I shall go on conquering to the very gates of Delhi, if no one stands in the way". The Government was getting the *'Gadar'*. Through its system of espionage it was kept informed of all that was taking place ; and on the basis of this knowledge it had decided that as soon as any one arrived from

America he should be arrested on board ship and thrown into gaol. I think indeed that this was the only weapon by which the Punjab Government could have completely checked the movement. And there is no doubt that if it had been employed the Punjab would have had peace. There would have been no cause for the government to be alarmed nor for so many to be put to death. Those who were working the movement were really acting under a blind impulse.

What is surprising to me is that the Government which was priding itself on its caution, intelligence and resourcefulness should not have been able to do this much at the very outset. It was a task calling for the exercise of intelligence. No doubt many were arrested ; but many also got away disguised from the ships at Calcutta and many came in unrestrained from Ceylon and other places. And once they reached the Punjab they openly wandered about from place to place. I believe they knew my name and three or four among them had arranged to make me the medium of communication with others. But how could I prevent all this ? If a third person made this request to me, why should I have refused it? I did not see any harm in this either from the legal or moral point of view. They had also certainly got American gold coins changed through me—a common service which even a stranger is entitled to.

One of these a Mahratta youth named Pingale, who had come back from America was at first in touch with secret societies in Bengal. He went to Benares,

there had an interview with the famous Rash Behari Bose and brought him to the Punjab. A year before he had been mentioned as the chief of the Delhi conspiracy though the police had not succeeded in arresting him. A large sum had been offered as reward far his arrest. But he had spent the year going about from place to place and now with startling audacity came back to the Punjab.

The leaders of these people set up committees near all the smaller railway stations in Ludhiana. In these committees proposals were made now to make raids on Cantonments and win over the army to their side, andnow to loot government treasuries. But failing of success in these plans the directors of the movement in Bengal resorted to dacoities to collect funds for their expenses and for gathering material for a rising. I could never understand their policy of committing robbery in the name of the country. Much better were it for those young men to rob their own homes first, or work for money if they needed it, or beg for it from others. What lessons in patriotism were taught to the inhabitants of the villages or towns where dacoities were committed! When in iail, I put these questions on several occasians to the party from Bengal their invariable answer was, "Did not Sivaji commit docoities?" Sivaji also used to plunder forts and royal treasuries. Even if he committed a crime why should we repeat it? These robberies never brought any success to them. I can see in this policy of robbery only the greed and sin of the leaders who made

tools of these youths to get money for their own extravagance.

The police knew all about their names and places of residence and were after them. If they went to their villages they would not for the fear of the police stay there even for a night. Money was needed for food and for the means of locomotion. for wandering about from place to place So when they began to commit dacoities their associates began to be caught in going about from place to place. Jagatram was arrested at Peshawar, Prithwi Singh at Ambala. Seven of them while travelling in a *tonga* from Ferozpur were recognised through their dress as Indians who had returned from America. This was near a village. The police wished to make a search of their persons. They, however, had pistols with them which they discharged at the police, killing a Sub-Inspector and one or two men. They then fled to the jungle. The police brought the villagers and surrounded them ; now they had to surrender and after trial were sentenced to be hanged. One of them was Pandit Kashiram, who had property worth Rs. 40,000 all of which was forfeited to the Government. Three others from their ranks were going in a *tonga* in Lahore. A sergeant of police wanted to arrest them, but they fired their pistols at him wounding him mortally. Two of them fled. One was caught and sentenced to be hanged. Two or three dacoities were committed in the district of Ludhiana. Finally dacoity was committed in a village near Amritsar out of pure private spite. Some Jats of that place were

indebted to a Brahmin sowcar and entertained feelings of hostility towards him. A relation of his who had come back from America was in touch with these revolutionaries. Several of them collected and committed dacoity in the sowcar's house. The villagers turned out to help him. The two forces met, bombs and pistols were fired and the sowcar was cruelly murdered. A common blacksmith had accompanied the dacoits. He was not able to escape and on being caught, gave out that Moola Singh was their leader. His arrest was brought about in this way. The police released one Kirpal Singh who went over to their side and pretending to work with them soon became a leader. It was with his aid that Moola Singh was arrested at Amritsar railway station. Then the revolutionaries began to suspect Kirpal Singh and a boy was set to watch his movements. He made a report against Kirpal Singh, in consequence of which they changed the date of their intended raid from the 22nd to the 19th February. At the same time, however, Kirpal Singh got intimation of the change in date. He communicated with the police and procuring a force got seven men arrested while asleep at night in a house, one of them being Amar Singh who was the leader of the movement at Lahore.

It is at the time of arrest that a man's courage is tested. Until that moment arrives every one is a hero. Many indeed can act the part of a hero so long as it is all lime light and applause. It is nothing extraordinary to be brave in a fit of enthusiasm or indignation but when shut up in a dark dungeon, with no one to exchange a

word with (let alone the giving of applause) and all animation has departed—it is in such a state that a man's heart sinks and his mind begin to be assailed by doubts and misgivings- He who has committed any secret sins finds himself in a state of extreme fear. his sins weigh down his heart and every minute struggle for making themselves known. When the drum beats for action, the soldier in the company of thousands boldly rushes in the front of cannon and bayonets, and boldly faces the point of sword and spear. But few indeed are the hearts which in solitude are not weighed down by the load of the fear in their own breasts. Many join secret socities and indulge in dreams of the power and prestige which should follow them once freedom is won ; but the result too often sadly shatters their fond imaginings and forces them to contrive for the very safety of their lives. All this depends on the strength or weakness of one's heart. Pandit Kashi Ram used to drink and lead an easy life. He had also accumulated a large fortune. He was unmoved even while the death sentence was pronounced on him in court, his mind had such full control over his emotions. This also emboldened his companions. But on the contrary when Moola Singh and Amar Singh were arrested and heard from the police that they knew everything they were at once ready to turn approvers. As regards Nawab khan, he had communicated with the police of his own occord and was keeping them fully informed, while all the time he was pretending to act as an enthusiastic supporter of the revolutionary movement.

Bhai Parmanandji
(on his way to Andamans.)

THE DEATH SENTENCE

In the course of the trial I was described by the Goveanment as the real leader of the conspiracy. It was said that after making all the necessary arrangements in America I had come to India with a veiw to prepare the people for joining in the plot. The clear answer to this charge was that this conspiracy had taken shape only after the outbreak of the great war, whereas I had left America more than a year before and had never corresponded with any one there since. To this we got the amusing reply that we knew even a year before about the coming war with Germany and had made preparations on this footing. It was conveniently forgotten that if the *Komagata Maru* incident had not occurred there would not have been such an awakening among the Indians in Canada and the United States. Could we possibly have anticipated this also ?

Further, the facts connected with the Delhi conspiracy expose the utter groundlessness of this charge. Some four or five months after my arrival in Lahore the well-known Delhi incident took place. The Calcutta police got on the track of Rash Behari. In the course of search of a house in Raja Bazaar in

Calcutta they had got a clue *viz.*, that he had gone to Delhi. They began to scrutinize the letters addressed to master Amirchand the leader of the Delhi populace. With him lived a friend of his, named, Avadh Behari. A letter written by him from Simla was addressed to one "M. S." This letter was shown to Avadh Behari and he was asked who this "M. S." was. He said that this was Dinanath of Lahore. The same evening the houses of all the Dinanath in Lahore were locked and sealed up by the secret police. Nothing was done as regards three of the Dinanaths, whose identity and movements were well-known. The house of the fourth was searched, as he was making a large number of political speeches and had no particular profession. While he was being taken to the lock-up he began weep and cry from which the police felt sure that he could be made use of to discover the secrets of the conspiracy. Finally he gave the secret history of the revolutionary movement in the Punjab. He said that in 1908 when Har Dyal was leaving India he had made Amir Chand, leader and representative in his place and appointed Dinanath a deputy in Lahore. He also described the bomb incident in Lawrence Bagh and the murder of a gardener. That bomb had been placed there by himself and Basant Kumar, but they fled and in their secret society gave out the name of Balraj, son of Lala Hansraj and my cousin Balmukund, as the authors of the mischief. Rash Behari's place of residence was also betrayed. He, however, had changed to another

house, and evaded all the searchings of police. The Government was fully convinced that the bomb thrown in Delhi at Lord Hardinge had been thrown by Rash Behari and Basant Kumar with the aid of these people. So, whether their trial was according to the forms of law or not, master Amir Chand, Avadh Behari, Bhai Balmukund, and Besant Kumar were given death sentence, while Balraj and Nevant Sahai got seven years' imprisonment. Bhai Balmukund cheerfully ascended the gallows at the very place where his ancestor Bhai Matidas had been sawn alive by Aurangzeb's orders. His beautiful wife Srimati Ram Rakhi had been married to him only a year before; on his arrest she never set foot again on the marital cot but followed her lord to the other world by the sacrifice of her own life. This touching story has been beautifully told in the pages of the "Arya Gazette" and we make a present of it to our readers.

I. The flower was in bloom. The cuckoo, sang intoxicated with the beauty and softness of its petals. The gardener came and the cuckoo flew away frightened to circle round and round its companion. But the gardener mercilessly plucked the flower and tearing it into petals put them into his basket. The cuckoo shrieked and cried, but alas! in vain. Then it fell down in a swoon and near its own favourite flower gave up the ghost.

II. It was summer. He was in jail, I at home. For six months I had been waiting for the hour to come. They used to say "Don't be foolish. He will be

released and will certainly come back". I would say, "When will that day dawn? When will that sun rise? When will the night come to an end? When will that happy hour strike?"

What occasions had I to see Delhi? But he was kept in Delhi and the trial too was taking place there. So I reached Delhi. The jail cells were fearful. It was in these narrow cells that during the hottest months he was kept imprisoned day and night.

"Do they give you a cot?" I asked. "How innocent you are! What use is a cot here?" he said.

"Then what do you sleep on?" I timidly enquired.

"I spread a blanket on the floor and sleep on it."

III. I came back home. Others kept on cots on the open terrace. I went down to the lowermost room and spreading a woollen blanket on the floor lay down on it. Mosquitoes began to sing; they were running about my ears. They seemed to be preaching a sermon to me. They seemed to me to say, "Fool! does sleep visit anyone in this season in such a room and on a woollen blanket?" I sat up. Moonbeams were coming in through the window. I gazed upon the moon and asked.

"Dost thou, O shinning one, brighten his cell? Dost thou, see that he, too, spends his nights awake or tossing, about on his bed?"

I looked at the moon again and again, but never an answer did I get. I again lay down. The mosquitoes bit me severely. The next night also my bed was in this room. The third night also the mosquitoes had

continued their attack on me—a helpless woman—when my sister-in-law suddenly appeared.

"Are you bent upon killing yourself?" she asked.

I: Why, how am I dying?

She: These are the sure means of death.

I: Do those who sleep in this fashion.....

She : Yes, Yes, they die.

My eye were opend. Tears rushed into them. My companion was alarmed and began to curse herself. "It is nobody's fault," I said ; "my fortune has burst. If he sleeps like this in jail shall I not also sleep so?"

IV. Once again I got permission to see him and went to Delhi. When I asked about their present condition, he said. "We eat only once a day." When I asked what sort of bread it was he gave me a bit of it. I brought it back with me. There was gram in it, also wheat and some other things. I came home and prepared the same kind of bread for one meal a day—living upon water for the rest. Several months passed by in this manner. The case was proceeding uninterruptedly. At last, I was sitting one day in my room thinking of him. The sound of weeping came from outside. My heart began to leap ; beads of perspiration formed on my forehead. Controlling myself. I came out. I saw her repeating his name and saying. "The death sentence ! The death sentence !....."

V. "I went to Delhi again to see him for the last time in that same jail where noble youths are deprived of their lives, where soft and delicate blossoms are crushed out. I met my lord. My heart said, "Let us

exchange a few words". But my lips were saying there was no strength in us for that. Yes, his lips moved and the soft voice came out, "Beloved ! the world is unreal. He whc has come, has to go. No one can count on another's help. Think yourself fortunate that I am laying down my life at the alter of the motherland".

My ears heard the words, while tears rushed from my eyes. Again and again I tried to check their course to satisfy my heart's longing to take a last long look at him. But it was in vain.

The next day the materials for the sacrifice were got ready. They were saying, "This will be the last service for his soul." I said to myself, "This will be a good occasion for me to join him." But they came back saying that the body could not be obtained.

What happened next I cannot say. For fifteen days now I have been fasting and praying. The hour is very nearly come when my heart's longing will be fulfilled.

After saying this she was silent. My hair stood on their end at the narration of this painful story. Tears flowed from my eyes. There was pain at my heart. She never afterwards ate a grain or drank an ounce of water. The eighteenth day had passed in this fashion—sitting in the self-same spot in meditation of him who was the object of all her meditations. She practised asceticism. At last, one day, when the sky was clear, the sun was brightly shining and folk were engaged in their occupations, she rose from her place. She herself

brought pure water, bathed, and clothing herself in pure garments, lay down again in the old place. "For many days you have tried me, dear lord!" she said. "To-day I will not leave you. I can no longer be away from you." So saying she breathed her last breath and yielded up her spirit. People began to say. "Balmukund's wife has become a *Sati*." I said, "The cuckoo has given itself up for the rose." This is a fact, not fiction, no story but the truth.

* * * * *

It is clear from Dinanath's own evidence that he, if no one else, was the lieutenant of Har Dyal in Lahore. If therefore, as the Government thought, I was the leader of the plot and organised it in America I should surely have conferred with him and kept him on my side.

Nawab Khan also unblushingly swore that Kartar Singh had told him I was the leader of the movement, that Kartar Singh did everything in consultation with me, that the raid on Mianmeer had been made at my suggestion and so on.

The truth, however, is that Kartar Singh was the real leader of the whole movement in the Punjab. His courage and manliness were indeed wonderful. His age was only about nineteen, and he was a resident of Ludhiana district. In his fifteenth year he had, while in the seventh standard of the Khalsa school at Ludhiana, run away to America. He worked there for sometime and studied in an American school. The *Gadar* movement had great attraction for him and he began to learn

the art of aeroplane construction. Immediately war broke out and he returned to India and won over his old schoolmates to his views. When more people arrived from America later on he easily became their leader and wished that everyone should act according to his directions. Whenever some one hesitated to act upon his instructions it would appear that he used to say he had consulted me and those were my directions. Though he denied this as false when I asked him, his disposition was such that I think he did say such things.

To the students he used to say, "Leave off your studies ; the Germans are coming and I shall procure you commissions under them." Wherever he went, whether on foot in the villages, or in schools or in the railway train, he used to say such things.

While travelling by rail he once met a *hawaldar* and asked him point blank, "Why don't you leave off service?"

Seeing that he was a spirited lad, the *hawaldar* said, "Bringing your men to Mianmeer. The keys of the magazine are in my hands, and I shall hand them over to you."

The 25th of November was fixed as the day for this. When he mooted this question in his committee they made fun of it. "Very well," he said, "I have asked Bhai Parmanand and have his consent." A hundred of his followers spent the night in great discomfort in the neighbourhood of Mainmeer Railway station : but of course no *hawaldar* appeared. About this incident Nawab Khan said that he had remonstrated with

Kartar Singh, who had said "what could I do ? it is Bhai Parmanand who is making me do these things."

If this is true there is no doubt that Kartar Singh, thought it essential to avoid the least suspicion in the minds of his followers regarding his fitness for leadership.

In the attempt made by his followers to seduce the army (including the attempt to win over the regiment at Phirozepur) and the making of preparations for the mutiny of the regiment at Mianmeer by getting together one night a hundred or hundred and fifty mounted men ready to dash forward—an adventure which came to nothing as no man came over from the other side—we see the childishness for which Kartar Sing's age is responsible. But his great spirit, his fearlessness and defiance of death are extremely rare qualities to be found in a lad of his age. I shall give here one example of his resourcefulness and courage. The Ludhiana police were after him ; they were searching a house in a village about three or four miles from Ludhiana. Kartar Singh happened to pass that way on his bicycle. He knew that the police were searching for him. If he had attempted to run away the police would certainly have given persuit and he would have been captured. So he got down from his bicycle and entered that very house asked coolly for a glass of water, which he drank, and then continued his journey. In the court the Sub-Inspector expressed his great admiration for this feat, by which the police had been completely deceived.

Kartar Singh was not the least afraid of the high officials. Mr. Tomkin, Deputy Inspector General of police, went to fetch him after his arrest. (His arrest had been brought about in this fashion. Himself with Harnam Singh and Jagat Singh went to meet a Sardar, a friend of theirs. The Sardar made them sit down and secretly sent word to the police. (That Sardar was afterwards cut to pieces). At Lahore railway station with chains on hands and feet Kartar Singh said to the Deputy Inspector General, "Get us some food, Mr. Tomkin, we are hungry". In jail also he used to speak out everything to the Superintendent. The Superintendent was surprised to note his tender years and used to listen to his conversation with great relish, when he would often say, "You are indeed going to hang us ; why then trouble us here?"

One evening in jail, we were ordered to go out of our cells with our blankets, bowls and water-pots, and there was a fresh allotment of cells. This took place regularly from the next day onwards. We did not knew the reason of this for sometime ; but we learnt later on that Kartar Singh had with the assistance of the *lambardars* attempted to escape at night by cutting the bars of his window. One of them had disclosed the whole thing and a search being made, a string and some powdered glass were found in his room. Prisoners employ this method for cutting down iron bars. Glass is ground into a fins powder and wetted and then it is pasted on to the string. When it gets dry the string serves as a file to cut the iron bars.

I asked Kartar Singh why he had done like this. He was living in happiness and comfort in America and was now rotting in jail here. He at once replied that life was to him a burden even in America, that this heart used to burn to hear the Americans abuse us saying "Damned Hindu." "I indeed wished to die," he said, "and have come here to die." But you are also dragging me to the gallows with you." I exclaimed. "Yes, you are really responsible for all that I have done."

I was taken aback by his bold statement and asked for an explanation. He then recalled to mind what had passed in the room in the drug-store in America. He had come to me one night and we slept there together. He had a wound on his wrist and he wished to have it treated in our hospital the next day. That night I asked him "Do you know the history of India ?" He said "yes." Then I asked him how it was that the nation had become so dead and slavish that a steady stream of invasions had flowed on to it from the north-west for over 700 years; countless people had been carried away in captivity while the heads of many more had been cut off with as little concern as if they were a herd of sheep? But in the life of that very nation, we saw in the recent history of the Punjab the rise of a new strength which had not only put an end to all invasions but had turned their course in an entirely different direction. What was the significance of this wonderful achievement ? Kartar Singh was thrown into a fit of deep reflection. At last I recalled to his mind the saying of Guru Govind Singh, "Many of the birds will I cause to be killed before the

name of Govind Singh I get". He it was who had worked this miracle and his method which had been evolved out of sacrifices was the offering up of heads, a method which his father had followed by sacrificing his own life. By destroying the attachment to life Guru Govind had implanted in the minds of men the seeds of fearless courage by which death once for all lost for them its terrors. "That same night I resolved to give my life for my country," Kartar Singh now told me. He said that he had also met me once in Lahore, when I had brushed aside his ideas as those of unthinking childhood. While giving evidence in court he clearly confessed that it was his ambition to free the country and all the means employed by him had been contrived to this one end. He had no selfish object to gain and had never thought ill of anybody.

Four months prior to my arrest orders had been given to all post officers to send all my correspondence to the office of the Deputy Inspector of police and I used to get all my letters a week late, all of them bearing the stamp of having been censored by the police. It is clear that the police got no letter to connect me with any of the secret societies, though it is far from clear how such a connection could be inferred even if some third person chose to address me any such letter.

It is my own belief that it is impossible to know fully in the world what a man is ; only the All-High knows what I really am. In my vanity I think myself to be something : my friends regard me in a certain light, while my enemies

take me a totally different man. It ought perhaps to be stated that it was possible for the Government to arrive at its desired conclusion regarding me from a consideration of the various stages and experiences through which my life had passed. But surely more evidence than this is required to condemn a man to such punishment as was in store for me.

Police officers would come and converse with me, on some pretext or other. Some time earlier the secret police were engaged day and night in watching me. I was searched, but nothing came out of this; no, not even a copy of the "History of India" for which the order of search seems to have been made. In spite of all this I had been arrested. Mr. Pitman was the Government Advocate while Lala Raghunath Sahay defended me. The judge smilingly observed that they had occupied the same position in the previous case against me. Mr. Pitman spiritedly contended that I was such an arch conspirator that even Har Dyal could take lessons from me. It may be there was no direct evidence against me but that was because, like the snake hidden in the grass I had done my work silently and in darkness, and was the more dangerous on that acconnt. Why was there no evidence? Because I had done my work with the greatest circumspection, taking care to avoid everything which might betray me. I then remembered the words of the British consul at Sanfrancisco, who said to a friend of mine, "We are not afraid of Har Dyal; he speaks out his thoughts. But we are most afraid of Bhai Parmanand, for he says

nothing, and one never knows what he is at." Strange indeed is this conundrum; no escape in action, nor any in inaction.

It is necessary to record that Mr. Pitman in the conduct of the case displayed not only fairness but also sympathy. He advised the Punjab Government to abandon the charge of conspiracy against me; but the Government was under O'Dwyer. "Let the Law take its course", he was told. The fact was, as Lala Raghunath Sahay told me, I had no hope. A new law had been made to hang us; if it was a question of going into evidence where was the need for a law like that?

The 13th of September was fixed for pronouncing sentence. We were all taken together into the circular enclosure where we all used to meet and embrace one another. Nobody knew what was in store for us. Many among us who could sing began to sing national songs. Our life, hard though it was, had up to this stage passed happily; this would now come to an end. The gaol was reverberating with the echo of this sentiment. The noise and excitement became intolerable; we were all therefore again taken to our cells and led out in two's and three's to the court room to hear sentence pronounced upon us. Excepting three or four who were acquitted, the rest were all condemned to one of two sentence; those who got the death sentence were led through a passage into the death-chamber, while those others who got transportation were led into another yard. Twenty four came in for the first, including myself. Sentinals were at once posted to guard us, many

were brought down from other gaols specially for this work.

On hearing the sentence people gave vent to their feelings in different ways. One who was sentenced to transportation begged to be given the death sentence and was told he might appeal for that. On hearing the death sentence passed on him, Kartar Singh said, "Thank you"; another exclaimed, "So, that's all".

I was told that there was a difference of opinion in my case. Two of the judges were for the death sentence, the third was for the "black water" (The Andaman). I was asked to appeal. I was a little surprised at this but remained silent.

Till now we had been wearing our own shirts and pyjamas or dhoties. The first thing now was to put us into the special uniform of those sentenced to death—a shirt and a pair of short breeches. The superintendent came and asked who among us wished to appeal. Some declined as they wanted no mercy. Other wished to appeal as a matter of course. I also had been directed to appeal owing to the difference among the judges; but barely three days had passed before orders were received that Government accepted the opinion of the majority.

I wrote to my wife to come and see me, but on no account to give vent to sorrow or lamentations. The relations of the other prisoners also came to see them. My wife and daughters also came and I was very glad to see that though sorrowful in countenance my wife

was bearing herself with fortitude. They came again on the third day. The manner of our meeting was now quite changed; it was impossible for us to go out of our cells. But there was a small yard outside the cells, which had a door to admit persons. A screen would be placed across this door and the visitors standing behind it could peep at us behind the prison bars. The interviews generally took place in the evenings so that our forms might not be distinctly seen. My mother-in-law one day came there and as soon as she saw me began to make wild gestures which I had angrily to cut short.

My wife wired to Lala Raghunath Sahay to go to Simla to intercede with the members of the Legislative Council on my behalf. She also interviewed Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and explained the whole matter to him. Other members of the Council were also surprised at the decision. The law member, Sir Ali Imam, too, did not approve of the decision and the matter was the subject of discussion for a long time. But two months were taken up in arriving at a decision and it would appear that correspondence was going on all this time between the Punjab Government and the Government of India in regard to this matter. According to the *Civil and Military Gazette*, the Punjab Government claiming to be best acquainted with local conditions, wished to hang every one of us. Its policy was clear, *viz.*, to terrorize the Punjab by such punishments and an unending stream of similar prosecutions. Such terrorism was claimed to be essential for

the public safety. The Imperial Government did not fully agree with these views; but when there is difference of opinion in the Government the personality of the Governor is very often the deciding factor. If he is a person of broad sympathies and bold statesmanship like that of Lord Hardinge the policy of the Government would have taken a different course. But if he is a harsh and cruel man like O'Dwyer a totally different policy is followed. Many among us had to pass through more of the sorrow and difficulties of the world, and to see its strange ways; so, Lord Hardinge's merciful disposition brought us relief in the form of substituting transportation for the death sentence in the case of 17 out of the 24 who had been sentenced to be hanged.

All this was taking place outside and at the time we had no knowledge of it. The state of our own minds was different. It was those who had brought about the organised dacoities for their own private ends that were most wretched. All the rest were literally in the condition described in the popular saying "The death of many is a merry making". People may not readily realise, nor even believe my statement, that we were in fact in such a state of intoxication as might with truth be called a rejoicing. Not a minute passed but some one or another was singing some devotional song or patriotic poem which he had composed before, in some cases after coming to jail. Conversation with one another would be kept up till a very late hour at night, with laughter and mirth: until at last we would go to sleep, weary and exhausted. Our guards would

wonder at this sort of behaviour and often ask if we were going in a marriage procession or preparing for death. They, poor fellows, could never understand what joy is in such a death as this.

I was in America when England's biggest ship the *Titanic* in her maiden voyage to America struck an iceberg and sank with all the inmates. The *Titanic* had been built to compete with the line of German steamers plying across the Atlantic, which were the biggest and the most luxuriosly equipped in the world with pleasure gardens and roads and swimming baths. The *Titanic* was to have done the voyage in four days. But it was not to be. The American papers gave the photo of the ship with the news of its sinking. When the steamer was about to sink the Captain gave orders to the band to play, and as it sank deeper and deeper the band struck the notes of "Nearer unto thee, my Lord", which was still in their lips when they went down to their last rest.

The report of this incident had left a lasting impression on my mind of their courage and self-sacrifice. They are the bravest of the brave who can welcome death with songs and rejoicing. I often recalled this picture of the sinking *Titanic* as I lay in my cell, and began now to understand that there was no question of bravery in this. Barring a few weak and demoralised individuals, man's heart indeed is so framed that it can face death without the least trace of fear. Just as in the last stages of severe suffering the body loses its consciousness of pain the mind also, at such moments.

gets intoxicated with fearlessness, and in such madness all trace of pain is lost. Kartar Singh, especially, was in a very joyous mood and infected others with the same spirit. "Let us be hanged quickly", he would say, "so that we may the sooner be re-born to take up our work where we dropped it."

We were under the impression that our execution would take place on the morning of the seventh day. Before sentence we could get milk at our own cost; but afterwards we had to be content with the wreched jail food alone. The Superintendent was requested that, as indeed we were to be hanged we might at least be given decent food. But his answer was short and sharp—that that was the law.

On the seventh night several of my companions got up at midnight and began their devotions. They were anxiously awaiting the arrival of the jail authorities to fetch them. As for me, I was always a heavy sleeper and I only got up at the usual hour. In fact that day many of my companions were laughing at this very indifference. But nothing happened that day, nor the next day. Our spirits again dropped and we were again happy and thoughtless as ever. For myself my only regret was that I would not get God's light and air. Indeed, as the cold weather advanced, I was more and more athirst for the welcome rays of the sun. So much did this craving grow upon me that to this day it is a sort of disease with me that I never feel tired or am afraid of sitting in the sun for long hours. I had no attachment to the world, nor love for any creature. There was,

however, one other desire for the fulfilment of which I should have wished to stay a little longer in the world, viz., to watch the fun of the great war that was going on. Often the thought passed across my mind that the desire might only be the love of life finding expression in a different from as an apparently frevolous longing. But a story of the Great War in the Mahabharat used to enclose me, the story of the sage Babruvahan who is worshipped as a king even to this day. The story is beautiful and instructive and fully in accord with my then state of mind.

When the Great War was going on a sage emerged with bow and arrows in his hands. Lord Sree Krishna seeing him at one knew his prowess and the guise of a Brahmana went to meet him. "Where dost thou go, Sire?" he asked him. "To see the fun of the Great War," he replied. "Why then art thou armed with bow and arrows?" he again asked. "Whichever side is weaker I shall fight for," the sage replied. "What is the power of these arrows?" the Lord again questioned. The sage shot an arrow at a tree and all its leaves were pierced through. "This sage would prove a formidable opponent," Lord Sree Krishna thought "and would help the Kouravas when they are about to be worsted." So, he spoke again to the sage, "Thou art so mighty, good sir ; dost thou also possess magnanimity in a like degree? Wouldst thou grant me a prayer?" "Ask and it shall be granted" the sage gave word. "First promise me that thou wilt grant my request." The All-Wise persisted. "The sage gave his word. Then Lord

Sree Krishna said, "Cut off and give me your head." A shade of regret passed across the sage's countenance. "Dost fear to lose thy life"? Krishana asked. "Then you may break your word and save your skin". "That is not the difficulty," the sage answered; "I had a great wish to see the fun of the great war". Finally it was agreed that the head after being cut off should be placed in some high place from which it could view the opposing armies; afterwards it might be given to whoever wanted it. If such a desire could actuate a sage of such dauntless courage, then surely it could not be said to be a sign of weakness or cowardice in the minds of my companions, or myself nor the indication of attachment to life.

When we were confined to the jail there were already several other prisoners who were concerned in our own case or in some other case. Several of these were so bold that when their time came they ascended the gallows laughingly or with songs on their lips. But many were also extremely afraid of death and were praying day and night for deliverance from its coils. The love of life is indeed a wonderful thing, under the influence of which men allow themselves to be deluded by all sorts of fancies. The jail attendants used to make profit out of these fears and weaknesses. A Musulman warder told me that he would say to every such prisoner that life would be saved by pleasing the Pir of the eleventh day, (११ वी का पीर) and many credulous individuals whose sentences were subsequently altered naturally attributed it to the mercy of the Pir. As for those who died, well,

they would never come back to bear testimony against the Pir. So it would still continue to be said that the Pir saved lives.

Of the many who came to meet me now, several were content with a bare sight of me, it was a great consolation to them to have had a last look of me ; but others would ask me questions. Mr. Khusal Chand, the editor of the "Arya Gazette," for instance, asked me if death was not a dreadful thing. "That death is awe-inspiring is a vain delusion" I said. On the contary it is a beautiful thing, and shows itself in this light when it is very near, more especially that death for which a man is already prepared beforehand."

Arjum Deo generally accompanied my wife during her visits. Mr. Krishna also once came with her. They asked me about the Arya Samaj. To my mind the Arya Samaj had but one mission for the universality of mankind ; to established Truth in the place of untruth. But preparatory to and side by side with this, it should resuscitate through spiritual power the nation which had to this day kept alive the religion of the Vedas. The question of the political unity of Hindus and Musalmans would also find solution only when the Hindus grew strong. Nobody cared to cultivate friendship with the dead, nor is unity worth the price of self-Government. The Arya Samaj alone can revivify the Hindu nation. How should it work ? It seemed to me that its work had proceeded on a great principle. What was now needed was to push forward its work far and wide, and more especially in the provinces on a grand scale. Some

selected district, tahsil or villages should be made entirely Arya Samajist. Amir Abdur Rahiman had adopted this method to convert promising Hindu youths to Islam viz., to select some persons from each village and take them to Kabul, there to learn the work of Mullahs. They came back and converted people to Islam. Was I afraid of death ? I said: " There is a story in the Puranas of a sage who was for some offence deposed from Heaven and sent to the Earth to take birth a hundred times as a she-boar. He became a she-boar, made a cave, procreated offspring, began to live upon refuse and was living a life of contentment, full of love for the young ones. Meanwhile the term of the punishment was at an end and the heavenly car came to take him back. The boar began to weep and cry. " Let me live on a little longer, my young ones cannot yet take care of themselves. What will become of my cave ?" But they caught hold of it and placed it on the *Vimana*. At once his eyes opened and he saw everything in its true light. What would the sage have said then ; and what was his state but a few minutes before ? For me also the curtain had lifted and I was seeing the world as it was. From my very childhood I had taken stock of my life and resolved to lay it at the altar of service to the motherland. Towards death itself my wish had always been that I might not die on a sick-bed. Blessed, indeed, is the Almighty that gave me the opportunity of welcoming death with open eyes and in full possession of all my faculties.

XI

"THE ANDAMAN ISLANDS"

(THE BLACK WATER)

I think it was on the 15th November that orders were received regarding the commutation of our sentences and seventeen of us were one by one taken into a separate enclosure. The remaining seven were left behind—including Kartar Singh and Pingale, Mahratta Brahman. Two other brave souls, Jagat Singh and Harnam Singh, were also among them. The police arrested and released many a Harnam Singh, before they were able to get the address of the real Harnam Singh from the Hongkong police and arrest him.

The next morning was to see their execution. But just to relieve their minds they had been asked to prefer appeals. Kartar Singh had originally not cared to appeal and now also refused to do so. Very early next morning they were taken in two batches to the place of execution. We were told that just before ascending the gallows Pingale asked that he might be allowed to say his prayers and his handcuffs should be removed, he offered up his prayer to the Almighty. "O Lord on high! Thou knowest our hearts. The sacred cause for which we lay down our lives we entrust to thy care—this is our last prayer". After this they joyfully got ready for drawing their last breath; the fatal rope was thrown

round their neck and in another instant they had yielded up their souls into the hands of their Maker.

We who were left behind were told that we were to be transported for life. We were sorry that we had been separated from our companions. Those among us who were poets sang the praises of their friends on the gallows in many a sacred *In Memoriam.* Those who have a revolutionary temperament are devoted to poetry, and history shows that poetry and philosophy take new forms in times of revolution. Some of our companions were wonderful poets in Urdu and Punjabi. I myself have no great attachment to poetry and do not recollect all their productions. But a few lines which I happen to remember dwell with passionate fervour on the pride of being Indians and express the poet's gratification at death in the service of Mother India.

It was some six or seven days later that one day we were all weighed. We began to suspect that this was by way of preparation for the journey across the 'Black water'. But the gaol authorities take pride in doing things in secret. A little later a clerk came and began to tell us that if any of us wanted to write letters to friends or relations he should do so now as we were soon to go away. This was, however, only a trick to make us believe that we had some days more to stay in jail. That same evening we were given the special striped clothes—shirt, dhoty and two blankets for our new destination. Strong iron fetters were placed on our legs and we were all handcuffed in pairs so as to leave one hand free.

We were placed in a carriage and taken, guarded by policemen on all sides to the railway station where a carriage was in waiting. We were put into the two compartments along with the police. The carriage was then attached to the train. In a single night we had traversed the whole of the Punjab ; we did not even get an opportunity of taking a good farewell look at our own Province. We had come out of the jail singing songs ; and we also sang as we travelled to our new destination. At different stations people looked askance at us and after listening to our songs for a minute would wish to know who we were, and somebody would tell them. But the police did not allow ordinary passengers to come near our carriage ; they would stand at a distance and peep. This was the usual sight whenever the train stopped at stations.

It would be useless to detail the miseries of the journey. We had been handcuffed in pairs. If one wanted to rise both must do so ; if one wanted to attend to call of nature both must go, and one be looking on. This was so even while at stools. As for lying down there was no room at all and it was out of question. Three days and nights passed in this fashion before we reached Calcutta. Neither the jail-authorities nor the police there had been given any previous intimation of our coming and no special arrangement had been made for our supervision. The policemen, who were with us got some hackney carriages and putting us in them took us straight to the Presidency jail. It was almost midnight by the time we arrived there. The jail

authorities counted us in the usual fashion and let us in and kept us in barracks which accommodated other prisoners bound for the "Blackwater." With fetters on hands and legs, carrying blankets, clothes and mats on our heads and two iron bowls in our hands we must have been a strange spectacle as we entered the barracks and spreading our beds lay down to sleep.

Man is so made that whatever befalls him he puts up with it and gets on as best he can. But even bound hands and legs have to be raised, and it was then that we began to realise the misery of our newly given life. I, for one, began to think that we had been forcibly pulled down from the steps leading to Heaven, and made ready to enter the gates of Hell.

Those other prisoners who had been sentenced to transportation along with ourselves were removed the same evening from Lahore jail and sent to various other jails in the Punjab. Only three out of them and six others who had been sentenced by the court-martial at Mianmeer came with us in the first ship from Calcutta. All the rest still lay rotting in their various jails. At Calcutta we knew that a convict ship voyaged nine times every year, taking convicts to the Andamans. For five weeks prisoners sentenced to transportation from northern India are collected in Calcutta. Then the same steamer, the *Maharaj*, visits Madras and Rangoon in turn. We had to wait 15 days in the jail at Calcutta. The superintendent of the jail saw us on the second day and learning the details of our trial and sentence gave orders that we should be kept separate from the rest of the con-

victs in solitary cells. And special care was taken about our guard by placing English warders to watch over us.

At last the steamer arrived. It stopped there six days. In the evening all the convicts, numbering about a hundred, among whom were three or four women also, were collected and after being made to walk 3 or 4 miles taken on board ship. All were thrown into the lowest hold in the ship and even here we were given a special place. The rest of the convicts could go upon the deck, but even this was forbidden to us.

It is a three days' voyage to the Andamans. On all three days during the voyage we were given beaten rice, parched gram and some sugar-like thing to eat. We had one consolation ; we were all together. We passed days and nights in talking and singing. It was in these moments that one fully realized the essential social nature of man ; if he has society, he forgets every sort of misery and suffering. Even at such times the company of friends gives him great relief. In fact, the greatest punishment in jail is solitary confinement—the keeping a man in utter isolation from his fellows. The police also takes advantage of this human weakness. Those who have to do any dangerous work have first to remain in solitude for some time as a sort of discipline. So, too, men of rligion have to spend their days for some time in solitude and silence, by that means to make themselves stronger in body and spirit for their exalted work.

On the fourth day of the voyage we could see through the chinks in the side of the ship that we were

passing along near the woody shores of the Andamans. A little later we had come very near and going on deck we saw a hill on the island on top of which was a great fort-like structure. This, we learnt from the police, was the Silver Jail, our destination.

The ship came to anchor. The doctor of the settlement came and seeing everything went away. The special police then arrived. We were landed first of all and taken up the hill in regular line, with our bedding on our heads and our iron bowls in our hands. The convicts and others on the island stood looking on at us, talking amongst themselvs in whispers, for no one could talk to us. On the very summit of the hill were the jail gates. The police took us inside ; a tall, stout, white man wearing a shirt came out and took charge of us. The police departed. We were henceforth in the power of the Irishman, the lord of the jail.

There are about fifty islands, large and small, in what are called the Andamans, in the largest of which is situated Port Blair. All are covered with dense jungle in which dwell the wild and naked Andamanese. Scientists are of opinion that the inhabitant of Jawa and the Andamans are among the earliest types of the human race. Whether they are the earliest or not, this much is certain that they form a connecting link between mankind and the animal world. As the jungle is gradually destroyed these people move onwards. At first they had regarded the English, being new arrivals, as their enemies and used to shoot them down with their arrows whenever they met any. They are

experts in shooting with the bow; they never miss their mark. Even women and children can shoot with the bow. They catch fish with spears and live upon the boars and other animals they shoot down with their arrows. They can swim and dive in water with their eyes open. You could throw anything in the sea even a two anna piece; they would dive and fetch it up. They seldom, or never, come near the Indian settlement.

Besides these aborigines there is in Port Blair a class of people who are the descendants of convicts. This island had been discovered towards the end of the 18th Century. But the climate was so bad that it seemed impossible for man to live there. These islands are very hot, but being in the middle of the ocean, with heavy showers during seven or eight months in the year they are habitable, although the cutting down of forest trees every year decreases the rainfall. Pneumonia, malaria, consumption, fevers and all sorts of tropical diseases are common on these islands. When convicts were first taken there, they all died without exception. But after the great Sepoy Mutiny many prisoners were again taken and confined there, of whom some died, though some survived. Even to-day the death rate there is 35 per 1000, whereas the death-rate in the jail in India is only 18. And this heavy rate exists in spite of the fact that only convicts who are strong and under 40 years of age are brought here.

The forest was cleared to make room for the settlement, and from the very beginning it was a

settlement for convicts. After some time the convicts used to be set at large, and they would even marry, and the products of these marriages numbering eight or ten thousand, are still to be found there. Slowly they began to be made to do work for the state and a jail was erected to punish them for their misdeeds. The "Silver Jail" had been newly constructed about 25 years before—a pacca gaol with three storeys. In the centre is a rotunda from which branch off seven blocks or wards in each of which are lines of solitary cells numbering about forty or fifty.

When convicts are brought they are first kept here for six months or a year, and then sent to the other islands where they do work for the Government, and at eight o'clock at night are gathered together in barracks. After a few years they are even given tickets of liberty provided their conduct is honest and straightforward—a very difficult thing to find. If they commit any offence, such as rioting or theft, they are regularly tried and given special punishment of the jail.

This was the kind of jail where we were to pass the rest of our life. The stout whiteman whom we had seen was the head of this establishment, had been in charge of it from the time the new gaol was built. His name was Mr. Barrie. He was a model jailor. He had spent the greater part of his life among the most notorious criminals of India, and had so much experience of their criminal tendencies that there was no place in his intellect for any of the ordinary human qualities. Except the convicts, he could not pull on with any other people,

English or Indian ; he did not like to go to them, nor would they like his society. The other petty officers selected from among the convicts—*tandeels* and *jamadars* —cringed to him so much that he had come to regard himself almost as an emperor, and would actually say that within the jail he was *Parameswara* (the Great Lord.) His twentyfive years' life among the convicts had shaped his thoughts after their own fashion. Day and night he would be talking or cracking jokes with them or hearing their complaints about one another. He thought himself very clever in setting up the convicts to act as spies on each other ; he took great relish in their quarrels. Indeed, he wished to engage them all in some kind of mischief or other ; life was dull and uninteresting without this. Perhaps he thought his convicts to be like Satan, ready to turn against himself, if they had no other object of mischief to occupy their minds. Our arrival in their midst was a little disconcerting to him ; he was also anxious to create trouble. So he readily set the warders and petty officers to spy upon our movements and report to him what we were doing. A new agitation and a new methed of spying thus synchronised with our entry into the jail.

There was not, however, an utter absence of good men even in this jail. There were one or two good people who wished to warn us before hand of the conditions which prevailed there. After hearing Mr. Barrie's lecture at the gate we had just made our entrance into the jail, when one or two prisoners who were doing the work of a clerk there enquired who Bhai Parmanand was?

XII

LIFE IN THE JAIL

Mr. Barrie had a Pathan Jamadar who was the chief among the convict-officers set to supervise the rest of the convicts and was paid Rs. 15 a month. He took us to the Round and distributed us in twos and threes among the various wards. It was now midday and most of the convicts had finished their allotted work. Many of them carried in their hands beautiful bundles of cocoa-nut-fibre which they had extracted, while those who were too weak or inform for this work carried ropes which they had woven. Some others had got ready casks of oil which they had themselves extracted in mills. In each ward one of the convicts was constituted an officer over the rest and had his distinctive uniform of black and red. He was *Chobdar* (mace-bearer) of his ward and was called *Tandeel.* He had two assistants, also convicts, dressed in black uniform, who supplemented their orders with threats and blows. " Sirrah, there, come this side. Sit here in this line. Show your work. Take care you don't mix up wet fibre in your bundle. Untie this bundle. Keep it in the sun there. Spread it out." These and such other orders were freely given and enforced. " What are you about ?" they would go and ask a man, adding

to the words one or two knocks and, if he had the temerity to murmer a protest, their hands would at once fly to the rod they carried. As for abuse, there was no limit to it. As we were fresh arrivals the *tandeels* were purposely giving themselves airs to impress their importance upon us and to prove to us new comers how complete was their authority over the herd-like convicts who were put in their charge. Indeed, inside the jail, and particularly for a month in each ward, the *tandeel* was a great authority, next only to the Lord Barrie himself. At the end of a month the *tandeels* used to be transferred to different wards.

As soon as we had made our entry into the jail our *tandeel* loudly proclaimed his command to the convicts : " Look here, all of you ; these new arrivals are concerned in a bomb case. No one is to talk to them, and any one seen conversing with them will be taken up." For even the most trifling acts a convict would be threatened with " being hauled up before his presence", which meant being taken before Barrie Sahib. If Barrie let him off with threats and a sound rating—well and good. Otherwise, he would enter a committal upon the prisoner's ticket and he would have to go before Superintendent as an offender for trial, and if the Superintendent gave him any punishment it would be noted against the particular convict as evidence of his misbehaviour.

Our old clothes were now removed and we were given instead the usual jail dress, a cap, breeches, and a small shirt without sleeves. There was another pair of very short breeches for doing work. In each yard or

enclosure there was a long shed where sea-water was supplied through pipes, and prisoners could bathe and wash their clothes after their day's work. We went and bathed in it. It was now time to show up work. All the convicts were seated in line and an assistant gaoler—a whiteman—came and sat on a chair in the Rotunda with a table before him and a pair of scales. The bundles of fibre or ropes would be weighed and if found to be of proper weight put on one side. If one was short weight, or wet, or not quite clean, he would reprimand the *Tandeel*, saying, " Is this the work you do for the Government's money " ? and so on. Soon after return supper was taken. The store-keeper would come accompanied by one man carrying rice on his head in an iron box, another man with dal in a cask, a third man carrying vegetables and the *Jamadar* and one or two other attendants. They would come to the door-way of each yard. The petty officer or *tandeel* would call out to the convicts to take their pots and sit in line. The measure of rice, with a ladleful *dal* and vegetables would be served out, along with two small puff-cakes. In four or five minutes food would have been distributed to a hundred or hundred and fifty convicts and the store-keeper would pass on to the next yard. In fifteen minutes we finished eating; and would be ordered to get up and clean our plates and keep them in a line and asked to sit in our various lines. And as half past four struck all would be arranged in pairs in lines of three, and the *tandeel* and petty officer would go and

stand at the gate silently awaiting somebody's arrival. Meanwhile the *Jamadar* would come and proclaiming "The *Sahib* is coming" pass on to the next yard. The *tandeel* would order all to keep quiet. If anyone made the least noise the *tandeel* and petty officer would note him down as very talkative. The *Sahib* comes strolling along the Rotunda and passes the gates of all the yards in about two minutes. Just before he reaches the doorway the *Jamadar* raises his hand to his forehead and says in a loud voice " Sirkar !" All the convicts in their lines stand up in a second. The Jailor comes along with protruding belly and a lighted cigar in his mouth, sees everyone at a glance and, if anyone happens not to be standing erect, makes a sign in his direction, which the *tandeel* and petty officer follow up with their attentions. A bell is hung up on the second floor of the Rotunda. At the very first ringing of the bell every prisoner stands up and taking off his cap and shirt throws them on the ground and keeps standing, holding his breeches in his hand. It is evening and the convict warders about a dozen in each yard, come round to take stock of the day's work of the convicts. Four of them keep guard in turns for three hours at night in the various lines in each yard and keep looking at the convicts lying in their cells to make sure that they do not cut their prison bars or commit suicide. These warders rank below the petty officers and are recognised by their red turbans. Very well-behaved prisoners can expect to be made warders in about five years, and thus exchange the task of doing work for that of exacting it from

others. After another five years they rise to the rank of petty officers and, some two or three years later, *tandeels*. Thus the whole system is worked by the convicts themselves. Though these convicts come here as exiles to work out their terms, the little of happiness they get and the being clothed with some authority over their fellows convert them into such trustworthy servants of the jail administration that they come to regard their erstwhile companions as their enemies. They report their least word to their superiors and, at a nod from them, are ready in order to please them, even to take their lives, let alone the infliction of physical injury; and this in spite of the fact that the smallest offence or negligence on their part will reduce them to their old position of having to do hard labour. It is in this fashion that the jail authorities make these very convicts do their work of looking after the jail arrangements.

The warders search the person of the convicts in the line over which they are to keep guard. Meanwhile the second bell rings and the convicts, in small numbers, march in line to their rooms.The petty officer then omes along with his bunch of keys and locks in the prisoners. Once locked in, the prisoner may lie down on his blanket or on the board, if any exist, or walk about within the four walls of his cell ; only, he must not make a noise or talk—which is an offence which the man on duty will take notice of. Some go to sleep, some sing, some gently converse with their neighbours when the warder is not near by. Thus the twelve or thirteen hours of the night are passed in solitude and darkness. Most people

regarded this as a dreadful time, but to me it was the happiest part of the life in jail. For one thing, I could get the pleasuue of sleeping as much as I liked. Again, I had no interest in the talk or thoughts of others, and the remaining apart from their society was indeed a source of happiness. Furthermore, this was a very good opportunity for meditation and for spiritual training, when one's state of mind is such that one feels oneself freed from the desires and attachments of the world. The *Bhagawad Gita* was the only book I had with me and the only book I used to read. And when I had learnt all the chapters by heart, I was spared even the trouble of opening and reading it. One verse in particular which repeatedly occurred to my mind is that in which Lord Krishna says. "When it is night for all beings the *Yogin* keeps awake ; and when all creatures are awake the *Yogin* sees it to be night". What was to other convicts the worst form of imprisonment—the lying chained in the silence of a solitary cell of dark nights—was to me the great opportunity for freeing myself from the illusions of the world. No longing was there to tempt me, nor any hope—the bonds which tie down our souls to the world. I had time and opportunity now to see how much of these bonds still remained and how they could be broken. When the bonds are innumerable how can a man attempt to break them? But when they are only a few he can strive to get rid of them. Thus, this solitary confinement was this time a means of salvation to my soul. For several months after entering on life I had gone on considering the world and my own exist-

ence therein an unreality,—"the stuff which dreams are made of"—but "the Great Illusion" of the world had been of late all too powerful for me. Gradually I saw how this disattached mind was beginning to fall into the net. I, therefore, thanked the jail life that made it possible for me again to get into this frame of mind.

A little before day-break the bell rang for us to be awake. I used to get up at once, and after attending to the call of nature in the nightpot, take my exercise. To answer both call of nature in the same small mudpot is not a little difficult and requires considerable practice, especially as the cell must remain clean. There were also latrines in all the yards, but it was necessary for me to clear the bowels at once in the morning for exercise. A little later, the *tandeel* and petty officer would come and unlock the doors of the cells in their respective lines. All the convicts would then be taken out and made to sit in line in pairs. After each line was counted the Jailor would be informed that our ranks were full. At the second bell we were to go downstairs, where again we were made to sit in line to be counted. After this we were at liberty to attend to call of nature and perform our ablutions. A few minutes later the cry goes rouud for us to sit in line, for *Ganji* is coming. This is the name given to a kind of thin rice-gruel a potful of which was given to each to be at once drunk. Then we were to get ready for our tasks. The shirts and nickers were taken off and shorts put on and, we too, were engaged at the work of extracting cocoanut fibre. There was a heap of wooden-logs in the yard and each

of us was ordered to take one out of it. The other convicts would take these and sit in front of their cells in the venrandah for work. We ourselves had to work inside our cells for six months. A heap of thick bundles of cocoanut fibre is then brought and given to us, out of which we are to extract fine fibre by beating between the logs of wood. A few minutes' beating would bring out the fine, white fibre which was collected and laid aside. We had to extract two pounds weight of this daily. People with strong arms, or experts in the work, could easily do this in three or four hours. Novices to the work and the weak or those unaccustomed to manual labour would find it difficult to do it in double the time.

Very good use is made in the Andamans of the coceanut tree. In addition to clearing forest—the timber is sent abroad—this furnishes work to all the convicts. Convicts who are at liberty to work out of doors plant the young trees and pluck the nuts, which are ripening through out the year and bring them, laden in carts, to the jail. Inside the jail, the outer covering of the nuts is removed and the kernel dried for extracting oil out of it. One man could extract fifteen seers of oil a day. Out of the hard shell *hookahs* etc., are made. The outer covering is used for extracting fibre out of which all kinds of ropes, large and small, are made for us in ships etc., these ropes having the peculiar quality of getting stronger instead of rotting, by immersion in water.

At ten o' clock the bell rings for us to go out for breakfast which is distributed in the same manner as

the afternoon meal. After meal we come back to our places to resume our work. All this time the *taudeel,* petty officer and warders are moving about upstairs, seeing that we get no opportunity of sitting quiet or talking. The jailor and his assistant also go on their rounds to supervise the work. As soon as a convict has finished his work and the petty officer is satisfied that it is all right, he is free to read his book or rest or do anything else he pleases. Then comes the hour to show up our work and the rest of the programme which I have already described. This is the endless monotony of the life in this jail, which convicts have to undergo for days, months, and years, or even a lifetime. There is absolutely no change or variety, for variety would mean pleasure and that is a thing prohibited in the jail code. The love of life, however, keeps a man alive in spite of all this and he even learns to go through this life with cheerfulness.

On the second day of my stay in the jail, just as I had finished my work, an Indian fellow-prisoner came to me and asked: "Why, sir, whence have you brought your presence" ? I was amused at the question and replied that I had not brought my presence but had been forcibly brought with chains on hands and legs.

XIII

POLITICAL PRISONERS

In our old Indian prisons it was considered sufficient punshment to chain up a man inside and thus deprive him of his liberty; but in the jails of the British Government it is thought necessary that every prisoner should do some work. The Superintendent of the jail, who is a medical man, allots work to each convict according to his health and strength and the nature of the offence of which he has been convicted.

There are two ways in jail by which a convict may give expression to his grievances or protests; refusal to work and refusal to eat. Refusal to work is a great offence in the jail code, and when a number of people join in this it becomes a strike. Even before our arrival there were political prisoners in this jail of several years' standing. Those who were concerned in the Manicktolla conspiracy of Bengal were there; the Savarkar brothers of Maharashtra were there; and editors of the *Swaraj* newspaper of the Punjab and the United Provinces convicted one after another had been there, but were sent back to the jails in India before our arrival. Though it had sometimes gone up to thirty or forty the number of old political prisoners just now was only about ten. As soon as we went there the convicts told us the story of how some of them like Nand Gopal, Ladharam and Ram Hari had fought for their rights, as well as of their

fellows, with the Jailor and Superintendent; how they had courted every form of punishment provided in the jail to pot an end to the cruel and inhuman treatment meted out to the convicts, and how Savarkar and other political prisoners had been made to work at the oil mills.

They told the story of how Nand Gopal had originated the idea of refusing to work, and they all collectively struck work; how a Bengali lad named 'Nani Gopal' went on hunger strike for three months, refusing to eat or wear any clothes, lying on the bare floor of his cell until only, bare skeleton of his body was left. These and other similar tales were treasured up by the convicts as the history of the jail, and were made known to us, in spite of the prohibition to talk, within a day or two of our arrival. There is in the jail such a crowding of orders that several have to be cancelled daily to make room for new ones; the convicts only obeying those which they are by force compelled to obey.

On our arrival orders were given to the petty officers and *taadeels* to have special care of us. We should not be allowed to converse among ourselves or with the rest of the convicts. Even at meal-time parade we should be made to sit at a distance from one anther. Our cells, too, were to be so arrangd. People were to be employed to overhear and report our conversation. The Jailor made us to understand that whenever anyone made a complaint the complainant was presumed to be at fault till he established the truth of the statement.

In such a state of things it is no wonder we had to complain. The first day we all did our work, though it

was the first time—in or out of jail—that I had had to do such hard work with my hands. It was not indeed to be expected that we would finish our whole task. Several of us ould do very little, and three or four did not do even a third of the allotted work. So we were all taken to the Jailor the same day, but according to the jail rules no reports are made against new convicts for the first fifteen days. As ours, however, was a special case the *tandeel* had to take us before the Jailor. Barrie at once began to hold out threats to us. "This is jail, my dear friends". he said,—the jail across the black water. You *will* have to do your work; we stand no damned nonsense here".

There was amongst us a youth of my own name. He was listening to this in an unconcerned sort of way, standing negligently by himself. "Stand erect, you there", Barrie Sahib's command rang out. The *Jamadar* at once went up to him and was beginning to teach him to stand erect, when Barrie added, "Never mind, this is the first day; take them away", and we were brought back to our cells.

The next day was Sunday and on Sunday morning we have to get up and wash and dry our clothes. While the clothes are drying we have to clean up the yard by plucking out weeds and grass. That day no *Ganji* is given. After breakfast at ten o'clock all are shut up in their cells. Similarly we are taken out in the evening, given our food and after parade shut up once more in our rooms. The next day Parmanand refused to work, saying he could not do that task. The *tandeel* at once

took him to the Jailor in his office. The Jailor was very cross but Parmanand also made angry retorts. When the Jailor got up from his chair with a view to use violence towards him, Parmanand gave him a push which precipitated him back into the chair, which being over-turned, he fell down on the floor. The *tandeel* and the *Jamadars*, awe-struck at this unheard of audacity gave Parmanand a sound thrashing till he began to bleed in the head. The Superintendent was at once 'phoned to, as Barrie was terribly afraid of the Superintendent. The Superintendent gave orders that Parmanand's wounds should be washed so as to leave no trace of blood and he should be confined in his room and not allowed to go out-side for work.

The Superintendent, Major Murray, was a good-natured and impartial gentleman, very strict and regular in the full discharge of his duties. Barrie had been very much discontented with his methods. We heard in our cells that as soon as he arrived Barrie had been indignant that he should interfere in these matters. They both went together to Parmanand's cell. Parmanand was in an angry mood and when the Superintendent gave him a good rating—a common thing in jail—he angrily retorted to him also. Meanwhile the whole jail rang with the cry that Barrie Sahib had been assaulted. Even the *tandeel* and petty officers who were outwardly very submissive to Barrie and would cringe and flatter him in his presence were glad at his discomfiture. He was so harsh and tyrannical that all were glad at heart.

Four or five days afterwards the Superintendent held a regular enquiry into Parmanand's offence and after

getting all the gaol gates closed, ordered thirty lashes to be administered to him, which was duly carried out. He took it without a murmur, but as soon as the news of this spread, there was a general strike. The jail authorities are very much alarmed by a strike as it is contagious and might effect the rest of the convicts and so bring the whole working of the jail to a standstilll. Barrie now began to go about among the convicts talking soft and winning words, saying it was all Parmanand's fault and that he (Barrie) had said nothing. This time they agreed to resume work, but only on condition that such harash treatment should not be repeated in future. But this was impossible. Though Barrie could talk sweet words on occasions his heart was full of cruelty and venom. He was burning with the thought of revenge. He secretly won over one or two of the older prisoners among us to his side and made ready to play his game.

It would be tedious and unprofitable to relate in detail the history of the years that follow. It will suffice to say that, as in the country, parties were formed in the jail also of persons holding different views, and as the interests of these were different, a unique conflict went on inside the jail. The key to all these developments was to be found in Barrie Sahib, whose sole object was to satisfy his desire for vengeance by practising as great severity as was possible towards these newly arrived political prisoners who missed no opportunity of showing him disrespect, and had even gone to the extent of assaulting him. One means towards this end was to rouse

up the Pathan and Mussulman warders and petty officers against them, while at the same time be intimated the Hindu warders and petty officers who were a few in number for conniving at their convenience and not joining in the plans for teasing them. The result of this was that out of fear they were more severe than the Mussulmans, to satisfy the Sahib somehow; but he himself could not inflict any hardship on the prisoners, as the entire authority in the jail rested with the Superintendent who personally looked into the minutest details. The Superintendent was by nature a good man, and he also knew that the Jailor took pleasure in creating mischief. It was therefore Barrie's great wish that the Superintendent's ideas should somehow or other fall in with his, and the only way in which this could be done was by one amongst us making on the Superintendent an attack similar to the one made on himself, or even severer if possible, so that the Superintendent should be personally convinced of our evil nature.

To provoke such an attack it was necessary to win over some of us to his side, who should deliberately set up some one or other to do the act. Now, there are in jail two very powerful weapons for securing very conceivable end—the desire for pleasure and the greed for eating good things. Where the usual food served out to us was rotten, consisting of some wretched *dal* and two dry-loaves with some ill cooked rice and vegetables which consisted of grass and leaves, and this was given day in and day out without the least variation for years

the appetite begins to have a strong carving for all kinds of things. An occasional feast of rotten eggs and fish is considered the greatest possible happiness on earth, and to get this a man is prepared to do anything. Barrie took advantage of this to get together a following ready to carry out his least wish, to whom also held out hopes of some means being found for an early release. These people could preserve their honour by giving up their greed for eating, but though several of them thought it a sin even to touch the things coming from Barrie, ordinary people easily yielded to this influence and he used it to egg them on to do his deeds of wickedness.

Barrie had other means also of creating discontent. There was a party of convicts in the settlement who really thought themselves very much aggrieved because as political prisoners they were shown to special consideration—in matters of food and clothing. They wanted better treatment than the rest of the convicts, but the treatment they actually received was not at all to their taste. The same food was given to them as to the other prisoners and they were set to do the same kind of work. But while these others were more or less accustomed to such food and work while free, the political prisoners had led a comparatively comfortable life out of prison. Their present treatment was therefore a greater punishment to them than to the ordinary convicts. These last had also, while free, moved in more or less the same society as that of the men now in jail with them. In spite of all these facts, these murderers and ruffians clothed in the petty authority of subordinate servants

of the jail, were ruling over the political prisoners. The political prisoners therefore wished to assert their rights by carrying on an agitation inside the jail similar to that they had, carried on outside. Their thoughts and feelings had undergone no alteration by confinement in jail. They, therefore favoured strikes and some among them went on hunger-strike, refusing to eat the jail food and even given up their lives in this fashion. One such person was Ram Rakha Vali, resident of village in Hushiarpur District who had been arrested at Shanghai. There was again Prithwi Singh who was on hunger-strike for five months, losing weight from 150 to 90 pounds and who was finally prevailed on to take food by his companions. The Sikhs, particulary, among the political prisoners, complained that no soap *etc.*, was given them for washing their hair which was a religious injunction.

In addition to this there was the party of those who were ready to champion a cause on mere representation. They almost always quarrelled with the petty officers and the Jailor and assistant jailor. When they saw that inhuman treatment was meted out to Hindu or Burmese chidren, or that they were being ground down by oppression, or that their chastity was being outraged, they could not bear to see such sights and would interfere at the risk of creating a big row. The argument appealed to them that since they had come to jail in the service of the Motherland, it was still their duty to try to ameliorate the condition of their fellow-prisoners in jail. They had the greatest contempt for Barrie and his underlings ; they

would neither stand up in his presence nor speak to him with respect, all of which made Barrei burn with indignation. There was also a militant party who believed in gaining their objects by constant opposition to the jail-authorities.

Some months passed. The strike was repeated, and finally these malcontents conspired a plan of manufacturing a dagger in jail to stab the Snperintendent. The plan was prefected. I took no part in any of these schemes ; as their deliberations counsels of wisdom were unwelcome. I could see from a study of the temperament of these revolutionaries that they—every one of them—thought themselves wiser then their feliows. It was an impossible task to convince them of anything which went against their inclinatien. If one of them provoked a quarrel wtth somebody, all the rest thought it their duty to take his side. This would mean that the most angry and pugnacious amongest them could involve all the rest of us in his quarrels ; and the occasions for picking up a quarrel constantly occur in jail. I told them that I could be with them only if they would pay some heed to my opinion—not if to remain in their company meant to follow them blindly in all their mad adventures. The result was that I remained aloof from them as a spectator of what they were doing, only giving my opinion when asked for.

It is a great offence in jail to keep a pencil or a piece of paper, just as it is to gamble. But as the prisoners thought it their duty to break all rules it was a common practice among the political prisoners to

write and send letters just as the ordinary convicts gambled with the money treasured up in their throats. The warder themselves were the bearers of these letters from ward to ward. Several Sikh warders were caught as spies in the act of taking the letters and dismissed from their posts and sent back to labour. One day a warder came with a letter for "Bhaiji" which he entrusted to one of the convicts for delivery. Thinking me to be the Bhaiji referred to, he at once gave it to me. It related to procuring something from outside and making something of it in jail. I was very much surprised to receive such a letter and called and asked the warder, who explained everything as to how the convicts were planning to make a knife to attack the Superintendent, and how all this was not only known to Barrie but contrived by himself. I told all my fellow-prisoners that this was a false snare. They listened to me, and one or two among them held out threats, of even death first to those who should go back. The next day all of us had to change our yards—such a change used to take place every three or four months. But the change meant no abatement in the high spirits. which had been raised.

One Sunday morning in every months the Superintendent himself used to take the weight of all the covicts. While he was being weighed Bhai Chathar Singh made an unarmed attack on the Superintendent by trying to get at his neck. The Superintendent fell down from his chair. Chathar Singh received a good beating at the hands of the officers and warders,

the Superintendent himself had to free him from his assailants. The Jailar was at the gate and on hearing this smiled within himself and was very happy that his plan had borne fruit.

Chathar Singh was kept confined to his cell, with wire-netting across the door and window and henceforth the Superintendent had greater faith in the representations made by Barrie. It was only natural that the Superinentdent's mind should get a little hardened. When danger or misfortune befalls a man a his whole behaviour changes. The Savarkar brothers were said to be at the bottom of the plot, the seggestion being that they always took delight in creating disaffection in the jail.

Barrie's plan had been successfull. His supporters were rewarded. Stricter watch was maintained on his opponents. The rest of the bomb-case men began to be treated with greater severity. But this only made them worse. They refused to stand up when the Superintendent came, and would be locked up in their cells. With handcuffs on their arms they would be chained up high so that they would have to remain standing. Fetters were also put on their legs. Several strikes took place,also refusals to take food, which brought inevitable punishments.

Thus days passed on, and years, till Barrie Sahib passed on to his eternal rest. The Superintendent also went on leave. Several persons were released from the jail. New jail offtcers and a new Supurintendent arrived and a new policy began to be followed.

Everything else may be borne, but not the constant fear of dishonour. The wretchedness of the food and other arrangements was as nothing in comparison with this. The difficulty of my position in jail was indeed peculiar. On one side was oppression ; on the other stupidity, and I was kept reflecting as to which of these was the more dangerous—a question to which I could involve no answer to the very end. As far as I could see both were equally dreadful ; the one is a defect of the brain, the other of the heart. The evil in the brain we may be prepared to excuse on reflection ; but that of the heart—selfishnees—by yielding to which men deceive themselves, does not seem deserving of excuse. There were also those who regarded my unconcern as cowardice, and used to call me names, though I could never understand how those are braver who in order to satisfy their craving for better food throw themselves into questionable ways than one who welcomes and endures suffering with joy. However that may be, all I can say is that my views as to bravery and cowardice did not agree with theirs. If my character and mental frame were such that I had from the very beginning taken part in their acts. I must say that it was just possible that even in spite of manifest errors of judgment in their acts I might have loved them ; but respect for them it was impossible for me to entertain. It was a very difficult thing indeed to live amongst them. Life with those low people whom one regards with contempt is only possible whom their minds are reformed.

XIV

THE OTHER CONVICTS

What sort of people were the convicts in whose midst we were placed ?

Indian society, so far as its public or civic qualities are concerned, comes behind that of almost every other nation on earth. Many fallen members of it go to jail to suffer their just punishment. Many of these prisoners in jail are bad men and are sent out across the 'black-water.' In the Andamans the more well-behaved criminals are given a little freedom and sent out to work in the other islands, but the *badmashes* among them still offend and are sent back to the jail for punishment. Thus the very pick of the worst criminals in the islands are to be found inside the jail, and it was amongst these that we were passing our days. They were the types of India's criminality, though the most notorious among them were placed in a special line. Their special quality was that they would abuse each other the whole day long, would fly into a rage against another on the slightest provocation and get ready to fight out the matter. They would steal their neighbour's clothes or vessels if they got the opportunity and would gamble amongst themselves in their cells day and night. Give them only a few pice and you could get them to abuse or fight with anybody.

The restrictions and discomforts of jail life made every convict naturally an enemy of Government and of the jail authorities. They were being made miserable; their anger naturally turned towards those who, to their mind, were inflicting the misery on them. They have great respect and sympathy for the political prisoners, for they know that these have done something against the Government they hate. And there is also the distant hope that by the efforts of these political workers and of their friends outside, the Government might one day be put down and another set up which might release them. They were always wishing for the overthrow of the Government as therein by their sole hope of escape from across the 'black-water'; and, as wish is father to the thought they easily believed that the Government would disappear. During the time of the war they would be engaged at night in coining all sorts of false news of the arrival of the Germans and would sedulously circulate it in the morning. An old Burman who had spent more than thirty years in jail came to me one day and in an earnest manner began to ask, "Why, sir, is it true that the English will go away"? I said, "You tell me, yourself". Then he said, "This is a lie coined by the convicts. It is now thirty years since I came here, and then also it used to be said that the English were going". But it is on such hopes that life convicts spend their days. Indeed the convicts liked those who purveyed these false news to them and cheered them with words such as these: "Why do you fear? Only a few days are left". But truth is so unpalalable that nobody wishes to utter it.

What sort of people were these who at the slightest provocation had cut the throats of their fellows ? Some had out of greed robbed others and murdered their children. They would for a little opium or tobacco do anything in jail. It is not in their nature to have any regard for the happiness or misery of their fellow beings ; they only see things from the point of view of their own selfishness. The Jailor teases them : he must die. If he gives them any comfort, there is no good man comparable to him. Their own pleasure and pain are their tests of good and evil. Their desire makes a thing good or bad for them. How indeed can one expect to find the welfare of the country or the happiness of others sharing the thoughts of such depraved beings ? How can those who feel pain in another's happiness, be expected to suffer pain themselves to benefit another ? They might talk of the freedom of the motherland, but this was because the existing Government was their enemy. The political prisoners, however, taken in by their professions, used to lecture to them on patriotism. Could there be a greater illusion ? If the Jailor wished to get any information out of them he had only to hold out the inducement of some small comfort if they would speak out anything—so fickle was their nature.

It is not indeed correct to say there was no good men in their ranks. There were some unfortunate persons, who had been the victims of police tyranny, and had been convicted on false evidence concocted against them by the police. Or they committed a crime in a fit of anger or ignorance, for which, they

had to undergo life-long suffering. There were some youths also who had caused loss of life in play or games. Two or three lads from Bombay were in our midst who, while grazing their herds in the forest had constituted a mock-tribunal amongst themselves with one of them as judge and two as policemen. Some charge was brought against a companion and he was tried in their court and sentenced to be hanged. The boys acting as policemen put a string round his neck and mounting him on a baffalo tied the string to the branch of a tree and drove away the buffalo. The boy began to swing on the branch, when the rest ran away frightened leaving him to his fate. There were several persons in the jail, who had been brought there as being concerned in such and such incidents, who were models of gentlemanliness such as are seldom found.

There is one article which plays a very important part in the lives of this folk, and it is necessary to mention. That article is tobacco, which in jail is called "Sukha". It is brought to the jail in the form of dry leaves. It is the jail officers themselves who introduce it into the jail, even in jails in India; in the Andamans the underlings of the jail, the warders, petty officers, etc., do this. It is of course a violation of jail rules to take this in, and whenever it is found out during a search a man has to suffer the consequences. But as those who bring it to the jail make a considerable income by this means it is impossible to put a stop to its introduction. Two pice worth of tobacco is brought and sold inside for an anna and most of the convicts in

jail are in the habit of chewing it. Even those not accustomed to it easily acquire the habit in the company of the rest. Inside the jail the tobacco-leaf is used as money. By its aid one may sit idly by and make another do his work for him or buy work already finished. It can purchase bread. Once or so a week in jail curds are given and also milk to those who are very weak or thin or have had some illness. Tobacco can buy these things for a man. He who has a large stock of it or can procure it is considered wealthy. There is a regular trade in it. The traders are often caught and punished but still keep their business going. Receptacles for holding it are made in the ground in the yard outside, or under the flooring inside the cells, or in the cell-walls. To chew tobacco is considered a great luxury in jail. There are also many who procure and eat opium, but this is very expensive and a serious offence against jail rules.

Gambling, chewing of tobacco, talking the talk of the wicked, telling one's own story or some other old story to one another, incessant singing of ribald songs and the reading of religious books are the various ways in which different convicts spend their leisure in jail. But the greatest vice of the jail affecting morals is the commission of uunatural offences. Generally those who go to jail are notorious criminals. Once inside jail it is impossible for them to lead an honest and moral life. Hence it is that the vice is commonly found in jails. In the penal settlement of the Andamans there is the additional circumstance that all sorts and

conditions of men from different provinces are brought together, among whom are persons who are cruel and immoral by nature. Convicts from the Punjab and the N. W. Frontier Province are guilty of such vicious practices. The people of the United Provinces, Bombay and Madras are mostly gentle in nature and it is a common thing to spoil the young among them by intimidation or the greed of a little tobacco.

Many convicts are brought from Burma. The Burmese, who are generally beardless even late in life appear in the eyes of these ruffians as women; and as they do not understand the talk of these fellows, and as their officers—the convict warders who exact work, the petty officers etc.,—are of the stronger races, they are frightened or over powered into submission. Occasionally no doubt a member of the better classes of the Punjab, Madras or Bombay may be seen here, but it is from the United Provinces that large numbers of men belonging to the highest castes such as Brahmans, Thakurs, are sent here as convicts for taking part in dacoities. There are also many young lads concerned in these banded dacoities and these are made the victims of such vicious practices. Not only is their character affected, but they are actually deprived of chastity and religion. No doubt such things are to be found in the jails of the country, but here the bringing together of all sorts and conditions of men from various parts of the country makes matters worse and furnishes more opportunities for vice. And as in this settlement there is a little of freedom outside the jail, the strong use their freedom to oppress the weak.

It is therefore my opinion that to keep such men at large is only to increase crime.

At night, while in bed, these fellows tell one another the story of their wicked achievements and amuse themselves by singing all sorts of ribald songs.

There were also some prisoners who delighted in religious books and used to spend all their spare time in reading. One can get permission in jail to keep books. The books of all the political prisoners were kept in an almirah, and they could exchange books every Sunday.

There was a parade of all the convicts one day in the week, when they had to stand outside in a line with their bedding, clothes and vessels, holding their tickets in their hands and the Superintendent passed by each. If one had anything to say to the Superintendent he would raise his hand, and the Superintendent would stop to listen to his complaint and give his reply. The ticket is a man's character-certificate, on it being entered all his misdeeds and generally his whole conduct. It is also called a 'history-sheet'.

There is only one other means refreshing one's mind in jail *viz.*, the arrival of new convicts, brought by the *Maharaj* from Calcutta; Madras and Rangoon. Prisoners sentenced to transportation from Northern India come *via* Calcutta; Madras sends those from the south and west, and those from Burma embark from Rangoon. It is strange, but true, that whenever convicts in the settlement recognise among the new arrivals the face of an acquaintance they are very happy, either because he can give the latest news from India, or probably because

human nature itself is so constituted. Those convicted of ordinary murder are seldom kept inside the jail. There sentence is considered to be equal to a term of twenty years. Those guilty of dacoity and assassination are taken to be sentenced to twentyfive years, while those who have murdered by administering poison or by incendiarism are thought worst of all and taken as sentenced to thirty and thirty five years respectively. If one among the ordinary homicides can read and write Urdu, his services may be needed as a clerk, and then he has not got to do very hard work.

A great number of convicts are those sentenced in cases of theft and robbery, and they are generally old jail-birds who have been in jail five or even seven times before. Jail becomes their home and they are not at their ease anywhere else. If released they are at large for a shart time, again commit theft and return to jail. Some have also been seen who committed theft on their very way back home from the Andamans and were at once sent back.

As for the women who come here, they are mostly convicted of poisoning their husbands or some such crime. They live in a separate jail called the "Women's Barracks". They have their own women petty officers and *tandeels* and they, too, have to work like men. If after three years a woman takes a fancy to a male convict who has done a term of at least ten years they may marry with permission. Similarly, if after ten years there is no misconduct or punishment noted against him, he is set at large. During the remainder of their

term they may engage in agriculture or keep cows and herds and sell milk and by thrifty living, save a considerable amount. The number of these free convicts is not indeed large and they have separate cottages.

The language of the Andamans is Hindustanee which the people from Madras, Bombay and Burma easily pick np.

At Ibradeen there is an Anglo-Vernacular Middle School to give instruction to the children of convicts or of their descendants. Some 150 to 200 pupils study in this school. Those who are educated there get employment in the offices there on low salaries. The morals of the free women, living in the midst of such a large number of male convicts are not very strict. Their food consists of rice ; if wheat flour is wanted it has to be procured by special permission from the Commissariat. The provisions for the whole settlement are brought by the ship and stored in the Government store-room. The shop-keepers also buy from there.

XV

THE USE OF THE JAIL

Jail is Hell. Jail is new world the conditions of which ordinary people cannot even imagine. I, too, before I went inside a jail, had only heard of jails, possibly also read of them and pondered over the punishments awarded to them. But I had only thought of them somewhat in the light of the law of transmigration of souls, according to which the *Jeevatma* is obliged to be born in lower forms of life—such as beasts and trees—so that life may be retrained by closer bonds, and by depriving it of the liberty to kill other forms of such life, it may be freed from those sins and the sinning faculties themselves may atrophy and perish. The jail, it is said, has been similarly created by society and government in the world. It could not have been that the effecting of such reform by means of jails was the theory, however short of it the actual practice may be. If the jail was like a cage holding a bird, the analogy may be true to some extent, though even so, the bird is not kept imprisoned in the cage for the correction of any fault of its own but to satisfy the tastes of a depraved human being. If the jail does serve as a house of correction for depraved human beings, then perhaps it serves its purpose. But the jail unfortunately is not a cage ; it is a very dirty

and evil-smelling spot, where the whole atmosphere, the talk, the waves of thought and activity, all combine to make it the model of a particular type—a place where the fallen members of society are gathered together, so that they may spend their time in exchanging their thoughts and shaping their canduct accordingly. Whenever a good man happens to be thrown in their midst, for a time he turns away from them with disgust ; but finally he is also moulded after their fashion, like the children of a scavenger in whose nostrils the faculty of smell is easily smothered.

The jails in India are run on business lines for profit. There is no doubt that the *daroga* and other attendants of the jail, drawn from the lower orders of society, wish to profit themselves by the misfortunes of a good man. The jail underlings are set after him to taste and oppress him, to give him the hardest work ; to shower abuses on him and even to assault him so that he may get some money from the friends and propitiate these deities. The *daroga* is thus regularly paid every month to spare the prisoner his tender mercies. We were told that sometimes, in order to extort money, prisoners are very severly beaten, and as the *lambardars* etc., are bloody ruffians drawn from the ranks of convicts guilty of offences like murder, they even murder their victims in fits of fury and afterwards hush up the whole thing by some means or other. This explains the fact that Pathan convicts who are proverbially cruel and merciless, are preferred in jail as more serviceable and fit for the post of *lambardars.*

The sole object of punishment in the Andamans is to extract work. The promotion of the men in charge of the settlement depends on the work they are able to show and that work consists in working the settlement at a profit. The work done by a dozen or thirteen convicts suffices to pay the salary of even the highest officers in the settlement; the costs of the military and police on the island are similarly met and the free settlers are enabled to live, the things they need are brought down. Thus 'work' is the single motto for everybody. Though the mild Burmese convicts should have their own tender-hearted petty officers, this would mean loss of work. So, hard-hearted Pathans are employed who indeed extract work, but side by side with it, practice on their victims unimaginable atrocities. The superior officers are all aware of these practices but can do nothing to stop them. Reform would only be possible if the reformation of the convicts was the chief object kept in view and an attempt was made to wean them from their evil ways. But so long as the extracting of work is the chief object no regard can be paid to the reformation of character.

Herbert Spencer has in his book on Ethics discussed the relation of morality to kindness and justice, and dealt fully on the advantages of these qualities. It is a difficult thing for society to bring these into play in its conduct. Society has made certain laws for keeping itself alive and for securing the happiness and progress of its members. We have no doubt the freedom to do

whatever we like, so long as we do not interfere with the like freedom of others to pursue their ends. From this fundamental principle follow other rules of conduct such as that we should respect the rights of others, should not do any injury to their life or persons, should not in short, cut at the roots of social orgarnisation by spreading evil ways, nor seek to attain our evil ends by dishonouring others. Neither in thought, nor word, nor deed should we deceive another. There are numberless ways of violating these rules, which society regards as offences to be punished in order that others may be deterred from similar acts.

One man may in a fit of revenge take the life of another who has offended him. Another, unable to earn his living, breaks into a man's house and murders his wife and children but later on repents and begs for forgiveness. Pity demands that man's plaintive cry should be heard and granted, but justise says that if this is done any man in society may with impunity take another's life and escape the penalty of the law by weeping and crying. Therefore to reform him in the future as well as to deter others from acting like him, it is necessary to punish him severely; else society would be in chaos.

But there is another aspect to this question, viz,. how far society itself is responsible for his act. At first sight it may be difficult to see what liability others can have for the sins or crimes of a particular man. The responsibility arises because every individual is largely the product of the society in which he lives. If

a man is the slave of anger to the extent of committing crimes under its influence, he may either have inherited it from his parents, or it may be that society did not provide for him the education which would have corrected his evil tendencies in either of which contingencies; society must take the blame on itself. Similarly, although crimes like theft are the result of bad habits—society must be held responsible for their spread, as people usually get these habits from others. Or, again, the motive for these offences is hunger and want and it is the duty of society to remove them from its midst before contriving punishments for the offences themselves.

These considerations lead to the conclusion that while justice ought to be kept in view in meting out punishment to an offender, society, conscious of its faults, should also view the matter with sympathy. The object of punishment should, therefore, be to place the criminal in a position in which he will have an opportunity of reforming himself; and when once he has the determination to reform himself, he should be set at liberty to carry out his resolution. It is on considerations like these, I believe, that reformatories have been established for juvenile offenders. I could therefore never understand why young boys and youths are sent to the Andamans, where instead of getting reformed they are daily turned into worse criminals. It would be a great step in advance if reformatories could be extended also to elderly offenders, provivded it is their first offence.

The object of all punishments provided in jail

is to cut at free and associated activity. When a man is sent to jail his movements instead of being free and unhampered are confined to the limits of the jail and his companions are the other inmates of the jail; and if any offence is committed inside the jail, a man is given solitary confinement so that his talk and movements are circumscribed within the four walls of his nerrow cell. If he still persists in wrong doing, heavy fetters are put on his legs and even their movement is made impossible. Further wrongdoing is punished by still greater restriction of movements, such as by putting up an iron stake between his legs, by hand-cuffs being placed on his wrists, or by hand-cuffing behind the back. In addition to the restriction of movements of hands and feet, big offences are punished with whipping, up to a maximum of thirty lashes, and there is, last of all, the extreme penalty of death.

For the future—blank despair; for the present, the severity of punishment and of hard labour; under such conditions many prisoners became indifferent to life and resolve to destroy themselves. Though there is a search every evening and the warder keeps going round the lines at night with lamp in hand, they menage to conceal a piece of rope or improvise one by tearing to pieces their shirts or breeches and hang themselves to death. If a warder happens to see the occurrence he raises an alarm, the sentinel on duty reports to the Jailor and they all come and at once take down the corpse. If it is not immediately discovered, it is only at the next day's counting that the man's absence is noticed and on

a search being made, his hanging corpse is recoverd. Several such cases occurred during my stay there and these served to imprees firmly on our minds how near life and death was our place of residence.

Those convicts who have had occasion to be repeatedly in jail have only one wish: by some means or other to avoid work,—the same motive which induces a man to steal rather then earn his living by honest work. By nature and temperament their minds turn a way from work and they sit contriving means to avoid work First of all, some three days before the day of weighing they diminish their food or do not eat at all and keepawake the previous night so that their weight may appear less. They make themselves weak and lose weight in order that lighter work may be given to them. But even more than this, there are 'doctors' among them who can create diseases. Ordinarily, we regard diease as the source of great misery and as far as possible seek to avoid it, but the perverity of the conditions in jail makes many people actually welcome illness, as it gives them the much-longed for entry into hospital and saves them from work for some time. It is then a struggle between the doctors' attempts to cure them and their own efforts to prolong their illness as long as possible by imprudence in diet and the like. Jail doctors have thus not only to fight the disease but also the patient and cure him, if possible, against his will.

The real 'doctors' of these people are those old convicts who know the ways of inducing and provoking illness. If one cannot get the services of one of these

and at the same time is strongly disinclined to work, one common device is to swallow glass finely powdered. The glass powder goes in and tears up the intestines and sets up haemorrhage. At first this may end fatally, or the man lingers on in hospital for months. So, also, some get eye diseases by putting lime into them, getting blind in consequence, or, in any event, a long holiday from work.

These disease-producing 'doctors' have three well-known drugs with them. One is the red seed of *rathi* (a bean of the *Adenathera Puvonina*) which is useful in producing wounds. It is powdered and a piece of thread dipped in it and allowed to dry. Then it is introduced with a needle into some part of the leg or arm. In the course of a night it produces an ulcer accompanied by much swelling, and thread is then taken out. A second drug consists of the seeds of *Jamalgota* (a purgative nut and medicine) one or two of which are powdered and eaten to produce bloody stools and the patient becomes so weak that he is disabled for a number at days. The third thing is the bark of the root of white *Kaner* (oleander) which is powdered and mixed with jaggery to make small pills, which when taken, produce very high fever in two or three hours, the thermometer rising very high, though the fever subsequently abates of its own accord. In these and similar ways they try to throw dust into the eyes of the doctors. Experienced doctors, however, at once find out these tricks, but cannot do anything to prevent them. Sometimes, no doubt, where the prisoner gets the same kind of injury after the doctor

has once cured him the doctors have in some cases cut off the offending arm of leg. Some of the convicts make attempts to get blind. It is their nature which works all these strange phenomena and it cannot be said to what extent they are to blame.

XVI

LESSON OF JAIL LIFE

The first lesson we learn in jail is the economic truth that the price of a commodity depends, in addition to its intrinsic value, on the difficulty of acquiring it. And a thing is good or bad according as a man regards it. Let me give one or two illustrations.

Oil is not a part of the diet of the people of the Punjab, and in spite of the dearness of *ghee* it is supposed to be unwholesome and avoided. But there are orders in jail to put four drams of oil into the *dal* and vegetables of every prisoner. At first its taste is not palatable, but one soon gets to regard it like ghee itself, and prisoners compete with one another for the topmost portion of the *dal* where the oil floats. Many warders and petty officers bribe the storekeeper with a little tobacco to give them oil with which they prepare vegetables. Oily preparations in fact are considered a great delicacy in jail.

Jaggery is another article which is difficult to procure in jail. Oil at least is procurable from the Government stores, but jaggery cannot be had at all in jail. As for sugar it is impossible to get. But as jaggery is cheap, some one or other of the convicts manages to smuggle it inside the jail. The gift of its

small quantity to anyone is regarded as a great favour, as if it were the gift of a *jaghir*.

Some months had passed since our entry into jail when one day a convict brought me a piece of garlic. I had till then never seen garlic in jail and the man made a present of it with great regard and respect. I had no wish to surrender myself to the greed for food, but it was so beautiful to look at that I took it. It was then that I realised how such an insignificant thing like that which God has created for our use is prized at such moments, when we have been deprived of it for some time.

Where a thing cannot be procured one only makes oneself miserable by wishing for it. In such circumstances it is that one has perforce to arrive at the rule of conduct that where a particular desire cannot possibly be fulfilled it is best to root it out from the mind. The getting rid of wants is the surest and simplest way of satisfying wants. Two courses are open to a person thus situated:—either, by fondling these desires in his mind to increase his own wretchedness, or to cut at the root of the desires themselves. What is generally found is that a man, just like a child, longs for the very thing which is taken away from him, though such longing is the sure cause of pain. A few cultured persons also see and follow the other path, and after some training find in it the very core of Hindu and Buddhist Philosophy,—the way to realise the greatest happiness by the extinction of desire.

When the value of ever the smallest things is so much enhanced in jail, one can readily imagine how much

more valuable becomes life which we already prize. The truth of the matter is this, that when there is absolutely no hope of getting back life, one cannot correctly appraise its valve to a man who gets a new lease of it. To recover it adventurous persons even risk there lives; they cut down prison-bars, and jump over prison walls to escape. How much easier for one working at large in the other islands to fly to the woods! In these woods dwell the jungle tribes who keep on receding as the work of clearing the forest proceeds. When a man goes to them it is certain that one of two things will happen either they will kill him or he can be in their midst a freeman. Several such prisoners escaping into the jungle have begun to cultivate their own land and spend their days there.

Another strong feeling which works in the minds of convicts is the desire to obtain one more sight of the dear old Motherland. I have seen even the most hard-hearted and notorious of criminals strangely moved at the memory of the mother-country and sigh at the thought of never seeing there own village again. It is only when a man is exiled from his country that he realises the extent of his attachment to it. Similarly, one never prizes happiness till one meets the hosts of misery and pain. Even in their sleep convicts mutter prayers to Parameshwara (God) to give them one more sight of their native land.

The sincerity of this feeling may be verified by the fact that although India is about a thousand miles remote from the Andamans and Burma too, is several hundered

miles away, the convicts who free from the island attempt to return to their native land on rafts of bamboos which they cut from the jungles. They take some wheat flour and water inside the hollow of a bamboo (which is afterwards opened to take it out) and trust themselves to the uncertain mercy of the winds and waves. If the wind is favourable and their stars are lucky and they manage to evade the steamer which Government keeps navigating around the shores to detect such runaway convicts, they may reach the coast of Madras or Burma. Many perish in the attempt, and many of landing are re-arrested on the report of the village watchman. But some manage to escape. To throw oneself without mast or sail on the broad ocean for weeks or even months together in order to go back to one's country is indeed a deed which requires the greatest daring and courage.

Broadly speaking, convicts may be divided into two classes. The first consists of those who commit offences like murder in the course of a quarrel with another. The source of such quarrels may generally be traced to some dispute regarding land or woman. Their trials also follow one and the same course. There is some suspicion regarding the conduct of a woman; this leads to notoriety, either she or her paramour is murdered. If it is land there is some dispute with a neighbour; each side gathers its followers; a free fight ensues, in which some are killed and some are wounded. The root cause of all such offences is to be found in mutual misunderstanding, anger or jealously. Another class of offences consists of those against property or possession

and the only motive to such crimes is greed, the desire to get another man's property gratuitously. Several means have been devised to filch property. The commonest and simples of course is theft, to commit which one or two persons conceal themselves in a house and at night walk away with what they can get. When the number of persons who take part in the crime is larger, and they use weapons ready to fight out any opposition, and fear of bodily harm is held out to intimidate the victims to disclose all their property and it is looted by show of force, the offence becomes what is known as dacoity. If there is among the dacoits a leader of extraordinary daring and courage he does not flinch from facing even the forces of Government and like Robin Hood of old has his own stronghold in the forest.

The cleverer set of people however are those who wander about the country in disguise and cheat people out of their money. They are a sort of *thugs*. One man told me that he was a big 'Syed' of his village, held in a great respect by the people. He was reported to know the art of turning other metals to gold. In truth, however, he was the head of a great thieving organisation. He kept about a hundred agents in two or three of the neighbouring districts who formed a sort of secret society, the members of which whenever they found an opportunity for theft, would send word to their chief and he would go at night and bring back the stolen goods. As he was indoors the whole day long, nobody ever suspected that he was not an alchemist but a big thief. One of his agents, however, was caught and he disclosed the

whole secret. Another man told me that he was a "gentleman thief". Well dressed in a coat and a pair of trousers he would travel in railway trains. He would go and sit in the Second or Intermediate class when chance offered. He had a pair of very sharp steel scissors which cut through clothes and such things the moment it was applied to them. He would skilfully cut and remove men's pockets, or, betweeen two stations drop the passengers' trunks or bags out of the train while they were asleep and himself get down at the next statiou and go to the spot to take them.

Several persons had come there who had suffered their term of punishment for being members of a company of *thugs*. Their accomplices in Bombay had opened a shop for trade there. He would find out when and by which train a man with a large sum of money or goods was travelling and give intimation to these fellows. They would also travel in the same train and when they got the chance would remove the goods or money and make themselves scarce. For several years these *thugs* went on looting even big merchants before they were finally caught. There were others who had police uniforms with them and would transform themselves into police officers and men. They would go to a Sowcar's house and saying that they had received information about harbouring stolen goods there, begin to make a search and walk away with the jewellery.

There are many rogues masquerading under the guise of Sadhus, who go and take up their residence in

the neighbourhood of houses and practise the art of poisoning. They administer poison to the master of the house and walk off with his belongings. The greater robber among them live in the villages and abduct widows and young women to be sold as slaves. One of these 'Sadhus' used to keep a vessel in his knapsack, wound round with red and yellow clothes. He used to impose upon the gullible by pretending that he could transform silver into gold. He would ask his victims to get a vessel of that description, covered with red and yellow cloth and put all their silver jewellry into it which they wished to convert into gold. He would then bury it underground and burn holy fires over it with many incantations. But in the act of burying it he would cleverly exchange the vessel for another and put theirs into his wallet and at night he would walk away with it. These 'Sadhus' would also frequent places of pilgrimage, always with an eye on the pilgrims' belongings. One Sadhu went about from place to place offering up big oblations and exhibiting to his wonder-struck audience the image of Durga mounted on a lion in the sacrificial fire. He would take money from them to placate the goddess. He had a ring on his finger with a very small image of Durga encased in a glass frame and it was the magnified reflection of this on the top of the flames that his victims took to be the real manifestation of the deity.

There were sometimes bands of these swindlers at centres of pilgrimage. They would make one of the company a Mahant, and two or three of his followers would go

and wait on the roadside. Whenever they saw a group of pilgrims coming, they used to mix with them and sing the praises of their chief. When they arrived at their master's place they would go and fling themselves at the feet of the 'Sadhu' and shower some money, which example others followed according to their means. The secret of all these methods of robbery is to throw dust into the eyes of people by making them believe that to be real which in truth is a pre-arranged farce. The organisers of *Panths* have also taken advantage of this trick. When fresh travellers come these people go out two or three miles to meet them on the road.

There are in the ranks of these also some who counterfeit currency notes and cheques as well as coins. They make moulds for rupees, sovereigns etc. with special kinds of clay. All sorts of base metals are used to make false coins in these moulds. There are also abductors of young children among these. They wander about villages and towns with all kinds of attractive glass marbles and balls and other toys for children. They draw the children after them by showing these trinkets, and leading them to some lonely spot, remove their jewels and make themselves scarce.

One moral which I was able to draw from talks with all these thieves and swindlers was that all these crimes originated with the goldsmiths who manufacture and sell ornaments and also ended with them or the money changers. These jewellers and money-changers are the two classes who suck the blood of society and know well its weakness. They live and thrive upon the

well-to-do and make them the prey of these thieves and swindlers. It may be possible that socialism by its equal distribution of wealth will root out these evils. But till socialism comes the wealthy can find safety only by ridding society of these two classes of parasites.

XVII

THE END OF THE WAR

Owing to the kindness of the Chief Commissioner, or of the Superintendent of the jail, we political prisoners used to get the weekly edition of the London *Times* during wartime. Though this was the one privilege allowed to us in jail, it was by us so much prized (especially as war was raging) that we regarded it as sufficient compensation for all our other troubles. According to the policy of the jail we had to be kept in utter ignorance of the state of our own country, and so it was very rare that we ever saw any newspapers from India. We, however, were somehow or other kept informed of the main events taking place in the coutnry, if not at once, at lest in course of time, and some newspapers also used to find their way into the hands of the free settlers and from them were brought to the jail by the convicts. The accounts given by the convicts were no doubt grossly exaggerated, but after a short time in their midst we could easily distinguish the false from the true in their talks. In addition to this some one or other of us would be getting letters from home which also gave us information about what was happening in the country.

I have already said that if there was any desire

which made me wish to live it was the desire to witness the course of the greatest war in history. We have heard that in the great war of the *Mahabharatha* all the kings of the world were ranged on one side or the other. That, however, is ancient history and the world was perhaps not very densely populated then. But to-day, when man has established his sway over every part of the terrestrial globe, and not content with that, striven to conquer the air and the broad ocean, the whole world has to participate in the rivalries of the great states. And it did so participate, for there was not a state which did not take some part in this war. It could be plainly said of this war, in which great nations trembled with fear of utter destruction, that its roots were embedded in the very essence of European civilsation, whose one ideal has been self-aggrandisement, by whatever means, at the expense of others. Some nations had gone forward in this made competition; but Germany was sad that she was left behind. The German people therefore wished to secure themselves by the conquest of the world. From history they took their law of the victory of might, and it was on the supremacy of arms that they wished to found their empire. As against this, England and the other states took up their stand on the principle of nationality and self-determination and fought also on the basis of these principles.

It is now clear that except in a few small matters the war has left the political picture of the world unchanged. Germany was foiled in her object, but the old forces are still present in her. One change indeed

there has been, as a result of the war, which may have far-reaching effects on the future of the world—the revolution in Russia and the rise of 'Bolshevism'.

For myself, the sense of the great wrong which had been done to me, along with so many others, might have made me in my heart of hearts wish for England's defeat in the Great War. But I have always considered that when the state is in peril its conduct cannot be regulated by ordinary laws, and the value of any particular individual life is not a thing of great value in its eyes. For self-preservation, or even for making an example to others, the state may even deprive a man of his life on suspicion. In the history of a state or nation little regard can be paid to the individual life.

As regards the English nation, although it has kept us down and trampled on our rights, I had little hope that the atrocities would be less if the Germans came. No doubt, if both powers should fight in India, there might be a chance of improving our position. But when the end of the war brought England's proclamation promising reforms in India, great hopes were raised in our minds that the war was in some manner going to be of service to this country. At the same time, a ray of hope for ourselves was it up in our hearts. Then came the Rowlatt committee, whose report shattered all these hopes. The only thing now was to wait and see what would happen.

At last the war was over. Proclamation was made in jail that in the case of prisoners other than political terms would be reduced by remitting a month in

each year of imprisonment. The case of the political prisoners was said to be under consideration. This was again the starting point for hope. But soon came news that the passing of the Rowlatt Act had set on foot a powerful agitation in the whole country and more especially in the Punjab. The Hindus and Mussulmans made up their differences. Soon after we learnt that the leading vakils in the districts of the Punjab were arrested and that Martial Law had been introduced in many places.

We were astonished at the wonderful changs that had taken place in the country. Just then came a batch of thirty Martial Law prisoners and told us of the occurrences at Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala, Wazirabad and other places. Though it was clear that the people had been thoroughly roused, the Government policy was the old policy of repression, and for ourselves, it seemed that we must spend the rest of our lives in prison.

My own mind was kept agitated by the thought, "Why should I live longer?" A sort of special feeling of uneasiness occupied my heart. Every moment I was debating within myself whether I should cut short my life or continue to live longer. To preserve oneself even in the bonds of jail life exhibits an improper attachment to life. It was this one human feeling that was being taken advantage of to keep men in a worse state than that of beasts, and that also made them submit to that condition. What was the need to live under such conditions? At first there was a desire to see the war, but the war was now over. What else remained? Some

said that we should see the result of the rapid changes taking place in the country. But if it was a proper thing to watch this, there would always be something or other to see in the country, and the desire to see all this is the very bond which binds us to this world. I wished to free myself from this delusion. But just then came the evidence before the Hunter Committee of a true Englishman—General Dyer—which created a sensation in England. It appeared that there was still a party of Englishmen in England who thought that it was the timely arrival and gallant fighting of the Indian army at the first great onrush of the Germans that saved France. They were grateful to India for this, and it was therefore with a rude shock that they read of the achievements of General Dyer. By this treatment of India they had made it possible for themselves to hold up their heads before the world. All of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's activities were wasted. During the five years of war Sir Michael O'Dwyer had ruled the Punjab with an iron hand. His mind was obsessed by the idea that he could make all the people of the Punjab into excellent patriots by "blood and iron". It was his proud boast in season and out of season during his *regime* that, in his time, no part of the country remained so loyal as the Punjab and that it was the recruiting in the Punjab that saved the Empire. There may be some truth in this. But there is a limit to threats and persecutions.

Where he claimed to have thoroughly understood the character of the Punjabis he really took a few of his henchmen for the representatives of the whole province,

men whom the common people regarded with contempt and loathing. If he had not taken permission to extend his term for a year he might have gone back as a hero and a statesman. But he himself destroyed all his work. From the very beginning his policy was marked by anger and spite; this reached its zenith during the reign of Martial Law. By letting out the truth General Dyer had shattered the proud and boastful claims of Sir Michael O'Dwyer.

While all this was going on as regards the occurrences in the Punjab there took place an incident in jail which left me no choice but to prepare for the end. The Government of the Andamans is in the hands of a Chief Commissioner and a Col. Douglas was occupying this post in our time. The whole matter of the treatment of political prisoners was under his immediate control. He had been a Deputy Commissioner in the Punjab and was a great friend of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. He went to England on leave for three months. After this Major Murray, the Superintendent who was kindly disposed towards me, appointed me on his own authority to do the work of a compounder in the hospital. The Chief Commissioner used to visit the jail during his tour every third month. On his return from England, when he visited the jail in the usual course he was very much incensed to see me in the hospital where I had been appointed without his orders. At the same time he told me that Sir Michael O'Dwyer still remembered me and had enquired if I was alive and expressed his opinion that I ought to have been.....

somewhere else. Sometime after this Major Murray went on leave and the Punjab *Tribune* published some of the letters sent by me relating to some subject. Reports of this reached the Chief Commissioner and he made it a pretext to order my confinement in custody. Suddenly one evening the jailor, *Havaldar*, *Jamadar* and others came and after making a complete search of my person placed me in a confinement. No cause was known to me about this treatment. Nor was I told anything. Already the thought was in my mind: now, I resolved that the time had come for me to carry out my old resolution.

That resolution was this: by giving up all food to put an end to this fleeting drama of life. My thoughts were not those of reprisal or threat, but simply amounted to this—that I had had enough of life. Accordingly for seven days I lay still without food. For the first two days there was a strange feeling in the whole body. In the veins and arteries of the legs there was some creeping sensation; it seemed as if something was coming out of this part. But in my heart there was only one thought. Man's thinking faculty is indeed a wonderful thing; it can overcome all sufferings, When martyrs' limbs are served, I believe, they do not feel the pain. Even he rises above pain and suffering whose frame is sawn alive from head to foot. Once resolve that life is no longer worth living and sorrow and suffering pale into insignificance before this.

Only a few days after I had formed this resolution in my mind, news reached us in the jail, of the King-

Emperor's proclamation that all political prisoners should be set at liberty. Some friends sent word to me saying that I should now give up my idea. But I did not wish to joke with myself; living and dying is not a child's play. So I sent back word that if this was really to be I should be able to keep alive till then even without eating and drinking. All these days the usual food used to be placed by my side and a warder was commissioned to watch me day and night. When six or seven days had passed in this manner the doctor was sent for, and he came with his tube and other appliance to force milk into the stomach through the nose. Hands and feet were held tight and a long rubber tube introduced through the nose into the stomach through which milk was passed down. The process was painful but this is the usual thing in jail and is done by force. This went on for eight weeks running. During these two months my mind was completely turned away from the world. I had formerly spent one or two months in the cells in which are kept those who are condemned to die; now again I was preparing for death. Both these periods I considered exquisitely happy—with the happiness which comes of utter peace of mind, when cares and troubles of the world are once for all left behind, and oneself far in advance of these things, with all thoughts concentrated on the one important thing.

At this juncture a few Superintendent arrived and he used to try to convince me by argument that suicide is a sin, which I ought not to commit.

I told him that suicide is described as a sin only when a person is leading a free life and is free, or has opportunity to do what is his duty, or is for his uplift. What is sinful or otherwise for the free world outside cannot be the same for the life in jail. Further, the idea that to leave off the body is a sin is not shared by in the Aryan nation; the body has never been considered a thing of any great value in this country. It was with smiles on their faces that wives used to ascend the funeral pyre along with their husband's corpses. Kumarilla Bhatta burnt himself to ashes by way of expiation for a single sin. The Brahman Kalanus ascended the funeral pyre for the simple reason that after eighty years of age his mortal frame had yielded to an attack of fever and become too unclean to live in.

This sort of discussion would go on whenever the Superintendent came to visit the Jail. Just at this time, too, arrived the order for the release of the Martial Law prisoners and of four Bengali convicts. One among these four Bengalis was concerned with the Benares conspiracy case, which was thought to be a part of our own huge plot. Again friends sent word to me that I should now at least change my resolve and that they had seen in some newspaper that orders had been issued for my release. This brought a faint hope again, which began to attach me once more to the world. It was still my desire to wait till the last moment. But the Superintendent one day hinted that I should now desist from killing myself. Many had been released and it was just possible that

orders had been passed in my case also; but if I went on in that fashion how could I hope to return to my country? This was a clear indication of what was coming and so I thought proper, as an opportunity again offered itself, to use this body to advantage. After this I was persuaded to resume food and the Superintendent also out of pity, or for whatever other reason, made such special arrangements regarding my food that in three or four weeks I had regained my old weight. Every month after my going to jail I had lost weight by about a pound or half a pound and just before I give up food it was only 142 lbs. In two months it had fallen to less than 100 lbs. and now again it came up to 120 lbs. or thereabouts.

XX

RELEASE

One morning I had hardly got up and come downstairs when a warder hurriedly came to summon me. Fourteen others involved in our case were also called. We stood near the gate looking out for what was coming. The Superintendent with the Jailor then made his appearance with some forms in his hands. He asked me to tell others in Punjabi that the Punjab Government had agreed to release them on certain conditions. If they were agreable to this let them sign a contract that they would abide by these terms. The terms were these: that they should not do anything against the Government; that they should leave their districts only with the permission of the Deputy Commissioner till the Government was pleased to give them their full liberty. If they violated these conditions they would be sentenced to undergo the remainder of their terms. Printed forms had arrived for those who had been sentenced to the above terms and conditions were imposed on them.

There was also a typed letter about myself, the terms being that I should not take part in any anarchist society or organisation and should be grateful to the Government of its kindness. As I had from the very

beginning never taken part in the work of any such society I had no difficulty in giving this undertaking. We all then went back to our respective wards to fetch our blankets and clothes, as we were henceforth to be kept together in a separate ward.

Our companions who were already acquainted with what had taken place now came running to meet us; they could hardly contain themselves with joy; on their faces was a kind of serene happiness. But my own state of mind was peculiar. On the one had there was the joy of having obtained a new lease of life. But there was also something more than the mere getting of a new life. The *jeevatma*, which was entering on this new life was finding itself in, what was for it, an extremely new state. I do not know how it is, but it has become part of human nature that old associations give one a peculiar pleasure—so much so that one always longs to see once more the haunts of one's childhood and to meet and converse with the friends of bygone days. Indeed it is the memory of these associations that makes exile so hard to bear and the getting an opportunity to mix with them is not merely a new life but one mixed with the sweet joys of life.

But there was also a pang of regret at the separation from those with whose lot had been cast for some time our own fortunes—life and death, pleasure and pain, hope and despair. The thought that they would now be left behind brought tears into my eyes; I could not bear to look at them. It was not merely for those concerned in my own case that I felt like this, but for all those

convicts—a great many—with whom I had lived in friendship. Many of them, no doubt, were fallen individuals, but there were also some like diamonds mixed up with heap of dust. In them, too, was to be found the spirit of love and service and extreme humility. But leave them out of consideration; one feels some regret even in parting with those cells and walls. This recalls to mind a story told of the destruction of the Bastille at the time of the Revolution in France. There was led out of one of its cells a prisoner who had been imprisoned within its walls for twentyfive or thirty years. During all these years the mice that infested the dark cell were his sole playmates and companions and he had grown to love them. They alone would come near him, share his meals and cheer up his drooping spirits. The prisoner's eyes could hardly bear the sun's rays when he came out, and he himself was so much attached to his prison-life that he wished to run back to his old cell.

The sight of my companions from far and near reminded me of Guru Har Govind. How magnanimous was his spirit! How different from the present must those times, too, have been when the Government of this land was in the hands of our own countrymen. Jahangir in a fit of anger had ordered Guru Har Govind to be shut up in the fortress of Gwalior, where were also several other royal prisoners. The Guru's fame, the respect and reverence he commanded and the devotion and simplicity of the people were so great that hundreds of his disciples used to go to Gwalior and turn back

after kissing from outside the walls of the fortress which held the person of their holy master. About this time the king happened to fall ill, but no medicine could cure him. Then he was told that the cause of his ailment was the imprisonment of an innocent devotee of God. The king on hearing this at once ordered the release of Har Govind. When the royal favour was communicated to Guruji he declined to go out of the jail unless all his companions who were imprisoned in the stronghold were also released. The king accepted this condition and released all the prisoners.

In old ways and manners, which may seem to us to be pernicious customs and traditions there also appears a peculiar beauty of spirit. Such a prayer as this has ceased to have any meaning at all in these days. To me there was, however, this consolation that I resolved to work, as far as I could, for the release of my companions. And I have faithfully tried to carry out this resolution according to my lights.

Two days after the same old ship, the *Maharaja*, got ready for the voyage to Madras. We were led out of the jail and taken on board. Many of the shopkeepers on the island and the outside convicts had never seen us though they were very eager to see us. They all now came and, as nearer approach was forbidden, made their obeisance to us from a distance. The bazaarmen raised funds and provided us with dhoties, shirts and turbans. Baskets of fruit and flowers were also supplied, though all this was done with fear. Fear is always present in the land of con-

victs where anything may be made out to be a crime We, however, were out of this state for good.

IN INDIA ONCE MORE

On the way I made the acquaintance of two doctors from Madras who had taken leave and were travelling in the steamer with us. One of them had been in jail for some time. I have always had a particular affection for Madras. I have seen and mingled with Madrasis in Africa, in Burma, in the Andamans and in Madras itself, and I know Madrasis in all the provinces of India who have the greatest affection for other provinces.

Three days later we arrived at Madras. The Andamanese Police handed us over to the Madras Police, with a special caution. They took us to a police station in the city, where we were supplied with food and spent the night. The next morning we went to the Police Commissioner's office and were given each his food and other requisites. On the morning of the second day a Police Inspector came to the station and purchased for us third class tickets for Lahore and Amritsar. The Officers of the Madras C. I. D. accompanied us up to the limits of their jurisdiction and did all they could to ensure for us a comfortable journey.

My opinion of the secret police had now completely changed. Formerly I thought we should treat them with contempt and we had so treated them on our return from Bombay. But I now think this is a mistake. They, too, are human beings and by such treatment we

are knowingly converting them into our enemies. Everyman, however, forms his opinion out of his own experience ; *a priori* no one would suppose that it is possible for a man to lay aside his human qualities in the discharge of his duty.

Our route lay through the provinces of Bombay the Central Provinces, the United Provinces, Delhi and the Punjab and each province sent its own Police to watch us as we passed through. They used to come and observe us and count our number to make a report to the next jurisdiction. We could travel only by local trains and the journey took some six days. It was with great difficulty that we got six annas in place of the three annas which is the usual scale of daily allowance made by the Police. We were obliged, whenever there was some delay in catching a train, to purchase meal ourselves for two days together, so that we could cook and eat our food for the day and prepare the bread for the next day.

The journey by rail was very painful to me. Although we had heard that there was a growing sense of national consciousness in the land this railway journey completely wiped out the impression for my mind. At every station, and in every train, a most painful scene was enacted. Those seated inside the carriages were attempting to push out those who were seeking to enter them. They naturally struggled and fought to get in and there was thus invariably a scuffle. Many men and women had recourse a flattery and obsequiousness just to get in ; but those inside, out of

selfish considerations, stoned their hearts against all such apeals. The sight of this almost made me loathe the railway, for I considered this not merely a kind of national disease, but the source of mutual contempt among the people. No doubt railway trains are limited in number and there is not an over-abundance of room in them. But just imagine for a moment how there can be mutual tolerance and sympathy in a land where at thousands of railway-stations, both day and night, and by every train, people of one and the same land are quarrelling and fighting among themselves like this. This sort of railway journey has very much lessened in our minds the respect and consideration due to the weaker sex and completely destroyed the feeling of companionship with strangers. I saw passengers mercilessly pushing aside even women, women, who with children in their laps, out to be the objects of worship and adoration. Women rushed about with children in their arms seeking for accomodation, but no body gave them a seat. Nor do the railway servants sympathise with the passengers and try to make them comfortable. Whenever I travel by rail the sight of the faces of other passengers as they enter the carriage makes me almost burn with indignation and to wish that I should never more set foot on a railway train. In short, the railway journey has destroyed all the discipline in our character. Everyone rushes in to secure a comfortable seat ; he thinks he has nothing to do with the others. It is this attempt to secure one's own comfort and convenience in utter disregard of the comfort of others

that destroys our character. Indeed to my mind the greatest vice in the country is this disregard of the rights of others—at meetings, at places of amusement, in railway trains and the like.

Things are quite different among the English. Thousands of them may go to a place of amusement—a theatre, or circus. They form a 'queue' or line at the place where tickets are to be purchased and each quietly takes his or her turn to buy a ticket and go in. No one pushes another, nor does one attempt to take another's place—though he may have to wait standing for hours. So also in a railway train when a new passenger comes he finds everyone seated in their respective places and quietly takes a vacant seat. There is no noise, no struggle and no confusion. If there is no room he walks off. If there is only room to stand in he quietly stands. This is the discipline which we cannot even think of in this country.

Of my companions some got down at Ludhiana, others at Amritsar. I was alone when at last the train reached Lahore. It was seven o'clock in the evening of the 30th of April—the sun had not yet set. With my blankets and clothes rolled into a bundle I stepped out of the carriage and was just walking on when I saw a C. I. D. Sub-Inspector whose face was familiar to me making a search of all the carriages. I understood, and called to him to ask whom he wanted. He now recognised me and said it had become almost impossible to make me out. Yes, I said ; my stay had been in such a place. He took me to an English officer who was

standing looking at me. Where did I propose to stay, he asked. I said that my wife lived in the city and that I wanted to find out the house and go there. If he knew the house he could take me there. He regretted that he did not know and shaking hands with me departed.

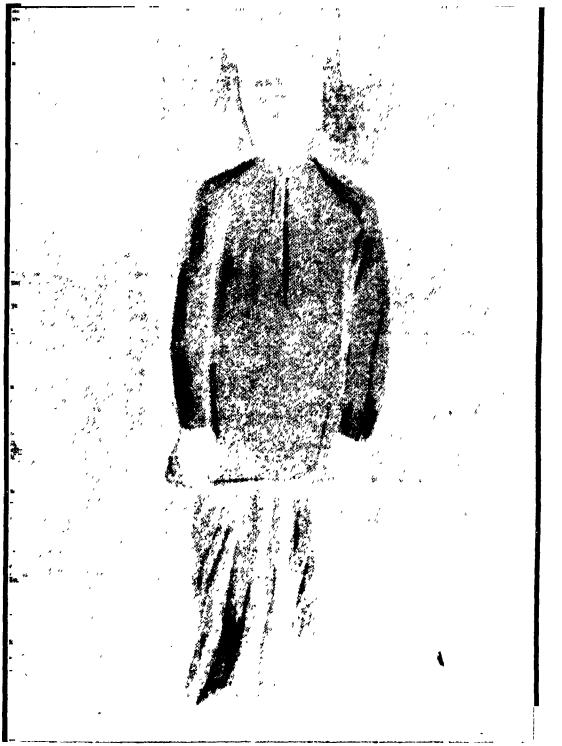
I came out and took a *tonga* as far as the Lohari gate, where I got down. There is much hustle and bustle in this part of Anarkli at evening time; people are constantly passing up and down. Here was I standing with my bundle thinking where to go. The sight of Lahore at this part of the day left me wondering and asking myself whether it was all a dream. How long I stood there, as if unconscious, what pictures passed before my eyes, with what thoughts my heart was full, I cannot describe. He alone can imagine all this who has passed through such vicissitudes, experienced such a striking change and come so near to life and death as I had done. My pen cannot describe in what an ocean of bewilderment I was swimming—of wonder and of happiness, but whether in a dream, or a state of unconsciousness, or as scenes on the stage passing before the eyes of a spectator, I could not tell.

This was a stage between dream and reality when life has began to pass out of dream into the stage of reality, and the interval was passing as I stood as one unconscious in a corner of the *Crossing* at the entrance of Lohari gate. I woke out of this state with a start and said to myself I shall go to the Samaj. I went and stood at the threshold of the Samaj and calling an

individual who was there asked him if he could direct me to where Bhai Parmanand's wife lived. He readily came and took me to the house, where I am now writing these pages. It was almost dark, but the news had spread and people were already coming to see me.

My wife could hardly believe her eyes when she saw me, much less could words come out of her lips. What passed through her heart I cannot describe. But I learnt that she had had to undergo many hardships and sufferings in my absence. She was maintaining her daughters by working for a small wage in a school, and was living in squalid surroundings. At first people were afraid even to call on her, but she lived on in Lahore making attempts to get me recalled. She had seen leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Andrews on my behalf. Two or three of my friends were always ready to help her, and for them her heart was full of gratitude. It was perhaps through the instrumentality of this my Goddess that I was again enabled to appear in this world to share her joys and sorrows.

At the time of leave-taking the Superintendent of the jail in the Andamans had asked me what work I was going to do on my return. I said I did not know, as I had decided nothing. When he asked me again and again I said, "My wife will be teaching at school and perhaps I shall do her work at home."



Bhai Parmanandji
(on his return from Andamans.)

XXI

WHAT I SAW ON MY RETURN

Coming from Madras I saw once more my own Lahore. Lahore the beauty of which used to haunt my memory in jail. What an ancient city ! said to have been colonised by King Lava, the son of Sri Ramachandra, the city where King Jaipal once held his sway and, unable to bear the ignominy of defeat, entrusted the Kingdom to his son and himself ascended the funeral pyre; where the women joyfully sold away their jewels and resorted to the *Charkha*, to render aid to their King's army; where Jahangir and Shah Jahan used to reside; in the streets of which played the child who was to become Guru Arjun, and where he and Fakeer Mianmeer had their learned discussions; where Guru Har Govind came and made friends with Mianmeer; where was born Bhagat Chhajju; the city which Jasa Singh (the great) won from the Abdalis; where ruled Maharaja Ranjit Singh and laid the foundations of the Sikh Empire, though everything was changed after founded the sect of *Gulab-dasi* and king Ranjit Singh himself used to go to meet him; which gave birth to brave and fearless men like Jalla Pandit, Raja Dinanath and Bhaksi Bhagatram; where swami Dayanand laid the foundations

of Arya Samaj and whence that body awoke by its fire are not only Hindus but also the Sikhs and Mussalmans, it was of this city that I often thought and burned with the longing to see once more.

From Lahore I went to my village. The impressions made on the heart in childhood are so deep that thay never disappear. The streets where one has played in childhood, the friends one has made are so deeply established in the mind that their memory returns again and again throughout life. The pain of separation consists in the regrets which such memories rekindle. Such is also the state of the *Jeevatma* when it is separated from its normal state of *Ananda* and falls into the bonds of material life. Its wanderings in this incessant stream of coming and going are its attempts to regain its proper state and the pain at the non-fulfilment of this desire. It is the regaining of the condition of '*Sat Chit* and *Ananda* that constitutes liberation.

I stayed sometime in my village observing things. Its historical importance is only this, that its founder—our ancestor Baba Paraga remained with the gurus from the time of Baba Nanak to that of Guru Har Govind. When the latter unfurled his standard against king Shah Jahan, Baba Paraga was one of his seven lieutenants. His son Manidas was with Guru Tegbahadur and before the martyrdom of the guru in Delhi he was sawn alive. His sons fought under Guru Har Govind and continued to serve him to the very end.

I next went to Rawalpindi, where some kind friends sent me on to Kashmere to recruit my ruined health,

I had already visited Kashmere once in 1903. Before this only Swami Ram among travellers had done the journey from Jammu to Kashmere on foot. I, too, with only one other companion and taking only a single blanket with me walked from Jammu to Srinagar and thence to Muzaffarabad and Abbotabad. That tour was in every respect like that of a *Sadhu*. Owing to the rains the mountain streams were all in floods and we had to do the journey at very great risk. This time I started from Rawalpindi in a motor car. The chauffeur was quite new to his work and had never seen such a winding road before. He had been engaged on his false representation that he had gone this way before. Thus we had engaged an *ignoramus* for a driver and placed our lives in his hands. Several times he stumbled. On one side was the majestic Jhelum, on the other high mountains, with twists in the road at every hundred yards; to drive a car along those narrow roads was indeed a most risky adventure. Nor were our fears unjustified. For at one place our chauffeur could not stop the car, which was knocked down and damaged. We were, however, thankful that we escaped with our lives. There were also dangers in going forward alone. But dangers, a man can face, by the use of his intelligence, but when once he has made another his leader he is no longer free and if the leader is ignorant or incapable he will drag his companions down along with himself into the bottomless abyss. The accident to the car obliged us to stay on the way for four or

five days, till another car arrived to take us to our destination.

In the beauty of its natural scenery Kashmere has no equal in the whole world. Not only does it hold its own against Switzerland and other European beauty spots, but even excels them in several respects. The tour through its various districts by car was full of pleasing interest and exhilaration. The sight of the Brahmana women, the *Tilak* mark on the foreheads of the children, and the scared thread round their necks produced a deep impression on my mind. The number of these Brahmans in Kashmere is now very small, but the way in which these families had preserved their faith in tact through all misfortunes and difficulties was very inspiring. Yes, great injustice had everywhere been done to Hindus in respect of their religion, but in Kashmere such treatment had exceeded all limits. The sight of the *Tilak* on the forehead of every Brahmana boy in Kashmere made me unconsciously bow my head in silent worship and reminded me of the great sacrifice made by Guru Teg Bahadur Singh. At the same time I recalled the lines by Guru Gobind Singh about the respect due to the *Tilak* in the Kali age.

While in Kashmere we learnt that some one had received a telegram that Tilak Maharaj had gone to his last rest.

We also learnt there that a special congress was going to be held at Calcutta. I was eager to see what change had come over the country, so I came back to Lahore and thence went to Calcutta. After twenty

years I was at last able to see the Congress with my own eyes. It was apparent from this session of the Congress that a new life had really appeared in the country; I saw the glow of such enthusiasm and earnestness I had not hoped to see before a hundred years.

The great soul who gave the inspiration to this life and spirit was taken away from our midst, though his picture was prominently hung upon the platform—the picture of a man who had given his whole life to bringing the Congress to this state. It was he who gave it the character of a national assembly. It was the misfortune of the congress that he was never its President. And now, when the Congress had become worthy of having him as its President it had pleased merciful Providence to take him away.

All eyes were now turned to Mahatma Gandhi. Fifteen years ago I had had the good fortune to be his guest in Transvaal, when I lived a whole month as a member of his household. The qualities which then characterised him were those very qualities which now held him up before the gaze of the whole civilized world. There his field of action was limited, but the small Indian population of Africa was for him a training ground where he prepared himself by years of discipline and self-restraint for the great sacrifice to come. Gandhi led the Congress after him with his non-co-operation resolution. This Congress clearly showed that the whole country was with Mahatma Gandhi and that all its hopes centred round him. He alone has a message for the future of this country. His

countrymen, men and women, young and old, rich and poor, from the merchants in cities to the peasants of the countryside are drunk with the wine of his holy name. Of him it can be said that no other man, dead or living, ever had such a strong hold over the affections and imagination of the people. There is not the like of him even among the *Avatars* of the Hindus, and he may without hestitation, be reckoned as a new *Avatar* ; Hindus would perhaps be ready to receive him as *Kalki*—the tenth incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

The question may therefore well arise as to what is the quality in him which has raised him to this position. What is the secret of his phenomenal success? The secret is to be found, as I think, in the magnanimity of his heart, which has made him always love the Mussulmans. To a great many amongst us our family is even dearer than our life, while to many others their sect is so dear that they must needs quarrel with those of a rival faith, such as the Mussulmans. But in Mahatma Gandhi we have the unique figure of a man who, while he loves the Hindus, loves the Mussulmans even more. The Gita says that the *Gnani* is to be known by the equal love he bears towards all beings. Mahatma Gandhi has attained this high ideal and become a living example of the brotherhood of not only Hindus and Mussulmans, but the whole race of man on earth.

I went to Bolpur and at the Santiniketan obtained *darshan* of that unique Englishman Mr. Andrews. He had shown great sympathy to my wife and children and

also exerted himself on my behalf. I call him unique among Englishmen because of his sincere love for this nation and country. He is sincerely anxious that it should not be said of Englishmen that they have no regard for truth or justice when their national interests are concerned. It is such examples that maintain unimpaired our friendship for the English nation, however bad, in our opinion, may be the bureaucracy which governs us.

I saw that the Arya Samaj which had taken the lead in pnblic life in this country, and striven to rouse the slumbering nation, was now lagging behind in the conntry's onward march. Dayanand always had the country's interest at heart and knew that the existence of numerous creeds and sects was an obstacle to national progress. At that time religion was understood to mean the observance of religious forms and ceremonies and a man practised these became a great leader in the religious sphere whatever harm he might be doing to the country at the same time. Religion was thought to have nothing to do with the welfare of the nation. In the place of these harmful creeds and churches Swami Dayanand wished to turn men's minds to a religion, which would mean the leading of an honest and truthful life. On the occasion of the Imperial Durbar in Delhi he wished to get together a conference of Sir Syed Ahmed and Hindu leaders with a view to unite the two sections of the the people. But he soon saw that they were not willing to abandon doctrine and accept reason. So he went to Lahore and founded the Church of the

Arya Samaj to bring home to the people by an organised propaganda, the conviction of the essential truth of their religion. He wished to build up national unity on the basis of a common faith. Mahatma Gandhi has left creeds and churches behind and aspires to build up nationality on the sole foundation of love.

There is one special reason for the going back of the Arya Samaj *viz.*, that its leaders subordinated principles to personal advantage, thus loosening the fundamental tenets of the faith. Religion says, "Never abandon truth, whatever gains may appear". But man's limited intelligence cannot grasp the full magnitude of any movement. Hence the injunction "To work alone is thy duty, not to care for the result thereof". We cannot indeed fully know things or forsee the future of the opinions we share; they are like shouldering fire which may at any moment, without our knowing it, burst into flames. Everything in the world is the result of thought, the rule of intelligence, and we are grossly in error when we abandon it to run after the wealth or pleasures of this world. The French philosopher Rousseau in his *Contrat Sociale* developed the idea that in the state of nature men were equal but that the advent of civilization brought with it the inequality of riches and poverty and all the ills they produce. The rich laughed at the idea ; but the far-sighted Carlyle prophesied the enormous influence it would have upon the world.

If Guru Arjun had cared for profit, not truth, he would have pleased Jahangir by inserting in the *Granth Saheb* some words to extol his dignity, but to do this

Would have been to swerve from the truth, which was dearer to him then life itself. So not only did he not care for gain but willingly offered up his very life. It is in the 'eternal verities' that life is to be found—in the realms of thought, not those of pleasure of gain which obtrude on our sight and shut out the farther vision.

While it is seen that Mussulmans enter the political field as pucca Mussulmans and the Sikhs also as pucca Sikhs and those among them who do deeds and make sacrifices are all devoted to their religion, Hindus alone are characterised by utter disregard of religion in their political work. How I wish that they would love their religion even more than the Mussulmans and the Sikhs and at the same time ensure their national existence. How can we love others or serve them or the country while annihilating or weakening ourselves ?

I believe that it is the Arya Samaj which has resuscitated the Hindu culture and religion which is its soul and that this Samaj alone can save it.

PART II

XXII

NEW LIFE

Today when I am writing these pages I have traversed fifteen years of my new lease of life. Roughly this period of time may be devided into two parts. The first half of it I spent mostly in watching that turbulent political turmoil which gripped the country in its meshes during these years. It did not take me long to realise what that political upheaval portended. If however, took me some time to arrive at definite conclusions in regard to it. But once I had formed my conclusions, I thought it my bounden duty to bring them home to the Hindus and to impress upon their minds the consequences of that wave of political thought, fearlessly, regardless of public opinion. The second half of this period of time was spent in trying to achieve the particular object which I had then set before me. I may as well state here the conclusions I had arrived at. In the first place, from a careful and close study of the past history of our land and of the present policy and behaviour of her various classes and communities I was driven, as every sensible man would be driven, irresistibly to the conclusion that the salvation of this country was possible through Hindus and Hindus alone. Secondly, I was firmly convinced that the way to this salvation was to make the Hindu community, as a whole,

strong and powerful. The stronger the Hindus would grow the greater would be the chance of the other communities combining with them in working for the common good of the country. If, on the other hand, the Hindus remained weak as they are, they would not only be without internal solidarity and cohesion, but no other community also will ever desire co-opration with them. This principle is at the bottom of the Hindu sangathan movement which I regard as the only means of salvation of both our community and country. It now remains to see what those events were which forced me to these conclusions.

I have already mentioned that on return to Lahore after my release I began to live in the selfsame house in which my wife had lived during the period of my exile. Before the attention of the public had been drawn towards my wife and children partly on account of Mr. Andrew's articles and partly due to a general awakening in the country, (and this was only a few months before my release) she had to manage as best as she could with the paltry sum of twenty rupees which was her salary as teacher in the *Arya Kanya Patshala,* implemented by what she could earn by sewing at night. Her hard work and sacrifice should not be taken to mean that she could not get two meals a day at her village home. What actuated her to continue at Lahore was the one sole desire of her heart, namely, to approach influential people and otherwise endeavour for my release. Her going away to live at her village would have meant that she had despaired altogether of my life and had only to think of passing

her remaining days as best as she could. Soon after my return it was proposed to present me a purse of Rs. 10,000 (ten thousand) and collections were also going to be started for that purposes. I, however, expressed through the press my strong dislike of this form of help and the proposal was ultimately dropped. But inspite of this many kind and sympathetic friends came forward, individually and in private, with offers of help in cash. More often than not I declined their offers with thanks, though I must admit that from some of them I accepted a small part of the proferred sums and returned the rest. Besides this, there were some instances when people left money at my place in my absence without my knowledge. I could not even know their names nor was I in a position to decline their help. But all this show of kindness and sympathy touched me deeply. For seven years I led an extremely simple life and thought I should not wish for more comforts than I could get in the Jail. For about a year I did not buy even a pair of shoes and went about bare footed. I clad myself only in a *dhoti* and *kurta* of the same fashion as provided in Jails. It should not be inferred from this that I had no money with me. The fact is that I had forgotten how to spend. After my return home from the Andamans money came into my hands in other ways too. The Ghader party in America had handed over Rs. 11,000 to the late Lala Lajpat Rai to be sent on to my wife and children. Shomehow Lala Ji could not remit that money earlier. He had come back to Lahore a few months before my release, but it was on my return that he gave me a cheque for Rs. 3,500 out of

that amount. Another friend and pupil of mine offered me Rs. 5,000. He was a croesus and there happened circumstances that left me no alternative but to accept his offer. Besides this, at this time I began to write books,* which brought me several thousands of rupees. A part of this money I invested in the shares of a company. Fortunately for me the sugar mills of Dr.

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*"Story of my life" (Urdu, Hindi and English)
"Bir Bairagi" (Urdu and Hindi)
"Bharat Nari Rattan"
"History of Europe" (Urdu and Hindi)
"History of Maharashtra"
"Swarajya Sangram"
"Hindu Sangathan" (Urdu and Hindi.)
"Udasi Sant"
"Jivan Rahasya"
"Koum ka Naya Janam"
"Gita-ke-Raz" (Urdu and Hindi)
"Bharat-Varsh ka-Ithas"
"History of the Punjab"
"History of Rajasthan"
"Bir Charittra"
"Arya Samaj and Congress"
"Balmik Charittra"
"Hindustan ki Rajniti"
"Hindu Zindgi ke Raz"
"Life of Socrates".
"Desh-puja-men-Atam Balidan"

In addition to all these books, in 1927, the paper "Hindu" Weekly was started. ***Akash Vani*** another Weekly organ, a Hindi version to the Urdu Hindu was restarted but after a year and a half, it was closed on account of lack of funds.

Gokal Chand Narang, for that was the company wherein I had invested, were running at a great profit and the dividends on my shares also began to earn for me a handsome income.

In the year of my release a special session of the Congress was held in Calcutta with Lala Lajpat Rai as President. Lala ji took me to Calcutta along with him. At that session the programme of agitation for the Khilafat and the Non-Co operation movements was adopted. All the same I held that the Arya Samaj was the only force in the country which held in its hand the key to the ultimate well-being of the Hindus and Hindustan. But I also felt that the work of Arya Samaj had been confined to the educated classes alone and that if it wanted to become a really living force in the country it should extend the sphere of its activity and reach the people in the villages. Accordingly, when in 1921 as an effect of the non-co-operation movement many students gave up their studies, I took with me a batch of nine youngmen to Narnaund, a village in the District of Hissar. We stayed there for five months and carried on the work of propaganda from door to door in that village and in many others in the neighbourhood. This village consisted entirely of Hindu Jats. In the course of our work there we encountered one great difficulty, a difficulty which shall have to be faced by all those who undertake the work of organising the villages ; namely the deep-seated evil of litigation and the disunion and dissenions consequent upon it. On account of this evil no idea of a common nationality, no amount of religious propaganda can ever bind these

people together into one whole.

Another idea with regard to the mission of the Arya Samaj had been in my mind for a very long time. Will the Arya Samaj be content to remain as an ordinary part of the Hindu Society or will it be a movement for infusing new life and fresh vigour into it. So far as I could see the Arya Samaj had paid but little attention to this very important question. Hence I started a new movement within the fold of the Samaj and founded the Jat Pat Torak Mandal (Society for the Abolition of the caste system).

The next year after the starting of the Non-Co-operation movement, a new programme of National Educational had been placed before the country. Many students had left their colleges and some of them had devoted themselves zealously to active political work. But in every province and in every town there was a large number of students who wanted to continue and complete their education. So the leaders of the Congress thought it necessary to establish a Central National College or University (Vidya-Pith) in every province to meet this demand. Accordingly, there was a proposal to start a national college or Vidya-Pith at Lahore, too. Some time before this Lala Lajpat Rai had founded a society known as the Tilak School of Politics. I, too, was one of its Trustees. As a leader of the Non-Co-operation Movement, Lala Ji felt it incumbent on him to go to Jail, and he not only made me the director of the Tilak School but persuaded the Congress to put me in charge of the National College and Vidya Pith. Of course, I had to give lectures to the class every day, but in addition to this I was also responsible for drawing up the whole curriculum for Education for that institution.

Bhai Parmanandji

(Chancellor of National University (Vidya Pith) Punjab.)

More-over, the Lahore Congress Committe had set apart Rs. 75,000/- for purposes of National Education. This sum also was in my charge. The College continued to function from 1921 to 1926 or 1927. Attached to this college was an Industrial School for which a certain generous person had made over Rs, 16,0000/-to the National trust consisting of Lala Ji and myself. Not only this. Two or three years after the foundation of the National College, a national Medical College was also started, and some local medical practitioners, e. g. Dr. Gopi Chand, Dr. Satya Pal and others promised to work on its staff. This college, too, was affiliated to the National University and I was put in charge of this also. The National Industrial School and the National Medical College have a history of their own. But I shall content myself with saying that inspite of my best efforts both these had to be closed on account of bickerings and dissesions among the local congress leaders. As the enthusiasm for the Congress waned, the number of students in the National College dwindled and when we found that no new students sought admission to the institution we had to close it too. In other words, the first period of Congress agitation in the Punjab had come to an end. A hundred or a hundred and fifty students of the National College and the National Medical College were awarded degrees or diplomas by the Vidya Pith. All these bore my signature.

If I took up the work of National Education, it was not because I believed in the Congress Programme, but because some ten or fifteen years earlier I had conceived a hatred for the present system of education. In 1908 Lala Hardayal had writen several articles running down

the present educational system. The material for all these articles was collected and supplied by me. When on the staff of the D. A. V. College, I had an earnest desire to see the college shake off the yoke of the present system of education. But I had to leave the college in 1910 and this desire remained unfulfiled. So when the Congress, led by Mahatma Gandhi took up the cause of education on National lines, naturally all my sympathies were with it. And I did all that I could for it.

The second important part of the Congress programme was purely political. The people were told that if they adopted a particular line of action, they would win Swarajya within one year; I never had the least faith in this and, therefore, did not support this part of the progarmme. In illustration of this contention I shall refer to a small incident. In 1921, the people were in favour of council entry, but the congress declared a boycott of the councils. Pt. Malviya intended to seek election to the Assembly. The Congress leaders wanted to dissuade him from so doing. Lala ji, too, was at first in favour of going to the councils, but later on changed his views and summoned Pt. Malviya to Lahore in order to put pressure upon him and thus prevent him from standing for election to the Assembly. The two great leaders were having a tete-a-tete when I, too, happened to be present. Pt. Malviya remarked that Mahatma Gandhi's promise to win Swarajya in one year was nothing but tall talk, but that there was every hope of India's attaining Swarajya in 5 years' time. Lala ji, however, expressed his disagreement with this view and opined that the conditions in Europe led one to believe that India could not remain a

slave country for more than 10 years. I laughed to myself at this whereupon Lalaji and I had the following words :

Lala Ji :—"Why do you laugh ?"

I :—"You are so amusing."

Lalaji :—"You think our words are wild".

I :—"Unfortunately, yes. I must say I have had greater opportunities than you of studying the English character".

Inspite of my views my sympathies were with the Congress ideal and Congress propaganda. There can be no Indian, much less a Hindu, who does not prefer Self-government to foreign rule in India.

Although I had been working honorarily, and with great zeal and devotion for the National Vidya Pith, yet in 1922, 1923, and 1924 circumstances arose which accentuated still more my differences with the congress policy and programme. I do not want to dwell upon those Hindu Muslim riots (there is a separate book on the subject by me) which began with the Moplah rebellion in Malabar and spread later on to Multan, Saharanpur, Kohat, Calcutta and to nearly all the important towns in India. Probably, it was in the summer of 1923 that I went to Bombay during the college vacation to raise funds for the college and succeeded in collecting five or six thousand rupees. On my return from Bombay, I went to Solan to see Lala Lajpat Rai whose illness had taken him there. While there he received telegrams about the riots at Saharanpur. He gave me Rs. 2,000/- and asked me to proceed to that place. The misery and sufferings of the Hindus there pained me deeply. And when I learnt that the office-bearers of the local Khilafat Committee were responsible

for the riots and the destruction of the lives and property of the Hindus, I was forced to the conclusion that the Khilafat agitation was at the bottom of all Hindu Muslim riots.

That agitation had fanned the flame of religious bigotry and fanaticism in the minds of the Mulsims. It was the simplest thing in the world. Mahatma Gandhi had told the Mohammedans that the Khilafat was in danger and that they should unite against England in defence of their religion. The Government had their answer ready. They had not touched the Sultan of Turkey; and somehow or other put this idea into the head of Mohammedans that the real danger to Islam lay in the playing of bands before mosques and the placing of obstructions in the way of *Tazias* by Hindus. Instead of realising their error and trying to neutralise its effects the Congress leaders took to voicing an absolutely wrong sentiment, that the presence of *goondas* among the two communities was at the bottom of Hindu Muslim roits. Had not the *goondas* been there already? Then, why were there no communal roits before?

On my return to Lahore from Saharanpur I gathered together a small band of youngmen and founded the *Hindu Sangh*. I also framed rules and regulations for it. But since, at about the same time, Swami Shradhanand, Pt. Malviya and other leaders of the Hindus held a conference at Benares, and founded the Hindu Mahasabha, I thought it but wise and proper to join the Hindu Mahasabha movement instead of running a separate *Hindu Sangh*. Need I mention that a little later even Lala Lajpat Rai identified himself with this movement. (?)

XXIII

THE SECOND HALF OF MY NEW LIFE

In this second half of my new life I find a definite ideal before me, the ideal of Hindu Sangathan. The more I studied the weaknesses of the Hindus and the harder I endeavoured to bring union and solidarity among them, the more convinced I became that the work of reform and uplift of the Hindu community was so very difficult that the worker in that field was bound to meet nothing but disappointment. I also came to realise that the founders of the Hindu Mahasabha had been moved by Hindu Muslim roits alone and had looked upon the movement, more or less, as a temporary remedy. On the other hand, the conviction grew upon me that the Hindus were so weak that Hindu Sangathan as a temporary movement could be of no use whatever. If we want to uplift the country, it would be necessary for us to unite Hindus first; and if they cannot unite into one harmonious whole, they can never get Swarajya nor can they ever retain it for a moment if it were given them. As I took my stand on this fundamental principle, my differences with Lala Lajpat Rai grew still more marked. An annual session of the Hindu Mahasabha was held at Delhi in 1935, where I insisted with all the force at my command, that the Hindu Mahasabha should set up

staunch Hindu candidates for election to the councils. Pt. Malviya was whole-heartedly with me, but Lala ji was strongly opposed to this view. At last after a long and heated discussion a compromise was effected, the session agreeing that the Hindu Mahasabha could set up its own candidates whenever they thought necessary.

On the coming out of the Simon Commission to India my differences with the Hindu leaders became still more sharply defined. Before the Simon Commission had left the English shores, Lord Birkenhead, then Secretary of State for India, made a most cunning and diplomatic remark, namely, that Hindus and Muslims could never produce any constitution jointly. The Hindu congressites looked upon this as a challenge and began to cajole the Muslims with a view to making them agree to some joint formula and thus answering the challenge of Lord Birkenhead. Even Pt. Malviya and L. Lajpat Rai were so incensed at the exclusion of Indians from the commission that, regadlesss of all their differences, they went over to and joined forces with Pt. Moti Lala Nehru, and started praising the Nehru Report to the skies. I, however, did not approve of the Nehru Report, and my strongest reason for this was that I felt sure that no amount of yielding on the part of Hindus to the Muslim demands could ever win them over to making common cause with the Hindus. That object could not be gained until and unless a common feeling of partriotism inspired them. To concede to their demands, however unreasonable, was nothing short of bribing them. The Government may succeed in that game, but not the

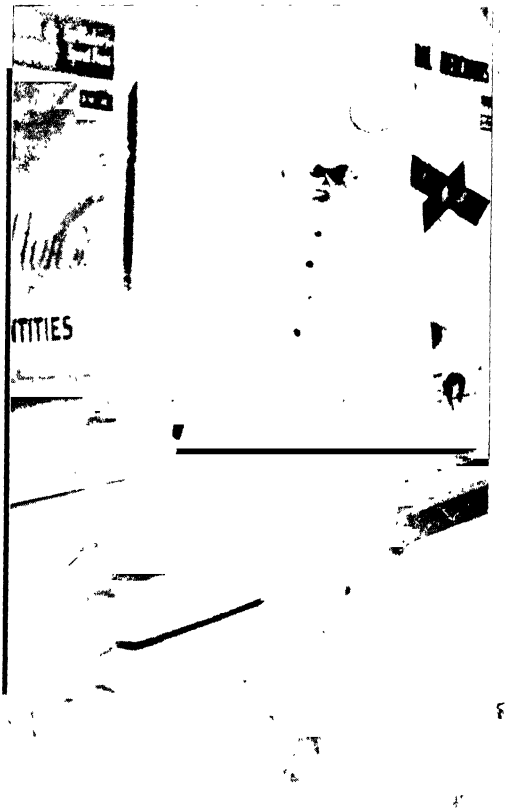
Hindus. For these reasons my differences with Lala Lajpat Rai became so acute that I had to start the "Hindu" in order to place my view before the country.

Pt. Jawahar Lal now started the Independence movement within the Congress. In a year or so Mahatma Gandhi, who at first had looked upon this movement as puerile and childish, not only lent his support to it but began even to lead it. He proclaimed, so to say, a war of independence and once again started the Civil Disobedience movement. During the first phase of this movement, several thousands of men and women went to jails. In the meantime the British Government laid aside the Simon Commission Report and called a Round Table Conference in London. After a few sittings the first R. T. conference was adjourned. We know how the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was concluded, how Mahatma ji was released, and how he again began to persue his old policy. He assured the Mohammedans that he was prepared to accept all their demands provided they agreed to fight along with him in the country's cause. This is known as the offer of a Blank Cheque. When Mahatma ji went to attend the Second Round Table Conference he stuck most stubbornly to this wrong policy of his. By this time there was a change in the Government of England. Instead of the Labour Ministery, the Tory party came into power. The new Government, filled with despair at the Mahatma's attitude, prepared what was known as the Minorities' Pact. According to the terms of this Pact the Premier some time later announced his Communal Award which purported to solve the communal tangle which

was a creation of their own policy.

As soon as Mahatma Gandhi returned from London without achieving anything, he was placed under arrest, and the Civil Disobedience movemont entered upon the second phase of its existence. This time, too, several thousand men as also some women went to Jail. But the Government was bent upon crushing the movement at all cost, and to that end promulgated some Ordinances which later on were passed into laws by the Assembly. The Civil Disobedience movement was a novel experiment altogether and its success was highly uncertain. In such a struggle as this fortune favours that party which possesses patience and endurance in a greater degree and can continue the struggle for a longer time than the other. To go to jails and give trials of their power of endurance was indeed a most difficult task for the people, but the Government could have had no particular difficulties to face in a struggle of this sort. The belief that if we fill the jails, the Government would grow tired of the struggle and accede to our demands was at best but childish.

The result of this policy is too well-known to require mention here. But there is no one thing in this connection which must not be lost sight of. And that is this. The policy of Mahatma Gandhi has brought us a fresh misfortune in the shape of the Communal Award. Mahatma Ji was in jail at the time of the announcement of the Award and he was deeply pained to learn that the untouchables had been granted separate rights and representation. He took a vow to fast unto death, unless the Award in that respect was amended.



Bhai Parmanandji

as a witness before the Joint Parliamentary Committee in London

The result was that Hindu leaders, in their enxiety to save this life, had to lay down their armes and submit to the terms dictated by Dr. Ambedkar. Thus came into being the Poona Pact which only served to embitter the already bitter pill particularly in the case of the Punjab and Bengal.

Today the Communal Award has bocome a matter of life and death to us. For the last 2 or 3 years I have taken upon myself, as a work of paramount importance, the duty of drawing the attention of the Hindus to the injustice done to the Hindus in the Award. I hope I shall not be accused of being conceited when I say that had I not begun and continued this agitation, the Hindus might never have awakened from their lethargy. They might never have thought of the interests which are so vital to their very being.

When this constitution was in the making, I saw that congressmen were really bent upon bringing about a Muslim Raj in the country and that they would not object to any constitution simply on the ground of Muslim weightage in it. Then I felt it necessary that I should go to the Assembly in order to safeguard the rights and interests of the Hindus, and that I should place, from time to time, the Hindu point of view before the Government and the country. To this end I also felt the necessity of going to London and appearing as a witness before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. There I founded the Central Hindu Society of Great Britain. I am proud of the fact that the Hindu public at large appreciated the value and importance of my views and

selected me for presiding over the Ajmer Session of the Hindu Mahasabha.*

In my presidential address I enunciated my views on the conditions through which the country was then passing. At that time many public men and newspapers in the country ran down my views on the ground that I preached Co-operation with the Government as I advised the Hindus to capture the legislatures. But only four months after this these same critics began to subscribe to the same views and came to look upon council-entry as

*In addition to this I was honoured by the Hindu public by being elected to preside over the following occasions:—

1925—Presided over the U. P. Provincial Hindu Conference, Lucknow.
1926—Presided over the Bihar Provincial Hindu Conference, Bhaghalpur.
1927—Presided over the Aryan Congress, Lahore.
1928—Toured for Hindu Sangathan Movement through Assam, Bengal and Burma.
1930—Presided over the Sindh Provincial Hindu Conference, Sukker.
1931—Presided over the Punjab and Frontier Hindu Conference, Lahore.
1931—Presided over the All-India Hindu Youths Conference, Karachi.
1931—Presided over the Bihar Provincial Hindu Conference, Patna.
1932—Presided over the Panjab Pranti Hindi Sahitya Sammellan, Gujranwalla.
1933—Presided over the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Ajmer. After this toured throughout Madras, C. P. Maharashtra, Bengal, Gujrat and U. P.
1933—Presided over the Bengal Hindu Political Conference, Calcutta.

the only political work of any importance. It is my firm conviction that if the Communal Award remains, the way to Swaraj in this country will be closed for ever and Hindus will be subjected to a kind of double slavery.

I have said that I am opposed to the policy of the Congress. It is so not because I am against political agitation, but because most Congressites, inspite of their being members of the Hindu community, are out to destroy Hinduism. Our foreign Government is, no doubt, against us. But more dangerous to us still are those of our fellow countrymen who help our alien Government in their anti-Hindu measures. And, perhaps, the most dangerous of all are some of our Hindu brethren whose appropriate appellation is perhaps serpents-in-the-bosom. They are really cankers of the Hindu Society. Very often am I told that the Congress, inspite of all its defects, has at least done one great good to India. It has brought awakening in the land. But to my mind, this awakening was not so much due to any propaganda on the part of the Congress, but, just as after the Russo-Japanese War a strong wave of Swadeshi and boycott swept over the country in 1905, so also the Great War in Europe brought about a widespread political awakening and created an intense desire for freedom in the masses. Like electric energy, this went on accumulating, and when a chance came, it burst all bounds in the Punjab. It was for the suppression of this that in 1919 the Martial Law was declared in the Punjab. Up till then Mahatma Gandhi himself as well as other Congress leaders not only co-operated with the Government, but actively and fully supported and helped it. Even when the

Congress session was held at Amritsar Mahatmaji was bent upon thanking the Government for the new Reforms. If Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress did anything, it was this: they harnessed that universal sentiment to the service of their own movement, We have already seen what the outcome of that movement has been.

I must refer to another thing directly connected with my own self. I must frankly admit that when I got my release from the Andamans. I promised not to take part in any anarchist or *Ghadar* activities. This molehill was magnified into a mountain by those who had no answer to my arguments. Many Congress journals and several congress leaders and their blind followers went so far as to declare openly that I opposed the Congress merely because I had given that undertaking to the Government. I think it necessary to refer to this matter to clear my position. When I was told that orders for my release had arrived, I had been on hunger-strike for two months, which meant only one thing, that I was sick of life and wanted to make an end of it. Is it fair and honest to say of a man in this frame of mind that he wanted to get some favour from the Government or was prepared to give an undertaking ? When the type-written order was read out to me I could not possibly have made any answer other than the one I actually made. Even in the course of the trial my statement had been that I had never taken the least part in any revolutionary activity.

Even supposing that I intended secretly to join the anarchist movement later on, would any man in his senses

have expected me to have made the statements:—"No, I must identify myself with the Ghadar party, come what may?" Besides this, neither the Non-Co-operation nor the Civil Disobediance Movement had been started then and even when they were, Mahatma Gandhi could carry on his agitation by preaching the doctrine of Non-Violenee, so much so that when Lord Reading wanted to arrest Maulana Mohd Ali, Mahatma Ji not only promised himself but made the Maulana, too, give an undertaking to the Viceroy that they would never make any speeches in favour of violence. But above all, the most important fact to be borne in mind in this connection is that for full six years after my release I ran the institutions started by the Congress. Even then the conditions of my release were to be seen set down in clear terms in my book, but nobody ever dared lay any such charge at my door at that time. I think it is owing to the slave mentality of our countrymen that when they find an opponent too strong for them, they start abusing and vilifying him. What do you think of the degree of moral degradation of a country where such persons as these look upon themselves as patriots and political saviours ?

Only two things degrade a man :—fear and avarice. As for the first, namely fear, I have to say only this, that when in 1909 the first case was instituted against me, the people of Lahore, including my friends and co-workers were so cowed and affrighted that no one would come and see me. I was discharged from the college. Those Congressmen who now impute motives to me had not come into being nor yet their *gurus* and preceptors.

If the fear which then filled all hearts could not affect me, how could I be expected to shudder at the thought of going to jail now when even such persons as have passed all their lives in wine and women could court two or three months' imprisonment and come to be known as fearless and brave patriots? At the time of the pronouncement of judgment in my case I was ready to go to jail for a term of three years. My counsel, L. Raghu Nath Sahay, told the magistrate that people were so frightened that nobody was prepared even to stand security for me. Upon this the magistrate said, "I do not want to send him to jail. Bring any five men and I will accept them as sureties." After this I spent 3 years in U. S. A. and South America, and without any fear did what I could for my country. People who had seen me after my arrest or on my return from America, or in course of the trial or after the sentence of death had been passed upon me, can bear witness to the fact that not even the shadow of fear ever came near me. Not only during those days, but many a time afterwards too, has the depressing thought occurred to me that there are very few in this unhappy land of ours who can show the same fearlessness and indifference to death. No wonder, then, if I have no patience with those callow youths who accuse me of weakness and cowardice!

The second great cause of a man's fall is greed of gold. Need I say that after finishing my education. I was the first man to suggest to Mahatma Hans Raj the desirability of having of an order of life members for the D. A. V. College on the lines of the Poona National

College ? Our highly educated men who have to starve now-a-days in spite of potential abilities or Lawyers for whom it has become difficult to make two ends meet, must bear in mind that the days were different when I joined the group of life members sacrificing my prospects at the altar of Duty. In those days, I, too, could have made money as easily and in heaps as many of my friends and even students have done. Is it not then simply outrageous to ask me, how I came by this or that ? Why do not people ask me, how I managed to supprt myself in England for about two years on Rs. 75/- a month ? How I went to America after the first case against me was over and how I passed three years there ? How on my return to India I managed to invest five or six thousand rupees in a "Dawaigar" (Pharmacy), which was confiscated by the Government in the second case against me ? Last of all I have to say that it is impossible for a man who on account of his greed for money is ready to sell his conscience, to be so magnanimous as to part with all he has got as I have dared to do.

My critics must know that after I had given an undertaking to the Government, there were only two alternatives before me. First, as some of my co-accused and others did; that is, simply to ignore the pledge and take part in anarchist activities; or secondly, as I actually did, to respect my word of honour and refrain from joining revolutionary movements. It can very well be said that if my vow was so sacred to me, I should have lapsed into utter silence and inactivity and not taken part in any movement whatever. Where was the need for me to

raise the flag of Hindu Sangathan and resolve to fight against all forces that barred my way, irrespective of the fact whether that opposition came from the Congress, the Muslims or the Government? Hence if I laid aside my silence and started the Sangathan movement, it was only because I believed that the welfare and salvation of the Hindus lay in it.

XXIV

MY LAST LETTER TO MY WIFE

I feel that the story of my life will not be complete without a brief sketch of the life and character of my life's companion, who suffered with me, and much more than me, during the days of my exile and imprisonment, who had not a penny left her after the forfeiture of my property, but who bore all this cheerfully and with a stiff upper lip and never showed the least sign of weakness during the days of her terrible ordeal. Her unwavering love and devotion, her noble self-sacrifice, her unfaltering patience and courage are undelibly impressed upon my mind. When she was seriously ill, my duty to my country and community called me away to Delhi. From there I wrote her a letter, my last letter to her, which I reproduce here in full.

Assembly Chambers,
New Delhi,
Dated 30th March, 1932.

My Dear,

You have been ailing for some time past. I doubt if these words of mine can relieve your suffering to any extent. But my own heart is heavy and full of pain and it is to lighten it that I write these lines.

Our lives and fortunes have been linked together for the last 35 years. Believe me when I say that there is hardly any person in the world who has been blessed with such a true and devoted friend, as you have proved to me. I am not ignorant of my shortcomings and weaknesses. I have on several occasions lost my temper, but you, in your unbounded love and tolerance, have borne all and never swerved an inch from the path of duty.

You were born at a village in the house of a poor Zamindar. Female education was a thing unheard of in those days. Besides, who could think of educating his child at a small village? But, believe me, whenever I compare your two great virtues of love and tolerance with the accomplishments of educated girls of rich families, my whole soul rises against modern education. It is possible I may be wrong, but I am of opinion that in a poor country like India a girl of a rich family or one educated at a college cannot bring peace and happiness to any household.

However, this is only a digression. I very clearly remember that I was a headmaster at Abbottabad when for the first time you came to live with me. I wanted you to learn the three R's but, on account of the force of habits formed early in life, the spinning wheel and the knitting needle had more attraction for you. One day in anger I flung away your spinning wheel and cast your embroidery into the fire. However, you consented to act upon my advice and began to study regularly. By slow degree and steady progress you

finished the course for the eighth class. Later in life when you fell on evil days of darkness and distress, this little education rendered you and your family such a signal service.

There are two sides to a man's life: his family life and his public life. These exercise an important influence on each other, and a man is truly happy only when both are correctly lived and harmonise with each other. The public life of every person is different from that of his fellow-men and he has to adapt himself to its requirements. But family life is generally the same for us all. However, to manage it properly and thereby make it a means of human happiness is a task at once important and difficult. The highest and most sacred duty before a woman is to help to bring consummation to this side of a man's life. Woman is the Queen of the family. She is the flower of the household. If she does not understand and fulfill this duty, but tries to imitate the men and encroaches upon their sphere she simply wastes her life.

My dear! I look upon you as an ideal woman in this respect. For my part I seldom attended to my duties towards my family. For my public life I had chosen a profession which left me little or no leisure to bestow even a thought on affairs of the household. If, under these circumstances, I have been able to devote myself to the service of my religion and nation, the credit for this must go to you. Our first daughter was born in 1904, In 1905 I had to go to East Africa and then to South Africa to do religious propaganda. I asked

your permission to go there and said, "Our forefathers were mostly soldiers, who had to pass their lives away from home and seldom lived in the midst of their families." With your consent I went to foreign lands. In my absence you lived in contentment and studied the Hindu Scriptures.

Hardly had two years elapsed since my return when the Government instituted the first case against me. In the meantime our second daughter, Savitri, was born. The case against me was proceeding. My connection with the D. A.-V. College had been severed. The people of Lahore avoided us for fear of the authorities. This was the second of the great misfortunes that befell you. The thought of how patiently and courageously you endured all fills me with astonishment and admiration. I was bound over to keep the peace for three years. I should have preferred going to jail to furnishing bail, but some of my Arya Samajist friends forced me not to do so and furnished security themselves. However, I felt anxious for my sureties. Once again I decided to go abroad for three years. This was another ordeal that you had to face. To live alone for a number of years and support and look after two young daughters was a task which required great strength and self-sacrifice. But not a word of complaint escaped your lips and cheerfully did you agree to my going abroad. In my first voyage I had been to Africa and England. This time I passed three years in U. S. A. and in South America.

At the end of 1913 when I returned from abroad I opened a pharmacy on Mohan Lal Road. Fourteen

Late Shrimati Bhagsudhiji
(wife of Bhai Parmanandji)

months after this another great misfortune befell you. Members of the Ghadar Party began to arrive at Lahore. You did not like that anyone of them should come to our place. However, you never expressed your feelings of displeaaure. Their visits to our place bore fruit at last. One day you were cooking and I was taking my meals, when you asked me, "Why are you so gloomy today? What weighs on your mind?" I answered, "This meal is, perhaps, the last I shall have at yours hands."

I had no definite information, but the political situation at that time lent colour to my fears. Some Police Officers came to our house in a tonga and said to me, "You must accompany us. Give your parting message to your family. The charges against you are very grave."

I went upstairs, bade you farewell and cast a longing, loving look at the children. Then I was ready to accompany the Police Officers. Sometime before this our third daughter, Sushilla, had been born. What did the poor innocent girls know as to what was in store for them? They were going to be deprived of their father.

There could be no more terrible ordeal for you than this. It is impossible now to form an idea of the troubles you must have had to face during the seven or eight months the trial lasted. How all alone, with but Sushila in your arms, you waited patiently outside the jail gate to see from a distance your life's companion—now a prisoner—once or twice a week, and how sad and gloomy you must have returned home after an interview lasting for not more than five or six minutes. I don't want to rip

open these sores. How frightened the general public were at that time. Not more than one or two persons sympathised with you. You saw me even after I had been sentenced to death. God alone knows how you must have moved heaven and earth to get the sentence altered. I believe that it was your prayers and devotion that saved me from the gallows. But it made no difference for you. I had to pass five years in the Andamans. If I had anything to worry me in the Cellular Jail, it was the thought of your sufferings. How would you possibly manage to support the three girls ?:—was a thought that often haunted me. You could have got the necessities of life at your village home, but going to live there would have been burying me in oblivion. Therefore you chose to drag on a miserable existence at Lahore and not forgot me. In the jail I had no worries of my own. I used to be kept in my cell for ten or twelve hours, which I spent mostly in sleep, all oblivious of my surroundings. The waking hours were spent partly in work, partly in study. You were the real sufferer, for you had not only to fill your own stomach but to feed three hungry mouths besides, and this when the Government had forfeited every little bit of thing in the house and put to auction even the kitchen utensils and the bed-clothes. I could form some idea of these trying conditions from your letters to me. You wrote to me that you had left your old house and shifted to another with a low rental of three or four rupees a month in the city. When the goods in the house were being seized under orders from the Government, you threw

a quilt on to the roof of an adjacent house so that at least the children might be saved from the cold of the winter night. At this the neighbour began to shout, "What do you do ? Do you want us also to hang ?" What must have been your thoughts and feelings then ? How bitterly you must have realised that friends forsake us in adversity. Inspite of all these trials and troubles, you remained at Lahore so as to be able to make efforts on my behalf. You went to see Mahatma Gandhi, who spoke to Mr. C. F. Andrews. Mr. C. F. Andrews came to Lahore and saw your place of residence and read the letters I had written to you from the jail. He wrote articles about me in the "Tribune". The police reported all this to the authorities of the Andamans Jail. The result was that I was subjected to greater hardships than before. Upon this I resolved to go on hunger strike and thus to end my life. For two months I lay without food till Mr. Andrew's intercession got me my release.

How you passed these five years I know not. You were penniless and destitute and possessed neither money nor goods. Your grievance was that many of our relatives, thinking that I was a lost hope, did not look after you. I know also that when I returned to Lahore from the Andamans, you were working as a teacher in the Wachhowali Kanya Pathshala run by the Anarkali Samaj at about Rs. 20/- p. m. I had come to know that our eldest daughter, Soma, had left this world and left you to weep and pine. Our second daughter, Savitri, was now grown up but was extremely weak having been brought up in the midst of poverty and distress.

Though we bestowed every possible care on her for the next few years, she found an early grave. To live in Lahore and to have only Rs. 15/- a month.! You must have been endowed by God with a rare courage and power of endurance which enabled you to face such hardships. For about ten months after my release you continued to work in the school though you had to attend to all household duties, including cooking. But now that I was near, all this labour was no less than the joys of paradise to you. People often question me. "How did you manage to save so much money as to be able to build yourself a house and to meet other expenses too ?" I would tell them that there need be no dearth of money in a house where there is such a devoted manager as yourself. A penny saved is a penny gained. I spent thousands in travels and voyages abroad, but never felt the need for a servant when I was at home. When after having a house of your own, you found it necessary to keep a cow or a buffalo, you not only looked after the children and cooked a food for the whole house, but gave fodder to the animals, milked them and churned the milk yourself. Could there be anything more surprising than your being able to attend to all these duties yourself ?

Before this when we had no cow or buffalo in the house you thought it your duty to ply the spinning wheel and prepared yarn sufficient for providing all members of the household with Khaddar. During the last 12 years after my release I have not worn a single shirt which was not made from the yarn spun with your own

hands. Not only this. I have not used a single shirt which was not sewn by you.

Besides, I never felt the necessity for engaging a washerman to wash my clothes, for you performed that labour at home. Your devotion and diligence made my house a veritable Paradise on earth. If you had sprung from an aristocratic family or had been educated at some high school, how difficult, if not impossible, it would have been to manage our household even for a single day. I found in you an ideal wife and ideal mother. I believe that a woman who keeps such an ideal before her is not only happy herself but brings happiness to her family too.

On my return from the Andamans another daughter was born to us. During the Non-Co-operation days I came across Dharm Vir. I proposed to adopt him as my son. After having obtained your consent I appealed to his father, L. Kanshi Ram. He, too, agreed to my proposal. You kept Dharm Vir in the house as if he were your own son. Two years after this God blessed you with a son of your own. Now I said to you, "As I do not believe in castes and as we have taken Dharm Vir for our son let him still be our son, though only a little different in relationship". This time, too, you fell in with my plans. I must thank Dharm Vir and Soshila for the love and devotion with which they are serving you during your prolonged illness, even though I know they are only doing their duty

I remain,
For ever your loving admirer,
BHAI PARAMANAND.

Printed by Pt. Bhim Sen Vidyalankar

AT

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LAHORE.

ERRATA

Page	Para	Line	Wrong	Correct
1	1	3	maiden	maidan
3	4	4	sentinals	sentinels
4	2	6	whom	and whom
13	2	5	some	somewhat
14	2	16	elements	element
15	2	last	keep up	keep awake
16	2	5	bail	ball
,,	,,	11	practice	practise
,,	,,	19	practicing	practising
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23	1	4	Patman	Petman
25	2	9	also t	also I
26	2	8	dumb-drived	dumb-driven
,,	,,	17	loaf	quantity
27	3	1	t shall	I shall
28	1	9	having	having had
,,	,,	18	would be	I would be
31	1	3	conforts	comforts
35	2	9	Goveanment	Government
39	2	2	Ajit Siagh	Ajit Singh
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44	2	2	may	my
46	1	13	to go America	to go to America
48	2	8	a English	an English
,,	2	12	exists	exist
58	2	3	decree	degree
61	1	16	there	their
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67	1	17	idia	idea
69	1	2	theater	theatre
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71	I	5	far	for
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76	1	9	Dinanath	Dinanaths
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78	III	1	kept	slept

Page	Para	Line	Wrong	Correct
82	4	2	Bringing	Bring
84	2	12	fins	fine
85	1	4	this	his
86	2	2	officers	offices
88	3	11	here	hear
"	"	14	sentence	sentences
"	"	last	sentinals	sentinels
89	4	7	other	others
91	1	10	sorrow	sorrows
94	1	6	frevolous	frivolous
"	2	3	at one...and the	at once...and in the
96	3	5	to established	to establish
99	1	1	neck	necks
103	3	5	Jawa	Java
107	1	9	inform	infirm
109	1	21	ladleful *dal*	ladleful of *dal*
111	2	4	omes	comes
113	2	4	both call	both calls
114	2	12	for us	for use
117	1	3	pot	put
"	3	2	*taadeels*	*tandeels*
118	1	4	ould	could
120	1	6	effect	affect
"	1	12	harash	harsh
121	1	2	be	he
"	2	3	very conceivable	every conceivable
122	1	1	carving	craving
"	2	4	to special	no special
123	1	8	given up	gave up
124	2		as	at
"	"	13	amongest	amongst
125	1	3	warder	warders
"	2	1	months	month
126	2	6	man a his	man his
"	3	1	successfull	successful
127	1	8	involve	evolve
"	"	29	whom their	when their
129	1	13	by	lay
"	"	last	unpalalable	unpalatable
130	2	2	men	man
131	1	14	such and	some
134	5	1	means refreshing	means of refreshing
135	1	3	There	Their
"	2	6	shart	short
137	1	1	is new	is a new
138	2	6	taste	tease
139	1	15	practice	practise
"	2	2	biscussed	discussed
142	2	3	became	become

Page	Para	Line	Wrong	Correct
,,	,,	6	menage	manage
143	2	4	then	than
,,	,,	5	a way	away
,,	,,	13	diease	disease
,,	,,	15	perverity	perversity
145	1	2	arm of leg	arm or leg
147	4	1	ever	even
148	1	3	valve	value
,,	,,	5	there	their
,,	2	6	,,	,,
,,	3	3	hundered	hundred
149	1	1	free	flee
,,	,,	11	of	on
,,	2	13	jealously	jealousy
150	1	4	simples	simplest
151	1	10	statiou	station
156	1	18	made	mad
157	3	10	it up	lit up
158	2	1	changs	changes
162	2	1	few	new
164	1	12	give	gave
166	2	5	had	hand
170	3	10	a flattery	to flattery
171	1	2	apeals	appeals
173	3	2	began	begun
175	1	18-19	after founded	after his death; where Gulab Singh, a common soldier, founded.
176	1	2	fire are not	fire not
181	2	2	pnblic	public
,,	,,	19	the the people	the people
181	2	10	shouldering	smouldering
183	1	2	then	than
187	1	3	devided	divided
,,	,,	8	If	It,
,,	,,	14	in trying	in my trying
192	3	2	Educational	Education
193	1	1	committe	committee
,,	1	6	Rs. 16,0000/-	Rs. 160,000/-
197	,,	23	1935	1925
199	2	14	persue	pursue
200	3	2	is no one	is one
201	1	2	this	his
,,	,,	,,	armes	arms
205	1	6	Non Vioienee	Non-Violence
216	1	20	cooked a food	cooked food