



their sense of decency and cleanliness blunted during their travelling experience.

Among the many suggestions that can be made for dealing with the evil here described, I would respectfully include this : Let the people in high places, the Viceroy, the Commander-in-Chief, the Rajas, Maharajas, the Imperial Councillors and others, who generally travel in superior classes, without previous warning, go through the experiences now and then of third class travelling. We would then soon see a remarkable change in the conditions of third class travelling and the uncomplaining millions will get some return for the fares they pay under the expectation of being carried from place to place with ordinary creature comforts.

VERNACULARS AS MEDIA OF INSTRUCTION

The following introduction was written by Mr. M. K. Gandhi to Dr. P. J. Mehta's "Self-Government Series." Pamphlet No. 1, entitled "Vernaculars as Media of Instruction in Indian Schools and Colleges."

It is to be hoped that Dr. Mehta's labour of love will receive the serious attention of English educated India. The following pages were written by him for the *Vedanta Kesari* of Madras and are now printed in their present form for circulation throughout India. The question of vernaculars as media of instruction is of national importance ; neglect of the vernaculars means national suicide. One hears many protagonists of the English language being continued as the medium of instruction pointing to the fact that english Educated Indians are the sole custodians of public and patriotic work. It would be mons-



trous if it were not so. For the only education given in this country is through the English language. The fact, however, is that the results are not at all proportionate to the time we give to our education. We have not reacted on the masses. But I must not anticipate Dr. Mehta. He is in earnest. He writes feelingly. He has examined the pros and cons and collected a mass of evidence in support of his arguments. The latest pronouncement on the subject is that of the Viceroy. Whilst His Excellency is unable to offer a solution, he is keenly alive to the necessity of imparting instruction in our schools through the vernaculars. The Jews of Middle and Eastern Europe, who are scattered in all parts of the world, finding it necessary to have a common tongue for mutual intercourse, have raised Yiddish to the status of a language, and have succeeded in translating into Yiddish the best books to be found in the world's literature. Even they could not satisfy the soul's yearning through the many foreign tongues of which they are masters; nor did the learned few among them wish to tax the masses of the Jewish population with having to learn a foreign language before they could realise their dignity. So they have enriched what was at one time looked upon as a mere jargon—but what the Jewish children learnt from their mothers—by taking special pains to translate into it the best thought of the world. This is a truly marvellous work. It has been done during the present generation, and Webster's Dictionary defines it as a polyglot jargon used for inter-communication by Jews from different nations.

But a Jew of Middle and Eastern Europe would feel insulted if his mother-tongue were now so described. If these Jewish scholars have succeeded, within a generation, in giving their masses a language of which they may



feel proud, surely it should be an easy task for us to supply the needs of our own vernaculars which are cultured languages. South Africa teaches us the same lesson. There was a duel there between the Taal, a corrupt form of Dutch, and English. The Boer mothers and the Boer fathers were determined that they would not let their children, with whom they in their infancy talked in the Taal, be weighed down with having to receive instruction through English. The case for English here was a strong one. It had able pleaders for it. But English had to yield before Boer patriotism. It may be observed that they rejected even the High Dutch. The school masters, therefore, who are accustomed to speak the published Dutch of Europe, are compelled to teach the easier Taal. And literature of an excellent character is at the present moment growing up in South Africa in the Taal, which was only a few years ago, the common medium of speech between simple but brave rustics. If we have lost faith in our vernaculars, it is a sign of want of faith in ourselves; it is the surest sign of decay. And no scheme of self-government, however benevolently or generously it may be bestowed upon us, will ever make us a self-governing nation, if we have no respect for the languages our mothers speak.



CSL

SOCIAL SERVICE

At the anniversary celebration of the Social Service League held in Madras on February 10, 1916, Mr. Gandhi delivered an address on "Social Service." Mrs. Whitehead presided. He said:

I have been asked this evening to speak to you about social service. If this evening you find that I am not able to do sufficient justice to this great audience you will ascribe it to so many engagements that I hastily and unthinkingly accepted. It was my desire that I should have at least a few moments to think out what I shall have to say to you but it was not to be. However, as our Chair Lady has said, it was work we want and not speeches. I am aware that you will have lost very little, if anything at all, if you find at the end of this evening talk that you have listened to very little. ①

Friends, for Social Service as for any other service on the face of the earth, there is one condition indispensable namely, qualifications, and proper qualifications, on the part of those who want to render social service or any other service. So we shall ask ourselves this evening whether those of us who are already engaged in this kind of service and others who have aspired to render the service possess these necessary qualifications. Because you will agree with me that in social service if they can mend matters they can also spoil matters and in trying to do service however well-intentioned that service might be, if they are not qualified for that service they will be rendering not service but disservice. What are these qualifications? ②



Imagine why I must repeat to you almost the qualifications that I described this morning to the students in the Young Mens' Christian Association Hall. Because they are of universal application and they are necessary for any class of work, much more so in social service at this time of the day in our national life in our dear country. It seems to me that we require truth in one hand and fearlessness in the other hand. Unless we carry the torchlight we shall not see the step in front of us and unless we carry the quality of fearlessness we shall not be able to give the message that we might want to give. Unless we have this fearlessness I feel sure that when that supreme final test comes we shall be found wanting. Then I ask you to ask yourselves whether those of you who are engaged in this service and those of you who want hereafter to be engaged in this service have these two qualities. Let me remind you also that these qualities may be trained in us in a manner detrimental to ourselves and in a manner detrimental to those with whom we may come in contact. This is a dangerous statement almost to make, as if truth could be ever so handled, and in making that statement I would like you also to consider that truth comes not as truth but only as truth so-called. In the inimitable book *Ramayana* we find that Indrajit and Lakshman, his opponent, possessed the same qualities. But Lakshman's life was guided by principle, based upon religion while Indrajit's principle was based upon irreligion, and we find what Indrajit possessed was mere dross and what Lakshman possessed was of great assistance not only to the side on whose behalf he was fighting but he has left a treasure for us to value. What was that additional quality he possessed? So, I hold that life without religion, is life without principle, that life with-



out principle is like a ship without a rudder. Just as our ship without rudder, the helmsman plying at it, is tossed about from place to place and never reaches its destination, so will a man without the heart-grasp of religion whirl without ever reaching his destined goal. So, I suggest to every social servant that he must not run away with the idea that he will serve his whole countrymen unless he has got these two qualities, duly sanctified by religion and by a life divinely guided. 5

After paying a glowing tribute to the Madras Social Service League for its work in certain Pariah villages in the city he went on to say :—

It is no use white-washing those needs which we know everyday stare us in the face. It is not enough that we clear out the villages which are occupied by our Pariah brethren. They are amenable to reason and persuasion. Shall we have to say that the so-called higher classes are not equally amenable to reason and to persuasion and to hygienic laws which are indispensable in order to live a city-life. We may do many things with immunity but when we immediately transfer ourselves to crowded streets where we have hardly air to breathe, the life becomes changed, and we have to obey another set of laws which immediately come into being. Do we do that? It is no use saddling the municipality with the responsibilities for the condition in which we find not only the central parts of Madras but the central parts of every city of importance in India, and I feel no municipality in the world will be able to over-ride the habits of a class of people handed to them from generation to generation. It can be done only by such bodies as Social Service Leagues. If we pulsate with a new life, a new vision shall open before us in the near future, I think that these are the signs which will be 6



an indication to show that we are pulsating with a new life, which is going to be a proper life, which will add dignity to our nationality and which will carry the banner of progress forward. I, therefore, suggest that it is a question of sanitary reform in these big cities, which will be a hopeless task if we expect our municipalities to do this unaided by this voluntary work. Far be it from me to absolve the municipalities from their own responsibilities. I think there is a great deal yet to be done in the municipalities. Only the other day I read with a great degree of pain a report about the proceedings of the Bombay Municipality, and the deplorable fact in it is that a large part of the time of the Municipality was devoted to talking over trifles while they neglected matters of great moment. After all, I shall say that they will be able to do very little in as much as there is a demand for their work on the people themselves.

Here Mr. Gandhi instanced two cases where the Social Service League had been of immense help to the Municipality in improving the sanitary condition of the town, by changing the habits of the people, which had become a part of their being. He observed that some officials might consider that they could force an unwilling people to do many things, but he held to that celebrated saying that it was far better that people should often remain drunkards than that they should become sober at the point of the sword.

Mr. Gandhi then recounted some of his experiences in a temple at Kasi (Benares)—the wretched lanes surrounding it, the dirt to be witnessed near the sanctuary, the disorderly crowd and the avaricious priest. These evils in the temples, he said had to be removed by Social Service Leagues. For making it possible for students to



fight these conditions, the educational system had to be revolutionised. Now-a-days they were going out of their schools as utter strangers to their ancestral traditions and with fatigued brains, able to work no longer. They had to revolutionise that system.

Finally, he referred to the railway services and the conditions under which third class passengers travelled. To do social service among the passengers and instil better habits of sanitation among them, the social servants must not go to them in a foreign costume, speaking a foreign tongue. They might issue pamphlets to them or give instructive lessons, and so on.

TRUE PATRIOTISM

The following report of a conversation which an interviewer had with Mr. Gandhi contains his views on a variety of subjects of national interest :—

"We have lost" he said, "much of our self-respect, on account of being too much Europeanised. We think and speak in English. Thereby, we impoverish our vernaculars, and estrange the feelings of the masses. A knowledge of English is not essential to the service of our Motherland."

Turning to caste, he said "caste is the great power and secret of Hinduism."

Asked where he would stay, Mr. Gandhi replied: "Great pressure is brought down on me to settle in Bengal: but I have a great capital in the store of my knowledge in Guzerat and I get letters from there."

"Vernacular literature is important. I want to have a library of all books. I invite friends for financial aid to form libraries and locate them."



"Modern civilisation is a curse in Europe as also in India. War is the direct result of modern civilisation, everyone of the Powers was making preparations for war."

"Passive resistance is a great moral force, meant for the weak, also for the strong. Soul-force depends on itself. Ideals must work in practice, otherwise they are not potent. Modern civilisation is a brute force."

It is one thing to know the ideal and another thing to practise it. That will ensure greater discipline, which means a greater service and greater service means greater gain to Government. Passive resistance is a highly aggressive thing. The attribute of soul is restlessness; there is room for every phase of thought.

"Money, land and women are the sources of evil and evil has to be counteracted. I need not possess land, nor a woman, nor money to satisfy my luxuries. I do not want to be unhinged merely because others are unhinged. If ideals are practised, there will be less room for mischievous activities. Public life has to be moulded."

"Every current has to change its course. There are one and a half million sadhus and if every sadhu did his duty, India could achieve much. Jagat Guru Sankaracharya does not deserve that appellation because he has no more force in him."

Malicious material activity is no good. It finds out means to multiply one's luxuries. Intense gross modern activity should not be imposed on Indian institutions, which have to be remodelled on ideals taken from Hinduism. Virtue as understood in India is not understood in foreign lands. Dasaratha is considered a fool in foreign lands, for his having kept his promise to his wife. India says a promise is a promise. That is a good ideal. Mate-



rial activity is mischievous. "Truth shall conquer in the end."

"Emigration does no good to the country from which people emigrate. Emigrants do not return better moral men. The whole thing is against Hinduism. Temples do not flourish. There are no opportunities for ceremonial functions. Priests do not come, and at times they are merely men of straw, immigrants play much mischief and corrupt society. It is not enterprise. They may earn more money easily in those parts, which means that they do not want to toil and remain straight in the methods of earning. Immigrants are not happier and have more material wants."

Questioned about the Theosophical Society Mr. Gandhi said: "There is a good deal of good in the Theosophical Society, irrespective of individuals. It has stimulated ideas and thoughts."

THE SATYAGRAHASHRAMA

This Address was delivered in the Y.M. C.A. Auditorium, Madras, on the 16th February 1916, the Hon. Rev. G. Pittendrich, of the Madras Christian College, presiding on the occasion:—

To many of the students who came here last year to converse with me, I said I was about to establish an institution—*Ashrama*—somewhere in India, and it is about that place that I am going to talk to you this morning. I feel and I have felt during the whole of my public life that what we need, what any nation needs, but we perhaps of all the nations of the world need just now is nothing else and nothing less than character-building. And this is the view propounded by that great patriot, Mr. Gokhale.



(cheers). As you know in many of his speeches, he used to say that we would get nothing, we would deserve nothing unless we had character to back what we wished for. Hence his founding of that great body, the Servants of India Society. And as you know, in the prospectus that has been issued in connection with the Society, Mr. Gokhale has deliberately stated that it was necessary to spiritualise the political life of the country. You know also that he used to say so often that our average was less than the average of so many European nations. I do not know whether that statement by him whom, with pride, I consider to be my political *Guru*, has really foundation in fact, but I do believe that there is much to be said to justify it in so far as educated India is concerned; not because we, the educated portion of the community, have blundered, but because we have been creatures of circumstances. Be that as it may, this is the maxim of life which I have accepted, namely, that no work done by any man, no matter how great he is, will really prosper unless he has religious backing. But what is religion? The question will be immediately asked. I, for one, would answer: Not the religion which you will get after reading all the scriptures of the world; it is not really a grasp by the brain, but it is a heart-grasp. It is a thing which is not alien to us, but it is a thing which has to be evolved out of us. It is always within us, with some consciously so; with the others quite unconsciously. But it is there; and whether we wake up this religious instinct in us through outside assistance or by inward growth, no matter how it is done, it has got to be done if we want to do anything in the right manner and anything that is going to persist.

Our Scriptures have laid down certain rules as maxims of life and as axioms which we have to take for granted as



self-demonstrated truths. The Shastras tell us that without living, according to these maxims, we are incapable even of having a reasonable perception of religion. Believing in these implicitly for all these long years and having actually endeavoured to reduce to practice these injunctions of the Shastras, I have deemed it necessary to seek the association of those who think with me, in founding this institution. And I shall venture this morning to place before you the rules that have been drawn up and that have to be observed by every one who seeks to be a member of that *Ashram*.

Five of these are known as *Yamas* and the first and the foremost is,

THE VOW OF TRUTH.

Not truth simply as we ordinarily understand it, that as far as possible we ought not to resort to a lie, that is to say, not truth which merely answers the saying, "Honesty is the best policy"—implying that if it is not the best policy, we may depart from it. But here truth as it is conceived, means that we have to rule our life by this law of Truth at any cost. And in order to satisfy the definition I have drawn upon the celebrated illustration of the life of *Prahlad*. For the sake of truth, he dared to oppose his own father, and he defended himself, not by retaliation, by paying his father back in his own coin but in defence of Truth, as he knew it, he was prepared to die without caring to return the blows that he had received from his father or from those who were charged with his father's instructions. Not only that: he would not in any way even parry the blows: on the contrary, with a smile on his lips, he underwent the innumerable tortures to which he was subjected, with the result that, at last, Truth rose triumphant, not that *Prahlad*



suffered the tortures because he knew that some day or other in his very life-time he would be able to demonstrate the infallibility of the law of Truth. That fact was there; but if he had died in the midst of tortures, he would still have adhered to Truth. That is the Truth which I would like to follow. There was an incident I noticed yesterday. It was a trifling incident, but I think these trifling incidents are like straws which show which way the wind is blowing. The incident was this: I was talking to a friend who wanted to talk to me aside, and we were engaged in a private conversation. A third friend dropped in, and he politely asked whether he was intruding. The friend to whom I was talking said: "Oh, no, there is nothing private here." I felt taken aback a little, because, as I was taken aside, I knew that so far as this friend was concerned, the conversation was private. But he immediately, out of politeness, I would call it overpoliteness, said, there was no private conversation and that he (the third friend) could join. I suggest to you that this is a departure from my definition of Truth. I think that the friend should have, in the gentlest manner possible, but still openly and frankly, said: "Yes, just now, as you properly say, you would be intruding," without giving the slightest offence to the person if he was himself a gentleman—and we are bound to consider every body to be a gentleman unless he proves to be otherwise. But I may be told that the incident, after all, proves the gentility of the nation. I think that it is over-proving the case. If we continue to say these things out of politeness, we really become a nation of hypocrites. I recall a conversation I had with an English friend. He was comparatively a stranger. He is a Principal of a College and has been in India for several years. He was comparing notes with me, and he asked



me whether I would admit that we, unlike most Englishmen, would not dare to say "No" when it was "No" that we meant. And I must confess I immediately said "Yes"; I agreed with that statement :—We do hesitate to say "No," frankly and boldly, when we want to pay due regard to the sentiments of the person whom we are addressing. In our *Ashrama* we make it a rule that we must say "No" when we mean "No," regardless of consequences. This then is the first rule. Then we come to the

DOCTRINE OF AHIMSA

Literally speaking, *Ahimsa* means non-killing. But to me it has a world of meaning and takes me into realms much higher, infinitely higher, than the realm to which I would go, if I merely understood by *Ahimsa* non-killing. *Ahimsa* really means that you may not offend anybody, you may not harbour an uncharitable thought even in connection with one who may consider himself to be your enemy. Pray notice the guarded nature of this thought; I do not say "whom you consider to be your enemy", but "who may consider himself to be your enemy." For one who follows the doctrine of *Ahimsa* there is no room for an enemy; he denies the existence of an enemy. But there are people who consider themselves to be his enemies, and he cannot help that circumstance. So, it is held that we may not harbour an evil thought even in connection with such persons. If we return blow for blow, we depart from the doctrine of *Ahimsa*. But I go further. If we resent a friend's action or the so-called enemy's action, we still fall short of this doctrine. But when I say, we should not resent, I do not say that we should acquiesce: but by resenting I mean wishing that some harm should be done to the enemy, or that he should be put out of the way, not even by any action of ours, but by the action of somebody else.



or, say, by Divine agency. If we harbour even this thought, we depart from this doctrine of *Ahimsa*. Those who join the *Ashrama* have to literally accept that meaning. That does not mean that we practise that doctrine in its entirety. Far from it. It is an ideal which we have to reach, and it is an ideal to be reached even at this very moment, if we are capable of doing so. But it is not a proposition in geometry to be learnt by heart; it is not even like solving difficult problems in higher mathematics; it is infinitely more difficult than solving those problems. Many of you have burnt the midnight oil in solving those problems. If you want to follow out this doctrine, you will have to do much more than burn the midnight oil. You will have to pass many a sleepless night, and go through many a mental torture and agony before you can reach, before you can even be within measurable distance of this goal. It is the goal, and nothing less than that, you and I have to reach, if we want to understand what a religious life means. I will not say much more on this doctrine than this: that a man who believes in the efficacy of this doctrine finds in the ultimate stage, when he is about to reach the goal, the whole world at his feet,—not that he wants the whole world at his feet, but it must be so. If you express your love—*Ahimsa*—in such a manner that it impresses itself indelibly upon your so-called enemy, he must return that love. Another thought which comes out of this is that, under this rule, there is no room for organised assassinations, and there is no room for murders even openly committed, and there is no room for any violence even for the sake of your country, and even for guarding the honour of precious ones that may be under your charge. After all that would be a poor defence of



see honour. This doctrine of *Ahimsa* tells us that we may guard the honour of those who are under our charge by delivering *ourselves* into the hands of the man who would commit the sacrilege. And that requires far greater physical and mental courage than the delivering of blows. You may have some degree of physical power,—I do not say courage—and you may use that power. But after that is expended, what happens? The other man is filled with wrath and indignation, and you have made him more angry by matching your violence against his; and when he has done you to death, the rest of his violence is delivered against your charge. But if you do not retaliate, but stand your ground, between your charge and the opponent, simply receiving the blows without retaliating, what happens? I give you my promise that the whole of the violence will be expended on you, and your charge will be left unscathed. Under this plan of life there is no conception of patriotism which justifies such wars as you witness to-day in Europe. Then there is

THE VOW OF CELIBACY.

Those who want to perform national service, or those who want to have a glimpse of the real religious life, must lead a celibate life no matter if married or unmarried. Marriage but brings a woman closer together with the man, and they become friends in a special sense, never to be parted either in this life or in the lives that are to come. But I do not think that, in our conception of marriage, our lusts should necessarily enter. Be that as it may, this is what is placed before those who come to the *Ashrama*. I do not deal with that at any length. Then we have

THE VOW OR CONTROL OF THE PALATE

A man who wants to control his animal passions easily does so if he controls his palate. I fear this is one



of the most difficult vows to follow. I am just now coming after having inspected the Victoria Hostel. I saw there not to my dismay, though it should be to my dismay; but I am used to it now, that there are so many kitchens, not kitchens that are established in order to serve caste restrictions, but kitchens that have become necessary in order that people can have the condiments, and the exact weight of the condiments, to which they are used in the respective places from which they have come. And therefore we find that for the Brahmans themselves there are different compartments and different kitchens catering for the delicate tastes of all these different groups. I suggest to you that this is simply slavery to the palate, rather than mastery over it. I may say this: unless we take our minds off from this habit, and unless we shut our eyes to the tea shops and coffee shops and all these kitchens, and unless we are satisfied with foods that are necessary for the proper maintenance of our physical health, and unless we are prepared to rid ourselves of stimulating, heating and exciting condiments that we mix with our food, we will certainly not be able to control the over-abundant, unnecessary, and exciting stimulation that we may have. If we do not do that, the result naturally is, that we abuse ourselves and we abuse even the sacred trust given to us, and we become less than animals and brutes, eating, drinking and indulging in passions we share in common with the animals; but have you ever seen a horse or a cow indulging in the abuse of the palate as we do? Do you suppose that it is a sign of civilization, a sign of real life that we should multiply our eatables so far that we do not even know where we are; and seek dishes until at last we have become absolutely



mad and run after the newspaper sheets which give us advertisements about these dishes? Then we have

THE VOW OF NON-THIEVING.

I suggest that we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use, and keep it, I thief it from somebody else. I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to-day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation in this world. But so long as we have got this inequality so long we are thieving. I am no socialist and I do not want to dispossess those who have got possessions: but I do say that, personally, those of us who want to see light out of darkness have to follow this rule. I do not want to dispossess anybody. I should then be departing from the rule of Ahimsa. If somebody else possesses more than I do, let him. But so far as my own life has to be regulated, I do say that I dare not possess anything which I do not want. In India we have got three millions of people having to be satisfied with one meal a day, and that meal consisting of a chapatti containing no fat in it, and a pinch of salt. You and I have no right to anything that we really have until these three millions are clothed and fed better. You and I, who ought to know better, must adjust our wants, and even undergo voluntary starvation, in order that they may be nursed, fed and clothed. Then there is the vow of non-possession which follows as a matter of course. Then I go to

THE VOW OF SWADESHI.

The vow of *Swadeshi* is a necessary vow. But you are conversant with the *Swadeshi* life and the *Swadeshi* spirit.



I suggest to you we are departing from one of the sacred laws of our being when we leave our neighbour and go out somewhere else in order to satisfy our wants. If a man comes from Bombay here and offers you wares, you are not justified in supporting the Bombay merchant or trader so long as you have got a merchant at your very door, born and bred in Madras. That is my view of *Swadeshi*. In your village-barber, you are bound to support him to the exclusion of the finished barber who may come to you from Madras. If you find it necessary that your village-barber should reach the attainments of the barber from Madras you may train him to that. Send him to Madras by all means, if you wish, in order that he may learn his calling. Until you do that you are not justified in going to another barber. That is *Swadeshi*. So, when we find that there are many things that we cannot get in India, we must try to do without them. We may have to do without many things which we may consider necessary, but believe me : when you have that frame of mind, you will find a great burden taken off your shoulders, even as the Pilgrim did in that inimitable book, "Pilgrim's Progress." There came a time when the mighty burden that the Pilgrim was carrying on his shoulders unconsciously dropped from him, and he felt a freer man than he was when he started on the journey. So will you feel freer men than you are now, immediately you adopt this *Swadeshi* life. We have also.

THE VOW OF FEARLESSNESS.

I found, throughout my wanderings in India, that India, educated India, is seized with a paralysing fear. We may not open our lips in public ; we may not declare our confirmed opinions in public : we may talk about them secretly ; and we may do anything we like within the four



walls of our house,—but those are not for public consumption. If we had taken a vow of silence I would have nothing to say. When we open our lips in public, we say things which we do not really believe in. I do not know whether this is not the experience of almost every public man who speaks in India. I then suggest to you that there is only one Being, if Being is the proper term to be used, whom we have to fear, and that is God. When we fear God, we shall fear no man, no matter how high-placed he may be. And if you want to follow the vow of truth in any shape or form, fearlessness is the necessary consequence. And so you find, in the *Bhagavad Gita*, fearlessness is declared as the first essential quality of a Brahmin. We fear consequence, and therefore we are afraid to tell the Truth. A man who fears God will certainly not fear any earthly consequence. Before we can aspire to the position of understanding what religion is, and before we can aspire to the position of guiding the destinies of India, do you not see that we should adopt this habit of fearlessness? Or shall we over-awe our countrymen, even as we are over-awed? We thus see how important this “fearlessness” now is. And we have also

THE VOW REGARDING THE UNTOUCHABLES.

There is an ineffaceable blot that Hinduism to-day carries with it. I have declined to believe that it has been handed to us from immemorial times. I think that this miserable, wretched, enslaving spirit of “untouchableness” must have come to us when we were in the cycle of our lives, at our lowest ebb, and that evil has still stuck to us and it still remains with us. It is, to my mind, a curse that has come to us, and as long as that curse remains with us, so long I think we are bound to consider that every affliction that we labour under in this sacred



land is a fit and proper punishment for this great and indelible crime that we are committing. That any person should be considered untouchable because of his calling passes one's comprehension; and you, the student world, who receive all this modern education, if you become a party to this crime, it were better that you received no education whatsoever.

Of course, we are labouring under a very heavy handicap. Although you may realise that there cannot be a single human being on this earth who should be considered to be untouchable, you cannot react upon your families, you cannot react upon your surroundings, because all your thought is conceived in a foreign tongue, and all your energy is devoted to that. And so we have also introduced a rule in this Ashrama: that we shall receive our

EDUCATION THROUGH THE VERNACULARS.

In Europe every cultured man learns, not only his language, but also other languages, certainly three or four. And even as they do in Europe, in order to solve the problem of language in India, we in this Ashrama, make it a point to learn as many Indian vernaculars as we possibly can. And I assure you that the trouble of learning these languages is nothing compared to the trouble that we have to take in mastering the English language. We never master the English language: with some exceptions it has not been possible for us to do so; we can never express ourselves as clearly as we can in our own mother tongue. How dare we rub out of our memory all the years of our infancy? But that is precisely what we do when we commence our higher life, as we call it, through the medium of a foreign tongue. This creates a breach in our life for bringing which we shall have to pay dearly and heavily. And you



will see now the connection between these two things,—education and untouchableness—this persistence of the spirit of untouchableness even at this time of the day in spite of the spread of knowledge and education. Education has enabled us to see the horrible crime. But we are seized with fear also and, therefore, we cannot take this doctrine to our homes. And we have got a superstitious veneration for our family traditions and for the members of our family. You say, “My parents will die if I tell them that I, at least, can no longer partake of his crime.” I say that Prahlad never considered that his father would die if he pronounced the sacred syllables of the name of Vishnu. On the contrary, he made the whole of that household ring, from one corner to another, by repeating that name even in the sacred presence of his father. And so you and I may do this thing in the sacred presence of our parents. If, after receiving this rude shock, some of them expire, I think that would be no calamity. It may be that some rude shocks of the kind might have to be delivered. So long as we persist in these things which have been handed down to us for generations, these incidents may happen. But there is a higher law of Nature, and in due obedience to that higher law my parents and myself should make that sacrifice.

AND THEN WE FOLLOW HAND-WEAVING.

You may ask: “Why should we use our hands?” and say “the manual work has got to be done by those who are illiterate. I can only occupy myself with reading literature and political essays.” I think we have to realise the dignity of labour. If a barber or shoe-maker attends a college, he ought not to abandon the profession of barber or shoe-maker. I consider that a barber’s profession is just as good as the profession of medicine.



Last of all, when you have conformed to these rules, think that then, and not till then, you may come to

POLITICS

and dabble in them to your heart's content, and certainly you will then never go wrong. Politics, divorced of religion, has absolutely no meaning. If the student-world crowd the political platforms of this country, to my mind, it is not necessarily a healthy sign of national growth; but that does not mean that you, in your student-life, ought not to study politics. Politics are a part of our being; we ought to understand our national institutions, and we ought to understand our national growth and all those things. We may do it from our infancy. So, in our *Ashrama*, every child is taught to understand the political institutions of our country, and to know how the country is vibrating with new emotions, with new aspirations, with a new life. But we want also the steady light, the infallible light, of religious faith, not a faith which merely appeals to the intelligence, but a faith which is indelibly inscribed on the heart. First, we want to realise that religious consciousness, and immediately we have done that, I think the whole department of life is open to us, and it should then be a sacred privilege of students and everybody to partake of that whole life, so that, when they grow to manhood and when they leave their colleges they may do so as men properly equipped to battle with life. To-day what happens is this: much of the political life is confined to student life; immediately the students leave their colleges and cease to be students, they sink into oblivion, they seek miserable employments, carrying miserable emoluments, rising no higher in their aspirations, knowing nothing of God, knowing nothing of fresh air or bright light and nothing of that real vigorous independence that comes out of obedience to these laws that I have ventured to place before you.



EDUCATION, ANCIENT AND MODERN

At a public meeting held at Allahabad under the chairmanship of the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya Mr. Gandhi spoke on the Ideals of Education, Ancient and Modern. The following is an English rendering of the speech which was delivered in Hindi :—

Mr. Gandhi who on rising was greeted with loud and prolonged cheers, said that the fact that he should have felt difficulty—of which he was ashamed—in addressing the meeting in Hindi was a striking commentary on the system of modern education which was a part of the subject of his lecture that evening. He would, however, prefer to speak in Hindi although he had greater facility of expression in English. Describing the modern system of education he said that real education was considered to have begun at the college at the age of 16 or 17. The education received in school was not useful. For instance, an Indian student, while he knew well the geography of England, did not possess a sufficient knowledge of the geography of his own country. The history of India which they were taught was greatly distorted. Government service was the aim of their education. Their highest ambition was to become members of the Imperial Legislative Council. The boys abandoned their hereditary occupations, and forsook their mother tongue. They were adopting the English language, European ideas and European dress. They thought in English, conducted all their political and social work and all commercial transactions, etc., in English and felt that they could



not do without the English language. They had come to think that there was no other road. Education through English had created a wide gulf between the educated few and the masses. It had created a gulf in the families also. An English educated man had no community of feelings and ideas with the ladies of his family. And, as had been said, the aspirations of the English educated men were fixed on Government service and at the most on membership of the Imperial Legislative Council. He for one could never commend a system of education which produced such a state of things and men educated under such system could not be expected to do any great service to the country. Mr. Gandhi did not mean that the English educated leaders did not feel for the masses. On the other hand, he acknowledged that the Congress and other great public movements were initiated and conducted by them. But, at the same time, he could not help feeling that the work done during all these years would have been much more, and much greater progress would have been made, if they had been taught in their mother tongue. It was unfortunate, said the speaker, that a feeling had come over them that there was no path to progress other than that which was being followed. They found themselves helpless. But it was not manliness to assume an attitude of helplessness.

Mr. Gandhi then described the ancient system of education and said that even elementary education imparted by the village teacher taught the student all that was necessary for their occupations. Those who went in for higher education became fully conversant with the science of wealth *Artha Sastra*, ethics and religion *Dharma Sastra*. In ancient times there were no restrictions on education. It was not controlled by the State,



but was solely in the hands of Brahmans, who shaped the system of education solely with an eye to the welfare of the people. It was based on restraint and *Brahmacharya*. It was due to such a system of education that Indian civilization had outlived so many vicissitudes through thousands of years, while such ancient civilizations as those of Greece, Rome and Egypt had become extinct. No doubt the wave of a new civilization had been passing through India, But he was sure that it was transitory, it would soon pass away and Indian civilization would be revived. In ancient times the basis of life was self-restraint, but now it was enjoyment. The result was that people had become powerless cowards and forsook the truth. Having come under the influence of another civilization it might be necessary to adopt our own civilization in certain respect to our new environments, but we should not make any radical change in a civilization which was acknowledged even by some western scholars to be the best. It might be urged that it was necessary to adopt the methods and instruments of western civilization to meet the material forces of that civilization. But the forces born of spirituality, the bed-rock of Indian civilization, were more than a match for material forces. India was pre-eminently the land of religion. It was the first and the last duty of Indians to maintain it as such. They should draw their strength from the soul, from God. If they adhered to that path Swarajya which they were aspiring to and working for would become their hand-maid.



INDIAN MERCHANTS

Mr. Gandhi was entertained by the merchants of Broach during his visit to the city and presented with an address of welcome. Mr. Gandhi replied to the address in the following terms :—

Merchants always have the spirit of adventure, intellect and wealth, as without these qualities their business cannot go on. But now they must have the fervour of patriotism in them. Patriotism is necessary even for religion. If the spirit of patriotism is awakened through religious fervour, then that patriotism will shine out brilliantly. So it is necessary that patriotism should be roused in the mercantile community.

The merchants take more part in public affairs now-a-days than before. When merchants take to politics through patriotism, Swaraj is as good as obtained. Some of you might be wondering how we can get Swaraj, I lay my hand on my heart and say that, when the merchant class understands the spirit of patriotism, then only can we get Swaraj quickly. Swaraj then will be quite a natural thing.

Amongst the various keys which will unlock Swaraj to us, the Swadeshi Vow is the golden one. It is in the hands of the merchants to compel the observance of the Swadeshi Vow in the country, and this is an adventure which can be popularised by the merchants. I humbly request you to undertake this adventure, and then you will see what wonders you can do.



This being so, I have to say with regret that it is the merchant class which has brought ruin to the Swadeshi practice, and the Swadeshi movement in this country. Complaints have lately risen in Bengal about the increase of rates, and one of them is against Gujarat. It is complained there that the prices of Dhotis have been abnormally increased and Dhotis go from Gujarat. No one wants you not to earn money, but it must be earned righteously and not be ill-gotten. Merchants must earn money by fair means. Unfair means must never be used.

Continuing, Mr. Gandhi said: India's strength lies with the merchant class. So much does not lie even with the army. Trade is the cause of war, and the merchant class has the key of war in their hands. Merchants raise the money and the army is raised on the strength of it. The power of England and Germany rests on their trading class. A country's prosperity depends upon its mercantile community. I consider it as a sign of good luck that I should receive an address from the merchant class. Whenever I remember Broach, I will enquire if the merchants who have given me an address this day have righteous faith and patriotism. If I receive a disappointing reply, I will think that merely a wave of giving addresses had come over India and that I had a share in it.



NATIONAL DRESS

Mr. Gandhi wrote the following reply to Mr. Irwin's criticism of his dress in the "Pioneer" during the Champaran enquiry.

I have hitherto successfully resisted the temptation of either answering your or Mr. Irwin's criticism of the humble work I am doing in Champaran. Nor am I going to succumb now except with regard to a matter which Mr. Irwin has thought fit to dwell upon and about which he has not even taken the trouble of being correctly informed. I refer to his remarks on my manner of dressing.

My "familiarity with the minor amenities of western civilisation" has taught me to respect my national costume, and it may interest Mr. Irwin to know that the dress I wear in Champaran is the dress I have always worn in India except that for a very short period in India I fell an easy prey in common with the rest of my countrymen to the wearing of semi-European dress in the courts, and elsewhere outside Kathiawar. I appeared before the Kathiawar courts now 21 years ago in precisely the dress I wear in Champaran.

One change I have made and it is that having taken to the occupation of weaving and agriculture and having taken the vow of Swadeshi, my clothing is now entirely hand-woven and hand-sewn and made by me or my fellow-workers. Mr. Irwin's letter suggests that I appear before the ryots in a dress I have temporarily and specially adopted in Champaran to produce an effect. The fact is that I wear the national dress because it is the most



natural and the most becoming for an Indian. I believe that our copying of the European dress is a sign of our degradation, humiliation and our weakness, and that we are committing a national sin in discarding a dress which is best suited to the Indian climate and which for its simplicity, art and cheapness, is not to be beaten on the face of the earth and which answers hygienic requirements. Had it not been for a false pride and equally false notions of prestige, Englishmen here would long ago have adopted the Indian costume. I may mention incidentally that I do not go about Champaran bare-headed. I do avoid shoes for sacred reasons. But I find too that it is more natural and healthier to avoid them whenever possible.

I am sorry to inform Mr. Irwin and your readers that my esteemed friend Babu Brijkishore Prasad, the "ex-Hon. Member of Council," still remains unregenerate and retains the provincial cap and never walks barefoot and "kicks up" a terrible noise even in the house we are living in by wearing wooden sandals. He has still not the courage, in spite of most admirable contact with me, to discard his semi-anglicised dress and whenever he goes to see officials he puts his legs into the bifurcated garment and on his own admission tortures himself by cramping his feet in elastic shoes. I cannot induce him to believe that his clients won't desert him and the courts won't punish him if he wore his more becoming and less expensive dhoti. I invite you and Mr. Irwin not to believe the "stories" that the latter hears about me and my friends, but to join me in the crusade against educated Indians abandoning their manners, habits and customs which are not proved to be bad or harmful. Finally I venture to warn you and Mr. Irwin that you and he will ill-serve the cause both of you consider is in danger by reason of my presence in



Champanan if you continue, as you have done, to base your strictures on unproved facts. I ask you to accept my assurance that I should deem myself unworthy of the friendship and confidence of hundreds of my English friends and associates—not all of them fellow-cranks—if in similar circumstances I acted towards them differently from my own countrymen.

THE HINDU-MAHOMEDAN PROBLEM.

The following is an extract from a Gujarati letter addressed by Mr. Gandhi, to a Mahomedan correspondent :

I never realise any distinction between a Hindu and a Mahomedan. To my mind, both are sons of Mother India. I know that Hindus are in a numerical majority, and that they are believed to be more advanced in knowledge and education. Accordingly, they should be glad to give way so much the more to their Mahomedan brethren. As a man of truth, I honestly believe that Hindus should yield up to the Mahomedans what the latter desire, and that they should rejoice in so doing. We can expect unity only if such mutual large-heartedness is displayed. When the Hindus and Mahomedans act towards each other as blood-brothers, then alone can there be unity, then only can we hope for the dawn of India.



SELF-GOVERNMENT.

The following is the Foreward contributed by Mr. Gandhi to Mr. G. A. Natesan's book entitled "What India Wants: Autonomy within the Empire"—published in September 1917.

I have read Mr. Natesan's booklet with the greatest pleasure. It is a fine *Vade mecum* for the busy politician and worker. Mr. Natesan has provided him with a connected narrative of the movement of self-government in a very attractive and acceptable form. By reproducing in their historical sequence the extracts from official records he has allowed them to speak for themselves. The book is in my opinion a great help to the controversialist and the student of our present day politics who does not care to study musty blue books or has no access to them.

With reference to the joint scheme of Self-Government, though I do not take so much interest in it as our leaders, I feel that from the Government standpoint it must command their attention as a measure which has agitated the public mind as no other has, and I venture to think that there will be no peace in the country until the Scheme has been accepted by the Government.



GUJARAT EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE

The following is the Presidential address to the Second Gujarat Educational Conference held at Broach in October 20, 1917, specially translated for the "Indian Review."

EDUCATION THROUGH THE VERNACULARS

The Gujarat Education League that has called us together has set before it three objects :

(1) To cultivate and express public opinion on matters of education.

(2) To carry on sustained agitation on educational questions.

(3) To take all practical steps for the spread of education in Gujarat.

I shall endeavour to the best of my ability to place before you my thoughts on these objects and the conclusions I have arrived at.

It must be clear enough to everybody that our first business is to consider and form an opinion about the medium of instruction. Without fixing the medium all our other efforts are likely to be fruitless. To go on educating our children without determining the medium is like an attempt to build without a foundation.

Opinion seems to be divided on the matter. One party claims that instruction ought to be imparted through the vernacular (Gujarati in this province). The other will have English as the medium. Both are guided by pure motives. Both are lovers of their country. But good intentions alone are not sufficient for reaching a



goal. It is world-wide experience that good intentions often take a man to a bad place. It is, therefore, our duty to examine on their merits the contentions of both the parties and, if possible, to arrive at a final and unanimous conclusion on this great question. That it is great no one can doubt. We cannot, therefore, give too much consideration to it, (2)

It is, moreover, a question which affects the whole of India. But every Presidency or Province can come to an independent conclusion. It is in no way essential that before Gujarat may move, all the other parts of India should arrive at a unanimous decision.

We shall, however, be better able to solve our difficulties by glancing at similar movements in other provinces. When the heart of Bengal, at the time of the Partition, was throbbing with the Swadeshi spirit, an attempt was made to impart all instruction through Bengali. A National College was established. Rupees poured in. But the experiment proved barren. It is my humble belief that the organisers of the movement had no faith in the experiment. The teachers fared no better. The educated class of Bengal seemed to dote upon English. It has been suggested that it is the Bengali's command over the English language that has promoted the growth of Bengali literature. Facts do not support the view. Sir Rabindranath Tagore's wonderful hold on Bengali is not due to his command of the English language. His marvellous Bengali is dependent upon his love of the mother tongue. "Gitanjali" was first written in Bengali. The great poet uses only Bengali speech in Bengal. The speech that he recently delivered in Calcutta on the present situation was in Bengali. Leading men and women of Bengal were among the audience. Some of (4)



them told me that for an hour and a half, by a ceaseless flow of language, he kept the audience spell-bound. He has not derived his thoughts from English literature. He claims that he has received them from the atmosphere of the soil. He has drunk them from the Upanishads. The Indian sky has showered them upon him. And I understand that the position of the other Bengali writers is very similar to the poet's.

When Mahatma Munshiramji, majestic as the Himalayas, delivers his addresses in charming Hindi, the audience composed of men, women and children listen to him and understand his message. His knowledge of English he reserves for his English friends. He does not translate English thought into Hindi.

It is said of the Hon. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who, though a householder, has, for the sake of India, dedicated himself entirely to the country, that his English speech is silvery. His silvery eloquence compels Viceregal attention. But if his English speech is silvery, his Hindi speech shines golden like the waters of the Ganges under the sunbeams, as they descend from the Mansarovar.

These three speakers do not owe their power to their English knowledge, but to their love of the vernaculars. The services rendered by the late Swami Dayanand to Hindi owe nothing to the English language. Nor did English play any part in the contributions of Tukaram and Ramdas to Marathi literature. The English language can receive no credit for the growth in Gujarati literature from Premanand's pen as of Shamal Chat's and quite recently of Dalpatram.

The foregoing illustrations seem to afford sufficient proof that love of, and faith in, the vernaculars, rather



than a knowledge of English are necessary for their expansion.

We shall arrive at the same conclusion when we consider how languages grow. They are a reflection of the character of the people who use them. One who knows the dialects of the Zulus of South Africa knows their manners and customs. The character of a language depends upon the qualities and acts of the people. We should unhesitatingly infer that a nation could not possess warlike, kind-hearted and truthful people, if its language contained no expressions denoting these qualities. And we should fail to make that language assimilate such expressions by borrowing them from another language and forcing them into its dictionary, nor will such spurious importation make warriors of those who use that speech. You cannot get steel out of a piece of ordinary iron, but you can make effective use of rusty steel, by ridding it of its rust. We have long laboured under servility and our vernaculars abound in servile expressions. The English language is probably unrivalled in its vocabulary of nautical terms. But if an enterprising Gujarati presented Gujarat with a translation of those terms, he would add nothing to the language and we should be none the wiser for his effort. And if we took up the calling of sailors and provided ourselves with shipyards and even a navy, we should automatically have terms which would adequately express our activity in this direction. The late Rev. J. Taylor gave the same opinion in his Gujarati Grammar. He says: "One sometimes hears people asking whether Gujarati may be considered a complete or an incomplete language. There is a proverb, 'As the king, so his subjects; as the teacher, so the pupil.' Similarly it can be said, 'As the speaker, so the



language.' Shamalbhatt and other poets do not appear to have been obsessed with an idea of the incompleteness of Gujarati when they expressed their different thoughts, but they so coined new expressions and manipulated the old that their thoughts became current in the language.

"In one respect all languages are incomplete. Man's reason is limited and language fails him when he begins to talk of God and Eternity. Human reason controls human speech. It is, therefore, limited, to the extent that reason itself is limited, and in that sense all languages are incomplete. The ordinary rule regarding language is that a language takes shape in accordance with the thoughts of its wielders. If they are sensible, their language is full of sense, and it becomes nonsense when foolish people speak it. There is an English proverb, "A bad carpenter quarrels with his tools." Those who quarrel with a language are often like the bad carpenter. To those who have to deal with the English language and its literature, the Gujarati language may appear incomplete for the simple reason that translation from English into Gujarati is difficult. The fault is not in the language but in the people before whom the translation is placed. They are not used to new words, new subjects and new manipulations of their language. The speaker, therefore, is taken aback. How shall a singer sing before a deaf man? And how can a writer deliver his soul until his readers have developed a capacity for weighing the new with the old and sifting the good from the bad.

"Again some translators seem to think that Gujarati they have imbibed with their mother's milk, and they have learnt English at school, and that they, therefore, have become masters of two languages, and need not take



up Gujarati as a study. But attainment of perfection in one's mother tongue is more difficult than effort spent in learning a foreign tongue. An examination of the works of Shamalbhatt and other poets will reveal endless effort in every line. To one indisposed to undergo mental strain, Gujarati will appear incomplete. But it will cease to so appear after a proper effort. If the worker is lazy, the language will fail him. It will yield ample results to an industrious man. It will be found to be capable even of ornamentation. Who dare belittle Gujarati, a member of the Aryan family, a daughter of Sanskrit, a sister of many noble tongues? May God bless it and may there be in it to the end of time, good literature, sound knowledge and expression of true religion. And may God bless the speech and may we hear its praise from the mothers and the scholars of Gujarat."

Thus we see that it was neither the imperfection of Bengali speech, nor impropriety of the effort that was responsible for the failure of the movement in Bengal to impart instruction through Bengali. We have considered the question of incompleteness. Impropriety of the effort cannot be inferred from an examination of the movement. It may be that the workers in the cause lacked fitness or faith.

In the north, though Hindi is being developed, real effort to make it a medium seems to have been confined only to the Arya Samajists. The experiment continues in the Gurukuls.

In the Presidency of Madras the movement commenced only a few years ago. There is greater intensity of purpose among the Telugus than among the Tamils. English has acquired such a hold of the literary class among the Tamils that they have not the energy even to

conduct their proceedings in Tamil. The English language has not affected the Telugus to that extent. They, therefore, make greater use of Telugu. They are not only making an attempt to make Telugu the medium of instruction; they are heading a movement to repartition India on a linguistic basis. And though the propagation of this idea was commenced only recently, the work is being handled with so much energy that they are likely to see results within a short time. There are many rocks in their way. But the leaders of the movement have impressed me with their ability to break them down.

In the Deccan the movement goes ahead. That good soul Prof. Karve is the leader of the movement. Mr. Naik is working in the same direction. Private institutions are engaged in the experiment. Prof. Bijapurkar, has, after great labour, succeeded in reviving his experiment and we shall see it in a short time crystallised into a school. He had devised a scheme for preparing textbooks. Some have been printed and some are ready for print. The teachers in that institution never betrayed want of faith in their cause. Had the institution not been closed down, so far as Marathi is concerned the question of imparting all instruction through it would have been solved.

We learn from an article in a local magazine by Rao Bahadur Hargovindas Kantawala that a movement for making Gujarati the medium of instruction has already been made in Gujarat. Prof. Gajjar and the late Diwan Bahadur Manibhai Jushbhai initiated it. It remains for us to consider whether we shall water the seed sown by them. I feel that every moment's delay means so much harm done to us. In receiving education through English at least sixteen years are required. Many experienced



teachers have given it as their opinion that the same subjects can be taught through the vernaculars in ten years' time. Thus by saving six years of their lives for thousands of our children we might save thousands of years for the nation.

The strain of receiving instruction through a foreign medium is intolerable. Our children alone can bear it, but they have to pay for it. They become unfit for bearing any other strain. For this reason our graduates are mostly without stamina, weak, devoid of energy, diseased and mere imitators. Originality, research, adventure, ceaseless effort, courage, dauntlessness and such other qualities have become atrophied. We are thus incapacitated for undertaking new enterprises, and we are unable to carry them through if we undertake any. Some who can give proof of such qualities die an untimely death. An English writer had said that the non-Europeans are the blotting-sheets of European civilisation. Whatever truth there may be in this cryptic statement, it is not due to the natural unfitness of the Asiatics. It is the unfitness of the medium of instruction which is responsible for the result. The Zulus of South Africa are otherwise enterprising, powerfully built and men of character. They are not hampered by child-marriages and such other defects. And yet the position of their educated class is the same as ours. With them the medium of instruction is Dutch. They easily obtain command over Dutch as we do over English, and like us they too on completion of their education lose their energy and for the most part become imitators. Originality leaves them along with the mother-tongue. We the English-educated class are unfit to ascertain the true measure of the harm done by the unnatural system. We should get some idea of it if we realised how little we have



reacted upon the masses. The outspoken views on education that our parents sometimes give vent to are thought-compelling. We dote upon our Boses and Roys. Had our people been educated through their vernaculars during the last fifty years, I am sure that the presence in our midst of a Bose or a Roy would not have filled us with astonishment.

Leaving aside for the moment the question of propriety or otherwise of the direction that Japanese energy has taken, Japanese enterprise must amaze us. The national awakening there has taken place through their national language, and so there is a freshness about every activity of theirs. They are teaching their teachers. They have falsified the blotting-sheet smile. Education has stimulated national life, and the world watches dumbstruck Japan's activities. The harm done to national life by the medium being a foreign tongue is immeasurable.

The correspondence that should exist between the school training and the character imbibed with the mother's milk and the training received through her sweet speech is absent when the school training is given through a foreign tongue. However pure may be his motives, he who thus snaps the cord that should bind the school-life and the home-life is an enemy of the nation. We are traitors to our mothers by remaining under such a system. The harm done goes much further. A gulf has been created between the educated classes and the uneducated masses. The latter do not know us. We do not know the former. They consider us to be 'Saheblog.' They are afraid of us. They do not trust us. If such a state of things were to continue for any length of time, a time may come for Lord Curzon's charge to be true, viz., that the literary classes do not represent the masses.



Fortunately the educated class seems to be waking up from its trance. They experience the difficulty of contact with the masses. How can they infect the masses with their own enthusiasm for the national cause? They cannot do so through English. They have not enough ability or none for doing so through Gujarati. They find it extremely difficult to put their thoughts into Gujarati. I often hear opinion expressed about this difficulty. Owing to the barrier thus created the flow of national life suffers impediment.

Macaulay's object in giving preference to the English language over the vernaculars was pure. He had a contempt for our literature. It affected us and we forgot ourselves and just as a pupil often outdoes the teacher so was the case with us. Macaulay thought that we would be instrumental in spreading western civilisation among the masses. His plan was that some of us would learn English, form our character and spread the new thought among the millions. (It is not necessary here to consider the soundness of this view. We are merely examining the question of the medium.) We, on the other hand, discovered in English education a medium for obtaining wealth and we gave that use of it predominance. Some of us found in it a stimulus for our patriotism. So the original intention went into the background, and the English language spread beyond the limit set by Macaulay. We have lost thereby.

Had we the reins of Government in our hands we would have soon detected the error. We could not have abandoned the vernaculars. The governing class has not been able to do so. Many perhaps do not know that the language of our courts is considered to be Gujarati. The Government have to have the Acts of the legislature



translated in Gujarati. The official addresses delivered at Darbar gatherings are translated there and then. We see Gujarati and other vernaculars used side by side with English in currency notes. The mathematical knowledge required of the surveyors is difficult enough. But Revenue work would have been too costly, had surveyors been required to know English. Special terms have, therefore been coined for the use of surveyors. They excite pleasurable wonder. If we had a true love for our vernaculars we could even now make use of some of the means at our disposal for their spread. If the pleader were to begin to make use of the Gujarati language in the courts they would save their clients much money, and the latter will gain some necessary knowledge of the laws of the land, and will begin to appreciate their rights. Interpreters' fees would be saved, and legal terms would become current in the language. It is true the pleaders will have to make some effort for the attainment of this happy result. I am sure, nay, I speak from experience, that their clients will lose nothing thereby. There is no occasion to fear that arguments advanced in Gujarati will have less weight. Collectors and other officials are expected to know Gujarati. But by our superstitious regard for English we allow their knowledge to become rusty.

It has been argued that the use we made of English for attainment of wealth, and for stimulating patriotism was quite proper. The argument however, has no bearing on the question before us. We shall bow to those who learn English for the sake of gaining wealth or for serving the country otherwise. But we would surely not make English the medium on that account. My only object in referring to such a use of the English language was to show that it continued its abuse as a medium of instruc-



tion and thus produced an untoward result. Some contend that only English-knowing Indians have been fired with the patriotic spirit. The past few months have shown us something quite different. But even if we were to admit that claim on behalf of English, we could say that the others never had an opportunity. Patriotism of the English-educated class has not proved infectious, whereas a truly patriotic spirit ought to be all-pervading.

It has been stated that the foregoing arguments, on matter how strong they may be in themselves, are impracticable. "It is a matter for sorrow that other branches of learning should suffer for the sake of English. It is certainly undesirable that we should suffer an undue mental strain in the act of gaining command over the English language. It is, however, my humble opinion that there is no escape for us from having to bear this hardship, regard being had to the fact of our relationship with the English language, and to find out a way." These are not the views of an ordinary writer. They are owned by one who occupies a front rank among the Gujarati men of letters. He is a lover of Gujarati. We are bound to pay heed to whatever Prof. Dhruva writes. Few of us have the experience he has. He has rendered great service to the cause of Gujarati literature and education. He has a perfect right to advise and to criticise. In the circumstances one like me has to pause. Again the views above expressed are shared with Prof. Dhruva by several protagonists of the English language. Prof. Dhruva has stated them in dignified language. And it is our duty to treat them with respect. My own position is still more delicate. I have been trying an experiment in national education under his advice and guidance. In that institution Gujarati is the medium of instruction. Enjoying

such an intimate relation with Prof. Dhruva I hesitate to offer anything by way of criticism of his views. Fortunately, Prof. Dhruva regards both systems, the one wherein English is the medium and the other in which the mother tongue is the medium, in the nature of experiment; he has expressed no final opinion on either. My hesitation about criticising his views is lessened on that account. It seems to me that we lay too much stress on our peculiar relationship with the English language. I know that I may not with perfect freedom deal with this subject from this platform. But it is not improper even for those who cannot handle political subjects to consider the following proposition. The English connection subsists solely for the benefit of India. On no other basis can it be defended. English statesmen themselves have admitted that the idea that one nation should rule another is intolerable, undesirable and harmful for both. This proposition is accepted as a maxim beyond challenge in quarters where it is considered from an altruistic standpoint. If then both the rulers and the nation are satisfied that the mental calibre of the nation suffers by reason of English being the medium, the system ought to be altered without a moment's delay. It would be demonstration of our manliness to remove obstacles however great in our path, and if this view be accepted, those like Prof. Dhruva who admit the harm done to our mental calibre do not stand in need of any other argument.

I do not consider it necessary to give any thought to the possibility of our knowledge of English suffering by reason of the vernacular occupying its place. It is my humble belief that not only is it unnecessary for all educated Indians to acquire command over English, but that it is equally unnecessary to induce a taste for acquiring such command.



Some Indians will undoubtedly have to learn English. Prof. Dhruva has examined the question with a lofty purpose only. But examining from all points we would find that it will be necessary for two classes to know English :—

(1) Those patriots who have a capacity for learning languages, who have time at their disposal and who are desirous of exploring the English literature and placing the results before the nation, or those who wish to make use of the English language for the sake of coming in touch with the rulers.

(2) Those who wish to make use of their knowledge of English for the sake of acquiring wealth.

There is not only no harm in treating English as an optional subject, and giving these two classes of candidates the best training in it, but it is even necessary to secure for them every convenience. In such a scheme the mother-tongue will still remain the medium. Prof. Dhruva fears that if we do not receive all instruction through English, but learn it as a foreign language, it will share the fate of Persian, Sanskrit and other languages. With due respect I must say that there is a hiatus in this reasoning. Many Englishmen, although they receive their training through English, possess a high knowledge of French and are able to use it fully for all their purposes. There are men in India who although they have received their training through English have acquired no mean command over French and other languages. The fact is that when English occupies its proper place and the vernaculars receive their due, our minds which are to-day imprisoned will be set free and our brains though cultivated and trained, and yet being fresh will not feel the weight of having to learn English as a



language. And it is my belief that English thus learnt will be better than our English of to-day. And our intellects being active, we should make more effective use of our English knowledge. Weighing the pros and cons, therefore, this seems to be the way that will satisfy many ends.

When we receive our education through the mother-tongue, we should observe a different atmosphere in our homes. At present we are unable to make our wives co-partners with us. They know little of our activity. Our parents do not know what we learn. If we receive instruction through the mother-tongue we should easily make our washermen, our barbers, and our bhangis, partakers of the high knowledge we might have gained. In England one discusses high politics with barbers while having a shave. We are unable to do so even in our family circle, not because the members of the family or the barbers are ignorant people. Their intellect is as well-trained as that of the English barber. We are able to discuss intelligently with them the events of "Mahabharata," "Ramayana" and of our holy places. For the national training flows in that direction. But we are unable to take home what we receive in our schools. We cannot reproduce before the family circle what we have learnt through the English language.

At the present moment the proceedings of our Legislative Councils are conducted in English. In many other institutions the same state of things prevails. We are, therefore, in the position of a miser who buries underground all his riches. We fare no better in our law courts. Judges often address words of wisdom. The court-going public is always eager to hear what the Judges have to say. But they know no more than the dry deci-



sions of the Judges. They do not even understand their counsels' addresses. Doctors receiving diplomas in Medical Colleges treat their patients no better. They are unable to give necessary instructions to their patients. They often do not know the vernacular names of the different members of the body. Their connection, therefore, with their patients, as a rule, does not travel beyond the writing of prescriptions. It is brought up as a charge against us that through our thoughtlessness we allow the water that flows from the mountain-tops during the rainy season to go to waste, and similarly treat valuable manure worth lakhs of rupees and get disease in the bargain. In the same manner being crushed under the weight of having to learn English and through want of far-sightedness, we are unable to give to the nation what it should receive at our hands. There is no exaggeration in this statement. It is an expression of the feelings that are raging within me. We shall have to pay dearly for our continuous disregard of the mother-tongue. The nation has suffered much by reason of it. It is the first duty of the learned class now to deliver the nation from the agony.

There can be no limit to the scope of a language in which Narasingh Mehta sang. Nandshanker wrote his *Karanghelo*, which has produced a race of writers like Navalram, Narmadashanker, Manilal, Malabari and others; in which the late Raychandkavi carried on his soul-lifting discourses, which the Hindus, Mahomedans and Parsis claim to speak and can serve if they will; which has produced a race of holy sages; which owns among its votaries millionaires; which has been spoken by sailors who have ventured abroad; and in which the Barda hills still bear witness to the valourous deeds of Mulu Manek.



and Jodha Manek. What else can the Gujaratis achieve if they decline to receive their training through that language? It grieves one even to have to consider the question.

In closing this subject I would invite your attention to the pamphlets published by Dr. Pranjiwandas Mehta, of which a Gujarati translation is now out. I ask you to read them. You will find therein a collection of opinions in support of the views herein expressed.

If it is deemed advisable to make the mother-tongue the media of instruction, it is necessary to examine the steps to be taken for achieving the end. I propose to recount them, without going into the argument in support :—

(1) The English-knowing Gujaratis should never, in their mutual intercourse, make use of English.

(2) Those who are competent both in English and Gujarati, should translate useful English works into Gujarati.

(3) Education Leagues should have text-books prepared.

(4) Moneyed men should establish schools in various places in which Gujarati should be the medium.

(5) Alongside of the foregoing activity, conferences and leagues should petition the Government and pray that the medium should be Gujarati in Government schools, that proceedings in the Law Courts and Councils and all public activities should be in Gujarati, that public services should be open to all, without invidious distinctions in favour of those who know English, and in accordance with the qualifications of applicants for the post for which they may apply, and that schools should be established where



aspirants for public offices may receive training through Gujarati.

There is a difficulty about the foregoing suggestions. In the councils there are members who speak in Marathi, Sindhi, Gujarati and even Kanarese. This is a serious difficulty, but not insurmountable. The Telugus have already commenced a discussion of the question, and there is little doubt that a re-distribution of provinces will have to take place on a linguistic basis. Till then every member should have the right to address his remarks in Hindi or in his own vernacular. If this suggestion appears laughable, I would state in all humility that many suggestions have at first sight so appeared. As I hold the view that our progress depends upon a correct determination of the medium of instruction, my suggestion appears to me to have much substance in it. If my suggestion were adopted the vernaculars will gain in influence, and when they acquire State recognition they are likely to show merits beyond our imagination. * * *

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE FOR INDIA

It behoves us to devote attention to a consideration of a national language, as we have done to that of the medium of instruction. If English is to become a national language, it ought to be treated as a compulsory subject. Can English become the national language? Some learned patriots contend that even to raise the question betrays ignorance. In their opinion English already occupies that place. His Excellency the Viceroy in his recent utterance has merely expressed a hope that English will occupy that place. His enthusiasm does not take him as far as that of the former. His Excellency believes that English will day after day command a larger place, will permeate the family circle, and at last rise to