

**Punjab Unrest**

**Before & After**

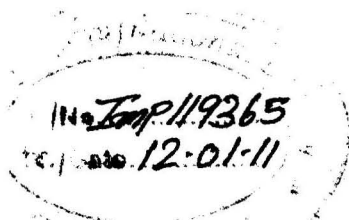
# PUNJAB UNREST BEFORE & AFTER

2nd Edition

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# CONTENTS.

## PART I

	page.
<i>Introduction</i>	7
History of the Rowlatt acts ...	9
Rowlatt Committee Recommendations ...	13
Hon. Khaparde's Resolution ...	14
The Rowlatt Bill in the Imperial Council ...	16
Views of Sir Narayan Chandavarkar ...	17
Chronicle of Events ...	26
The Great Satyagraha Agitation ...	33
The Satyagraha Vow ...	34
Dr. Subrahmanya on Satyagraha ...	35
Satyagraha expounded by Gandhi ...	37
Gandhi declares Hartal on 6th April ...	42
Laws of civil disobedience ...	47
The Flames of Riot and Rebellion ...	49
The Great Delhi Riot of 30th March '19 ...	51
Swami Sradhananda's Account ...	54
Government Account of Delhi Disturbances ...	58
Col : Beadon's Conduct at Delhi ...	61
Satyagraha Sabha's Reply to Col Beadon ...	62
The All India Hartal of 6th April 1919 ...	68
Michael O' Dwyer's Insulting speech to Punjab Leaders ...	79
Deportation of Mahatma Gandhi ...	80
Riots in Lahore ...	82
Deportation of Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew ...	83
Riots and Incendiarism in Amritsar ...	84
Punjab Government Communique ...	89
Martial Law in the Punjab ...	91
Government of India Communique on Punjab Disturbances ...	92
Riots and Incendiarism at Ahmedabad ...	95
Mahatma Gandhi back at Bombay ...	98
Sir R. N. Tagore's letter to Gandhi ...	101
Delhi between 10 th and 19th April ...	103
Riot at Calcutta ...	111
State of Punjab after 11th April ...	119
Martial Law Orders ...	128



## PART II.

### Proceedings of the Imperial Council.

	Page
<b>The Criminal Law Amendment Bill</b>	
Bill No I of 1919 ... ..	iii
<b>The Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill</b>	
Bill No II of 1919 ... ..	vi
<b>The Rowlatt Bill Debate in Imperial Council on 6th Feb. '19</b>	1
Sir William Vincent's Speech ... ..	1
Mr. Patels' Speech ... ..	7
Mr. S. N. Banerjee's Speech ... ..	9
Mr. Chanda's Speech ... ..	12
Mr. Jinnah's Speech ... ..	15
Pundit Malaviya's Speech ... ..	24
Mr. Lovatt's Speech ... ..	47
Dr. Sapru's Speech ... ..	53
Mr. Khaparde's Speech ... ..	55
Mr. Shaf's Speech ... ..	56
Sir G. Lowndes' Speech ... ..	57
Mr. Sarma's Speech ... ..	64
Mr. Sastri's Speech ... ..	71
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ... ..	80
<b>The Rowlatt Bill Debate in Imperial Council Feb. 10th '19</b>	84
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ... ..	84
Mr. Patel's Speech ... ..	85
Dr. Sapru's Speech ... ..	85
Mr. Chanda's Speech ... ..	86
Pundit Malaviya's Speech ... ..	87
Sir G. Lowndes' Speech ... ..	87
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ... ..	88
<b>Select Committee Report on Rowlatt Bill</b>	89
<b>Majority Note of Dissent on Rowlatt Bill</b>	95
Nawab Nawab Ali's Note ... ..	97
Mr. Khaparde's Note ... ..	98
Mr. Patel's Note ... ..	101
Pundit Malaviya's Note ... ..	106
<b>The Rowlatt Bill Debate on Select Committee's Report</b>	113
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ... ..	114
Mr. Banerjee's Speech ... ..	117
Mr. Ironside's Speech ... ..	121
Mr. Jinnah's Speech ... ..	122
Mr. Sastri's Speech ... ..	123

	Page
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ...	124
Debate on the Amended Rowlatt Bill ...	128
The Passage of Rowlatt Bill No. I ...	147
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ...	147
Mr. Patel's Speech ...	148
Mr. Banerjee's Speech ...	150
Mr. Sastri's Speech ...	151
Sir V. Lovett's Speech ...	153
Mr. Hogg's Speech ...	153
Pt. Malaviya's Speech ...	154
Mr. Chanda's Speech ...	156
Dr. Sapru's Speech ...	157
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ...	158
The Indemnity Bill ...	159
The Preamble and the Act ...	159
Objects and Reasons ...	160
Debate on the Indemnity Bill, 18th September 1919 ...	161
Sir W. Vincent's Speech ...	161
Mr. Chanda's Speech ...	174
Sirdar Sunder Singh's Speech ...	187
Pundit Malaviya's Speech ...	189

## APPENDIX.

Hon. Pt. Malaviya's Questions re Martial Law in the Punjab	1
Extracts from Evidence before Hunter Committee	
Evidence of Mr. Barron ...	25
Evidence of Mr. Yule ...	30
Evidence of General Brockman ...	31
Evidence of Mr. Currie ...	34
Evidence of Mr. Jeffreys ...	39
Evidence of Principal Rev. Rndra ...	42
Evidence of Hakim Ajmal Khan ...	46
Evidence of Mr. Irving ...	49
Evidence of Genl. Dyer ...	77
Evidence of Mr. Marsden ...	105
Evidence of Capt. Doveton ...	116
Evidence of Sardar Amar Singh ...	129
Evidence of Colonel O'Brien ...	130
Evidence of Mahatma Gandhi ...	139

	Page.
<b>The Secretary of State's Despatch on the Report of</b>	
the Hunter Committee	153
<b>The Hunter Report—a Synopsis</b>	163
<b>The Majority Report of the Hunter Committee</b>	167
<b>The Minority Report</b>	177
General Observations	177
On Martial Law and State of things in the	
Punjab Districts	190
Nine Reasons of Sir M. O'Dwyer	199
The Jhallianwala Massacre	212
Administration of Martial Law	223
Armoured Trains and Aeroplanes	224(n)
Courts under Martial Law	224(x)
<b>Punjab Disturbances in the House of Commons—</b>	
Interpellations	225(a)
Sir M. O'Dwyer's letter to Mr. Montagu	225(f)
Sir W. Holderness's letter	225(i)
<b>The Amritsar Debate in the H. of Commons</b>	225
Mr. Montagu's Speech	225
Sir Edward Carson's Speech	229
Mr. Churchill's Speech	233
Mr. Asquith's Speech	239
Sir Hunter Weston's Speech	241
Sir W. Joynson-Hicks' Speech	243
Brigadier Genl. Surttee's Speech	245
Col. Wedgwood's Speech	246
Mr. Clynes' Speech	247
Mr. Bonar Law's Reply	248
<b>The O'Dwyer Outburst—</b>	251
Sir Michael's Campaign in England	251
Mr. Basir's Reply to the O'Dwyer allegations	262
<b>The Dyer Debate in the House of Lords</b>	266
Lord Finlay's Motion	266
Lord Sinha's Speech	267
Lord Curzon's Speech	268
Lord Milner's Speech	268
<b>The Amritsar Debate—a Pen-picture</b>	
<b>The Naidu-Montagu Controversy</b>	
<b>The Question of Impeachment of Dyer and O'Dwyer</b>	
Opinion of Leading Counsel	

## Introduction

The late unhappy disturbances in the Punjab owe their origin, as is now well known, ostensibly to the Rowlatt Act, or the Black act as it is more popularly called in this country, but the root-cause lies very deep in the system and procedure of Government on one side and popular institutions on the other. The ground of quarrel was this: Government said that they must have repressive powers to enable them to carry on the government; Indian leaders said that that was an insult to India which she did not merit after what she had done in the late War; that India had had enough of repression and the conclusion of peace was looked forward for ameliorating measures and not unnecessary repression. Had the issue been really so simple the solution would have been soon found, but there was in reality much behind the open protestations on both sides. On one side victory gave scope for the vent of an arrogant superiority long nurtured by tradition but kept in needy restraint before the German menace, and on the other the final triumph of a good cause against the bad, as demonstrated in the late war, heartened even the most timid to assert his due even unto bitter struggle and suffering.

Indian political history in the first half of this decade and back is a history of anarchism, that of the second, the history of repression. Anarchism in India in recent years has been the effect of derelict aspirations following an ideal of nationhood evolved out of economic and racial cornering by the world at large. As time wears on the underlying idea is spreading over the masses and percolating through the classes. Repression has been the result of want of agility in a "too wooden, too iron, too antediluvian" government to take the lead and anticipate the next move in a self-conscious India. An alien government steadily grown to power by force of arms deals with the people as if they are so many masses of human flesh and can not catch the spirit which humanises them. Power, especially when it is well-established, curiously enough fails to appreciate generosity and do justice until it spends itself. It is impossible to dethrone it unless it has to lie down perforce through sheer exhaustion. Thus the Kaiser was never conquered; he spent himself. Perhaps this explains why in India acts of justice and generosity never come unless in the heels of dire calamity. In Bengal the Curzonian policy of *"divide et impera"*

lashed up the people into a state of frenzy, and this was met by that type of ruthlessness which is better known as Fullerism in East Bengal. It was after the full force of repression was spent upon dismembered Bengal that the cruel wrong was righted and the Royal annulment of the partition brought in its train many generous acts of His Majesty towards his Indian subjects. In the events of the Punjab which is engaging public attention now many months we see the same tale retold, though now with a vehemence and fleetness reminiscent of Prussianism and its collapse. The following pages give a cursory view of the events which led up to the Rowlatt Act and the agitation which it brought forth ending with the lamentable events of the Punjab of last April.

The year 1916 is memorable in the history of Indian Politics. That year saw the union of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, the two great political organisations of the country voicing the inchoate political consciousness of the people. The joint sessions of the Congress and the League held at Lucknow put forth identical demands for a constitution of India based partly on the Dominion principle of Self-Government. About this time Europe was tasting the "Mailed fist" of the Kaiser and the British Empire was perilously threatened. The Dominions rallied to the Mother-Country, and India rallied to Britain no less. At one stage it was only the Indian army which saved the British lines by taking the German thrust upon itself. India's loyal response to the Empire's call aroused a grateful echo in the hearts of the British Public, and British Ministers solemnly pledged the Empire's gratitude. All this mighty effort on the part of the Empire required some catch word and platitudes to keep it going; and such words as 'self-determination', 'right is might', 'inviolability of small nations', 'scrap of paper', etc, came to be freely bandied. Questions of readjustment often arose,—some relating to post warschemes to suit a better world, and some to settle the relationship between the Dominions and Britain. Indian political thought naturally bent inwards and there came to be a searching for India's position in the new world-adjustment. In this atmosphere was conceived the Indian Home Rule Movement which spread very fast in Madras under Mrs. Besant, and in Bombay and the Central Provinces under Lokmany a Tilak. From all sides public consciousness as to India's legitimate position in the Empire was rising, and it was quite apparent that this rising tide had somehow to be met by those in charge of India's destiny. Towards the close of 1916 nineteen Indian members of the Viceroy's legislative Council formulated a demand on behalf of India of a definite constitution based on the idea of Dominion Self-Government. This is now famous as the "Memo. of the Nineteen." The Congress and the League were at the back and so too the Home-Rule movement.

Immediately after the Lucknow *entente* of the Congress and the League, the Home Rulers pressed their campaign so vigorously that in a short time the whole country was organised into formidable camps of propaganda. More and more the public came to know how the Allies were avowedly fighting in defence of the rights of small and weak nations, how the world was going to accept the creed of self-determination for all nations, big or small, how democracy and government by popular opinion was to be adopted every where; and people queried "where is India?" The humiliating treatment of Indians in the British Colonies, specially in the Cape and Canada, were brought in sad contrast to India's huge and devoted contribution to the war.

In the turmoil of war and the ever-threatening German invasion government lost their balance. There was disorganisation on all sides, there was bungling in every department, and the blunt Briton went about his business as tactlessly as ever. The high tide of Indian aspirations met not vents for their partial realisation but infructuous and illtimed advice, rebuke, and repression. Early in 1917 Government published the long expected Report of the Public Services Commission. From the Indian view point it was a miserable and miserly document not worth a hundredth part of the time and money spent on it. Mr (now Sir) Justice Abdur Rahim who sat on the commission wrote a very lengthy Note of Dissent setting out in the main all that Indian policy had been demanding for the last few years. About this time came to light the notorious Mesopotamian muddle. The Indian Expeditionary force in Mesopotamia was under the Govt. of India, but such was the confusion into which that affair was kept that the whole army broke down and had to retire before the enemy. A Commission was duly appointed and it scathingly attacked the Govt. of India. The matter was the subject of heated debate in the House of Commons. It was in this debate that Mr. Montagu, then an unofficial M. P. delivered his historic indictment of the Govt. of India: "The Govt. of India is too wooden, too iron, too inelastic, too antediluvian, to be of any use for modern purposes." In that Report Commander Wedgwood, M. P. who was a member of the Commission, strongly advocated a complete Home Rule for India as the only way to stop the unpardonable mismanagement of important affairs of State. Needless to say the Report was a triumph to Indian Home Rulers and vindicated their propaganda in a very convincing manner.

While the Home Rule propaganda was spreading and getting accession of strength from within and outside, riots took place in Behar in the indigo districts. The European planters had for some time past been levying oppressive taxes on the indigo-cultivators who in despair adopted passive resistance on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi himself went to Champaran

to enquire into the grievances of the ryots but the European Magistrate of the place imprisoned him for reasons best known to himself. This act of flagrant high-handedness at once roused the whole country and there was such an agitation over the affair that the Behar Govt. had to accommodate the Mahatma, appoint a committee of enquiry and ameliorate the conditions of the ryots. Closely following upon this agitation was one raised by an intemperate, sordid and undignified attack on Indian Morals by the European Principal of the Presidency College, Calcutta, in a speech delivered to his students on a social function.

While there was no one in authority in India to grasp the situation and lead the growing storm into a worthy channel the reactionary and highly unsympathetic Governments of Madras and Punjab delivered in the middle of the year 1917 ill-conceived attacks on the Home Rule Movement. This gave rise to a suspicion that Government was about to embark upon a campaign of repression with the object of stampeding all political life. Nor was the apprehension altogether unfounded. For, on May 14th 1917 Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, once more warned political agitators and a month later, on June 10th, he interned Mrs. Besant with her coadjutors, Messrs Arundale and Wadia.

This was quite an unexpected shock, and the effect, far from being what was desired by the government, was to stiffen the resolve of the Home Rulers to fight out once for all the question whether self-government was a legitimate aspiration for India or not. Unfortunately for Government Mrs. Besant had a following and an influence far beyond official ken, and such a storm was raised over this act (not only in India but also in England and America) that soon all shades of political opinion in the country united to make a solid stand against this policy of government. Sir Subramanya Aiyar, the venerable ex-Chief-Justice of Madras, who had since joined the Home Rule movement as its president, wrote to President Wilson of America, complaining bitterly of the system of Government in India where the people are "held in chains, forbidden to express publicly our desire for the ideals presented in your famous war message", where "officials of an alien nation, speaking a foreign tongue, force their will upon us; they sap us of our wealth, refuse us education, impose crushing taxes without our consent, cast thousands of our people into prison for uttering patriotic sentiments." As a recent instance of misrule the internment of Mrs. Besant, without charges and without trial, shortly after "printing and circulating your war message" was mentioned, and the letter concluded with an appeal that he would "so completely convert England to your ideals of world liberation" that India may freely lend assistance in the war.

## INTRODUCTION

II

This letter was transmitted to President Wilson in July 17 through Mr. and Mrs Henry Hotchner, American tourists in India, was published in America about September next, and created a world sensation.

With such a tension in the political atmosphere is to be coupled the most wide-spread and uncompromising internment policy of the Government. In the midst of a great War Government could not with clear conscience permit the raising of popular feeling on abstruse political dogmas. But it was helpless before the cascade of events which came from unexpected quarters to prove its utter obesity with matters quite incompatible with a new world created by the war. Up and down India feeling ran high for the great number of young educated Indians interned under the the Defence of India Act, and this gradually came more and more to stand in the way of effective recruiting campaign of the Government.

By this time the agitation over the Mesopotamian Campaign in England had led Mr Chamberlain, the Secy of State, to resign his office and Mr. Montagu, who but a month ago had castigated the Government of India, became Secy of State for India. Soon after he made the famous Declaration of 20th Aug. 1917 enunciating the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to India. The result of this was quickly seen in the shape of cleavages in the heretofore solid phalanx of Indian Nationalists. It satisfied a small section of the people who formed themselves into a Moderate party on Sept 15th. The Government of India acting on the advice of the Secy. of State removed the restrictions placed upon Mrs. Besant and her lieutenants by Lord Pentland of Madras.

While the political atmosphere of India was gradually clearing from circumstances arising out of the war, over which neither the Government nor the people had any control, the extensive internment policy of the Government was slowly driving it to an inevitable course of action. With the war in hand, with the rising tide of popular discontent over the internments obstructing recruitment, with the persistent moderate demand for a high and trustworthy committee to enquire into internments and into the dark and shadowy activities of the C. I. D., Government had no other course but to appoint the now famous Rowlatt Committee in the hope of satisfying public opinion that the internments were really backed by a sufficiency of evidence. From time to time both the Government of India and the Government of Bengal had been urging the fullest assurance that the internments were made after the most careful consideration by the Executive councils and that orders were passed after the most searching enquiries. These, however, failed to



shake popular belief founded on the first-hand knowledge of the people of the character and propensities of their own countrymen serving in the police. The Government of India at last decided in December 1917 to appoint an authoritative committee to investigate in the fullest manner possible all the evidence bearing upon the Sedition Movement in India. The Committee appointed included Mr. Justice Rowlatt, a Judge of the Supreme Court of Judicature in England, as president, the Chief Justice of Bombay, a puisne Judge from Madras, a Bengali lawyer and an I. C. S. The Committee was directed to (1) investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India, and (2) to examine and consider the difficulties that had arisen in dealing with such conspiracies and to advise as to the Legislation if any necessary to enable Government to deal effectively with them.

For a time the Moderates just crystallising were jubilant and self-congratulating on their achievement. They plumed themselves on having induced Government to bend to their wishes in appointing the committee. The Nationalist party, however, always suspicious of the motive of Government, disseminated the idea that the Committee was merely a move to justify the internments and to find an excuse for perpetuating in some permanent form the Defence of India Act to enable the officials to continue to exercise the extensive arbitrary and emergency powers acquired during the war. This suspicion came to be confirmed when the Committee, the personnel of which was strongly criticised as pro-Govt. and unreliable, began to work behind the public, *in camera*. It held its sittings in Calcutta, except only a very few in Lahore, examined only a few witnesses whose names and antecedents were not disclosed, presumably, it was alleged, on the recommendations of the police, and had nothing to go upon but the unattested and un-cross-examined statements and reports prepared by the Secret Service and officials. The Moderates also had their misgivings as to the result of such an enquiry. They could not however fall foul of a thing of their own seeking and had an altogether uneasy conscience not knowing their own mind, and seemed to think better of the coming Reforms on which they had pinned their great faith.

After her release Mrs. Besant turned her boundless enthusiasm and resources towards the less fortunate internees. Of these the case of Messrs. Muhamad Ali and Saukat Ali were strongly agitating public mind and embittering Moslem feeling. Govt. however proved inexorable. The cruel treatment of other internees brought to light by Mrs. Besant served further to accentuate bitterness against the Govt., especially of its C. I. D. branch, and by the end of December 1917 the one figure which commanded the love and esteem of whole

India was that of Mrs. Besant. By an unprecedented and overwhelming majority she was returned President of the National Congress at Calcutta and its deliberation showed that the majority was determined to disseminate extreme political views. Mr. Montagu, the Sec. of State, who had some time before come to India in connection with the Declaration of 20th Aug. was going to close his interviews by the middle of January. But more than the Montagu mission the internments continued to agitate popular mind throughout the length and breadth of the country.

Cases of suicide, cases of insanity, of torture, of hunger-strike, of death from phthisis, and similar inhumanities, amongst the internees came to light, and to crown all, the harrowing tales of the Sindhubalas in the February following struck the already stricken people of Bengal dumb with amazement. (For the political history of this period see the Indian Annual Register 1919). For once all shades of opinion coalesced in condemnation of such inequities, not excluding most Anglo-Indians, and very weighty committees for protecting the Civil Rights of the King Emperor's subjects were formed in Bengal and Madras.

On April 15th 1918 the Rowlatt Committee submitted its report and the Government of India published it with some elisions soon after the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. As expected the report was a complete justification of the Government. It proved that the ordinary provisions of the law were entirely unsuitable for a situation such as Government had been called upon to face in India at the beginning of the war. It recommended the enactment of special measures to deal with the situation when the Defence of India Act ceased to operate. As with all restrictive committees sitting in secret, so with this committee, the situation which it found was that which they were made to see and on that view it did what was most natural under the circumstances. It recommended (1) punitive measures, viz. those meant to secure the conviction of offenders and (2) preventive measures intended to check the spread of conspiracy and the commission of crime.

While Indians resented the Rowlatt recommendations and felt aggrieved over Government attitude, the Anglo-Indians were hilarious with joy and made political capital of the matter as an argument against giving any generous reforms to the children of the soil. The findings were made the basis of extensive propaganda work both in England and in India to discredit the Secretary of State for inaugurating a scheme of Reforms for India and to "whittle down" the proposal made in the Montagu-Chelmsford Report. The systematic campaign of Lord Sydenham and coterie, backed by the Anglo-Indian associations of India, trying with their enormous resources to prejudice Britons, especially Members of Parliament, against Indian

Reforms, alarmed all sections of the people, and exasperated the educated Indians for being thus most systematically and meanly abused in the English Press.

The Rowlatt Report was subsequently backed by the issue of another report containing the results of similar investigations conducted in the dark by a committee consisting of Mr. Justice Beachcroft, a Calcutta judge, and Sir Narayan Chandravarkar, the eminent ex-judge of Bombay. This Committee was specially appointed to enquire into the cases of the Bengal Internees. It vindicated the policy of the Government from materials placed at its disposal by officials and decided that in 800 out of 806 cases there was every ground for detention, and the remaining persons were discharged, "not because their innocence was established, but because the orders against them were not supported by adequate evidence."

The findings of the Rowlatt Committee were bitterly resented by Indians of all shades of opinion. The common ground of complaint was that it was one-sided, and the strongest objection was taken to a callous statement about the disbanded Indian soldiers, "of whom there will be large numbers, especially in the Punjab, and among whom it may be possible to stir up discontent." Gracious sentiment for services gloriously rendered!

On September 23rd 1918, the Hon'ble Mr. Khaparde moved a resolution in the Imperial Council, Simla, that "This Council recommends to the Governor-General in Council that the consideration and disposal of the Rowlatt report be kept in abeyance, and that a thorough and searching enquiry be under taken by a mixed Committee of an equal number of officials and non-official Indians into the working of the Criminal Investigation Department, including the Central Intelligence Department."

In moving the resolution Mr. Khaparde's object was to stay proceedings on the Rowlatt Report and also to have a public enquiry into the papers and reports of the Secret Service upon which the Rowlatt Report was based but which Govt. refused to make public. His complaint was that the enquiry of the committee was conducted *in camera*, in secret, and as such, whatever the eminence or impartiality of the judges, human nature being what it is, their findings, based on the one-sided evidence of the officials, can never command public confidence.

In the discussion that followed the official members, chiefly Sir Michael O'Dwyer and Sir W. Vincent, greatly warmed up against the motion and, as usual, spoke eloquently on the services rendered by the Secret service. Without it the machinery of Government, said they, would have been greatly damaged. But none could meet the mover's arguments. And while the officials

were angry because their pet child, the Secret Service, was proposed to be enquired into, the attitude of the most important non-official members, such as Messrs. Sastri, Bannerjea, and Sapru—leaders of the Moderate party—was non-committal. They were heart and soul with the Constitutional Reforms for which they were straining every nerve to put forth the greatest fighting strength, and did not care much about the Rowlatt business. Perhaps they did not also want to irritate the officials who, it was well known, were very keen on the Rowlatt Report. The result was that save one member (the Hon. B. D. Sukul) nobody supported and voted with the mover and the resolution was defeated by 46 to 2 !

### PUNJAB BEFORE 1918.

Prior to 1905 the Punjab was as quiet and somnolescent as any Bureaucracy could wish. Public life began to stir first in 1905 amongst the educated classes over the question of the Bengal Partition—that piece of Curzonian folly of outraging Nationality which inflamed nationalist sentiment throughout India in one leap. Shortly after the Punjab Govt. passed the Colonization bill depriving at one stroke the long vested interests of Indian settlers in areas once desolate but transformed into the most beautiful spot in the province by their own industry. A strong agitation followed and this was suppressed by force; the editor of the "Punjabee," the Indian paper which advocated the cause of the wretched settlers, was convicted and sent to jail. In 1907 riots occurred in Lahore and Rawalpindi, people came in conflict with the police and were put down with a force stronger than the occasion required. Without any amelioration a campaign of repression followed which made no difference between high and low, neither between legitimate and illegitimate grievance. Any thing short of fawning, adulation and sycophancy was read as sedition. Prominent men, leaders of the public, whose only fault was a worthy moral courage, Lala Hansraj Sawhney, Lajpat Rai, and Ajit Singh were deported. And for a time repression triumphed and justified itself by killing all political agitation on the surface during the years 1910-13. Such was Punjab as handed over to Sir Michael O' Dwyer by Sir Denzil Ibbetson. In 1914 occurred the sad Komagatu Maru affair and the Budge Budge shooting. Several hundreds of Punjabees, rendered homeless and hopeless by the colonization bill, were obliged to leave their mother country and embarked for Canada, lured by the roseate prospect of abundant wages and work. They were however not allowed to land by the Canadian Govt. who have their own laws prohibiting Asiatic immigrants. The Punjabees were packed back to India. They were coming with despair in their hearts and a careless spirit of revolt born of that. Reaching India they were not allowed to land; most of them were suspects in the eyes of the

Govt. who had in their wisdom in the meantime passed the Ingress into India Ordinance, restricting the liberty of any person entering India. They landed as prisoners and were kept in camp at Budge Budge, near Calcutta, under armed guard in readiness for being taken over to their Province and interned there. Exasperated by continued ill treatment, tortured all round by adverse circumstances created as popularly alleged by the Punjab Govt., which however, to say the least, had done not a particle of good towards their own subjects, these sturdy men of the Punjab—the finest specimens of the Aryan race—lost their head, broke loose into revolt, and the unfortunate Budge Budge riot was the result.

“The “Komagata Maru” episodes marked the recrudescence of unrest in the Punjab and afforded a pretext to Sir Michael O’Dwyer to ask for more “effective power” from the unwilling Government of Lord Hardinge. During 1914 and the early part of 1915 insistent demands continued to be made for a “carte blanche” to deal with the situation and a draft ordinance of a drastic character was submitted to the Government of India for approval and promulgation. At last Lord Hardinge was compelled to yield and the Defence of India Act which substantially embodied the provisions of this draft ordinance was hurriedly passed through the Indian Council. How this “essential war measure” has been used not only in the Punjab but other provinces as well, to deal with matters wholly unconnected with the war, we all know. Sir Michael O’Dwyer was not slow to utilise it and soon after reported its “salutary effect” to the Government of India.

“The years 1915 to 1917 were occupied with various conspiracy trials by special tribunals constituted under the Defence of India Act. The vernacular press was ruthlessly suppressed and hundreds of persons were interned under the Defence of India Act or the Ingress Ordinance. It was during this period that Lokamanya Tilak and Srijit Bepin Chandra Pal were prohibited from entering the province lest they should introduce the virus of Home Rule here.” ( From Congress Presidential Address, Amritsar, by Pt. M. Nehru ).

Upon the Rowlatt Bill no better commentary from the Indian view-point can be presented than that of the venerable jurist Sir Narayan Chandravarkar of Bombay, which is reproduced with humble acknowledgments in the following pages.

## Sir Narayan Chandravarkar on the Rowlatt Bills

Sir Narayan Chandravarkar writing to the *Times of India*, Feb 1919, on the Rowlatt Bills, says :—

The case in support of these Bills, so far as I can conceive it, is threefold and may be stated as follows.—

1. It is true that the powers under the Defence of India Act were taken by the Government from the Legislature as an emergency measure, limited to the period of the war and for some months after the Declaration of Peace ; but the enforcement of both the punitive and preventive provisions of the Act especially, the preventive, has proved that such a law is the only effective remedy for successfully coping with the secret and terrorising crimes of revolutionary conspiracies. That is the first necessity.

2. There are some hundreds of revolutionary interned under these provisions. These, judging from the Rowlatt Committee's Report, fall under one or other of two heads :—(1) those who have helped Government with information which has enabled us to unravel the revolutionary movement, track its course and detect its members, and (2) those whom internment has not made penitent and who are therefore still dangerous. If both these classes are let off, as they must be on the expiry of the Defence of India Act, the men of the first class will be exposed to assassination at the hands of the second class and others inclined to revolutionary crime ; and the men of the second class will continue their career of that crimes. Hence the necessity of a law on the lines of the Defence of India Act. That is the second necessity.

3. Anarchism however much limited to a small number, as compared with the vast mass of people, has come to stay in India, judging from the experience of these twelve years or so ; and it is absolutely necessary in the interests of peace and order that the Legislature should arm the Executive with exceptional powers to deal with this exceptional form of crime.

I have endeavoured to put the case for the Bills as strongly as it can be put with due regard to the exigencies of administration in the interests of peace and of order. And it is from the point of view of these interests that the merits of these Bills must be considered. I do not propose here to consider those merits on the basis of the principle of liberty, because high judicial authority in England has held that such suffering as there is in the internment of a person under the Defence of Realm Act, (which is akin to our Defence of India Act) without a trial in the criminal court is inflicted for something much more important than his liberty or convenience, namely, for securing the public safety and defence of the realm."

That safety and defence being then the paramount consideration, in judging the merits of these Bills I recognise fully the force of the first three points which I have set out above as making out a case for the kind of

legislation, proposed in the said Bills, with reference to their preventive provisions and the remedy of internment.

But that does not, in my humble opinion, exhaust the case for the Bills. The crucial and preliminary point raised by these bills is, should the Legislature sanction the law proposed by them in the present state of its constitution and Indian feeling?

Were there no remedy or power in any member of India's present constitution as effective as the Defence of India Act, that crucial and preliminary question should inevitable lead to an affirmative answer. But there is a remedy in the power given to the Governor General by Section 23 of the Indian Council's Act enacted by Parliament in cases of emergency, to make and promulgate from time to time ordinances for the "peace and good Government" of His Majesty's Indian territories.

The responsibility of making laws for the peace and good Government of the country no doubt rests on the Legislature. That is its peculiar function. The primary end of all laws is order; and they must have force behind them to compel obedience to them. That is where the anarchist and revolutionary makes his grievous mistake about Government. He thinks that because Government compels obedience to its laws by the use of force in the form of the Police and the Military, therefore all Government is physical force—the force of what he calls legalised violence and the negation of all soul. And so he concludes that he is justified in meeting that force by his own force and violence. That is the delusion shared by all the interned revolutionaries with whose cases I have had to deal. And all anarchical literature that I have come across shows that it forms the creed of anarchism and revolutionaries. They do not know, and if they know, they do not believe in the constitutional principle and practice of Government that its laws to which obedience is compelled by the show of force in the form of the police and the military, rest ultimately on another force, the force of public opinion and sentiment. There must be, therefore, the force of that opinion and sentiment behind the law and its machinery which the Rowlatt Bills propose to warrant their passage through the Legislative Council.

That brings me to the question—Is the force of public opinion and sentiment behind and at the back of these Bills? That public opinion and sentiment may be divided, for the sake of a clear understanding of the point, into two classes—one, the public opinion and sentiment of the educated Indians, the class known as the intelligentsia of India; the other, of the rest of the people known as the masses.

As to the opinion of the educated classes, I believe it is by now clear that as a whole, sinking all their political differences in other respects they have arrayed themselves against the Bills. And the best proof of it is the opposition of at least a majority of the Indian Members of the Imperial Legislative Council. The question is—Is the opposition reasonable? I venture to think it is, when the position occupied by those members is borne in mind. It is true that like all of us outside the Council and more as members of the Legislature they are bound to consult the interests of peace and good order and legislate accordingly. So they did when they assented to the passing of the Defence of India Act as an emergency and temporary measure in the time of war. But when in and for times of peace the same law is sought to be perpetuated they may well take their stand as follows:—

"The responsibility for administration is not yet ours. We are still outside the administration. We know and admit that there is revolutionary

conspiracy, but when we are asked to assent to a law of an exceptional character dealing with it and to empower the Executive to restrain a person's liberty on suspicion, we can assent to it only when we have the power of control over that Executive. The responsibility of peace and good Government rests primarily on the Government as it is at present constituted, and Parliament has given it through the Governor-General power to secure that by means of Ordinances."

But the Indian members in the Council being in a minority may be outvoted by the official majority. And if the official majority outvotes them and sanctions the Bill in their collective capacity as the Legislative Council, it may do so on one of two grounds, either because the proposed law is necessary as having behind it the force of public opinion and sentiment and thus fulfilling the essential condition of all law and constitutional Government or because though the law is not backed by public opinion, the official members feel convinced that such a law is needed. If the official majority sanction the law on the second of these two alternatives, they will fall in with the anarchist's view that law and Government are, based on physical force and violence, not on public opinion, and unconsciously play into his hands. It would be doing injustice to the official majority to think that they may or will act on that anarchist's view. So it is the other alternative that should prevail—that this law has the support of public opinion; and it should prevail all the more because Legislative Councils according to theory if not in actual practice, are representative of that opinion.

And when I speak of public opinion I will eliminate from it the element of the opinion of the educated classes for the purpose of argument with a view to give the case for the Bills the benefit of every doubt. I will take public opinion to mean the opinion of the masses. In these days it may be urged it is not difficult to ascertain that opinion. The Indo-British Association affirms that it represents the opinion of the masses in India. We of the educated classes affirm that we represent that opinion. In the midst of this conflict, I will crave my readers' indulgence to appeal to my own personal and sober experience and knowledge as to the view which the masses take of the law of internments. I have been visiting Calcutta every winter the last four years. The last time I was there in June, July and August it was as a member of the Advisory Committee on the individual cases of the Bengal internees. During my previous visits it had puzzled me to find from all I saw that while there was disapproval of and disgust for revolutionary crimes—the murders and dacoities to which they led—there was at the same time sympathy for the internees as youths who had been unjustly dragged out of their homes and hearths and schools and flung into confinement. What could be at the bottom of that more or less general sympathy? Was it sneaking sympathy with revolutionary crime because its object was to overthrow Government? I could not say, for I had no definite means of access to the heart of the average Bengali of the mass type until when I was engaged in my inquiry as a member of the Advisory Committee. I came across unofficially some of that type whose sons or other young relatives had been interned. I questioned them on the point which had puzzled me. One of the men whose son happened to be an internee and who candidly admitted to me his son's part in revolutionary conspiracy gave me an answer which I transcribe here as far in his own language as I remember it:—

"You ask us why people are not as indignant over the crimes of revolutionaries as they are ignorant over the internments of these youths. Why I



Crimes such as dacoities and murders and other offences have been taking place since God made the world and created man. We take that as the every day lot of life and there is nothing unusual however much we deplore it and curse the world. But the tearing away by the police of this young man from his family to-day, of that young man to-morrow and so on and interned for Heaven knows how long and we knew not why, the Police alone know—has that gone on since the world was made? Who sees the dacoities or murders? We don't and so we don't realise. But we see before our very eyes the youth taken away—and all neighbourhood sees it, and the sight and horror rankle in homes and villages." "But surely"—I asked—"the Sarkar must put down the crime; and if it leads to sorrow and suffering, that is nothing compared to peace and order." The man replied:—"Yes, the Sarkar starts schools, we sent our boys far away to them from where we live, and when the boys go wrong, they go wrong because of the Sarkar, without our knowledge and our responsibility. And we have to suffer the misery in our homes caused by the tearing away of our youth from our families."

I will not enlarge on this beyond saying that, in my view, the remarks of the man made in his untutored way reflect the opinion of the masses as to internments. They have a dim idea that the interned youth have become revolutionary because of the Sarkar's policy. And there they share the view of the educated classes. Further, when we closely analyse the character and proclivities of the youth forming 95 per cent. of the interned we find that they are youths a good many of whom are visionaries with a high personal standard of like, with ideas of sacrifice and service, though of perverse adventure. They are of the kind of British youth described by the late Donald Hankey. "A student in Arms" in his chapter on "Some who were lost and afterwards found." "They were lost but they were not poisonous. That was the trouble. They were incurably disreputable. We could not fit them in and somehow we felt that this inability of ours was a slur on society. We felt that there ought to be a place for them in the scheme of things." Then at last the war came and they were got out. "And then," says Hankey, "they came to their own. . . . never was such a triumph and spirit over matter." Have our youth had such opportunities?

Our whole political and social policy is then at the root of this revolutionary crime. Let it be changed first as it is going to be changed and till then the Legislature as representing public opinion at least Indian public opinion which ought to count above all in the matter—should decline to pass any law on the lines of the Defence of India Act but should leave it to the Governor-General to exercise his power of Ordinance until the new policy of reform has taken concrete effect and India has felt assured of the new life of progress vouchsafed to her.

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## ***From the Indian Social Reformer ; Bombay.***

The views of Sir Narayan Chandravarkar, the Venerable Ex Judge of Bombay, on the Rowlatt Legislation, so often alluded to in the Speeches in the Imperial Council at Delhi, appeared in *The Indian Social Reformer* of Bombay. The following is the full Text :—

"The unanimous opposition of the non-official Indian members of the Imperial Legislative Council to the Rowlatt Bills has had one effect in the right direction. Government, through the Home Member, who introduced the Bills into the Council and moved their reference to a Select Committee, have agreed to make the Bill dealing with revolutionary crime and internments a 'temporary' measure, which shall be enforceable only for a period of three years from the date of the expiry of the present Defence of India Act. So far one essential and crucial point affecting such legislation in its constitutional aspects has been gained. But important as this concession is to public opinion, by which we must mean Indian public opinion (for it is that which has the real claim to count in the matter), the concession is only partial and does not satisfy the conditions of the constitution to justify at least the Indian non-official members of the Council in resting satisfied with the concession made and according their support to the law as a temporary measure.

"What, then, are those conditions ?

"We shall best be able to comprehend them in all their clearness, if we start by taking up one point which the Hon'ble Sir George Lowndes, the Law Member of the Government of India, made in his speech in support of the Bills. To the argument, advanced by some of the non-official Indian members of the Council, that Government had already ample powers under two existing laws, namely (1) the Regulation of 1818, and (2) the Governor-General's power of making Ordinances from time to time for the peace and good Government of His Majesty's Indian territories under Section 23 of the Indian Councils Act of 1861, Sir George replied that those two laws were more drastic than the provisions contemplated in the Rowlatt Bills. They are no doubt drastic in the sense that the Regulation of 1818 empowers Government to deport a person without any trial or enquiry, judicial, quasi-judicial, or otherwise, and the Act of 1861 empowers the Governor-General to make Ordinances as he thinks fit, that is to say, it gives him 'absolute' discretion to frame such rules and machinery as he likes for the purpose of securing the internment of a person suspected of being a member of and implicated in a revolutionary conspiracy. This absolute discretion leaves the Governor-General full and unrestrained authority to make the Ordinances as mild or as drastic as he chooses. Instead of saying of the power that it is drastic, it is more true to the real nature of the power to affirm of it that it is plastic. There is nothing in the law or the power given by it to the

Governor-General to prevent him from framing his Ordinance on the same lines or with the same provisions as those of the Rowlatt Bills. Sir George Lowndes's point, therefore, does not meet the argument of his Indian colleagues in the Legislative Council. The question still remains—why should the Government seek the sanction of the Legislature to such a law, even for a limited period as a temporary measure, when it has already power in that behalf which it can exercise on its own authority and responsibility?

"The only intelligible reason that can be assigned is that Government does not think it expedient at this day and in these times of public opinion to use powers derived by it at a time when the Legislative Council had not come into existence and from authorities which did not and could not represent the public opinion of India. The Regulation of 18'8 was a law enacted when the Executive Government in India was also the legislative power of the country. There were no Legislative Councils then, professing to represent, even in theory, the people, and as such legislation for the people. The Governor-General's power of Ordinance was delegated to him by Parliament in 1861 and Parliament does not mean the people of India. That being the character of those two laws, Government apparently does not wish to take upon itself the responsibility of using the powers it has under those laws but deems it expedient to place the responsibility upon the Legislative Council, which contains non-official members, representing Indian public opinion, and so to give the law thus passed the character of a measure enacted with the sympathy and support of that opinion. That was exactly the ground on which Lord Hardinge appealed and appealed successfully to the Indian members of the Council for their loyal support to the Bill which accordingly passed into the present Defence of India Act in March 1915 as a war measure. And the same ground *a fortiori* must furnish the test now.

"That being the case, the non-official members of the Legislative Council have to ask themselves this question before deciding whether they should support the measure, even though it is temporary: Is it right to take upon themselves as representatives in the Council of the people, the responsibility of such a measure in times of peace, and make themselves parties to a law arming the Executive with powers to restrain the liberty of a subject, so long as the people have under the present constitution of the Government no share in or control over the Executive, and that when the Executive has already powers in that behalf derived from the Regulation of 18'8 and the power of Ordinance? In theory certainly, and in practice generally, all law, and particularly laws restraining liberty of the person, being a system of rules by which rights are maintained, form the expression of the general will of the people. The Indian members of the Council, at any rate, owe it to themselves and to the people, therefore, that they should refuse to support such an exceptional case of legislation unless the general will of the country, of which they are exponents, is behind them.

"That is the test for them; and they are entitled on the ground of recognised constitutional principles, to urge that the constitution of the Government should be popularised first in the direction of responsible Government before they can share the responsibility of such laws with the Executive in a time of peace.

"If, under the present system of Government and before Mr. Montagu's reforms take effect and admit the people into the administration and make them responsible for it, the Legislative Council pass the Rowlatt Bills, whether with the support of the Indian members or by an official majority without that support the Legislature will be passing the law under the guise of authority from public opinion, when that opinion is really opposed to the measure.

"The charge has been brought against the Indian members of the Council by some that those members have opposed the Bills because they fear that if they support the measures they will lose their popularity. The "Pioneer" makes much of that. Even assuming it is so, what does that argument come to? It means that these measures are unpopular. And if they are, the Indian members as representatives of the people will be going against public opinion should they support the measures. But apart from the pleasure of popularity or fear of unpopularity, it is wise to act upon the principle of healthy politics enunciated by Macaulay as follows:—

"As we cannot, without the risk of evil from which imagination recoils, employ physical force as a check on misgovernment, it is evidently our wisdom to keep all the constitutional checks on misgovernment in the highest state of efficiency, to watch with jealousy the first beginnings of encroachment and never to suffer irregularities, even when harmless in themselves, to pass unchallenged, lest they acquire the force of precedents."

"Therefore, popularise the Government first and then ask its popularised Legislature to take the responsibility of such exceptional legislation for the peace and good Government of the country, which till then rests exnecessitate primarily on the Executive,—"

The whole controversy over these Bills may be said now to have narrowed itself down to one simple question; why should the Legislative Council take the responsibility of such an exceptional law even as a temporary measure, and arm the Executive with the power of interning any person whom it suspects as an anarchist without an open trial in the ordinary Courts of Justice according to the ordinary criminal procedure of those Courts, when both under the Regulation of 1818 and the Governor General's power given by Parliament of making Ordinances, that Executive has already ample powers in that behalf?

It is contended by the supporters of the Rowlatt Bills that the Legislative Council should take the responsibility of passing them, because the Regulation and the Ordinance power are old-fashioned and will not do in these times when the people have grown accustomed to the idea and practice of Laws made by the Legislature for the time being, as the state organ of public opinion to meet the emergencies of the day.

That contention would be valid, if it were proposed to repeal the regulation of 1818 and the Section of the parliamentary Statute of 1861, which arms the Governor-General with the power of making Ordinances. There is no such proposal. The Regulation and the Ordinance power have from time to time been put into operation and are still alive. When to them are added, as is now proposed, fresh laws of the same kind by means of the Row-

lat Bills, we get to the familiar complaint made from of old against such laws that "the special and unique occasion of one Government becomes the habit of its successors," and special laws intended for emergencies and restricting liberty and excluding the jurisdiction of ordinary judicial tribunals and the operation of the ordinary criminal procedure, become the rule like ordinary laws.

No doubt it is very creditable to Government and manifests its desire to respect constitutional forms when it comes to the Legislative Council and says: "True, we, the Executive, have power under the Regulation of 1818 and the Governor-General's Ordinance to deal with revolutionary crime. But we do not wish to exercise that power and play the autocrat in disregard of the Legislative Council. We wish to act in the matter in co-operation with the Legislative Council which represents the people."

So far the action of the Government is constitutional because it satisfies the first condition of constitutional government that its Executive shall not exercise a power of a summary and arbitrary character, even when it is imperatively needed in the public interests, unless that power is derived from the Legislature of the time as an emergency power. But there is a second condition of constitutional government equally important for such power to emanate from the Legislature. That second condition is that, since the power is needed to make the criminal law more severe than it is and deprive the people of their right to be tried in the ordinary Courts of Justice according to established rules of law, and since the power is of the nature of arbitrariness, rendered imperative by the nature of the crime to be combated, the Legislature, which is invited by the Executive to give them that power, should be so composed that at least a majority, if not all, of its members shall have no interest in or inducement to make any law, especially a law of this summary and quasi-judicial character, as the Rowlatt Bills, which will not, in its practical operation, equally affect them or tend to affect them with the governed—that in other words (to borrow the language of the American Federalists) there must be, between the Legislature and the people for whom it makes such laws, the strongest bond of communion of interests and sympathy of sentiments by which human policy can connect the rulers and the ruled together, or else "the Government," however well-intentioned, "degenerates into a tyranny".

Now, test the position of the Imperial Legislative Council by the light of the second condition or constitutional principle above stated. While it must be admitted that the Rowlatt Bills have for their object the extermination of revolutionary conspiracies by interning persons suspected by the Executive of that crime without the safeguard of an open judicial trial according to the ordinary criminal procedure, and so guarding the rights and liberties and peace of the people of the Commonwealth, it must be, at the same time, remembered that, as the persons so suspected and therefore interned will be from among the people themselves, the danger of the law—its tendency and scope—affects them all in that every one of them whoever or whatever he be, is exposed, under the law to the fear and risk of being suspected and interned should the Executive choose to do that. The fear and risk may be groundless, but it is there more or less, more in the case of Indians than Europeans. Therefore, such a law, to have the sanction of Legislature, should be passed by a Legislature, the members of which are connected with the peoples being of the people in point of sentiment, interests, inducements and apprehension of

danger.

Is the Legislative Council as it is now constituted that security? The majority of its members are not of the people. The Indians, who are of the people, are in a minority. The former are indeed conscientious and mindful of the interests of the people, according to their lights. But they form the foreign governing power of the land; they represent the ruling race; and, (to cite Burke) "when any community is subordinately connected with another, the great danger of the connexion is the extreme pride and self-complacency of the superior which in all matters of controversy will probably decide in its favour." Hence the value attached to the Indian opinion in the Council and the solicitude for their support shown by the members of Government in that Council, in particular by Sir William Vincent, the mover of the Bills. That being so, of what use will the Rowlatt Bills be, if in disregard of Indian opposition in the Council, they are passed into law by the British majority in it? Will not the law so passed fall under the "greediest of legal categories," viz., laws defined by Justinian in his code in the maxim *QUOD PRINCIPI PLACUIT LEGIS HABIT VIGORAM*, i.e., "what pleases the Prince has the force of law"? The position of the Legislative Council in that event becomes the same as that of Parliament in the reign of Henry VIII, when Thomas Cromwell crowded it with members directly or indirectly nominated by the Royal Council and got it under "constitutional forms" to enact new laws of treason. The Rowlatt Bills, passing into law under such circumstances, will be no different, as to the source of their authority, from the regulation of 1818 or the Governor-General's Ordinance. In reality they will be the laws of the Executive, though in name only the Legislative Council will be their parent—the voice Jacob's, the hand Esau's. Why place the Legislative Council in this unenviable position?

It is these considerations which ought, I think, to move the Indian members to oppose these Bills and decline to take any responsibility for them. And they should decline all the more because public opinion insists that the root causes of revolutionary crime must be removed by reforms in the direction of responsible government before they, as representatives of the people, can be parties to and pass criminal laws of a summary character to extinguish the manifestation of that crime.

The fear expressed in some quarters that there will be no chance for such measures as the Rowlatt Bills after Mr. Montagu's scheme of responsible government comes into force, ignores the lessons of history and actual experience. What is then the ground of that fear? This, so far as I can see, is that demagogues with so called democratic ideas and visionary schemes of Government, who now flatter the people and rail against Government, will crowd the new Councils and vote plump against such laws and weaken the Executive authority. But is it not the case as proved by the experience of all democratic countries, that no body is so willing to interfere with the liberties of the people as the people themselves or their representative in the Legislature where the people through those representatives are made to share responsibility for the peace and order of their land? Note what Lord Morley says in his *Recollections*:—"The idealist becomes in business excessively, narrowly and tiresomely, pragmatic and opportunist and actually cultivates a near-sight. With or without cause, he suspects himself and is bent on showing that he is as fit for the profession of real politics as the best of them."

# Chronicle of Events

February—May 1919

**Feb. 1st to 4th, 1919**—All India protest meetings against proposed Rowlatt Legislation at all important towns representing all the influential public opinion of India.

1st Hon'ble Sir D. Wacha wired to Viceroy earnestly requesting postponement of Rowlatt Bills.

6th Viceroy's opening speech in the Imperial Council disillusioning Indian hopes and recommending Rowlatt Bills. **Sir W. Vincent introduced the Rowlatt Bill** and moved for reference to select committee of 15 members, majority being officials. Hon'bles Mr. Patel and Mr. Banerjee opposed and moved for postponement. Hot debate on this motion finally adjourned till next day.

7th Long debate on Rowlatt Bill in Imp. Council,—Non-official Indians opposing to a man. Mr. Patel's motion defeated and Sir W. Vincent's forced through by 36 official votes to 21 against unanimous Indian opposition. Bill referred to Select Committee.

8th Moderate **POUR PARLEUR** with Home Member (Vincent) in the matter of the Rowlatt Bills.

10th Sir W. Vincent announced that in deference to unanimous non-official opposition the Rowlatt Act was to be in operation for three years and not permanently. He also introduced the Second Bill which was referred to Select Committee against unanimous non-official opposition.

Influential protest meeting at Madras Mahajan Sabha—non-official Council members signed a mandate on Indian members of Imperial Council to oppose the Rowlatt Bill to the end.

13th Calcutta Indian Association protest meeting under Maharaja of Cossimbazar and all influential moderates against the Rowlatt Bills.

15th Bombay protest meeting under Mrs. Besant denouncing the Bill.

16th Home-Rule Campaign against the Black Bills opened by Mrs. Besant at Bombay with a large and influential following.

23rd Bombay Presidency Association protest meeting under Sir D. Petit.

Madras monster protest meeting under Mr. T. V. Venkatarama Iyer hotly denouncing the Rowlatt Bill—Mr. B. C. Pal's lecture on same.

**Mar. 1st. Select Committee report on Rowlatt Bill presented** by Sir W. Vincent to Imperial Council, together with strong dissenting minutes by non-official Indian members of the Committee—Messrs. Patel, Malaviya, Khaparde not signing the report.

**Mahatma Gandhi's press manifesto inaugurating Satyagraha.**

The Great Satyagraha vow taken by Home-Rulers and Gandhites in Bombay. Satyagraha Sabha Started its campaign.

2nd Moderate manifesto against passive resistance issued, signed by Hon' Wacha, Bannerjee, Sastri, Nundy, Shafi, Chitnavis and others.

Allahabad Satyagraha meeting under Pt. Motilal Nehru; many taking the vow.

4th Calcutta Nationalists met in Conference supporting Mr. Gandhi and the principle of passive resistance.



6th Gandhi's interview with the Viceroy—the result not made public—both sides, one basing on brute force, the other on soul force, uncompromisingly strong, and could not come to a settlement.

Mass meeting at Amritsar condemning the Rowlatt Bills.

8th Sir W. Vincent presented Select Committee Report on 2nd Rowlatt Bill.

Madras public meeting under Mr. V. Ramadoss in favour of Satyagraha; many taking the Vow.

C. P. Legislative Council members issue mandate to the representatives in the Imperial Council to withdraw from the Council in protest.

11th Bombay Council members issue mandate to their representatives in the Imperial Council to enter their emphatic protest against the bill.

12th Imperial Council debate on the Rowlatt Bill; Viceroy ruled minutes of dissent to the Select Committee of the Indian members out of order. Government motion for taking into consideration the Bill as amended by Select Committee passed.

13th Imperial Council debate on the amended Bill—long and hot debate lasting whole day till mid-night—non-official amendments all rejected by solid opposition of the Government bloc.

18th Imperial Council debate on 2nd Rowlatt Bill—motion to circulate the bill again for opinion passed.

The last debate on the fateful Rowlatt Bill—Bill passed into Act against solid non-official opposition. Hon'ble Mr. Sarma at once resigns in protest.

19th Madras Beach meeting to welcome Mr. Gandhi. Gandhi's message read and many new Satyagrahis enrolled.

21st Big public meeting at Madras under Mr. C. Vijayaraghava Chariar requesting Viceroy to withhold assent to Rowlatt Act and congratulating Hon'ble Mr. Sarma for his resignation—Gandhi's Satyagraha message read.

23rd Satyagraha Movement Started. Gandhi declares 6th April to be All India Hartal and day of humiliation—directed a twenty-four hours-fast and suspension of all business throughout the Motherland.

23-30th Satyagraha week all over India—Meetings and organisations held broad cast in view of coming hartal.

30th Monster Satyagraha day and meeting at Delhi sending cable to Secretary of State against Rowlatt Bill.

First Riot at Delhi. Police and Military fired on unarmed mob.

31st Delhi in mourning—business suspended—City in the hands of the Military—Hindu-Moslem unity solemnised in Mosques and Temples and in funeral processions following biers of innocent victims of last day's Military outrage.

Jullundur—Punjab Provincial political conference held on this and following 3 days—Dr. Kitchlew and Dina Nath of Amritsar addressed on Hindu—Musalman brotherhood.

April 1st—Delhi—Shops closed; people attending funeral processions of the innocent martyrs fallen. Military parading streets.

3rd Government of India Communique on Delhi disturbances issued to the Press—throwing whole blame on the Delhi public and local leaders.

4th Delhi—Col. Beadon convened meeting of Delhi leaders at which he abused Satyagraha, sought their co-operation, and presented a handbill for circulation broad cast. Satyagraha Sabha repudiated the Beadon allegations.

Amritsar—Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew prohibited to address public meetings.

6th All India Hartal, penance, humiliation, fasting and prayer as a passive protest against the Rowlatt Act. Civil disobedience of Press laws in Bombay by sale of proscribed and unregistered literature started, the unregistered paper "Satyagrahi" issued.



7th The parting kick of Sir M. O'Dwyer abusing and threatening Indian political workers of the Day of Reckoning soon to come.

9th **M. Gandhi Arrested and Deported** at Palwal without notice while travelling by train from Bombay to Delhi. Order passed on him not to enter Delhi and Punjab and intern him in Bombay Presidency.

Amritsar—Ram Navami Day, processions peacefully carried out playing the English National Anthem and paying homage to King and the Deputy Commissioner Mr. Miles Irvine. Latter receives order from Sir M. O'Dwyer to deport Dr. Satyapal and Kitchlew, the local leaders of passive resistance.

10th Amritsar—Arrest and Deportation of Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew.

**Mob outrage, Riot, incendiarism in Amritsar**—mob fired at; Mob then turned and looted Banks, Telegraph office, Post office, Zenana Hospital, C. M. S. Girl's Schools and burnt them, and also killed with gross brutality several Europeans.

Lahore—huge mob marching to petition Government was fired upon by the Police and the military near Anarkali; many killed and wounded.

Aeroplane hovering over the city.

All India closing of shops as a mark of sorrow for Gandhi's arrest.

Second Hartal all over Punjab and elsewhere.

11th Quiet at Amritsar and Lahore. Reinforcements pouring in from Jullunder and elsewhere.

All India Hartal and suspension of business continued,

Kasur—Public meeting against Rowlatt Act.

Ahmedabad—Mob outrage in city on hearing Gandhi's arrest.

12th Lahore—Badshahi Mosque meeting. C. I. D. pugree burnt. Mob fired upon by troops. Huge crowd attacked and looted Railway Station on being fired upon by soldiers travelling in a train. The train was stopped, derailed and burnt.

Kasur—Excited mob fired at by 2 European Soldiers from a train. Mob murdered the Soldiers, burnt Station, wrecked the train, and looted and destroyed all Government property.

Calcutta—Hartal on hearing Gandhi's arrest—Some mild disturbance at Burrabazar—Police and Military fire on Mob.

13th Amritsar—**Jhallianwala Bagh Massacre**. Peaceful meeting of twenty thousand men fired upon continuously unprovoked for ten minutes by Gen. Dyer; 500 killed, 1500 wounded and left for two days exposed to the elements without medical or any relief.

Delhi—Rumour of deportation of Leaders float—Great consternation in town; Mob provoked to assume threatening attitude.

14th Gujranwala—Jhallianwala Bagh news received. Whole town on Hartal. A big Baisakhi day held at Wazirabad. Booking stopped and the huge excited crowd stopped the train, pulled down passengers and set fire to the station yard. Mob further excited by slaughtered cows and pigs and assaulted Mr. Herron, S. P. who fired and caused death. Excitement leaped up into a flame resulting in acts of incendiarism—Post Office, Dak Bungalow, Court houses, Railway godown and the Church burnt down. Aeroplanes hovering over town dropped bombs, some on the Khalsa High School and neighbouring villages killing women and children.

Batala (in Gurdaspur)—Telegraph Wires cut by mob.

Wires also cut between Lahore—Amritsar and between Sialkot—Wazirabad.

Rohtak—Riotous mob attacked Ry. line, and cut it, damaged the Ry. bridge and attacked a train.

Delhi—Mob began to appear armed with Lathis on rumoured deportations of popular leaders. Town hall conference between officials and leaders came to nothing.

# The Satyagraha Movement.

## Mahatma Gandhi Starts Work.

On March 1, 1919. Mahatma Gandhi addressed the following letter to the Press :—

Sir,—I enclose herewith the Satyagraha Pledge regarding the Rowlatt Bills. The step taken is probably the most momentous in the history of India. I give my assurance that it has not been hastily taken. Personally I have passed many a sleepless night over it. I have endeavoured duly to appreciate the Government's position, but I have been unable to find any justification for the extraordinary Bills. I have read the Rowlatt Committee's Report. I have gone through its narrative with admiration. Its reading has driven me to a conclusion just opposite of the Committee's. I should conclude from the reports that secret violence is confined to isolated and very small parts of India and to a microscopic body of the people. The existence of such men is truly a danger to the society. But, the passing of the Bills, designed to affect the whole of India and its people and arming the Government with power out of all proportion to the situation sought to be dealt with, is a greater danger. The Committee utterly ignores the historical fact that the millions of India are by nature the gentlest on the earth.

"Now look at the setting of the Bills. Their introduction is accompanied by certain assurances given by the Viceroy regarding the Civil Service and British commercial interests. Many of us are filled with the greatest misgivings about the Viceregal utterance. I frankly confess, I do not understand its full scope and intention. If it means that the Civil Service and British commercial interests are to be held superior to those of India and its political and commercial requirements, no Indian can accept the doctrine. It can but end in a fratricidal struggle within the empire.

Trustee and Servant.

"The reforms may not come ; the need of the moment is the proper and just understanding upon the vital issue. No tinkering with it will produce real satisfaction. Let the great Civil Service Corporation understand that it can remain in India only as its trustee and servant, not in name but in deed and let the British commercial houses understand that they can remain in India only to supplement her requirements and not to destroy indigenous art, trade and manufacture, and you have two measures to replace the Rowlatt Bills.

"They, I promise, will successfully deal with any conspiracy against the State.

"Sir George Lowndes simply added fuel to the fire when he flouted public opinion. He has forgotten his Indian history or he would have known that the Government he represents has before now surrendered its own considered opinion to the force of public opinion.

"It will be now easy to see why I consider the bills to be the unmistakable symptom of the deep-seated disease in the governing body. It needs, therefore, to be drastically treated. Subterranean violence will be the remedy by the impetuous, hotheaded youths, who will have grown impatient of the spirit underlying the bills and circumstances attending their introduction. The Bills must intensify hatred and ill-will against the State, of which deeds of violence are undoubtedly an evidence. The Indian Covenanters, by their determination to undergo every form of sufferings, make an irresistible appeal to the Government, towards which they bear no ill-will, and provide to the believers in efficiency of violence as means of securing redress of grievance with the infallible remedy and withal a remedy that blesses those that use it and also goes against whom it is used. If the covenanters know the use of this remedy, I fear no ill from it. I have no business to doubt their ability. They must ascertain whether the disease is sufficiently great to justify a strong remedy and whether all milder ones have been tried. They have convinced themselves that the disease is serious enough and that the milder measures have utterly failed. The rest lies in the lap of the Gods'.

## The Satyagraha Vow.

"Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. 1 of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. 2 of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals, on which the safety of the community as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey those Laws and such other Laws as a Committee\* to be hereafter appointed may think fit and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow the truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property."

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[\*For the Laws to be broken as selected by this Committee, see p. 47.]

# Dr. Subrahmaniam on Satagraha.

## Dr. Subramania Aiyar's Views.

The following account of an interview with Dr. S. Subrahmaniam Aiyar, the Venerable Ex-Chief Justice of Madras and President Home Rule League, as regards passive resistance was published in "The Hindu" of Madras in March last.

Dr. S. S. Aiyer.— In my speech as Chairman of the Reception Committee during the Congress sittings held in Madras last time, I stated almost in terms that the course similar to the one adopted by Mr. Gandhi in South Africa with such signal success was the one which would prove efficacious in our hands against autocracy in this country. The spirit of my remarks on the point then will be found to be in entire accord, if I may say so, with what pervades the recent utterances of that most distinguished countryman of ours who is now amongst us since he initiated the present movement a few weeks ago.

Interviewer.—What is the reason for your opinion remaining unchanged as you said?

Dr. S. S. Aiyer.—The more I think about it the more I am convinced that the circumstances of the Indian people leave no alternative but to resort to the use of this remedy, against the ever tightening policy of repression of the present Government. I have said again and again, resort to brute force for obtaining redress at the hands of our rulers is out of the question. For, in the first place, even if it were permissible to resort to such force from the point of view of morality and justice, we possess none of the facilities required. But I hold strongly that the invisible powers that are guarding our well-being intend that our salvation should be accomplished without crime and violence. Otherwise, I cannot understand why we should have been deprived of all use of arms as we have been, so as to make us incapable of resisting oppression in the way nations have been accustomed hitherto to defend themselves against their oppressors. It follows either there is no salvation to us as a nation or our salvation is to be brought about by means other than revolution and bloodshed. That we as a nation are not to perish goes without saying, having regard to the necessity of the essentials of our past great civilisation being preserved for the benefit of the world. How then are we to be freed from the domination which seems to be crushing out all life from us? The answer is that those who are exercising this domination are blind to our sufferings and deaf to our entreaties, and nothing would open their eyes and ears but the impossibility of carrying on the administration of the country which would be created by passive resistance becoming common among the people more or less throughout the country.

Interviewer :—Is that likely ?

Dr. S. S. Aiyer :—No doubt it would take time before such a state of things comes to pass, but judging from the existing conditions one cannot but feel that the movement now set on foot marks the beginning of what is going to happen not very long hence. What I said as Chairman at the meeting held to welcome Mr. Gandhi, when he paid his first visit to this city, comes back to my mind now. After observing that the phrase about the new angle of vision which had been used by the then Under-Secretary of State, was an empty compliment and that the policy towards us after the war would be worse than instead of better, I stated emphatically that only when people came to be educated and guided by hundreds of Sanyasins like Mr. Gandhi, our people could hope to obtain that freedom without which true and prosperous national life was impossible.

Interviewer :—Are such Sanyasin leaders forthcoming now ?

Dr. S. S. Iyer :—Not yet in sufficient numbers ; but be assured that they will be in due course; of course not generally from the well-to-do classes who are accustomed to comfort if not to luxury in their lives. This class will shrink from the severe trials that would await the true and earnest passive resister. Such Sannyasin leaders will come from the humble section of the community some of whose representatives followed Mr. Gandhi with marvellous devotion in South Africa and enabled him to win the battle he there waged so nobly on our behalf. It strikes me that what he did there was but the prelude to the work which he has now undertaken to do here. That work is indeed uphill in every sense and may seem to progress little for sometime to come. But it is certain that the moral effect of the movement on the people at large is one not to be treated with contempt by the autocrat but must command his serious consideration. If things go wrong as the result of the movement, the blame will be his. No responsibility could attach to those who are called upon to embark on this attempt to resort to spiritual force through sheer necessity as against the asserted foundation of the British rule on brute force. The confession attributed to the Viceroy on this subject, if true, forebodes nothing but evil as it must wipe out every vestige of loyalty in the country and convert all its well-wishers into disaffected persons.

Interviewer.—Would you not like to enter into details as to how to carry on the movement ?

Dr. S. S. Aiyer.—No. That will have to be attended to by those on whom the actual duty of leading the people devolves, in the parts of the country, where the movement finds encouragement. That duty, indeed, is a very difficult and sacred one. It should not be undertaken lightly and unless those who take the pledge fulfill it by their infailing conduct, they would only retard the consummation that movement is bound to ensure. What is important is that none should take the pledge without fully realising the sacrifice it involves. It matters little that the number of those who take the pledge is small so long as those who take it are certain to act up to it. Even the example of a few who suffer in the exercise of this spiritual remedy is bound to tell in the long run and it would be a mistake to look upon the movement as unpromising from the mere fact that the number of pledged passive resisters is not very encouraging just now. Let me say that every aspect of the question has been considered by Mr. Gandhi and those who want details will get all the information they require from him if they care.

# Satyagraha Expounded By Gandhi.

**Madras—18th March 1919.**

A huge mass Meeting was held in Madras on this date to offer a welcome to Mahatma Gandhi and to support his Satyagraha movement. Mr. Kasturiranga Aiyangar presided and after a brief speech requested Mahatma Gandhi to say a few words. The Mahatma said a few words in a very low tone sitting in the chairs as he was seriously suffering from heart complaints and said that Mr. Desai would read his speech.

## **The Message.**

Mr. Desai then read the following speech of Mahatma Gandhi :—

I regret that owing to heart weakness I am unable to speak to you personally. You have no doubt attended many meetings, but these that you have been attending of late are different from the others in that at the meetings to which I have referred some immediate tangible action, some immediate definite sacrifice has been demanded of you for the purpose of averting a serious calamity that has overtaken us in the shape of what are known as the Rowlatt Bills. One of them Bill No. 1 has undergone material alteration and its further consideration has been postponed. In spite however of the alteration it is mischievous enough to demand opposition. The Second Bill has probably at this very moment been finally passed by the Imperial Legislative Council or rather will be claimed to have been passed by that Council, for in reality you can hardly call a Bill having been passed by that august body when all its non-official members unanimously and in strong language opposed it. The Bills require to be resisted not only because they are in themselves bad, but also because Government who are responsible for their introduction have seen fit practically to ignore public opinion and some of its members have made it a boast that they can so ignore that opinion. So far it is common cause between the different schools of thought in the country. I have, however after much prayerful consideration, and after very careful examination of the Government's standpoint,



pledged myself to offer Satyagraha against the Bills, and invited all men and women who think and feel with me to do likewise. Some of our countrymen including those who are among the best of the leaders, have uttered a note of warning and even gone so far as to say that this Satyagraha movement is against the best interests of the country. I have naturally the highest regard for them and their opinion. I have worked under some of them. I was a babe when Sir Dinshaw Wacha and Surendranath Bannerjee were among the accepted leaders of public opinion in India. Mr. Shastriar is a politician who had dedicated his all to the country's cause. His sincerity, his probity are all his own. He will yield to no one in the love of the country. There is a sacred and indissoluble tie binding me to him. My upbringing draws me to the signatories of the two Manifestoes. It is not therefore without the greatest grief and much searching of heart that I have to place myself in opposition to their wishes. But there are times when you have to obey a call which is the highest of all i.e., the voice of conscience even though such obedience may cost many a bitter tear, nay even more, separation from friends, from family, from the state to which you may belong, from all that you have held, as dear as life itself. For this obedience is the law of our being. I have no further and other defence to offer for my conduct. My regard for the signatories to the manifestoes remains undiminished, and my faith in the efficacy of Satyagraha is so great that I feel that if those who have taken the pledge will be true to it we shall be able to show to them that they will find when we have come to the end of this struggle that there was no cause for alarm or misgivings. There is, I know, resentment felt even by some Satyagrahis over the Manifestoes. I would warn Satyagrahis that such resentment is against the spirit of Satyagraha. I would personally welcome an honest expression of difference of opinion from any quarter and more so from friends because it puts us on our guard. There is too much recrimination, innuendo and insinuation in our public life and if the Satyagraha movement purges it of this grave defect, as it ought to, it will be a very desirable by-product. I wish further to suggest to Satyagrahis that any resentment of the two manifestoes would be but a sign of weakness on our part. Every movement, and Satyagraha most of all, must depend upon its own inherent strength, but not upon the weakness or silence of its critics. Let us therefore see wherein lies the strength of Satyagraha. As the name implies it is in an insistence on truth which dynamically expressed means Love; and by the

Law of Love we are required not to return hatred for hatred, violence for violence, but to return good for evil. As Shrimati Sarojini Devi told you yesterday the strength lies in a defined recognition of the true religious spirit and action corresponding to it and when once you introduce the religious element in politics, you revolutionise the whole of your political outlook. You achieve reform then not by imposing suffering on those who resist it, but by taking the suffering upon yourselves, and so in this movement we hope by the intensity of our sufferings to affect and alter the Government's resolution not to withdraw these objectionable Bills. It has however been suggested that the Government will leave the handful of Satyagrahis severely alone and not make martyrs of them. But there is here in my humble opinion bad logic and an unwarranted assumption of fact. If Satyagrahis are left alone, they have won a complete victory because they will have succeeded in disregarding the Rowlatt Bills and even other laws of the country, and in having thus shown that a civil disobedience of a Government is held perfectly harmless by it; I regard the statement as an unwarranted assumption of fact because it contemplates the restriction of the movement only to a handful of men and women. My experience of Satyagraha leads me to believe that it is such a potent force that once set in motion it ever spreads till at last it becomes a dominant factor in the community in which it is brought into play and if it so spreads no Government can neglect it. Either it must yield to it or imprison the workers in the movement. But I have no desire to argue. As the English proverb says "the proof of the pudding lies in the eating." The movement for better or for worse has been launched. We shall be judged not by our words, but solely by our deeds. It is, therefore, not enough that we sign the pledge. Our signing it is but an earnest of our determination to act up to it, and if all who sign the pledge act according to it, I make bold to promise that we shall bring about withdrawal of the two Bills and neither the Government nor our critics will have a word to say against us. The cause is great, the remedy is equally great; let us prove worthy of them both.

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## **Madras—20th March 1919.**

In another meeting held at Madras under the Presidency of Mr. C. Vijayaraghavachariar to send an appeal to the Viceroy to withhold his assent to the Rowlatt Bill, the President remarked that he was there in the place of Mr. Gandhi who was in ill-health, and after a short speech asked Mr. Desai to read out Mr. Gandhi's speech given below.

### **Mahatma Gandhi's Message.**

Mr. Desai read the following message of Mahatma Gandhi :—

FRIENDS, This afternoon I propose to deal with some of the objections that have been raised against Satyagraha. After saying that it was a matter of regret that men like myself "should have embarked on this movement" Sir Wm. Vincent in winding up the debate on Bill No. 2 said, "they could only hope that it (the Satyagraha) would not materialise. Mr. Gandhi might exercise great self-restraint in action, but there would be other young hotheaded men who might be led into violence which could not but end in disaster. Yielding to this threat, however, would be tantamount to complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General-in-Council". If Sir William's fear as to violence is realised it would undoubtedly be a disaster. It is for every Satyagrahi to guard against that danger. I entertain no such fear because our creed requires us to eschew all violence and to resort to truth and self-suffering as the only weapons in our armoury. Indeed the Satyagraha movement is among other things an invitation to those who believe in the non-efficiency of violence for redress of grievances to join our ranks and honestly to follow our methods. I have suggested elsewhere that what the Rowlatt Bills are intended to do and what I verily believe they are bound to fail in achieving is exactly what the Satyagraha movement is preeminently capable of achieving. By demonstrating to the party of violence the infallible power of Satyagraha and by giving them ample scope for their inexhaustible energy we hope to wean that party from the suicidal method of violence. What can be more potent than an absolute statement accompanied by corresponding action, presented in the clearest terms possible that violence is never necessary for the purpose of securing reforms? Sir William says that the movement has great potentialities of evil. The Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya is said to have retorted "and also of good." I would venture to improve upon the retort by saying "only of good."

It constitutes an attempt to revolutionize politics and to restore moral force to its original station. After all, the Government do not believe in an entire avoidance of violence i.e., physical force. The message of the West which the Government of India I presume, represent, is succinctly put by President Wilson in his speech delivered to the Peace Conference at the time of introducing the League of Nations Covenant. "Armed force is in the background in this programme,\* but it is in the background, and if the moral force of the world will not suffice, physical force of the world shall." We hope to reverse the process, and by our action show that physical force is nothing compared to the moral force, and that moral force never fails. It is my firm belief that this is the fundamental difference between modern civilisation and the ancient of which India, fallen though it is, I venture to claim is a living representative. We, her educated children seem to have lost faith in this the grandest doctrine of life. If we could but restore that faith in the supremacy of moral force, we shall have made a priceless contribution to the British Empire, and we shall, without fail, obtain the reforms we desire and to which we may be entitled. Entertaining such views it is not difficult for me to answer Sir William's second fear as to the complete abolition of the authority of the Governor-General in Council. This movement is undoubtedly designed, effectively to prove to the Government that its authority is finally dependant upon the will of the people and not upon force of arms, especially when that will is expressed in terms of Satyagraha. To yield to a clear moral force cannot but enhance the prestige and the dignity of the yielder.

It is to such a movement that every man and woman in this great country is invited, but a movement that is intended to produce far-reaching results, and which depends, for success on the purity and the capacity for self-suffering of those who are engaged in it, can only be joined after a searching and prayerful self-examination. I may not too often give the warning I have given at Satyagraha meetings that everyone should think a thousand times before coming to it, but having come to it he must remain in it, cost what it may. A friend came to me yesterday, and told me that he did not know that it meant all that was explained at a gathering of a few Satyagrahi friends and wanted to withdraw. I told him that he could certainly do so if he had signed without understanding the full consequences of the pledge. And I would ask everyone who did not understand the pledge as it has been explained at various meetings to copy this example. It is not

### *Mr. GANDHI'S INSTRUCTIONS*

numbers so much as quality that we want. Let me therefore note down the qualities required of a Satyagrahi. He must follow truth at any cost and in all circumstances. He must make a continuous effort to love his opponents. He must be prepared to go through every form of suffering, whether imposed upon him by the Government which he is civilly resisting for the time being, or by those who may differ from him. This movement is thus a process of purification and penance. Believe me that if we go through it in the right spirit all the fears expressed by the Government and some of our friends will be proved to be groundless and we will not only see the Rowlatt Bills withdrawn, but the country will recognise in Satyagraha a powerful and religious weapon for securing reforms and redress of legitimate grievances.

#### **Appeal to the Viceroy.**

The following resolution was then put from the chair:—

"In view of the unanimous opposition of India to the Rowlatt Bill and the fact that not a single Indian non-official member voted with the Government for the passing of the Bill, this public meeting appeals to His Excellency the Viceroy to withhold his assent to the Act, or in the alternative, to reserve the Act for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure under Section 68 of the Government of India Act."

## **Hartal of 6th April.**

### **Mr. Gandhi's Instructions.**

Satyagraha, as I have endeavoured to explain at several meetings, is essentially a religious movement. It is a process of purification and penance. It seeks to secure reforms of redress of grievances by self-suffering. I therefore venture to suggest that the second Sunday after the publication of the Viceregal assent to Bill No. 2 of 1919 (i.e., 6th April) may be observed as a day of humiliation and prayer. As there must be an effective public demonstration in keeping with the character of the observance, I beg to advise as follows:

(i) A twenty-four hours' fast counting from the last meal on the preceding night should be observed by all adults, unless prevented from so doing by consideration of religion or health. The fast is not to be regarded in any shape or form, in the nature of a hunger strike, or as designed to put any pressure upon the Government. It is to be regarded, for the Satyagrahis, as the necessary discipline to fit them for civil disobedience, contemplated in their pledge, and

for all others, as some slight token of the intensity of their wounded feelings.

(ii) All work, except such as may be necessary in the public interest, should be suspended for the day. Markets and other business places should be closed. Employees who are required to work even on Sundays may only suspend work after obtaining previous leave.

I do not hesitate to recommend these two suggestions for adoption by public servants. For though it is unquestionably the right thing for them not to take part in political discussion and gatherings, in my opinion they have an undoubted right to express upon vital matters their feelings in the very limited manner herein suggested.

(iii) Public meetings should be held on that day in all parts of India, not excluding villages, at which Resolutions praying for the withdrawal of the two measures should be passed.

If my advice is deemed worthy of acceptance, the responsibility will lie in the first instance on the various Satyagraha Associations, for undertaking the necessary work of organisation, but all other associations will, I hope, join hands in making this demonstration, a success.

*Madras, 23rd March, 1919.*

**M. K. GANDHI.**

## Another Madras Meeting.

*30th March '19.*

On this day a meeting was held at Madras with the Hon. Mr. R. Aiyangar, the Member of the Imperial Council who took the Satyagraha Pledge, in the Chair.

### **M. Gandhi's Message**

Mahatma Gandhi could not attend the meeting as he had left for Bezwada that day and Mr. Satyamurti read the following message from the Mahatma :—

Dear Mr. Rangaswami,—I am sorry that I shall not be with you for this evening's meeting, as I must take the train for Bezwada in order to keep my engagement with our Andhra friends. But before my departure, I would like to reduce to writing my impressions of the tour through the Southern part of the Presidency, which I have just completed, and to answer some criticism and some doubts that have been offered by friends.

I have visited Tanjore, Trichinopoly, Madura, Tuticorin and Negapatam ; and taking the lowest estimate, the people addressed must have been not less than thirty thousand. Those who have a

a right to give us warning, to express misgivings and who have just as great a love of the motherland as we claim to have, have feared that however well-meaning we may be, and however anxious we may be to avoid violence, the people who may join the movement under an enthusiastic impulse may not be able to exercise sufficient self-control and may break out into violence, resulting in needless loss of life, and what is more, injury to the national cause. After embarking upon the movement, I began addressing meetings at Delhi. I passed then through Lucknow, Allahabad and Bombay to Madras. My experience of all these meetings shows that the advent of Satyagraha has already altered the spirit of those who attend the Satyagraha meetings. In Lucknow, upon an innocent remark by the Chairman as to the manifesto signed by some of the members of the Imperial Legislative Council disapproving of our movement, the audience cried out "Shame! Shame!" I drew their attention to the fact that Satyagrahis and those who attended Satyagraha meetings should not use such expressions and that the speeches at our meetings ought not to be punctuated with either marks of disapproval or of approval. The audience immediately understood the spirit of my remarks and never afterwards made any demonstration of their opinion. In the towns of this Presidency, as elsewhere, whilst it is true that the large crowds have refrained from any noisy demonstration out of regard for my health, they have fully understood the necessity of refraining from it on the higher ground. The leaders in the movement, have also fully understood the necessity for self-restraint. These experiences of mine fill me with the greatest hope for the future. I never had any apprehensions of the danger our friends fear; and the various meetings I have described confirm my optimism. But I would venture further to state that every precaution that is humanly possible is being and will be taken to avert any such danger. It is for that reason that our pledge commits the signatories to the breach of those laws that may be selected for the purpose by a Committee of Satyagrahis (See p. 47); and I am glad that our Sindh friends have understood their pledge, and obeyed the prohibition of the Hyderabad Commissioner of Police to hold their inoffensive procession, for it is no part of the present movement to break all the laws of the land the breach of which is not inconsistent with the pledge. A Satyagrahi is nothing if not instinctively law-abiding and it is his law-abiding nature which expects from him implicit obedience of the highest law, i.e. the voice of conscience, which over-rides all other laws. His civil disobedience even of certain laws only is only seeming disobedience. Every law gives the subject an option either to obey the primary sanction or the secondary; and I venture to suggest that the Satyagrahi by inviting

the secondary sanction obeys the law. He does not act like the ordinary offender who not only commits a breach of the laws of the land, whether good or bad, but wishes to avoid the consequences of that breach. It will seem therefore that everything that prudence may dictate has been done to avoid any untoward results.

Some friends have said: 'We understand your breach of the Rowlatt legislation, but as a Satyagrahi there is nothing for you in it to break. How can you, however, break the other laws which you have hitherto obeyed, and which may also be good?' So far as the good laws are concerned, *i.e.*, laws which lay down moral principles, the Satyagrahi may not break them, and their breach is not contemplated under the pledge. But the other laws are neither good nor bad, moral or immoral. They may be useful, or may even be harmful. These laws one obeys for the supposed good Government of the country. Such laws are laws framed for purposes of revenue, or political laws creating statutory offences. These laws enable the Government to continue its power. When therefore a Government goes wrong to the extent of hurting the national fibre itself, as does the Rowlatt legislation, it becomes the right of the subject, indeed it is his duty, to withdraw his obedience to such laws, to the extent it may be required, to bend the Government to the national will.

A doubt has been expressed during my tour, and by friends who have written to me, as to the validity in terms of Satyagraha of the entrustment of the selection of the laws for breach to a committee. For, it is argued that it amounts to a surrender of one's conscience, to leave such selection to others. This doubt betrays a misunderstanding of the pledge. A signatory to the pledge undertakes so far as he is concerned to break if necessary all the laws which it would be lawful for a Satyagrahi to break. It is not however obligatory on him to break all such laws. He can therefore perfectly conscientiously leave the selection of the laws to be broken to the judgement of those who are experts in the matter and who in their turn are necessarily subject to the limitations imposed by the pledge. The worst that can happen to any signatory is that the selection may not be exhaustive enough for him.

I have been told that I am diverting the attention of the country from the one and only thing that matters, *viz.*, the forthcoming Reforms. In my opinion, the Rowlatt legislation, in spite of the amendment which, as the Select Committee very properly says, does not affect its principles, blocks the way to progress, and therefore to the allotment of the substantial reforms. To my mind, the first thing needful is to secure a frank and full recognition of the principle that public opinion properly expressed shall be respected by the Government. I am no believer in the doctrine that the same power can at the same time trust and distrust, grant liberty and repress it.



I have a right to interpret the coming reforms by the light that the Rowlatt legislation throws upon them ; and I make bold to promise that if we do not gather sufficient force to remove from our path this great obstacle in the shape of the Rowlatt legislation, we shall find the Reforms to be a whitened sepulchre.

Yet another objection to answer. Some friends have argued, "Your Satyagraha movement only accentuates the fear we have of the onrush of Bolshevism" The fact, however, is that if anything can possibly prevent this calamity descending upon our country, it is Satyagraha. Bolshevism is the necessary result of modern materialistic civilization. Its insensate worship of matter has given rise to a school which has been brought up to look upon material advancement as the goal and which has lost all touch with the finer things of life. Self-indulgence is the Bolshevik creed. Self-restraint is the Satyagraha creed. If I can but induce the nation to accept Satyagraha, if only as a predominant factor in life, whether social or political, we need have no fear of the Bolshevik propaganda. In asking the nation to accept Satyagraha, I am asking for the introduction in reality of nothing new. I have coined a new word for an ancient law that has hitherto mainly governed our lives and I do prophesy that if we disobey the law of the final supremacy of the spirit over matter, of truth and love over brute-forces, in a few years' time we shall have Bolshevism rampant in this India which was once so holy.

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## Laws of Civil Disobedience.

The following statement was issued in March last by the Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay :—

The Committee contemplated by the Satyagraha Pledge has advised that for the time being laws regarding prohibited literature and registration of newspapers may be civilly disobeyed.

With reference to prohibited literature, the Committee has selected the following prohibited works for dissemination :

“Hind Swarajya” by M. K. Gandhi.

“Sarvodaya” or Universal Dawn, by M. K. Gandhi (being a paraphrase of “Unto This Last.”)

“The Story of a Satyagrahi,” by M. K. Gandhi (being a paraphrase of the ‘Defence and Death of Socrates’ by Plato).

“The Life and Address of Mustafa Kamil Pasha.”

(Printed at the International Printing Press).

In making this selection, the Committee has been guided for the following considerations :—

(1) To cause as little disturbance as possible among the Governors and the governed ;

(2) Until Satyagrahis have become seasoned, disciplined and capable of handling delicately organised movements, to select such laws only as can be disobeyed individually ;

(3) To select, as a first step, laws that have evoked popular disapproval and that, from the Satyagraha standpoint, are the most open to attack ;

(4) To select laws whose civil breach would constitute an education for the people, showing them a clear way out of the difficulties that lie in the path of honest men desiring to do public work ;

(5) Regarding prohibited literature, to select such books and pamphlets as are not inconsistent with Satyagraha, and which are therefore, of a clean type and which do not, either directly or indirectly, approve of or encourage violence.

### How to commit civil disobedience.

Satyagrahis should receive copies of prohibited literature for distribution. A limited number of copies can be had from the Secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha. Satyagrahis should, so far as possible, write their names and addresses as sellers, so that they may be traced easily when wanted by Government for



prosecution. Naturally, there can be no question of secret sale of this literature. At the same time there should be no forwardness either in distributing it.

It is open to Satyagrahis to form small groups of men and women to whom they may read this class of literature. The object in selecting prohibited literature is not merely to commit a civil breach of the law regarding it, but also to supply people with clean literature of a high moral value. It is expected that the Government will confiscate such literature. Satyagraha is and has to be as independent of finance as possible. When, therefore, copies are confiscated, Satyagrahis are required to make copies of prohibited literature themselves or by securing the assistance of willing friends and to make use of it until it is confiscated by giving readings to the people from it. It is stated that such readings would amount to dissemination of prohibited literature. When whole copies are exhausted by dissemination or confiscation Satyagrahis may continue civil disobedience by writing out and distributing extracts from accessible books.

Regarding civil breach of the law governing the publication of newspapers, the idea is to publish in every Satyagraha centre a written newspaper without registering it. It need not occupy more than one side of half a foolscap. When such a newspaper is edited, it will be found how difficult it is to fill up half sheet. It is a well-known fact that the vast majority of newspapers contain much padding. Further, it cannot be denied that a newspaper articles written under the terror of the very strict newspaper law have a double meaning. A Satyagrahi for whom punishments provided by law have lost all terror, can give only in an unregistered newspaper his thoughts and opinions unhampered by any other consideration than that of his own conscience. His newspaper, therefore, if otherwise well edited, can become a most powerful vehicle for transmitting pure ideas in a concise manner, and there need be no fear of inability to circulate a hand-written newspaper; for it will be the duty of those who may receive the first copies to copy till at last the process of multiplication is made to cover, if necessary, the whole of the masses of India. And it must not be forgotten that we have in India the tradition of imparting instruction by oral teaching.

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# The Delhi Riot

The Satyagrahis of Delhi under the guidance of Swami Sharanananda, popularly known as Mahatma Munshi Ram of Hardwar Gurukula School, made arrangements to observe Sunday, the 30th March, as a day of humiliation and prayer among the citizens of Delhi, as a protest against the passing by the Government of India, against the unanimous voice of all India, of the Rowlatt Bills.

Before the announcement was made some days back Satyagraha meetings were held at the Congress Park to educate the public in the matter and to prepare them for the coming action. Local vernacular papers carried the announcement far and wide to every household and even women and children were ready to carry out the instructions contained therein. Voluntary workers went over to every shop in the city and persuaded the shopkeepers to close their shops.

On the evening of 29th a meeting was held at the Congress Park at which Prof. Inder, son of Mahatma Munshi Ram after explaining the programme of the coming day read from the Anglo-Indian daily of Delhi, the "Morning Post", a passage misrepresenting the intention of the Satyagraha movement, and assured the audience that it was none of their intention to create trouble and exhorted them to be true and pure Satyagrahis.

The next morning, Sunday 30th March, as proposed no shops were opened and the few which were opened here and there were speedily closed at the request of the organisers. People travelling in trams were requested to get down and so were those going on carriages and motors. All this was complete by 9-30 A.M. and everything went off quietly for sometime but for the bawling out of knots of idlers here and there when a carriage or a tram car was emptied of its occupants.

After accomplishing their task in the bazars and streets of Delhi some of the over-enthusiastic workers proceeded to the railway station at about half past ten to persuade the station shop-keepers who however refused to close their shops on the plea that they were bound by contract to keep their shops open. There was a *faraca* and some of the plates etc. of the sweet vendors were thrown off when the railway police intervened and took two of the demonstrators in custody. Hearing of this more men hurried to the

railway station and asked for the release of those arrested which was refused. It is said that the sergeants and other railway officers caned them severely. A quarrel ensued resulting in assaults on both sides. Meanwhile the crowd increased and gradually became unwieldy for the police. Intimation was sent to the Additional District Magistrate who arrived at the spot at about 12 with a small military force and **machine guns** and ordered the crowd to disperse. They did not heed. The machine gun was fired first in the air and then at the crowd killing a few and wounding more who were at once removed to the neighbouring building. In confusion the crowd withdrew to the Queen's Garden and then to the Clock Tower in Chandni Chowk. Meanwhile more people gathered at the Clock Tower and they tried to get into the garden to form the proposed procession. The military who were guarding the Municipal building in the gardens shot at the crowd with revolvers which again killed a few more and wounded some. The exact number of killed and wounded in all is not definitely known but eight bodies have openly been cremated and more are suspected to have been removed to outstations and cremated there by the military.

When the confusion was going on at the Railway station Mahatma Munshi Ram arrived at the spot and tried his best to reconcile with the authorities. He explained to the audience what had happened and exhorted them to have patience and conduct themselves like true Satyagrahis without being excited. At this time information was received of the happenings at Chandani Chowk when the crowd became restless. The Mahatma quieted them. Just at that time the military headed by two European officers were seen marching towards the crowd. The crowd began to disperse in confusion when the Mahatma again kept them in control. The military meanwhile arrived and began to surround the crowd when Mahatma interviewed the officer who wanted them to conduct themselves peacefully which he assured, provided the military were removed from the scene. The officer agreed and marched off round the park towards Chandni Chowk and after patrolling that street for some time came back again, this time headed by the Chief Commissioner and the District Magistrate, to another place in the park where the audience had shifted owing to increased numbers which by this time grew to more than ten thousand. This time there were no signs of confusion in the crowd. The military were arrayed in order and the officers stood at the edge of the crowd. The Chief Commissioner called the Mahatma who was standing on a platform in the middle, and had a talk with him. On being questioned what this meeting was for, how long it would last and who would be responsible for the orderly conduct of the audience, the Mahatma answered that the meeting was to protest against the passing of

the Rowlatt Bills, that it would last till 6 and that he would be responsible for order provided the military were removed from the place. He then explained to the audience what the Chief Commissioner told him and they in one voice cried out that it was none of their object to create trouble and that they had not done so and that they will not do so provided the military or the police did not interfere with them on their way. The Chief Commissioner assured them about the military and after giving instructions to the officers not to disturb them, marched off. After passing a resolution of protest against the Rowlatt Bills the meeting terminated at 6 p. m. and the crowd dispersed.

A portion followed the Mahatma through Chandni Chowk when on the way a Gurkha fired a shot at the crowd which did not hit anybody. Then the Mahatma went near the firer and asked why he shot at the peaceful crowd and in reply the Gurkha threatened to shoot him also pointing his rifle at him. He stood firm and offered himself to be shot. More men pointed their rifles at him when a European officer rushed into the spot and enquired who fired at the crowd and let the crowd pass on peaceably. The night passed on quietly. Not a man dared to walk out, not a carriage was to be seen and the police and the military guarded the streets and the military were posted outside the city throughout the Civil Lines.

### *Delhi, 31 March 1919.*

Next morning people began to clamour for the dead bodies, and pending receipt of the same refused to open the shops. Two out of them were handed over in the morning and were taken in possession to be buried. In the evening five more were given and a huge crowd numbering about ten thousand headed by Mahatma Munshi Ram followed the bodies to the grave.

A body of a Mahomedan who was killed the previous day was removed to an adjacent mosque. The police demanded the body which was refused. They threatened but to no purpose.

Some of the leading gentlemen of the city went to the Deputy Commissioner on deputation to ask for the dead bodies when, it is said, the Dy. Com. Gol. Beadon regreted that only innocent men were killed and not those who deserved to be killed.

In the evening a conference of the citizens was held when a Commission of private and independent enquiry consisting of Rai Saheb Piyare Lal, Hazi-ul-Mulk Hakim Ajmal Khan, Rai Bahadur Sukan Singh and others was appointed to record evidence and report, and a committee of about 16 members was also appointed to help them to secure evidence.

**Swami Sradhanda's Statement to the Press.**

"On Sunday, March 30th, every shop and business place was closed from the morning. Returning from morning service in the local Arya Samaj Mandir, I patrolled through the city. The tramcars had ceased plying because none would use them, and even 'tongas,' etc., had stopped and all was quiet with thousands of peaceful subjects walking on footpaths. I returned to my place after 12 a. m., intending to go to the meeting after four.

"At two o'clock some gentlemen came running from the Railway Station, saying that as some people asked the station shop to close a European railway official came and threatened them. When told it was no business of his to interfere he whistled to the police, who took two men out of the collected masses in custody. The masses said that if their men were given up they would go away. Then the police began to belabour them with a stick. Soldiers with a machine-gun were arriving when they left to report to me.

"I left immediately for the Railway Station. There I heard that the machine-gun had fired indiscriminately and about a dozen had either been killed or wounded, the bodies being dragged into the station yard. Those hit included a railway passenger with one woman. So they said. I saw the Gurkhas coming from the opposite side. The British soldiers were already there. I went to some Europeans, of whom one was Mr. Curry, the City Magistrate, and asked them to tell me the true facts. They treated me with indifference. Mr. Curry actually turning his back upon me. I told him that I was taking the people away to the meeting ground, although early, and he ought not to irritate the people by making a display of the military and machine gun.

"The whole crowd, some 3 to 4 thousands, followed me. Avoiding military cordons we marched through the city. Thousands followed and thousands had preceded us and about 15 thousands assembled on Congress grounds. The number was swelling and had risen to 25 thousands, and I was addressing them, exhorting them to act like Satyagrahis and to control their sorrow and anger, when intelligence reached that "Gora" soldiers had fired near the Clock Tower and that another dozen or so had been pierced with bullets. Some began to get excited and I again managed to pacify them. But then two British military officers on horseback came on full speed with some Sowers and wanted a talk with me. I went out and asked the officers the meaning of this. I said this was a meeting of peaceful citizens and they were exasperating the people by a show of military aggression. The officer said he would not interfere with the peaceful meeting but a brick bat had just passed him. Neither I nor any other had seen any

brickbat passing. The officer went away with the sowars, saying it was not their object to disperse a peaceful meeting.

### Machine gun at the door.

"The crowd was becoming huge and after putting up a platform in the middle of the maidan, we removed there. The crowd, some forty thousands, had hardly settled itself, and after extorting them in the name of Satyagrah, I had commenced a prayer to the Almighty when the same sowars came running again with a Mahomedan police officer, Mr. Curry and the Chief Commissioner. In the meantime a machine-gun motor had rattled to the door of the meeting maidan. I had to come down the platform and to go to the Chief Commissioner outside the audience. The Chief Commissioner asked me what we were going to do, and how long the meeting would last. I answered that a resolution of protest against the Rowlatt Bills would be passed to be sent to Mr. Montagu and the meeting would last till 6-30. He asked me about the speakers and names were given. Then he told me that if I gave an assurance that the feelings of the people would not be stirred and that the crowd would quietly disperse to their homes he would not interfere with the meeting. In reply I said I am personally responsible and had been pacifying those whose relatives had been shot and wounded but, if on our way back your military gave trouble again I will not be responsible. The responsibility will rest with you. I explained all the facts and said intelligence came that machine-guns again discharged volleys near the Clock Tower. The Chief Commissioner said in reply that no machine-gun was fired near the Clock Tower. I said in that case I could reassure the people saying that no people had been injured near the Clock Tower. The Chief Commissioner on this quietly said "rifles were fired not machine-gun." Then came an inquiry from me, "was anybody injured?" The reply was "I do not know and therefore cannot say." Then the Chief Commissioner told me to give a message of his to the people to act on the instructions of Mr. Gandhi and create no disturbance. I was all along speaking in a loud voice which thousands heard. Then I mounted the platform again and asked the assembled people categorically about what I had been telling them. They all said that they would never depart from the principles of Satyagraha. Whatever oppression they suffered they would bear with patience. The Chief Commissioner went away, saying that if the meeting dispersed quietly neither the military nor the police would interfere with the meeting. Then the resolution to be sent to Mr. Montagu was adopted unanimously.

"I asked the large audience to follow me and to leave quietly

when near their residence. We were walking in order. When we were nearing the Clock Tower, the Gurkhas were in the middle of the road in double file facing both ways. On seeing us they marched to the right foot board. We thought they had left to enable us to pass but when we came near them a rifle was fired into the crowd. There was a stir and deep tone of resentment but I asked all to halt and they obeyed. In my Sanyasi dress I went up to the foot path alone and asked the Gurkhas why they were firing on innocent and peaceful people. Two rifles were immediately pointed at me and they began saying in a very insolent tone "tum ko chhed denge".—"We will pierce you." I stood quietly before them and said "main khara hun goli chhalao," "I am standing: fire." At once eight or ten more rifles were aimed at my breast and insolent threats went on. The crowd could contain itself no longer and was about to rush when a wave of my hand and a short appeal stopped them. But they were saying "let us die and not you, oh let us die" The rifles had remained pointed at my breast for some three minutes when a European approached on horse back. I told him to mark the scene and the rifles at once went down. In my presence the European on horseback asked the only policeman present whether he had ordered the soldiers to fire. The policeman denied having ordered firing. I stopped northward and asked the European officer whether he heard the rifle fire; he impatiently answered that he was enquiring about it. I then left with the people following me.

Then there was a strange sight. A Gurkha came near me, brandishing his naked khukhri right and left. No one being cowed down he left. The machine-gun motor was rattling away encircling us with the gun constantly pointed at us and with the hand of the gunners on it. The crowd was neither cowed down nor impatient. At Fatehpuri I sent many of them home. Again many followed till I reached my place when all Hindus and Mohammadans took affectionate leave.

"I have no sense of resentment against the military or Government officials. But those whose relatives have been murdered or wounded are inconsolable and in the whole population of Delhi there is a sense of insecurity and complete distrust in the justice of the officers in charge. A helpless people, specially imbued now with Satyagraha principles, will keep quiet but this shedding of blood on a bloodless day will not pass unnoticed by the Master of the Universe. My message to my countrymen is "Celebrate 6th April with prayers and humiliation before the throne of the Father Spirit, but do not be deterred for fear of military force to hold mass meetings. The resolution against the Rowlatt Bills must go to the King-Emperor from every nook and corner of India."

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## Mahatma Gandhi on Delhi Tragedy.

Mahatma Gandhi was about this time touring in Madras and South India. He heard and read only scrappy accounts of the Delhi disturbance in the newspapers while in the train *en route* to Bombay. On reading Swami Shraddhananda's statement he wired to him a message of congratulation and said :—

*"In opposing the Rowlatt Legislation we are resisting the spirit of terrorism lying behind it. It is no easy task. We have to give much more such innocent blood as Delhi gave. It is unnecessary for Delhi to fast again on next Sunday."*

When the full news of the Delhi tragedy reached M. Gandhi who was then at Bombay ( April 4 ), he at once issued the following letter to the press :

It is alleged against the Delhi people assembled at the Delhi Railway Station (1) that some of them were trying to coerce sweetmeat sellers into closing their stalls ; (2) that some were forcibly preventing people from plying tramcars and other vehicles ; (3) that some of them threw brickbats ; (4) that the whole crowd that marched to the station demanded the release of men who were said to be coercers and who were for that reason arrested at the instance of the railway authorities : (5) that the crowd declined to disperse when the Magistrate gave orders to disperse.

I have read Sanyasi Swami Shraddhanandji's account of the tragedy. I am bound to accept it as true, unless it is authoritatively proved to be otherwise, and his account seems to me to deny the allegations 1, 2 and 3. But assuming the truth of all allegations it does appear to me that the local authorities in Delhi have made use of a blacksmith hammer to crush a fly. On their action, however, in firing on the crowd, I shall seek another opportunity of saying more. My purpose in writing this letter is merely to issue a note of warning to all Satyagrahis. I would, therefore, like to observe that the conduct described in the allegations 1 to 4, if true, would be inconsistent with the Satyagraha pledge. The conduct described in allegation 5 can be consistent with the pledge. but if the allegation is true, the conduct was premature, because the committee, contemplated in the pledge, has not decided upon the disobedience of orders that may be issued by the Magistrate under the Riot Act. I am anxious to make it as clear as I can that in this movement no pressure can be put upon people who do not wish to accept our



suggestions and advice, the movement being essentially one to secure the greatest freedom for all. Satyagrahis cannot forcibly demand release of those who might be arrested, whether justly or unjustly. The essence of the pledge is to invite imprisonment and until the committee decides upon the breach of the Riot Act, it is the duty of Satyagrahis to obey without making the slightest ado, Magisterial orders to disperse, etc., and thus to demonstrate their law-abiding nature. I hope that the next Sunday (Ap. 6th) at Satyagraha meetings, all speeches will be free from passion, anger or resentment. The movement depends for its success entirely upon perfect self-possession, self-restraint, absolute adherence to truth and unlimited capacity for self-suffering. Before closing this letter, I would add that in opposing the Rowlatt Legislation Satyagrahis are resisting the spirit of terrorism which lies behind it and of which it is a most glaring symptom. The Delhi tragedy imposes an added responsibility upon Satyagrahis of stilling their hearts and going on with their struggle until the Rowlatt Legislation is withdrawn.

## Government Account of The Delhi Disturbances.

On 3rd April the Government of India, Home Department, issued the following Press Communique.

As misleading accounts of the disturbances in Delhi on Sunday, the 30th March, appeared in certain newspapers, the following summary of the official report received from the local administration is issued for general information :—

The shops in the city generally were closed on Sunday morning as a protest against the passing of the Rowlatt Bills. Those shopkeepers who opened their shops were induced to close them at an early hour by 10-30 a.m. The crowds in the streets were making efforts to extend the *hartal* to the tonga-drivers and to compel all passengers to walk. The usual police precautionary measures had been taken, and all the reserves in the police lines and at the various stations were in readiness. About 1 or 1-30 p.m. a large crowd assembled outside the railway station and some persons entered and attempted to prevent the Railway contractor who supplies food to the third class passengers from carrying out his duties and to make him observe the *hartal*. On the contractor's refusal, he was assaulted and the railway police and staff arrested two of his assailants. Several hundred men of the mob, which had

collected outside, invaded the station with the object of rescuing the two men who had been arrested. A complete stoppage of the work of the station was thus threatened. The station was cleared by the police, assisted by various British soldiers who happened to be present on the platform and by a party of 250 Mainpuris on their way home from Mesopotamia, who were in a train in the station yard. As, however, the attitude of the mob outside the station was very threatening and the station authorities requisitioned help from the Fort, a party of some 20 to 30 British Infantry were sent from the Fort to the Station. The Superintendent of Police arrived on the scene with a few mounted constables at about 2 p.m., and found his Foot police under the command of the Assistant Superintendent and a party of 20 to 30 British Infantry surrounded by a shouting mob on the Queen's Road in front of the Railway Station. The mob was so close to the men protecting the station gates that one of them attempted to snatch a rifle from a British Infantry-man, and was wounded with the bayonet. To relieve the pressure, the Superintendent of Police charged the crowd with his mounted men, and drove them into the Queen's Garden and down the road to right and left. For sometimes the rioters had been throwing stones and bricks at the police and soldiers and, among others, the Additional District Magistrate, the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent of Police and the District Traffic Superintendent were struck on their helmets.

- After the police and military had been contending with the mob for nearly a couple of hours, without succeeding in driving them off, the Additional District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police came to the conclusion, about 2/30 p.m., that further postponement of sterner measures would only lead to an infinitely greater bloodshed. An order to fire a couple of rounds was therefore given. Two of the rioters fell. The remainder broke and the police and infantry were then able to drive them back through the Queen's Garden which was cleared in about half an hour. Pickets were placed up to the Town Hall, the Mainpuris already referred to being utilised to line the road round the Queen's Garden. The crowd maintained its threatening attitude in the Chandni Chowk and the Superintendent of Police, on riding up, after hearing a couple of shots from the direction of the Town Hall, found about 15 British Infantry and 15 Policemen being heavily stoned. The mob surged over the railing into the Queen's Garden. It appeared inevitable that some of the police and infantry would soon be seriously injured, and as the attacks of the mob continued the order to fire on them was given. Two or three rounds per man were fired, and three men were seen to fall, but others were probab-

ly hit. This ended the trouble and the rioters dispersed. So far as has been ascertained, eight men were killed and some 12 or 13 have been treated for wounds at the Civil Hospital. In spite of the rumours and newspaper reports to the contrary, none of the killed were boys, and though an armoured car was sent from the Fort, the machine gun in it was not fired. The squadron of the Cavalry which had been sent for from the new Cantonment arrived in the City after the rioters had dispersed. In the opinion of the local administration the Police and the British Infantry employed to scatter the rioters behaved with great restraint, and a very sudden and awkward situation was tackled with great firmness by the Additional District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police.

**Another Communique issued from the Government of India** dated *Simla, Apr. 5*, said: There is reason to believe that misleading accounts of the effect of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act (commonly known as the Rowlatt Bills) are being circulated among the more ignorant sections of the population. Thus in Delhi it is reported that large sections of the populace believed that the Act empowers any police officer to arrest, without a warrant, any three Indians whom he may see engaged in a conversation and to enter and search without a warrant any house. These beliefs sedulously propagated by evilly disposed persons and allowed to pass uncontradicted by others doubtless account largely for the high state of excitement prevalent among the crowds that came into conflict with the police and military at Delhi on the 30th March with fatal results. It is hardly necessary to state that the Act contains no provisions of the nature indicated, it confers no powers of arbitrary arrest or search on the police, and the only reference it contains to arrest or search is in Section 34 (1) which authorises the arrest on the written order of the Local Government of a person where there are reasonable grounds for believing that he has been or is concerned in certain serious offences in any area to which Part 3 of the Act has been extended. The same Section permits the search, under similar authority, of any place in such area believed to have been used by such person for any purpose connected with an anarchical or revolutionary movement. No part of the Act is as yet in force, nor can any part be brought into force within any Province or area unless and until the Governor-General in Council is satisfied that anarchical or revolutionary movements are being promoted in such Provinces or areas.

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## Col. Beadon's action

On April 4th Col. Beadon, the Deputy Commissioner, held an informal meeting with the leading citizens of the town to discuss what steps should be taken to prevent a repetition of the unfortunate happenings of the 30th March. A large number of gentlemen responded to his invitation, and this included three members of the non-official Commission of Enquiry which was set up by the Citizens to make a searching enquiry of the unhappy events and report thereon, namely, Khan Bahadur Hakim Ajmal Khan, Rai Saheb Piarey Lal and Rai Bahadur Sultan Singh.

In opening the proceedings Colonel Beadon said that there were rumours of another strike on Sunday next and he sought their co-operation in inducing the people not to strike, and, further more, if some persons persisted in striking to take such steps as would prevent rioting. He said that he proposed to issue hand-bills which he asked the gentlemen present to distribute broadcast. He read out the text of the hand-bill which was in the vernacular. The following is a translation :—

### The Hand-bill.

"You have all heard of the rioting which took place on Sunday, the 30th March, with the unfortunate result that some eight persons were killed and more have been wounded. For this reason I publish the following : On that day, certain persons had determined to close their shops as a sign of protest against the Act which had been passed by the Supreme Government to prevent murderous outrages and anarchical crimes and to protect the public from such criminals. Those persons who organised this protest concealed the fact that, though the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act had been passed by the Imperial Council, it is not actually in force, and no part of it can be brought into operation, unless and until the Governor General-in-Council publishes a notification declaring that he is satisfied that any part or parts of India, in which it is to come into force, anarchical or revolutionary movements are being promoted and certain serious offences connected therewith are prevalent to such an extent that special procedure for their repression prescribed by the Act is necessary to ensure public safety. It should be known to you that at present the Act is not in force in any part of India, and it is the hope of the Government that it will never be necessary to enforce it. The action of the Government in passing the Act is

merely that of a prudent house-holder who keeps buckets full of water to put out fire if one takes place, or a Zamindar who sleeps on his threshing floor when wheat has been reaped to prevent its being stolen. Citizens of Delhi have no need to anticipate that the enforcement of the Act will be necessary here. What reason is there then for the excitement which has been aroused thus? The strike was foolish and unnecessary. Those who had determined to close their shops, took the law into their own hands, and prevented other shopkeepers by threats from opening their shops. The result was that the bazaar was closed, and many people were idle, and a crowd of budmashes created a disturbance at the Railway Station. The so-called Passive Resistance turned at once into active rioting, which the Sirkar cannot allow. Those who created the strike are entirely to blame for creating a situation which they could not control. Be warned by this notice not to be deceived by persons who wish to compel you to close your shops. If you close your shops, you hurt yourselves, you may hurt innocent victims, but you do not hurt the Sirkar. If any one forces you to close your shops, get their names recorded at the nearest Thana. The Sirkar cannot help you unless you help the Sirkar in this way. Now that the city is quiet again, do not agitate yourself, and cause more trouble to your relatives and fellow citizens. The Sirkar, as you know, has no wish to see riots or to have to use force to repress riots. I want you all to realise how much we, the Government servants, deplore that men should have been killed and wounded. I am therefore asking the Rases of Delhi to raise subscriptions for the wounded and their dependents."

After this notice was read, Col. Beadon asked the meeting if they would propose any other measure.

**Dr Shroff** said, so far as he had learnt, there would be no strike on Sunday next. He had obtained this information from the Satyagraha Camp. Asked if the strike occurred the Satyagrahis would be able to stop it or prevent rioting, he replied he was not in a position to reply.

**Rai Bahadur Sultan Singh** said the Satyagraha Executive Committee had decided that there should be no second strike on Sunday 6th April as all realised that only evil and no good could come out of it. They however proposed to hold a public meeting that evening, and he desired to know if they would be allowed to do so in the Queen's Garden or in the grounds near the Fort.

**Col. Beadon** said that this matter was beside the object of the meeting, and a proper application should be made for the purpose. He asked in if any one would come forward to help preventing riots in case they occurred, but no reply was forthcoming. The members however said they would appoint a Sub Committee to collect funds for the wounded. The meeting then dispersed.

## Reply to Col. Beadon.

In reply to the Beadon Handbill the following counterblast was issued by Mr. K. A. Desai, Secretary, Satyagraha Sabha, Delhi, and addressed to the redoubtable Colonel:—

DEAR SIR,—After carefully reading the notice read out to the assembly convened by you in the Town Hall on the 4th of April 1919 and subsequently issued presumably under your orders to the public of Delhi, the Executive Committee of the Satyagraha Sabha Delhi feels constrained in the public interest to reply to certain reflections against the said Sabha contained in the notice referred to above, in order to remove the misunderstanding that it is likely to create and to counteract the attempts that are being assiduously made in certain quarters to screen the mistakes of certain subordinate Govt. officers in connection with the recent unfortunate incidents and to point out their responsibility on unoffending public workers.

(1) The assertion contained in your notice that the persons who advised to give expression to public indignation concealed from the public the fact that the Act No. 11 of 1919 would be applicable in special circumstances and only after a notification by the Governor-General-in-Council to that effect. It is submitted that the workers of the Satyagraha Sabha had explained to the public all the aspects of the act sought to be repealed in three meetings held before the Sunday demonstration. They had at the same time placed before the public in the said meetings the contentions and arguments advanced by the Non-Official members of the Imperial Legislative Council against the passing of the said Act. It appears to the Committee that the notice issued under your signatures was prepared without carefully reading the speeches delivered by all the Non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council and without obtaining a correct report of the speeches made at the meetings held under the auspices of the Satyagraha Sabha on the 24th, 27th and 29th March 1919. The Committee does not believe that the report of the said speeches did not reach you. All that it submits is that a very incorrect and distorted account of them was supplied to you which led on to arrive at incorrect conclusions and held the citizens of Delhi



and their leader, especially the members of the Satyagraha Sabha, responsible for the unfortunate incidents of Sunday the 30th March.

(2) In your notice you also mention that the Rowlatt Act is not applicable to Delhi and it is hoped that there will be no occasion to apply it to Delhi. Consequently in your opinion the closing of the shops was foolish and a silly decision. We feel it our duty to make it clear that the people of India object to the principle underlying the Act. The Act also presupposes that the whole of the country is rife with anarchical societies, necessitating the use of such stringent and harsh laws. We respectfully but firmly submit that considering the unimpeachable attitude of the country as a whole in the past, suspicions of this nature constitute an insult to its population. It is the feeling of this insult and indignation which is sought to be expressed in the meetings, speeches, and demonstrations from one end of the country to the other, that it may be brought home to the Government that the people cannot bear the breach of the principles of justice involved in the passage of the Rowlatt Act. To designate the purely constitutional efforts of the people as "futile and silly" is not only an insult of the people of this Country but it is an insult offered to the fundamental principles on which rests the entire structure of the British Empire and of which our rulers are justly proud.

(3) The third misstatement which we feel our duty to contradict is that threats were used to force people to close their shops. It is impossible to conceive that a handful, of men however influential would have succeeded in organising such a large demonstration if the people themselves had not willingly co-operated with them in the task. You must be aware of the failure that attended the efforts made by the leading citizens of Delhi and the members of the Satyagraha Sabha to prevent people from closing their shops on the 31st March, 1919. It is not intended to deny that some people might have expressed over-enthusiasm in their efforts to induce the public to close their shops which in a case or two might have resulted in unpleasantness. But it is absolutely unjustifiable and incorrect to represent it as forcing people to close their shops. In this connection we may be permitted to point out that it is against the fundamental principles of the Satyagraha Sabha and that the sabha cannot possibly violate its basic principles.

(4) The fourth statement in your notice is that the people who assembled at the station and were finally without any cause fired at were ordinary badmashes and rioters. You also assert

that no boys were killed or wounded near the station or Clock-tower. We may be permitted to say that it is incorrect and against facts. We feel confident that if the Government appoints an impartial Committee to investigate and inquire into the whole unfortunate affair it shall bear out our statement and it would be seen how many boys were killed or wounded by the firing of the police and military.

(5) The fifth incorrect statement in your notice is that the persons who suggested the closing of the shops are responsible for all these developments. We do not know on what arguments and facts the Government relies for this statement, but we beg to draw your attention to the fact that while the Government (according to its own statement) failed to restore order even after the free use of rifles and bayonets at the railway station where not more than five thousand are said to have been present, a few members of the Satyagraha sabha succeeded in controlling and peacefully dispersing an audience estimated at 20,000 to 25,000 people on the 30th of March in the People's park in spite of the provocation which the display of bare swords and bayonets, rifles and machine guns naturally causes. Can any man after seeing this attitude of the Satyagrahis rightly hold them responsible for the bloodshed on the 30th of March? Without the least intention of delivering a hasty judgment we respectfully submit that the responsibility of all this affair lies on the Government officials who, even if it be conceded that a few mischievous urchins flung a few stones at the police, replied to the stones of boys by rifles, bullets, and the bayonets of the police and military. Officials who were panic stricken by the ordinary noise and clamour natural on such occasions irresponsibly made innocent people the target of rifles and thought it necessary to contradict by facts and argument the allegations made by us. But if Government considers that no blame attaches to them in this matter it should establish its innocence in order to remove the possibility of all future misunderstanding.

(6) As regards your advice to the people not to close their shops and to report the name of persons who might compel them to do so to the nearest police station, we beg to point out that the Executive Committee of the Satyagraha Sabha has already decided that in view of the fact that they have already done so on the 30th of March that no such demonstration should be held on the 6th of April. Even Mahatma Gandhi has sent a notice to that effect which is binding on every Satyagrahi. But if your advice implies that it is illegal to persuade or induce any shop-keeper to close his shop we must emphatically protest against this unjust interference with the legitimate rights of the



people. After this rebuking and expression of displeasure you have been pleased to announce your intention of requesting the leading citizens of Delhi to raise funds for the help of the wounded and families of the killed. It is very kind of you to express such care and solicitude for the welfare of the people and we thank you for the humanitarian motives which prompted that decision. Need we point out that the citizens of Delhi have already started a fund for the relief of the wounded and sufferers and a memorial of those killed and it is hoped that the citizens shall give practical proof of their sympathy and sacrifice. It is therefore superfluous to appeal to the Rulers of Delhi when the general public has already taken up the work as a duty they owed to God.

In conclusion we may be permitted to say that our conscience is clear, our convictions are unshaken, we stand on the path of truth. Whatever we are doing we consider it our duty and in future whatever we shall do we shall be guided by the best interests of our people and our country. We are neither seditionists nor disturbers of peace. We are neither conspirators nor rebels. Our crime, if crime it can be called, is that we do not permit any interference with our legitimate rights and consider it the duty of every self-respecting man to be prepared for every kind of sacrifice for the defence of Right and Justice. In the end we pray to God that he may grant wisdom to our rulers and help us in our righteous cause.

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## Delhi after 30th March.

31st March saw Delhi *en masse* in mourning. Funeral processions, carrying biers of those fallen on the preceding day, attended by tens of thousands in hushed agony of mourning, marched to the graveyards and cremation grounds of Muslims and Hindus respectively with a solemnity never to be forgotten. It was not until after much praying and soliciting and mainly through the kindness of Mr. Barron, the Chief Commissioner, that the dead bodies were recovered. The military, however, were not unmindful of their duty of "keeping peace and order" and rattled with their machine guns in the rear of the processions. Thus passed the 31st of March with mourning on one side and righteous exultation on the other.

Next morning the local leaders went round the Bazars and exhorted people to resume business; after much persuasion shops were opened but soon closed on the appearance of the military near the Clock-Tower. Rumour ran afoot that there will be another firing. The popular leaders who had ever since been untiring in their efforts to pacify the crowd and dispel false fears, both on the part of the Police and the people, requested the authorities not to exasperate the despairing people by a show of the Military, and pointed out how they had detected several spies and hirelings haranging the crowd with a view to further excitement. The military was then withdrawn and for the next two days business ran as usual.

Then came the April 4th meeting under Colonel Beadon, a man disliked by the people of Delhi as being solely responsible for much of their suffering and travail. This was the man who, it was said, systematically misrepresented, slighted and insulted the popular leaders, not excepting the most revered and influential residents, callously scotched popular feeling, paraded before all the might of the Sirkar and the Police, and kept Delhi under the heels of the military. His was the percussion which constantly kept on popular feeling bursting in little explosions. On his approach shops closed, on his sight people fled. The popular feeling was that under his ample powers flourished all the infamous breed of C. I. D. underlings and spies, ever widening the gulf between the authorities and the people. On the same day (4th April) about 30,000 Hindus and Mahomedans assembled in the Jumma Musjid to pray for peace to the souls of the beloved innocents who fell a martyr on the 30th March last. The Machine gun and armed military were in front making aggressive demonstrations regardless of the solemnity of the occasion. Hindus and Mahomedans joined hands and prayed and mourned together. The blood of the Martyrs at last cemented their hearts after all these years of disillusionment as to their fundamental antagonism.

# The All-India Hartal

*Sunday, 6th April, 1919.*

Then came the Great Hartal of April 6th, set in motion by Mahatma Gandhi, and memorable in the history of Indian Nationhood as the day of political purification of a people long suffering from the sins of their fathers. From Simla to Cape Comorin, from Calcutta to Bombay, in the capital cities and in the mofussil towns, people in a body suspended their daily avocations, passing it in fasting and bathing, in pujas and prayers, and organising meetings to deplore the sad predicament of the country with black clouds, like the Rowlatt Act, threatening and thickening on all sides. Prayerful protest meetings were held everywhere, attended by thousands in the mofussil and by hundreds of thousands in the big cities, imploring His Majesty not to allow the Black Act to sully the fair name of a peaceful country and its people. If Authority had in their moment of triumph in the last War forgot themselves so far as to disregard the prayers of a law-abiding, dutiful, peaceful nation—one-fifth of the whole race of mankind—who had done their utmost and had been "bled white" in the cause of the allies in the late World War, the insult at least of passing a legislative measure in the manner in which the Black Act was passed, was too great to go by without protest. Good or bad, people had their leaders, good or bad, they had their views, and the spectacle of a modern Government passing a repressive measure at a time of peace and expectant prospect of all-round reorganisation, recalled the memory of all that had led to the recent world-conflagration, and stiffened the resolve of all right men to see an end of Junckerdom. All sections of the people, even so non-political communities as Marwaris and Parsis, rich and poor alike, observed the day in a manner which falsified all chauvinistic apprehensions of an old world Government and its adherents that all mass meetings of the people on political matters are bound to create trouble. This was a day of National humiliation, and wherever there was the least interference of that self-conscious body of men called the Indian Police, there was the least disturbance. In fact, the movement itself sprang so spontaneously from the heart of the masses and so little depended on the agitation of the usual political engineers that there was nothing left to the authorities but merely to look on, just as they do on such occasions as the Mohurram and Durga Puja. National Protest day thus came to acquire a religious meaning.

## Delhi.

In spite of the manifesto issued by the Satyagraha sabha urging the citizens not to observe another *Hartal*, all shops were closed on this day and all business was stopped. In order that idle people may not get out of control the leaders then organised various meetings to keep the people occupied. In the morning several thousands assembled at the Fatehpuri Mosque to pray for the dead. At noon a huge meeting of over 25,000 people was held in the Edward Park and there were lectures on Satyagraha and Swadeshi, and people were exhorted to be true Satyagrahis, to restrain themselves even under the most trying situations and not to feel any resentment. In the evening a monster Satyagraha meeting, unprecedented in the annals of Indian political life, attended by over a lakh was held under the presidentship of Dr. Ansari in the compound of his house. A large number went back disappointed for want of accommodation. The road from Daryaganj to Jumma Mosque, about half a mile, was one solid mass of humanity. Speeches were delivered from eight different platforms. The doctrines of Satyagraha were fully explained and the audience was exhorted to follow them scrupulously and obey the orders of Mahatma Gandhi. The Resolution condemning the Black Act and urging the Secretary of State to disallow it was reaffirmed. The people's behaviour throughout the day was exemplary; not one unpleasant incident was recorded, establishing beyond doubt that the attitude of the authorities on 30th March was due to nervousness, to their incapacity, and want of tact. A telegram from Mahatma Gandhi enquiring if relief was needed for the sufferers and wounded was read. Towards the close a donation of Rupees one lakh from Seth Raghunath for a memorial hall for the martyrs was announced by Swami Shradhanand.

## Calcutta.

The hartal was observed in Calcutta in a scale hitherto unparalleled. The genuine enthusiasm that pervaded not only the upper ten but also and more directly the masses to express their united protest against the Rowlatt Bills was a clear indication of a sensitive National feeling gradually lifting its head among the people. There was very little of propaganda, save the usual notice in the newspapers, and very little of persuasion for observing the day of mourning, and still all the shops, markets, Bazzars and places of business from one end of the town to the other were closed spontaneously. Even the drivers of carts and carriages in a body observed the hartal. People were seen forming Sankirtan

parties and hurrying towards the river for the customary bath on holy occasions.

In the afternoon thousands of people headed by the Nationalist leaders marched in procession from the different quarters to the Maidan, singing National songs of sorrow and humiliation with occasional outbursts of "Bande Mataram." The processions met at the foot of the Monument. By 5 P.M. the maidan was a vast sea of human heads; the number might have been anything between one and two hundred thousand. At 5.30 P.M. the meeting began. One platform for this vast audience was impossible, and a dozen new ones were improvised. There were all classes of people, except the aristocracy, titled gentry and the place hunter Moderates. It was a mass meeting in the true sense of the term. There were tens of thousands of Mahomedans, and Marwaris along with the Bengali Hindus. Mr. B. Chakraverty, the Nationalist Leader of Bengal, was voted to the chair. In his address he drew the attention of the audience to the famous Queen's (Victoria) Proclamation: "we hold ourselves bound to the Natives by the same obligation of duty which bind us to all our other fellow subjects" and to the Coronation announcement of King George V assuring Indians "of the maintenance of your rights and your privileges", and pointed out that the Government of India Act 1915 S. 65 gave statutory sanction to our rights and liberties. There it was provided that the Governor-General in Legislative Council had not the power to make any law affecting any part of the unwritten laws of the British Constitution whereon may depend in any degree the allegiance of any person to the Crown. He explained how the fundamental rights of Indians as British Subjects were being violated by the Govt. since 1907, the beginning of a long and tortuous era of repression, and reminded the audience Mr. Gandhi's injunction of non-violence in speech and action which must underlie their uncompromising protest to the recent Rowlatt Act. He ended by saying:—"My countrymen of the land of Dhruba, Prahalad and Kabir, I am addressing you on this occasion without passion, without resentment, without anger, and in perfect self-composure. My message to you to-day is this: "Seek ye the righteousness of God and all else will be added unto thee."

"Bear any abuse, any insult, any violence, any suffering even unto death without hatred, without resentment as brave men, as martyrs, determined to maintain the truth at any cost. Remember you are resisting the spirit of terrorism by soul-force and by the grace of God victory will be yours."

A resolution was thereupon passed beseeching His Majesty to withhold his assent from the Act.

The meeting then ended and the people dispersed with the Kirtan parties. So far nothing unseemly occurred anywhere with this huge concourse of people. The ubiquitous and interfering Police was nowhere much in evidence and this made it possible for such a vast meeting to pass off peacefully. In the evening however an incident occurred which but for the Satyagraha spirit of the people might have produced great unpleasantness. One of the Kirtan parties while passing opposite the Bristol Hotel received a shower of missiles thrown from the upper stories of the Hotel. There were Sahibs, it is said, mocking and jeering at the crowd below. There was a stir and for a time it seemed that Satyagraha was under a test. At this time Moulvi Akram Khan, Editor of the "Mahammadi", and several other gentlemen exhorted them to remember Gandhi and their Satyagraha, to behave like Satyagrahis and begin to learn to pocket this insult calmly which was a prelude to many more which a satyagrahi must expect, and prove themselves true to their creed by passing this test. The people thus pacified then moved on.

The Bristol hotel incident clearly showed the mentality of a section of the Anglo Indians. After abusing the crowd from the upper stories and throwing dirty water and wine bottles at them, they excited the crowd to rowdiness and at once telephoned the police and military for help and in holy horror put out the lights. On the part of the excited crowd, however, a few stones were thrown which broke the arc lamp, exemplifying satyagraha in practice, but this was promptly stopped. Even thus are Indian mobs tempted to excess!

A special feature of the demonstration was an all-day fast and worship of several thousand Hindus at the Kalighat temple, with the usual ceremonial of *Puja*, *Chandipath*, *Hom* and animal sacrifice.

### Bombay.

Since 6th April daybreak nearly all shops and all transports except railways, tramways and some bullock carts stopped working. Huge crowds assembled from the early hours totalling about a lakh who had their bath in Chowpaty and joined a mass meeting on the sands convened to protest against the Rowlatt Act. It was attended by all leaders of the movement including Mr. Gandhi, Mr. Horniman, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and many others. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarakadas was the first to address the meeting and speaking on behalf of Mr. Gandhi pointed out that it was Mr. Gandhi's injunction that Swadeshi and this Satyagraha movement against Rowlatt Act should not be mixed up. Referring to the late Delhi tragedy Mr. Gandhi said: We have two authoritative versions of the episode. One was Swami Shraddhanandji's, stating the people's version, the

other was of Government justifying the action of the local authorities. The two did not tally, they differed as to some main particulars. An impartial observer will regard both as spurious statements. I beg of the popular party to assume for purposes of criticism the truth of the official narrative but there are remarkable gaps in it amounting to the evasion of charges made against local authorities by Sanyasi Shraddanandji. His statement was first in the field and he was on the scene immediately after the shooting incident near the railway station. If the Government had sought co-operation of the natural leaders to regulate the crowd there would not have been any need to display or use the military force. Even if the official version was correct there was no justification to fire on the innocent people. The people were entirely unarmed and at the worst, what would they have done? In any other place but India the police would have been deemed sufficient to meet an emergency of the Delhi type armed with nothing more than batons. He then related how in 1897 at Durban a mob of 6000 Europeans bent upon lynching an innocent victim, threatened destruction of property worth £20,000 including the lives of nearly twenty men, women and children and how a dozen police, though they would have been justified in calling military aid, contended with the crowd themselves and succeeded in peacefully dispersing it. The Delhi crowd had not any intention of hurting anybody. It threatened to do nothing, except as alleged it refused to disperse. The authorities could have peacefully regulated the crowd; instead they have followed the customary practice of calling the military on slightest pretext. He did not want to labour the point. It was enough the crowd hurt nobody and were neither overawed nor infuriated. It was a remarkable incident that people were sufficiently firm and self-possessed to hold a mass meeting of 40,000 after the shooting incidents and it covered the Delhi people with glory. He has always emphasised that people who took part in the struggle against the Rowlatt Act will be self-possessed and peaceful, but he has never said that people will not have to suffer. Mr. Gandhi further said that to the Satyagrahis such suffering must be welcome. The sterner they were the better. They had undertaken to suffer unto death. Sanyasi Shraddanandji has wired saying that 4 Mahomedans and 5 Hindus had so far died and that about 20 people were missing and 13 persons were in hospital being badly wounded. **For Satyagrahis it was not a bad beginning.** No country had ever risen, no nation has ever been made without sacrifice and we were trying an experiment of building up ourselves by self-sacrifice without resorting to violence in any shape or form. That was Satyagraha. From Satyagraha standpoint the people's case in Delhi was weak in that the crowd refused to disperse when asked to do so and demanded the release of the two arrested men. Both acts were wrong. It was arrest and im-

prisonment they sought for by resorting to civil disobedience. In this movement it was open to Satyagrahis to disobey only those laws which are selected by the Committee contemplated in the pledge. Before being able to offer effective civil disobedience, we must acquire habits of discipline, self-control and qualities of leadership and obedience. Till these qualities were developed and till the spirit of Satyagrahis has permeated large bodies of men and women, Mr. Gandhi said, he had advised that only such laws as can be individually disobeyed should be selected for disobedience as while disobeying certain selected laws it was incumbent on the people to show their law-abiding character by respecting all other laws.

Then two resolutions were passed one expressing sympathy with the people of Delhi and the other praying the Secretary of State to advise His Majesty to exercise the right of veto regarding the Rowlatt Acts, and to withdraw the Rowlatt Bill. While the meeting was proceeding a number of Mahomedans came in procession and joined. After Mr. Gandhi's message was delivered a procession was formed in which all communities participated, and proceeded to Madhav Bag to offer prayers, after which the crowd dispersed. For the first time to-day, no distinction was made to allow Mahomedans and Parsis along with Hindus entrance within the precincts of Madhav Bag which is exclusively meant for Hindus.

#### Sale of Proscribed Literature at Bombay.

Next day the Satyagraha Committee advised that for the time being laws regarding prohibited literature and the registration of newspapers may be civilly disobeyed. Accordingly a number of copies of the *Hind Swarajya*, the *Sarvodaya* or *Universal Dawn*, the *Story of a Satyagrahi*, all by Mahatma Gandhi, and the *life and address of Mustafa Kamel Pasha* were publicly offered for sale. The hawkers were all prominent Satyagrahis among whom were Mahatma Gandhi himself, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Sobani, Mr. Lakhimdas Tairsee and others. All the books sold contained the signatures of the hawkers. A number of unregistered newspapers mostly resembling the ordinary posters and leaflets, both in print and Gujaratti handwriting, were also sold. Mr. Jamnadas Dwarkadas sold copies near the Stock Exchange and many copies were bought at a fancy price, people paying Rs. 10 to Rs. 100 for the leaflets.

Mahatma Gandhi and the Secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha issued a long notice in this connection to the effect that Satyagrahis should receive copies of prohibited literatures for distribution. A limited number of copies can be had from the Secretaries of the Satyagraha Sabha. Satyagrahis should, so far as possible, write their names and addresses as sellers, so that they may be



traced easily when wanted by the Government for prosecution. Naturally there can be no question of a secret sale of this literature. At the same time there should be no forwardness either in distributing it. It is open to Satyagrahis to form small groups of men and women to whom they may read this class of literature. The object in selecting prohibited literature is not merely to commit a civil breach of the law regarding it, but it is also to supply people with a clear literature of a high moral value. It is expected that the Government will confiscate such. Satyagrahis have to be as independent of finance as possible. When, therefore, copies are confiscated, Satyagrahis are requested to make copies of the prohibited literature themselves or by securing the assistance of willing friends and to make use of it until it is confiscated by giving readings to the people from it. It is stated that such readings would amount to the dissemination of prohibited literature. When whole copies are exhausted by dissemination or confiscation, Satyagrahis may continue the civil disobedience by writing out and distributing extracts from the accessible books.

#### Publication of Satyagraha Newspapers.

Regarding the civil breach of the law governing the publication of newspapers, the idea is to publish in every Satyagraha centre a written newspaper without registering it. It need not occupy more than one side of half a foolscap. When such a newspaper is edited it will be found how difficult it is to fill up half a sheet. It is a well known fact that a vast majority of newspapers contain much padding. Further, it cannot be denied that newspaper articles written under the terror of the very strict newspaper law have a double meaning. A Satyagrahi, for whom the punishments provided by law have lost all the terror, can give only in an unregistered newspaper his thoughts and opinions, unhampered by any other consideration than that of his own conscience. His newspaper, therefore, if otherwise well edited, can become a most powerful vehicle for transmitting pure ideas in a concise manner, and there need be no fear of inability to circulate a hand-written newspaper, for it will be the duty of those who may receive the first copies to recopy till atlast the process of our multiplication is made to cover, if necessary, the whole of India, and it must not be forgotten that we have in India the tradition of imparting instruction by oral teaching.

The unregistered newspaper, the *Satyagrahi*, which Mahatma Gandhi as the editor, issued on the 6th in defiance of the Indian Press Act, was a small sheet of paper sold for one pice. It said. "The editor is liable at any moment to be arrested,

and it is impossible to ensure the continuity of publication until India is in a happy position of supplying editors enough to take the place of those who are arrested. It is not our intention to break for all time the laws governing the publication of newspapers. This paper will, therefore, exist so long only as the Rowlatt Legislation is not withdrawn."

### **In this connection M. Gandhi issued the following instructions.**

#### **Mahatma Gandhi's Instruction to Satyagrahis.**

"We are now in a position to expect to be arrested at any moment. It is, therefore, necessary to bear in mind that if any one is arrested, he should, without causing any difficulty, allow himself to be arrested, and, if summoned to appear before a Court, he should do so. No defence should be offered and no pleaders engaged in the matter. If a fine is imposed with the alternative of imprisonment, the imprisonment should be accepted. If only fine is imposed, it ought not to be paid; but his property, if he has any, should be allowed to be sold. There should be no demonstration of grief or otherwise made by the remaining Satyagrahis by reason of the arrest and imprisonment of their comrade. It can not be too often repeated that we court imprisonment, and we may not complain of it when we actually receive it. When once imprisoned, it is our duty to conform to all prison regulations, as prison reform is no part of our campaign at the present moment. A Satyagrahi may not resort to surreptitious practices. All that the Satyagrahis do can only and must be done openly."

#### **Madras—6th April.**

Madras celebrated the Satyagraha day as peacefully as Bombay. From early in the morning thousands of people were seen on the beach taking a sea bath. They observed a 24 hours fast. All Indian shops, bazars, and business activities were closed. Innumerable Bhajan parties singing National songs and carrying the Satyagraha Banner and praying the lord for the repeal of the Rowlatt Act were parading the streets in sorrowful humility. In the afternoon a huge mass meeting was held in the Triplicane Beach where more than a hundred thousand men congregated around a dozen platforms to hear the Satyagrahis. Messages from Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Subramaniya were read. An air of religious solemnity was about the demonstration which could not but reach and convert the heart even of those who were anti-Satyagrahis. There were not the parading exhibitions of resentment, the beating of breasts and

cry of *hai, hai*, as at Lahore. A sense of spiritual resignation pervaded the assembly, and perhaps also the authorities, who managed to forbear from a show of the police and from letting loose the military.

Mr. Kusturiranga Aiyangar was in the chair and the Hon. Mr. Narasimham Aiyer read the message from M. Gandhi.

### Mahatma Gandhi's Message.

"I do hope that the Presidency that produced beautiful Valliamma, Nagappan, Narayanasami and so many others of your Presidency with whom I was privileged to work in South Africa will not quail in the presence of sacrifice demanded of us all. I am convinced that reforms will be of no avail, unless our would-be partners respect us. And we know that they only respect those who are capable of sacrificing for ideals as themselves. See how unstintingly they poured out treasure and blood during the war. Ours is a nobler cause and our means infinitely superior, in that we refrain from shedding blood other than our own".

Mr. T. M. Krishnaswamy Aiyer then read out the Ven'ble Dr. Subramaniam's message in which he expounded the true principles of Satyagraha and urged that "the right way to carry out the pledge is to *will* day after day, as forcibly as (one) can, that the autocracy now so much in evidence in the land and the exploitation to which it is exposed, should cease; the present servile state of the country is not an accident but the necessary consequence of our past collective Karma. It is no other than the punishment inflicted by Providence through the instrumentality of that Autocracy. None who takes this rightful view of the matter ought to sit still, but atone by striving by all legitimate means to prepare for better conditions to our successors."

### HARTAL AT LAHORE.

On April 2nd the Superintendent of Police issued a notice requiring the conveners of processions and meetings to apply for a license not later than 10 A. M. on the day previous to that for which the license is required. Orders were also passed by the Government on Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew prohibiting them to address public meetings. Official pressure was also applied on the local leaders to abandon the idea of the meeting at Bradlaugh Hall on the Satyagraha day and this raised a difference of opinion among the leaders as to the desirability of holding the protest meeting. Accordingly to arrive at a settlement a meeting was called on the

2nd where the leaders met to discuss the point. It lasted for several hours and sat till late at night with Dr. Gokul Chand Narang in the Chair. Mr. Ratan Chand moved for cancellation of the Bradlaugh Hall meeting while Mr. Dev Raj Sahney urged that the meeting be held as arranged, on the ground that a protest against the infamous "Black Act" was far more important than any other consideration. On being put to the vote the latter proposal was carried by 18 to 2 and it was decided that the meeting should be an open air one.

Accordingly on the 6th from the morning all business was suspended and all shops closed without a single exception. No gharry or tonga was plying except some private conveyances belonging to *raises*. At about 8 o'clock people were seen walking in groups with mourning badges on their left arms, and by 9 o'clock there was a crowd of about two or three hundred people with Dr. Swain Sivaram at their head. This crowd began to proceed towards the city from the Mall with shouts of "*Mahatma Gandhi Ji ki Jai*", Mr. Mahammad Ali, Mr. Shaukat Ali *ki Jai*, Lala Lajpat Rai *ki Jai*, Mahatma Shradhanand *ki Jai*, Mr. Tilak *ki Jai*". As the crowd proceeded towards the city it began to grow in number and when it reached the Dabbi Bazaar, the principal market in the city, the crowd swelled to a thousand. Other groups of people who were waiting here now joined the main crowd and the whole body then marched towards the Mochi Gafe with shouts of "*Hindu Musalman ki Jai*, Mahatma Gandhi *ki Jai*". People waiting on the roofs of houses and windows joined in the cry. All the people now took off their caps and pagris from their heads and began to express their mourning by beating their breasts with cries of "*hai hai*, Rowlatt Bill, *hai hai*" and proceeded towards Anarkali Bazaar. Poems condemning the passing of the Rowlatt Act were recited and in one place a printed copy containing the provisions of the Rowlatt Bill was burnt before the crowd with great cheering. Up to this time the crowd was passing peacefully but when it came near King Edward Medical College in order to proceed towards the Mall the Superintendent of Police came on horseback accompanied by several mounted Indian Sub-Inspectors and prevented it from proceeding towards the Mall. Some of the leaders who were in the front line of the crowd assured the Superintendent that they would not create any disturbance and requested him to allow them to proceed. He, however, would not allow the crowd to proceed towards the Mall and sent for military cavalry and armed police who were waiting near by and who had been picketted since early morning in Golbagh, a garden near the University Hall. A few minutes elapsed during which time the crowd had come in front of Mool Chand's shop near the Forman Christian College. The cavalry guarded the road towards

the Mall and practically closed it from all sides. The crowd here were shouting wild cries of *hai hai* and repeatedly requested permission to proceed, but they were asked to return and not to proceed. The crowd was not prepared to obey the orders of the police officers when Lala Duni Chand, Bar-at-law, and Dr. Gokal Chand Narang, Bar-at-law, arrived on the scene and co-operated with the police and appealed to the crowd to return towards the city. The discussion went on for some minutes and Dr. Gokal Chand once more appealed to the crowd to go back to the city and threw his cap at the feet of the crowd and said with a loud voice "gentlemen, if you love your country, you should go back towards the city." The appeal had its effect and Dr. Gokal Chand Narang mounting on a horse led the crowd towards the city. The crowd followed him and began to disperse gradually. Two armoured cars had arrived with machine-guns which slowly pressed the crowd and took them towards the city. By 1-30 p. m., the crowd had dispersed in different directions and calm was restored.

The protest meeting which was to take place at 5 P.M. began earlier, as by 4 P.M. the Bradlaugh Hall was packed to its uttermost capacity. Three overflow meeting took place in the adjoining grounds outside the hall. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt Chowdhury presided inside the hall, and outside the gatherings were addressed by different batches of speakers. Pandit Rambhuj Dutt in opening the meeting made a long speech in Hindi explaining to the people the real meaning of passive resistance, asking them to be prepared to bear all sorts of sufferings and trouble which passive resisters would have to face in the struggle. Resolution was passed most humbly entreating His Majesty the King Emperor to disallow the measure as it constituted an immediate insult to millions of His Majesty's law-abiding and loyal subjects in India.

Three more resolutions were passed :—(1) viewing with alarm and disapproval the repressive orders of the provincial Government against Dr Saifuddin Kitchlew, Bar at Law, Dr Satyapal, Pandit Kothmal, Swami Anubhavanand, and Pandit Dinanath, Editor of the "Waqat" newspaper of Amritsar, considering these orders were unjust and injurious to the interests of peace, order and good government of the province, (2) viewing with strong disapproval the act of the authorities at Delhi in firing upon innocent persons without any justification, expressing deep sympathy with the family of the deceased on their sad bereavement and also with those unfortunately wounded in the affray; (3) requesting the president of the meeting to forward resolutions passed to the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy and the Lieutenant Governor

of the Punjab. After the meeting the crowd again formed a procession and marched towards the city with cries of Mahatma Gandhi ki jai, Lala Lajpat Raj ki jai, Hindu Musalman ki jai, and beating their breasts with mourning cries of 'hai hai.' The crowd made a stampede through the city beating their breasts continually for three or four hours, and making speeches condemning the Rowlatt Act.

Then came the parting kick of Sir Michael to the Indians. On April 7th he held his last Council and in his last Council Speech delivered himself as follows.—

"Government of this province is and will be determined that the public order which was maintained so successfully during the time of war shall not be disturbed in time of peace. Action has therefore already been taken under Defence of India Act against certain individuals at Lahore and Amritsar who, whatever their motives, were openly endeavouring to arouse public feeling against the Government. **The British Government which has crushed foreign foes and quelled internal rebellion could afford to despise agitators,** but it has the duty of protecting the young and ignorant whom they may incite to mischief and crime while themselves standing aside. I therefore take this opportunity of warning all who are connected with political movements in the province that they will be held responsible for the proper conduct of meetings which they organise, for the languages used at and the consequence that follows such meetings.

"The recent puerile demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act in both Lahore and Amritsar would be ludicrous if they did not indicate how easily ignorant and credulous people—not one in a thousand of whom knows anything of the measure—can be misled. Those who want only to mislead them incur a serious responsibility. Those who appeal to passion and ignorance rather than to reason have a **day of reckoning** in store for them." The Day of Reckoning came in the shape of Martial Law and its abominable atrocities.

In concluding his speech Sir Michael O'Dwyer said : "Gentlemen, I have often been criticised for dwelling on the achievements of the Punjab in season and out of of season, but my pride in the province is based on no narrow parochial spirit. I have spent 15 years away from it during which I have seen many other parts of India. I might indeed say, much as I have seen and known cities, known men and manners, climates, councils, governments, but nowhere did I find the same qualities as the Punjab can show. **From the prince's palace down to the peasants** hut I found I could meet a Punjabi whatever



**his class or condition as man to man without suspicion or mistrust.** I found him in the mass loyal but not subservient, brave but not boastful, enterprising but not visionary, progressive but not pursuing false ideals or mistaking the shadow for the substance." And yet a couple of days later this very Punjab was declared to be in Revolt by this very man.

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## Arrest of Mahatma Gandhi.

The people of Delhi who had so long been suffering so much from bureaucratic longheadedness yearned to see the Mahatma in their midst, and such was his magnetic charm that not only was his visit longingly wished but the Satyagrahis at Delhi thought it necessary to have him in the city as the only means of meeting the despair of the people and keeping them in the right track. Gandhi, who was then ailing at Bombay from acute heart-trouble, at last persuaded his doctors to allow him to proceed to Delhi and left Bombay on the 8th April. The train was due to reach Delhi on the 9th evening. His coming was not made public on his own request as he could not bear a demonstration. The same evening, however, members of the Satyagrahi Sabha who went to the Station found it brimming over with the C. I. D. people. The train steamed in, and European travellers seeing them awaiting for Gandhi laughed and exultingly cried 'Arrested' ! Mr. M. Desai, Gandhi's secretary, alighted from the train and informed that the Mahatma had been arrested at Palwal Station, a few miles from Delhi. Says Mr. Desai :—

"Mahatma Gandhi on his way to Delhi at Kosi was served with an order not to enter the Punjab, not to enter Delhi and restrict himself to Bombay.

"The officer serving the order treated him most politely, assuring him it would be his most painful duty to arrest him, if he elected to disobey, but that there would be no ill-will between them.

"Mahatma Gandhi smilingly said that he must elect to disobey as it was his duty, and that the officer ought also to do what was his duty.

"In the few minutes that were left to us, he dictated the following message, laying special emphasis on his oral message to me, as in the written messages, that none shall resent this arrest or do anything tainted with untruth or violence which were sure to damn the sacred cause.