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ஆனால்என்டிஆர்ஒடியூசிடிநான்ஓஎன்

எஸ். Radhakrishnan

A. great teஒருஒருசெர்முறை தோன்றும். அத்தகைய ஒருவரின் வருகை இல்லாமல் பல நூற்றாண்டுகள் கடந்து செல்லக்கூடும். அவர் அறியப்படுவது அவருடைய வாழ்க்கை. அவர் முதலில் வாழ்கிறார், பின்னர் மற்றவர்களும் எவ்வாறு வாழலாம் என்று கூறுகிறார். அத்தகைய ஆசிரியர் காந்தி. ஸ்ரீ கிருஷ்ணா கிருபாலனியின் மிகுந்த அக்கறையுடனும் பாகுபாட்டுடனும் தொகுக்கப்பட்ட அவரது உரைகள் மற்றும் எழுத்துக்களில் இருந்து இந்த தேர்வுகள் வாசகருக்கு காந்தியின் மனதின் செயல்பாடுகள், அவரது எண்ணங்களின் வளர்ச்சி மற்றும் அவர் கடைப்பிடித்த நடைமுறை நுட்பங்கள் குறித்து சில யோசனைகளைத் தரும்.

இந்தியாவின் மத மரபில் காந்தியின் வாழ்க்கை வேரூன்றியது, சத்தியத்திற்கான உணர்ச்சிபூர்வமான தேடல், வாழ்க்கைக்கு ஆழ்ந்த பயபக்தி, இணைக்கப்படாததன் இலட்சியம் மற்றும் கடவுளின் அறிவுக்காக அனைத்தையும் தியாகம் செய்யத் தயாராக இருப்பது. சத்தியத்தின் நிரந்தர தேடலில் அவர் தனது முழு வாழ்க்கையையும் வாழ்ந்தார்: 'நான் வாழ்கிறேன், நகர்கிறேன், இந்த இலக்கைப் பின்தொடர்வதில் நான் இருக்கிறேன்.'

வேர்கள் இல்லாத, பின்னணியின் ஆழம் இல்லாத ஒரு வாழ்க்கை மேலோட்டமான ஒன்றாகும். சரியானதைக் காணும்போது அதைச் செய்வோம் என்று கருதுபவர்களில் சிலர் இருக்கிறார்கள். அது அவ்வாறு இல்லை. எது சரியானது என்று நமக்குத் தெரிந்தாலும் கூட, நாம் தேர்ந்தெடுத்து சரியானதைச் செய்வோம் என்பதைப் பின்பற்றுவதில்லை. நாம் சக்திவாய்ந்த தூண்டுதல்களால் மீறுகிறோம், தவறு செய்கிறோம், நம்மில் உள்ள ஒளியைக் காட்டிக் கொடுக்கிறோம். 'நமது தற்போதைய நிலையில், இந்து கோட்பாட்டின் படி, ஓரளவு மட்டுமே மனிதர்கள்; நம் கீழ் பகுதி இன்னும் விலங்கு; அன்பினால் நம் கீழ் உள்ளுணர்வுகளை வென்றால் மட்டுமே நம்மில் உள்ள விலங்கைக் கொல்ல முடியும். ' சோதனை மற்றும் பிழை, சுய தேடல் மற்றும் கடுமையான

ஒழுக்கம் ஆகியவற்றின் மூலம் தான் மனிதன் வலிமிகுந்த படிப்படியாக நிறைவேற்றுவதற்கான பாதையில் நகர்கிறான்.

காந்தியின் மதம் ஒரு பகுத்தறிவு மற்றும் நெறிமுறையாக இருந்தது. தனது காரணத்திற்காக முறையிடாத எந்தவொரு நம்பிக்கையையும் அல்லது அவரது மனசாட்சியைப் பாராட்டாத எந்தவொரு உத்தரவையும் அவர் ஏற்க மாட்டார்.

நாம் கடவுளை நம்புகிறோம் என்றால், நம்முடைய புத்தியால் மட்டுமல்ல, நம்முடைய முழு இருப்புடனும், இனம், வர்க்கம், தேசம், மதம் என்ற வேறுபாடு இல்லாமல் எல்லா மனிதர்களையும் நேசிப்போம். மனிதகுல ஒற்றுமைக்காக உழைப்போம். 'என் செயல்கள் அனைத்தும் மனிதகுலத்தின் என் அழியாத அன்பில் அவை உயர்ந்துள்ளன.' 'என எந்த வித்தியாசமும் எனக்குத் தெரியாது

உறவினர்கள் மற்றும் அந்நியர்கள், நாட்டு மக்கள் மற்றும் வெளிநாட்டினர், வெள்ளை மற்றும் நிறமுடையவர்கள், இந்துக்கள் மற்றும் பிற மதங்களைச் சேர்ந்த இந்தியர்கள், முசல்மான்கள், பார்சிகள், கிறிஸ்தவர்கள் அல்லது யூதர்கள். இதுபோன்ற வேறுபாடுகளைச் செய்ய என் இதயம் இயலாது என்று நான் கூறலாம். ' 'ஒரு நீண்ட பிரார்த்தனை ஒழுக்கத்தின் மூலம் நான் யாரையும் வெறுப்பதை நாற்பது ஆண்டுகளுக்கும் மேலாக நிறுத்திவிட்டேன்.' எல்லா மனிதர்களும் சகோதரர்கள், எந்த மனிதனும் இன்னொருவருக்கு அந்நியனாக இருக்கக்கூடாது. அனைவரின் நலனும், *சர்வோதயா*, எங்கள் நோக்கமாக இருக்க வேண்டும். எல்லா மனிதர்களையும் ஒன்றிணைக்கும் பொதுவான பிணைப்பு கடவுள். நம்முடைய மிகப் பெரிய எதிரியுடன் கூட இந்த பிணைப்பை உடைப்பது கடவுளை தானே துண்டு துண்டாக கிழிக்க வேண்டும். மிக மோசமானல் கூட மனிதநேயம் இருக்கிறது[1].

இந்த பார்வை இயற்கையாகவே தேசிய மற்றும் சர்வதேச அனைத்து பிரச்சினைகளையும் தீர்ப்பதற்கான சிறந்த வழிமுறையாக அகிம்சையை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதற்கு வழிவகுக்கிறது. அவர் ஒரு தொலைநோக்கு பார்வையாளர் அல்ல, ஆனால் ஒரு நடைமுறை இலட்சியவாதி என்று காந்தி உறுதிப்படுத்தினார். அகிம்சை என்பது புனிதர்களுக்கும் முனிவர்களுக்கும் மட்டுமல்ல, பொது மக்களுக்கும் பொருந்தும். 'வன்முறை என்பது முரட்டுத்தனமான சட்டமாக இருப்பதால், அகிம்சை என்பது நம் இனத்தின் சட்டம். ஆவி முரட்டுத்தனமாக செயலற்ற நிலையில் உள்ளது, அவருக்கு உடல் வலிமை தவிர வேறு எந்த சட்டமும் தெரியாது. மனிதனின் கண்ணியம் அதிக சட்டம் கீழ்படிதல் தேவைப்படுகிறது-.ஆவியின் வலிமை '

அகிம்சைக் கொள்கையை தனிநபரிடமிருந்து சமூக மற்றும் அரசியல் விமானத்திற்கு விரிவுபடுத்திய மனித வரலாற்றில் காந்தி முதன்மையானவர். அகிம்சையை பரிசோதித்து அதன் செல்லுபடியை நிறுவுவதற்காக அவர் அரசியலில் நுழைந்தார்.

'அரசியல் மற்றும் உலக விவகாரங்களில் உண்மைக்கும் அகிம்சைக்கும் இடமில்லை என்று சில நண்பர்கள் என்னிடம்

கூறியுள்ளனர். நான் ஏற்கவில்லை. தனிப்பட்ட இரட்சிப்பின் வழிமுறையாக அவர்களுக்கு எனக்கு எந்தப் பயனும் இல்லை. அன்றாட வாழ்க்கையில் அவர்களின் அறிமுகமும் பயன்பாடும் எனது சோதனையாக இருந்தன. ' 'என்னைப் பொறுத்தவரை, மதத்தை இழந்த அரசியல் என்பது முழுமையான அழுக்கு, எப்போதும் தவிர்க்கப்பட வேண்டியவை. அரசியல் என்பது நாடுகளைப் பற்றியது, நாடுகளின் நலனைப் பற்றியது என்பது மத ரீதியாக சாய்ந்த ஒரு மனிதனின் கவலைகளில் ஒன்றாக இருக்க வேண்டும், வேறுவிதமாகக் கூறினால், கடவுள் மற்றும் சத்தியத்தைத் தேடுபவர். என்னைப் பொறுத்தவரை கடவுளும் சத்தியமும் மாற்றத்தக்க சொற்கள், கடவுள் பொய்யான கடவுள் அல்லது சித்திரவதைக் கடவுள் என்று யாராவது என்னிடம் சொன்னால் நான் அவரை வணங்க மறுப்பேன். எனவே, அரசியலிலும் நாம் பரலோக ராஜ்யத்தை நிறுவ வேண்டும். '

இந்தியாவின் சுதந்திரத்திற்கான போராட்டத்தில், அகிம்சை மற்றும் துன்பத்தின் நாகரிக முறைகளை நாம் பின்பற்ற வேண்டும் என்று அவர் வலியுறுத்தினார்.சுதந்திரத்திற்கான அவரது நிலைப்பாடு

இந்தியபிரிட்டன் மீதான எந்த வெறுப்பையும் அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டிருக்கவில்லை. நாம் பாவத்தை வெறுக்க வேண்டும், ஆனால் பாவியை அல்ல. 'என்னைப் பொறுத்தவரை தேசபக்தி என்பது மனிதநேயத்தைப் போன்றது. நான் தேசபக்தன், ஏனென்றால் நான் மனிதனும் மனிதாபிமானமும் உடையவன். இந்தியாவுக்கு சேவை செய்ய இங்கிலாந்து அல்லது ஜெர்மனியை நான் காயப்படுத்த மாட்டேன். ' இந்தியாவால் சரியானதைச் செய்ய ஆங்கிலேயர்களுக்கு உதவுவதில் அவர் ஒரு சேவையை வழங்கினார் என்று அவர் நம்பினார். இதன் விளைவாக இந்திய மக்களின் விடுதலை மட்டுமல்ல, தார்மீக வளங்கள் அல்லது மனிதகுலத்தின் அதிகரிப்பு இருந்தது.

தற்போதைய அணுசக்தி சூழலில், உலகைக் காப்பாற்ற விரும்பினால், அகிம்சை கொள்கைகளை நாம் பின்பற்ற வேண்டும். காந்தி கூறினார்: 'நான் ஒரு தசையை நகர்த்தவில்லை, ஒரு அணுகுண்டு ஹிரோஷிமாவை அழித்துவிட்டதாக நான் முதலில் கேள்விப்பட்டேன். மாறாக நான் என்னிடம் சொன்னேன்: "இப்போது உலகம் அகிம்சையை ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளாவிட்டால், அது மனிதகுலத்திற்கு சில தற்கொலைகளை உச்சரிக்கும்". ' எந்தவொரு எதிர்கால மோதலிலும் எந்தவொரு தரப்பினரும் வேண்டுமென்றே அணு ஆயுதங்களைப் பயன்படுத்த மாட்டார்கள் என்பதில் நாம் உறுதியாக இருக்க முடியாது. நமது முயற்சி மற்றும் தியாகத்தால் பல நூற்றாண்டுகளாக நாம் கவனமாகக் கட்டியெழுப்பிய அனைத்தையும் ஒரே கண்மூடித்தனமான ஃபிளாஷில் அழிக்க நமக்கு சக்தி இருக்கிறது. பிரச்சாரத்தின் மூலம் அணுசக்தி யுத்தத்திற்காக ஆண்களின் மனதை நிலைநிறுத்துகிறோம். ஆத்திரமூட்டும் கருத்துக்கள் சுதந்திரமாக பறக்கின்றன. நாம் ஆக்கிரமிப்பை வார்த்தைகளில் கூட பயன்படுத்துகிறோம்; கடுமையான தீர்ப்புகள், தவறான விருப்பம், கோபம், இவை அனைத்தும் வன்முறையின் நயவஞ்சகமான வடிவங்கள்.

தற்போதைய இக்கட்டான சூழ்நிலையில், விஞ்ஞானம் கொண்டு வந்த புதிய நிலைமைகளுக்கு நம்மை சரிசெய்ய முடியாமல் இருக்கும்போது, அகிம்சை, உண்மை மற்றும் புரிதல் ஆகிய

கொள்கைகளை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வது எளிதல்ல. ஆனால் அந்த நிலத்தில் நாம் முயற்சியை கைவிடக்கூடாது. அரசியல் தலைவர்களின் பிடிவாதம் நம் இதயத்தில் அச்சத்தை ஏற்படுத்தினாலும், உலக மக்களின் பொது அறிவும் மனசாட்சியும் நமக்கு நம்பிக்கையைத் தருகின்றன.

நவீன மாற்றங்களின் அதிகரித்த வேகம் காரணமாக, உலகம் நூறு ஆண்டுகள் என்னவாக இருக்கும் என்று எங்களுக்குத் தெரியாது. சிந்தனை மற்றும் உணர்வின் எதிர்கால நீரோட்டங்களை நாம் எதிர்பார்க்க முடியாது. ஆனால் ஆண்டுகள் செல்லக்கூடும், ஆனால்பெரிய கொள்கைகள் *சத்யாஅஹிம்ஸாவின்* மற்றும் *அகிம்சை*, உண்மை மற்றும்ஆகியவை நமக்கு வழிகாட்ட உள்ளன. சோர்வாகவும் கொந்தளிப்பாகவும் இருக்கும் உலகத்திற்கு மேலே புனித விழிப்புணர்வை வைத்திருக்கும் அமைதியான நட்சத்திரங்கள் அவை. காந்தியைப் போலவே, சூரியன் சறுக்கும் மேகங்களுக்கு மேலே பிரகாசிக்கிறது என்ற நம்பிக்கையில் நாம் உறுதியாக இருக்கலாம்.

அதன் சொந்த தோல்வி மற்றும் தார்மீக ஒத்திசைவு ஆகியவற்றை அறிந்த ஒரு யுகத்தில் நாம் வாழ்கிறோம், பழைய நிச்சயங்கள் உடைந்து போகும் ஒரு வயது, பழக்கமான வடிவங்கள் சாய்ந்து

விரிசல் அடைகின்றன. சகிப்புத்தன்மை மற்றும் உற்சாகம் அதிகரித்து வருகிறது. பெரிய மனித சமுதாயத்தைத் தூண்டிய படைப்புச் சுடர் குறைந்து வருகிறது. மனித மனம் அதன் குழப்பமான வித்தியாசம் மற்றும் பலவகைகளில் மாறுபட்ட வகைகளை உருவாக்குகிறது, ஒரு புத்தர் அல்லது காந்தி, ஒரு நீரோ அல்லது ஒரு ஹிட்லர். வரலாற்றின் மிகப் பெரிய நபர்களில் ஒருவர் நம் தலைமுறையில் வாழ்ந்தார், எங்களுடன் நடந்தார், எங்களுடன் பேசினார், நாகரிக வாழ்க்கை முறையை எங்களுக்குக் கற்றுக் கொடுத்தார் என்பது எங்கள் பெருமை. யாருக்கும் அநீதி இழைப்பவர் யாருக்கும் அஞ்சமாட்டார். அவர் மறைக்க எதுவும் இல்லை, அதனால் அச்சமற்றவர். அவர் அனைவரையும் முகத்தில் பார்க்கிறார். அவரது படி உறுதியானது, அவரது உடல் நிமிர்ந்து, அவரது வார்த்தைகள் நேராகவும் நேராகவும் உள்ளன. பிளேட்டோ நீண்ட காலத்திற்கு முன்பு கூறினார்: 'உலகில் எப்போதுமே ஒரு சில ஈர்க்கப்பட்ட ஆண்கள் இருக்கிறார்கள், அதன் அறிமுகம் விலைக்கு அப்பாற்பட்டது.'

எஸ்.

ராதாகிரு

ஷ்ணன் புது

தில்லி

15 ஆகஸ்ட் 1958

பொருளடக்கம்

வெளியீட்டாளரின் குறிப்பு

(இந்திய பதிப்பு) முன்னுரை

(யுனெஸ்கோ பதிப்பு) அறிமுகம்

நான் சுயசரிதை II

மதம் மற்றும்

உண்மை III

பொருள் மற்றும்

முடிவடைகிறது

IV அஹிம்சா அல்லது

வன்முறையற்ற வழி V சுய

ஒழுக்கம்

VI சர்வதேச

அமைதி VII மேன்

மற்றும்மெஷின்

ஏராளமான

IX,மத்தியில்எட்டாம்

வறுமை ஜனநாயகம்

மற்றும் மக்கள்

X கல்வி

XI பெண்கள்

XII இதர

சொற்கள

ஞ்சியம்

ஆதாரங்க

ள்

தி ரீடர்

நான் நான் கவலை இல்லை என்று என் எழுத்துகளில் விடாமுயற்சி வாசகருக்கு அவர்களை ஆர்வமாக மற்றவர்களுக்கு சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன் சீரானதாகத் தோன்றும். சத்தியத்திற்குப் பிறகு நான் தேடியதில், நான் பல இலட்சியங்களை நிராகரித்தேன், பல புதிய விஷயங்களைக் கற்றுக்கொண்டேன். நான் வயதில் வயதாகிவிட்டதால், நான் உள்நோக்கி வளர்வதை நிறுத்திவிட்டேன் அல்லது சதை கரைந்துபோகும்போது என் வளர்ச்சி நின்றுவிடும் என்ற உணர்வு எனக்கு இல்லை. நான் கவலைப்படுவது என்னவென்றால், என் கடவுளான சத்தியத்தின் அழைப்பிற்கு கணம் கணம் கீழ்ப்படிவதற்கான எனது தயார்நிலை, ஆகையால், என்னுடைய இரண்டு எழுத்துக்களுக்கும் இடையில் யாராவது ஏதேனும் முரண்பாட்டைக் கண்டால், அவர் எனது நல்லறிவில் இன்னும் நம்பிக்கை வைத்திருந்தால், அவர் ஒரே விஷயத்தில் இரண்டின் பிற்பகுதியைத் தேர்ந்தெடுப்பது நல்லது.

எம்.கே.காந்தியின்

ஹரிஜன், 29-4-1933, பக்கம் .2

அதிகாரம் நான்

சுயசரிதை

அது ஒரு உண்மையான சுயசரிதையில் முயற்சிக்கும் என் நோக்கம். சத்தியத்துடன் நான் செய்த பல சோதனைகளின் கதையை நான் வெறுமனே சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன், என் வாழ்க்கையில் அந்த சோதனைகளைத் தவிர வேறு எதுவும் இல்லை என்பதால், கதை சுயசரிதையின் வடிவத்தை எடுக்கும் என்பது உண்மைதான். ஆனால் அதன் ஒவ்வொரு பக்கமும் எனது சோதனைகளைப் பற்றி மட்டுமே பேசினால் நான் கவலைப்பட மாட்டேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 4)

அரசியல் துறையில் எனது சோதனைகள் இப்போது இந்தியாவுக்கு மட்டுமல்ல, ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட அளவிற்கு 'நாகரிக' உலகிற்கும் அறியப்படுகின்றன. என்னைப் பொறுத்தவரை, அவர்களுக்கு அதிக மதிப்பு இல்லை; அவர்கள் எனக்காக வென்ற 'மகாத்மா' என்ற தலைப்பு இன்னும் குறைவாகவே உள்ளது. பெரும்பாலும் தலைப்பு என்னை மிகவும் வேதனைப்படுத்தியது; அது என்னைக் கூச்சப்படுத்தியதாகக் கூறப்படும் ஒரு கணம் கூட என்னால் நினைவுபடுத்த முடியவில்லை. ஆனால் ஆன்மீகத் துறையில் எனது சோதனைகளை நானே அறிந்திருக்கிறேன், அரசியல் துறையில் பணியாற்றுவதற்காக நான் வைத்திருக்கும் சக்தியைப் பெற்றேன். சோதனைகள் உண்மையில் ஆன்மீகமாக இருந்தால், சுய புகழுக்கு இடமில்லை. அவை என் மனத்தாழ்மையை மட்டுமே சேர்க்க முடியும். கடந்த காலத்தை நான் எவ்வளவு அதிகமாக பிரதிபலிக்கிறேன், திரும்பிப் பார்க்கிறேனோ, அவ்வளவு தெளிவாக எனது வரம்புகளை உணர்கிறேன். (ஏஎம்ஜி, 4)

நான் அடைய வேண்டும் என்ன-நான் முயற்சி மற்றும் இந்த முப்பது ஆண்டுகள் அடைய ஏங்குவதை உள்ளது என்பதை-அடைவதற்கு, முகம் கடவுள் முகத்தை பார்க்க, சுய உணர்தல் *மோட்சத்தினை*உள்ளது.நான் வாழ்கிறேன், நகர்கிறேன், இந்த

இலக்கை அடைய நான் இருக்கிறேன். பேசுவதற்கும் எழுதுவதற்கும் நான் செய்யும் அனைத்தும், அரசியல் துறையில் எனது அனைத்து முயற்சிகளும் இதே முடிவுக்கு இயக்கப்படுகின்றன. ஆனால் ஒருவருக்கு சாத்தியமானது அனைவருக்கும் சாத்தியம் என்று நான் அனைவரும் நம்பியுள்ளதால், எனது சோதனைகள் மறைவை நடத்தவில்லை, ஆனால் திறந்த நிலையில் உள்ளன; இந்த உண்மை அவர்களின் ஆன்மீக மதிப்பிலிருந்து விலகுகிறது என்று நான் நினைக்கவில்லை. தனக்கும் ஒருவரின் படைப்பாளருக்கும் மட்டுமே தெரிந்த சில விஷயங்கள் உள்ளன. இவை தெளிவாக புரிந்துகொள்ள முடியாதவை. நான் தொடர்புபடுத்தவிருக்கும் சோதனைகள் அப்படி இல்லை. ஆனால் அவை ஆன்மீக, அல்லது ஒழுக்கமானவை; மதத்தின் சாராம்சம்

அறநெறி. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 4-5)

இந்த சோதனைகளுக்கு எந்தவிதமான முழுமையையும் கோருவது என்னிடமிருந்து வெகு தொலைவில் உள்ளது. ஒரு விஞ்ஞானி தனது சோதனைகளை மிகத் துல்லியத்தோடும், முன்னறிவிப்போடும், மிகச்சிறிய தன்மையோடும் நடத்தினாலும், அவனது முடிவுகளைப் பற்றி ஒருபோதும் இறுதி கூறவில்லை, ஆனால் அவை குறித்து திறந்த மனதை வைத்திருக்கிறான். நான் ஆழ்ந்த சுய-உள்நோக்கத்தின் வழியாகச் சென்று, என்னைத் தேடினேன், ஒவ்வொரு உளவியல் சூழ்நிலையையும் ஆராய்ந்து பகுப்பாய்வு செய்தேன். ஆயினும்கூட, எனது முடிவுகளைப் பற்றி எந்தவொரு இறுதி அல்லது தவறான தன்மையையும் நான் கூறவில்லை. ஒரு கூற்று நான் உண்மையில் செய்கிறேன், இது இதுதான். என்னைப் பொறுத்தவரை அவை முற்றிலும் சரியானதாகத் தோன்றுகின்றன, மேலும் அவை இறுதியானவை என்று தோன்றுகிறது. அவர்கள் இல்லையென்றால், நான் அவர்கள் மீது எந்த நடவடிக்கையும் செய்யக்கூடாது. ஆனால் ஒவ்வொரு அடியிலும் நான் ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளும் அல்லது நிராகரிக்கும் செயல்முறையை மேற்கொண்டு அதற்கேற்ப செயல்பட்டேன். (ஏஎம்ஜி, 5)

என் முழு வாழ்க்கையையும் ஒரு பிரிக்கப்படவியலாதது, மற்றும் அனைத்து நடவடிக்கைகளையும் ஒன்று ஒரு ரன், மற்றும் அவர்கள் மனிதகுலம் முழுவதற்கும் என் திருப்திப்படுத்தப்படாத காதல் தங்கள் உயர்வு வேண்டும். (எஸ்.பி., 45)

சேர்ந்தவர்கள், *காந்தியர்கள் பனியா* சாதியைச்முதலில் மளிகைக்கடைக்காரர்கள் என்று தெரிகிறது. ஆனால் மூன்று தலைமுறைகளாக, என் தாத்தாவிடமிருந்து, அவர்கள் பல கத்தியாவாட் மாநிலங்களில் பிரதமர்களாக இருந்தனர். . . என் தாத்தா கொள்கை மனிதராக இருந்திருக்க வேண்டும். மாநில சூழ்ச்சிகள் அவரைஇருந்த போர்பந்தரை விட்டு

வெளியேறவும்,கட்டாயப்படுத்தின *திவானாகஜ*ானகத்தில் தஞ்சம் பெறவும். அங்கு அவர்மரியாதையையும் தெரிவித்துக் *நவாப்* இடது கையால்கொண்டார்.வெளிப்படையான சொற்பொழிவை கவனித்த ஒருவர், விளக்கம் கேட்டார், இது இவ்வாறு வழங்கப்பட்டது: 'வலது கை ஏற்கனவே போர்பந்தருக்கு உறுதிமொழி அளிக்கப்பட்டுள்ளது.' (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 11)

என் தந்தை தனது குலத்தை நேசிப்பவர், உண்மையுள்ளவர், தைரியமானவர், தாராளமானவர், ஆனால் குறுகிய மனப்பான்மை உடையவர். ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட அளவிற்கு அவர் சரீர இன்பங்களுக்கு கூட வழங்கப்பட்டிருக்கலாம். அவர் நாற்பது வயதைக் கடந்தபோது நான்காவது முறையாக திருமணம் செய்து கொண்டார். ஆனால் அவர் அழியாதவர் மற்றும் அவரது குடும்பத்திலும் வெளியிலும் கடுமையான பக்கச்சார்பற்ற தன்மைக்கு ஒரு பெயரைப் பெற்றார். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 12)

என் அம்மா என் நினைவில் வைத்திருக்கும் மிகச்சிறந்த எண்ணம் புனிதத்தன்மை. அவள் ஆழ்ந்த மதத்தவள். தினசரி பிரார்த்தனை இல்லாமல் அவள் உணவை எடுத்துக் கொள்வதைப் பற்றி அவள் நினைக்க மாட்டாள் ... அவள் கடினமான சபதங்களை எடுத்துக்கொண்டு, அவற்றைப் பிடிக்காமல் வைத்திருப்பாள். நோய் அவர்களை நிதானப்படுத்த ஒரு தவிர்க்கவும் இல்லை. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி., 12-13)

இந்த பெற்றோர்களில் நான் போர்பந்தரில் பிறந்தேன் ..... நான் எனது குழந்தைப் பருவத்தை போர்பந்தரில் கடந்துவிட்டேன். நான் பள்ளியில் சேர்க்கப்பட்டதை நினைவு கூர்ந்தேன். சில சிரமங்களுடன் தான் பெருக்கல் அட்டவணைகள் மூலம் கிடைத்தேன். மற்ற சிறுவர்களுடன் இணைந்து, எங்கள் ஆசிரியருக்கு எல்லா வகையான பெயர்களையும் அழைப்பதை விட, அந்த நாட்களில் வேறு எதையும் நான் நினைவுபடுத்தவில்லை என்பது எனது புத்தி மந்தமாக இருந்திருக்க வேண்டும், என் நினைவாற்றல் பச்சையாக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று உறுதியாகக் கூறுகிறது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 14),

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நான் மிகவும் கூச்ச சுபாவமுள்ளவனாக இருந்தேன்எல்லா நிறுவனங்களையும் தவிர்த்தேன். எனது புத்தகங்களும் பாடங்களும் எனது ஒரே தோழர்கள். மணிநேரத்தில் பள்ளியில் இருக்க வேண்டும் மற்றும் பள்ளி மூடப்பட்டவுடன் வீட்டிற்கு திரும்பி ஓடுவது-அதுதான் எனது அன்றாட பழக்கம். யாருடனும் பேசுவதை என்னால் தாங்க முடியாததால், நான் உண்மையில் பின்னால் ஓடினேன். யாரும் என்னை கேலி செய்யக்கூடாது என்று நான் பயந்தேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 15)

உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளியில் எனது முதல் ஆண்டில் தேர்வில் நிகழ்ந்த ஒரு சம்பவம் உள்ளது, இது பதிவு செய்யத்தக்கது. கல்வி ஆய்வாளர் திரு. கில்ஸ் ஆய்வுக்கு வந்திருந்தார். எழுத்துப் பயிற்சியாக எழுத ஐந்து வார்த்தைகளை அவர் எங்களுக்கு அமைத்திருந்தார்.

வார்த்தைகளில் ஒன்று 'கெட்டில்'. நான் அதை தவறாக எழுதியிருந்தேன். ஆசிரியர் தனது துவக்க புள்ளியுடன் என்னைத் தூண்ட முயன்றார், ஆனால் நான் கேட்கப்பட மாட்டேன். என் பக்கத்து வீட்டு ஸ்லேட்டிலிருந்து எழுத்துப்பிழை நகலெடுக்க அவர் விரும்பினார் என்பதைப் பார்ப்பது எனக்கு அப்பாற்பட்டது, ஏனென்றால் நகலெடுப்பதற்கு எதிராக எங்களை மேற்பார்வையிட ஆசிரியர் இருக்கிறார் என்று நான் நினைத்தேன். இதன் விளைவாக, என்னைத் தவிர அனைத்து சிறுவர்களும் ஒவ்வொரு வார்த்தையையும் சரியாக உச்சரித்திருப்பது கண்டறியப்பட்டது. நான் மட்டுமே முட்டாள். இந்த முட்டாள்தனத்தை என்னிடம் வீட்டிற்கு கொண்டு வர ஆசிரியர் பின்னர் முயன்றார், ஆனால் பலனளிக்கவில்லை. 'நகலெடுக்கும்' கலையை என்னால் ஒருபோதும் கற்றுக்கொள்ள முடியவில்லை. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 15-16)

பதின்மூன்று வயதில் எனது திருமணத்தை இங்கே பதிவு செய்ய வேண்டியது எனது வேதனையான கடமை. என் பராமரிப்பில் இருக்கும் என்னைப் பற்றி அதே வயது இளைஞர்களைப் பார்க்கும்போதுபற்றி நினைக்கும்

, என் சொந்த திருமணத்தைப்போது, நான் பரிதாபப்படுவதற்கும், என் நிறைய தப்பித்ததற்காக அவர்களை வாழ்த்துவதற்கும் நான் விரும்புகிறேன். இதுபோன்ற ஒரு முன்கூட்டிய திருமணத்திற்கு ஆதரவாக எந்த தார்மீக வாதத்தையும் நான் காண முடியாது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 18)

இது நல்ல திருமணம், டிரம் அடிப்பது, திருமண ஊர்வலங்கள், பணக்கார இரவு உணவுகள் மற்றும் ஒரு விசித்திரமான பெண்ணுடன் விளையாடுவதைத் தவிர வேறு எதையும் [திருமணம்] என்று நான் நினைக்கவில்லை. சரீர ஆசை பின்னர் வந்தது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 19)

மற்றும் ஓ! அந்த முதல் இரவு. இரண்டு அப்பாவி குழந்தைகள் அனைவரும் அறியாமலேயே தங்களை வாழ்க்கையின் பெருங்கடலில் வீசினர். முதல் இரவில் எனது நடத்தை குறித்து எனது சகோதரரின் மனைவி எனக்கு முழுமையாகப் பயிற்சி அளித்திருந்தார். என் மனைவியைப் பயிற்றுவித்தவர் யார் என்று எனக்குத் தெரியவில்லை. நான் அதைப் பற்றி அவளிடம் ஒருபோதும் கேட்டதில்லை, இப்போது அவ்வாறு செய்ய நான் விரும்பவில்லை. நாம் ஒருவருக்கொருவர் எதிர்கொள்ள மிகவும் பதட்டமாக இருந்தோம் என்பதை வாசகர் உறுதியாக நம்பலாம். நாங்கள் நிச்சயமாக மிகவும் வெட்கப்பட்டோம். நான் அவளுடன் எப்படி பேசுவது, நான் என்ன சொல்வது? கோச்சிங் கோ உல்ட் என்னை வெகுதூரம் கொண்டு செல்லவில்லை. ஆனால் இதுபோன்ற விஷயங்களில் எந்தவொரு பயிற்சியும் உண்மையில் தேவையில்லை நாங்கள்
படிப்படியாக ஒருவருக்கொருவர் தெரிந்துகொள்ள ஆரம்பித்தோம், சுதந்திரமாக ஒன்றாக பேச ஆரம்பித்தோம். நாங்கள் ஒரே வயதில் இருந்தோம். ஆனால் ஒரு கணவரின் அதிகாரத்தை ஏற்றுக்கொள்வதில் நான் நேரமில்லை. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 21)

நான் அவளை உணர்ச்சிவசமாக விரும்பினேன் என்று சொல்ல

வேண்டும். பள்ளியில் கூட நான் அவளைப் பற்றி நினைத்துக்கொண்டிருந்தேன், இரவுநேரத்தின் சிந்தனையும் எங்கள் அடுத்தடுத்த சந்திப்பும் என்னை எப்போதும் வேட்டையாடியது. பிரித்தல் தாங்க முடியாததாக இருந்தது. என் சும்மா பேச்சுடன் இரவு தாமதமாக வரை அவளை விழித்திருந்தேன். இந்த விழுங்கும் ஆர்வத்துடன் என் கடமைக்கு ஒரு எரியும் இணைப்பு இல்லாதிருந்தால், நான் நோய் மற்றும் அகால மரணத்திற்கு இரையாகியிருக்க வேண்டும், அல்லது ஒரு சுமையாக இருக்க வேண்டும். ஆனால் நியமிக்கப்பட்ட பணிகள் தினமும் காலையில் செல்ல வேண்டியிருந்தது, யாரிடமும் பொய் சொல்வது கேள்விக்குறியாக இருந்தது. இந்த கடைசி விஷயம் தான் என்னை பல ஆபத்துக்களிலிருந்து காப்பாற்றியது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 23-24)

எனது திறனைப் பற்றி எனக்கு அதிக அக்கறை இல்லை. நான் பரிசுகள் மற்றும் உதவித்தொகைகளை வென்ற போதெல்லாம் நான் ஆச்சரியப்படுவேன். ஆனால் நான் மிகவும் பொறாமையுடன் என் கதாபாத்திரத்தை பாதுகாத்தேன். மிகக் குறைவான கறை என் கண்களில் இருந்து கண்ணீரை ஈர்த்தது. நான் தகுதி, அல்லது ஆசிரியருக்கு தகுதி, ஒரு கண்டனம் என்று தோன்றும்போது, அது எனக்கு தாங்கமுடியவில்லை. ஒருமுறை உடல் ரீதியான தண்டனை பெற்றதை நினைவில் கொள்கிறேன். தண்டனையை நான் அதிகம்

பொருட்படுத்தவில்லை, அது என் பாலைவனமாக கருதப்பட்டது. நான் பரிதாபமாக அழுதேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 26-27)

உயர்நிலைப் பள்ளியில் எனது சில நண்பர்களில், வெவ்வேறு காலங்களில், இருவர் நெருங்கியவர்கள் என்று அழைக்கப்படலாம். இந்த நட்புகளில் ஒன்று ..... எனது வாழ்க்கையில் ஒரு சோகம் என்று நான் கருதுகிறேன். இது நீண்ட காலம் நீடித்தது. நான் அதை ஒரு சீர்திருத்தவாதியின் உணர்வில் உருவாக்கினேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 31)

நான் தவறாக கணக்கிட்டதிலிருந்து நான் பார்த்தேன். ஒரு சீர்திருத்தவாதி, அவர் சீர்திருத்த முற்படும் அவருடன் நெருங்கிய நெருக்கம் வைத்திருக்க முடியாது. உண்மையான நட்பு என்பது இந்த உலகில் அரிதாகவே காணப்படும் ஆன்மாக்களின் அடையாளம். போன்ற இயல்புகளுக்கு இடையில் மட்டுமே நட்பு முற்றிலும் தகுதியானது மற்றும் நீடித்தது. நண்பர்கள் ஒருவருக்கொருவர் எதிர்வினையாற்றுகிறார்கள். எனவே நட்பில் சீர்திருத்தத்திற்கான வாய்ப்பு மிகக் குறைவு. அனைத்து பிரத்தியேக நெருக்கங்களும் தவிர்க்கப்பட வேண்டும் என்று நான் கருதுகிறேன்; மனிதன் நல்லொழுக்கத்தை விட மிக எளிதாக எடுத்துக்கொள்கிறான். கடவுளோடு நட்பாக இருப்பவர் தனியாக இருக்க வேண்டும், அல்லது உலகம் முழுவதையும் தனது நண்பராக்க வேண்டும். நான் தவறாக இருக்கலாம், ஆனால் நெருங்கிய நட்பை வளர்ப்பதற்கான எனது முயற்சி தோல்வியை நிரூபித்தது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 31-32)

இந்த நண்பரின் சுரண்டல்கள் என்மீது ஒரு மந்திரத்தை எழுப்பின. அவர் நீண்ட தூரம் மற்றும் அசாதாரணமாக வேகமாக ஓட முடியும். அவர் உயரமான மற்றும் நீளமான ஜம்பிங்கில் திறமையானவர். அவர் எந்தவிதமான உடல் ரீதியான தண்டனையையும் விதிக்க முடியும். அவர் அடிக்கடி தனது சுரண்டல்களை என்னிடம் காண்பிப்பார், மேலும் ஒருவர் தன்னிடம் இல்லாத குணங்களை மற்றவர்களிடம் பார்க்கும்போது எப்போதும் திகைப்பூட்டுவதால், இந்த நண்பரின் சுரண்டல்களால் நான் திகைத்துப் போனேன். இதைத் தொடர்ந்து அவரைப் போல இருக்க வேண்டும் என்ற வலுவான

ஆசை ஏற்பட்டது. என்னால் குதிக்கவோ ஓடவோ முடியவில்லை. நானும் அவரைப் போல ஏன் பலமாக இருக்கக்கூடாது? (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 32-33)

நான் ஒரு கோழை. திருடர்கள், பேய்கள் மற்றும் பாம்புகளின் பயத்தால் நான் வேட்டையாடப்பட்டேன். இரவில் கதவுகளிலிருந்து வெளியேற நான் துணியவில்லை. இருள் எனக்கு ஒரு பயங்கரவாதமாக இருந்தது. இருட்டில் தூங்குவது எனக்கு கிட்டத்தட்ட சாத்தியமற்றது, ஏனெனில் ஒரு திசையிலிருந்து பேய்கள், இன்னொரு திசையிலிருந்து திருடர்கள் மற்றும் மூன்றில் ஒரு பகுதியிலிருந்து பாம்புகள் வருவதை நான் கற்பனை செய்வேன். எனவே அறையில் ஒரு ஒளி இல்லாமல் தூங்குவதை என்னால் தாங்க முடியவில்லை. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 33)

என்னுடைய இந்த பலவீனங்கள் அனைத்தையும் என் நண்பர் அறிந்திருந்தார். அவர் தனது கையில் நேரடி பாம்புகளை வைத்திருக்க முடியும், திருடர்களை மறுக்க முடியும், பேய்களை நம்பவில்லை என்று அவர் என்னிடம் கூறுவார். இவை அனைத்தும் நிச்சயமாக இறைச்சி சாப்பிட்டதன் விளைவாகும். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 33) இவை

அனைத்தும் எனக்கு உரிய விளைவைக் கொடுத்தன ..... இறைச்சி சாப்பிடுவது நல்லது, அது என்னை வலிமையாகவும் தைரியமாகவும் மாற்றும் என்றும், முழு நாடும் எடுத்துக் கொண்டால் இறைச்சி சாப்பிடுவது, ஆங்கிலத்தை வெல்ல முடியும். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 33)

இந்த இரகசிய விருந்துகளில் ஈடுபடுவதற்கான சந்தர்ப்பம் எனக்கு கிடைத்த போதெல்லாம், வீட்டில் இரவு உணவு கேள்விக்குறியாக இருந்தது. என் அம்மா இயல்பாகவே என்னிடம் வந்து என் உணவை எடுத்துக் கொள்ளும்படி கேட்பார், நான் சாப்பிட விரும்பாததற்கான காரணத்தை அறிய விரும்புகிறேன். நான் அவளிடம் 'இன்று எனக்கு பசி இல்லை; என் செரிமானத்தில் ஏதோ தவறு இருக்கிறது '. இணக்கமின்றி நான் இந்த சாக்குப்போக்குகளை வகுத்தேன். நான் பொய் சொல்கிறேன், என் அம்மாவிடம் பொய் சொல்கிறேன் என்று எனக்குத் தெரியும். நான் ஒரு இறைச்சி உண்பவனாக மாறிவிட்டதை என் அம்மாவும் தந்தையும் அறிந்தால், அவர்கள் மிகுந்த அதிர்ச்சியடைவார்கள் என்பதையும் நான் அறிவேன். இந்த அறிவு என் இதயத்தில் பதுங்கிக் கொண்டிருந்தது.

ஆகவே நான் என்னிடம் சொன்னேன்: இறைச்சி சாப்பிடுவது இன்றியமையாதது, நாட்டில் உணவு சீர்திருத்தத்தை மேற்கொள்வது இன்றியமையாதது என்றாலும், ஒருவரின் தந்தை மற்றும் தாயிடம் ஏமாற்றுவதும் பொய் சொல்வதும் இறைச்சியை சாப்பிடாமல் இருப்பதை விட மோசமானது. எனவே, அவர்களின் வாழ்நாளில், இறைச்சி சாப்பிடுவது கேள்விக்குறியாக இருக்க வேண்டும். அவர்கள் இல்லாதபோது, என் சுதந்திரத்தை நான் கண்டறிந்தால்,

நான் வெளிப்படையாக இறைச்சியை சாப்பிடுவேன், ஆனால் அந்த தருணம் வரும் வரை நான் அதிலிருந்து விலகுவேன்.

இந்த முடிவை நான் என் நண்பருடன் தொடர்பு கொண்டேன், பின்னர் நான் ஒருபோதும் இறைச்சிக்குச் செல்லவில்லை. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 36)

என் நண்பர் ஒரு முறை என்னை ஒரு விபச்சார விடுதிக்கு அழைத்துச் சென்றார். தேவையான அறிவுறுத்தல்களுடன் அவர் என்னை உள்ளே அனுப்பினார். இது அனைத்தும் முன்பே ஏற்பாடு செய்யப்பட்டிருந்தது. பில் ஏற்கனவே செலுத்தப்பட்டது. நான் பாவத்தின் தாடைகளுக்குள் சென்றேன், ஆனால் கடவுள் தனது எல்லையற்ற கருணையால் என்னை நானே பாதுகாத்தார். இந்த குகையில் நான் கிட்டத்தட்ட குருடனாகவும் ஊமையாகவும் இருந்தேன். நான் படுக்கையில் இருந்த பெண்ணின் அருகில் அமர்ந்தேன், ஆனால் நான் நாக்கால் கட்டப்பட்டிருந்தேன். அவள் இயல்பாகவே என்னுடன் பொறுமையை இழந்தாள், துஷ்பிரயோகங்களுடனும் அவமானங்களுடனும் கதவைக் காட்டினாள். என் ஆண்மைபோல நான் உணர்ந்தேன்

காயமடைந்ததைப், அவமானத்திற்காக தரையில் மூழ்க விரும்பினேன். ஆனால் என்னைக் காப்பாற்றியதற்காக நான் கடவுளுக்கு நன்றி செலுத்துகிறேன். என் வாழ்க்கையில் இதேபோன்ற நான்கு சம்பவங்களை என்னால் நினைவு கூர முடிகிறது, அவற்றில் பெரும்பாலானவற்றில் என் பங்கில் எந்த முயற்சியையும் விட என் நல்ல அதிர்ஷ்டம் என்னைக் காப்பாற்றியது. கண்டிப்பான நெறிமுறைக் கண்ணோட்டத்தில், இந்த சந்தர்ப்பங்கள் அனைத்தும் தார்மீக குறைபாடுகளாக கருதப்பட வேண்டும்; சரீர ஆசை இருந்தது, அது செயல் போலவே நன்றாக இருந்தது. ஆனால் சாதாரண பார்வையில், உடல் ரீதியாக பாவத்திலிருந்து காப்பாற்றப்பட்ட ஒரு மனிதன் இரட்சிக்கப்பட்டவனாகக் கருதப்படுகிறான். நான் அந்த அர்த்தத்தில் மட்டுமே காப்பாற்றப்பட்டேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 37)

ஒரு மனிதன் பெரும்பாலும் சோதனையை எதிர்கொள்கிறான் என்பதை நாம் அறிவோம், அதை அவர் எவ்வளவு எதிர்த்தாலும், பிராவிடன்ஸ் அடிக்கடி பரிந்து பேசுகிறார், தன்னை மீறி அவரைக் காப்பாற்றுகிறார் என்பதையும் நாங்கள் அறிவோம். இவை அனைத்தும் எப்படி நிகழ்கின்றன-ஒரு மனிதன் எவ்வளவு தூரம் சுதந்திரமாக இருக்கிறான், எவ்வளவு தூரம் சூழ்நிலைகள்-சுதந்திரம் எவ்வளவு தூரம் செயல்படுகிறது, விதி எங்கே காட்சிக்குள் நுழைகிறது-இவை அனைத்தும் ஒரு மர்மம் மற்றும் ஒரு மர்மமாகவே இருக்கும். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 37)

என் மனைவியுடனான எனது கருத்து வேறுபாடுகளுக்கு ஒரு காரணம் சந்தேகத்திற்கு இடமின்றி இந்த நண்பரின் நிறுவனம். நான் ஒரு பக்தியுள்ள மற்றும் பொறாமை கொண்ட கணவன், இந்த நண்பன் என் மனைவியைப் பற்றிய என் சந்தேகங்களின் சுடரைப் பற்றிக் கொண்டான். அவரின் உண்மைத்தன்மையை என்னால் ஒருபோதும் சந்தேகிக்க முடியவில்லை. என் மனைவியின் தகவல்களின் அடிப்படையில் செயல்படுவதன் மூலம் நான் அடிக்கடி வேதனை அடைந்ததில் நான் குற்றவாளியாக இருந்த

வன்முறையை நான் ஒருபோதும் மன்னிக்கவில்லை. ஒருவேளை ஒரு இந்து மனைவியால் மட்டுமே இந்த கஷ்டங்களை பொறுத்துக்கொள்ள முடியும், அதனால்தான் பெண்ணை சகிப்புத்தன்மையின் அவதாரமாக நான் கருதினேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 38)

அஹிம்ஸாவைநான் புரிந்துகொண்டபோதுதான் சந்தேகத்தின் வேர் வேரூன்றியது *உருளைகளிலும்* அதன் அனைத்து தாங்கு. நான் மகிமை பின்னர் *பிரம்மச்சரிய* பார்த்தேன்மனைவி கணவரின் பத்திர அடிமை அல்ல, ஆனால் அவரது துணை மற்றும் அவரது helpmate, மற்றும் அவரது இன்பத்திலும் துன்பத்திலும் சம பங்குதாரர் உணர்ந்து-கணவராக இலவச போன்ற அவரது சொந்த வழியைத் தெரிவு செய்வர். சந்தேகங்கள் மற்றும் சந்தேகங்களின் அந்த இருண்ட நாட்களைப் பற்றி நான் நினைக்கும் போதெல்லாம், என் முட்டாள்தனத்தையும், என் காமக் கொடுமையையும் வெறுக்கிறேன், என் நண்பனிடம் என் குருட்டு பக்தியை நான் விவரிக்கிறேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 38)

எனது ஆறாவது அல்லது ஏழாம் ஆண்டு முதல் பதினாறாம் வகுப்பு வரை நான் பள்ளியில் இருந்தேன், மதம் தவிர அனைத்து வகையான விஷயங்களும் கற்பிக்கப்பட்டன. ஆசிரியர்களிடமிருந்து எந்தவொரு முயற்சியும் இல்லாமல் அவர்கள் எனக்குக் கொடுத்ததை நான் பெறத் தவறிவிட்டேன் என்று நான் கூறலாம். இன்னும் நான் என் சுற்றுப்புறங்களிலிருந்து அங்கும் இங்கும் பொருட்களை எடுத்துக்கொண்டே இருந்தேன். 'மதம்' என்ற சொல் அதன் பரந்த அர்த்தத்தில் நான் பயன்படுத்துகிறேன், இதன் மூலம் சுய உணர்தல் அல்லது சுய அறிவு. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 47)

ஆனால் ஒரு விஷயம் என்னுள் ஆழமாக வேரூன்றியது-அறநெறி என்பது விஷயங்களின் அடிப்படை, மற்றும் உண்மைதான் எல்லா ஒழுக்கங்களுக்கும் பொருள். உண்மை எனது ஒரே குறிக்கோளாக மாறியது. இது ஒவ்வொரு நாளும் அளவு வளரத் தொடங்கியது, அதைப் பற்றிய எனது வரையறையும் எப்போதும் விரிவடைந்து வருகிறது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 50-51)

தீண்டாமையை இந்து மதத்தின் மிகப் பெரிய கறை என்று நான் கருதுகிறேன். தென்னாப்பிரிக்க போராட்டத்தின் போது எனது கசப்பான அனுபவங்களால் இந்த யோசனை என்னிடம் கொண்டு வரப்படவில்லை. நான் ஒரு காலத்தில் அஞ்ஞானியாக இருந்ததால் அல்ல. கிறிஸ்தவ மத இலக்கியம் குறித்த எனது ஆய்வில் இருந்து எனது கருத்துக்களை எடுத்துள்ளேன் என்று நினைப்பதும் சமமான தவறு. இந்த கருத்துக்கள் நான் பைபிளையோ அல்லது பைபிளைப் பின்பற்றுபவர்களையோ ஈர்க்கவில்லை, அறிந்திருக்கவில்லை. இந்த யோசனை எனக்கு வந்தபோது நான் இன்னும் பன்னிரண்டு வயதாகவில்லை. தீண்டத்தகாத ஒருவரான உக்கா என்ற தோட்டி எங்கள் வீட்டில் கழிவறைகளை சுத்தம் செய்வதற்காகப் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டது. பெரும்பாலும் நான் என் அம்மாவிடம் அவரைத் தொடுவது ஏன் தவறு, ஏன் அவரைத் தொடக்கூடாது என்று கேட்டேன். நான் தற்செயலாக உக்காவைத் தொட்டால், நான் செயல்களைச் செய்யும்படி கேட்டுக் கொள்ளப்பட்டேன், நான்

இயல்பாகவே கீழ்ப்படிந்தாலும், தீண்டாமையை மதத்தால் அனுமதிக்கப்படவில்லை என்று புன்னகையுடன் எதிர்ப்பு தெரிவிக்காமல், அது அவ்வாறு இருக்க முடியாது என்பது சாத்தியமில்லை என்று. நான் மிகவும் கடமைப்பட்ட மற்றும் கீழ்ப்படிதலுள்ள குழந்தையாக இருந்தேன், இது பெற்றோருக்கு மரியாதை செலுத்துவதால், இந்த விஷயத்தில் நான் அவர்களுடன் அடிக்கடி சண்டையிட்டுக் கொண்டிருந்தேன். உகாவுடனான உடல் தொடர்பை பாவமாக கருதுவதில் அவர் முற்றிலும் தவறு என்று நான் என் அம்மாவிடம் சொன்னேன். (எம்டி, II, 47-48)

நான் மெட்ரிகுலேஷன் தேர்வில் 1887 இல் தேர்ச்சி பெற்றேன். (ஏஎம்ஜி, 52)

மெட்ரிகுலேஷனுக்குப் பிறகு கல்லூரியில் என் படிப்பைத் தொடர என் பெரியவர்கள் விரும்பினர். பாவ்நகரிலும் பம்பாயிலும் ஒரு கல்லூரி இருந்தது, முந்தையது மலிவானது என்பதால், அங்கு சென்று சமல்தாஸ் கல்லூரியில் சேர முடிவு செய்தேன். நான் சென்றேன், ஆனால் என்னை முழுவதுமாக கடலில் கண்டேன். எல்லாம் கடினமாக இருந்தது. பேராசிரியர்களின் சொற்பொழிவுகளில் ஆர்வம் காட்டுவது ஒருபுறம் இருக்க, என்னால் பின்பற்ற முடியவில்லை. அது அவர்களுடைய தவறு அல்ல. அந்த கல்லூரியில் பேராசிரியர்கள் முதல் விகிதமாக கருதப்பட்டனர். ஆனால் நான் மிகவும் பச்சையாக இருந்தேன். முதல் பதவிக்காலத்தின் முடிவில், நான் வீடு திரும்பினேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 52)

ஒரு புத்திசாலித்தனமான மற்றும் கற்றறிந்த பிராமணர், ஒரு பழைய நண்பரும் குடும்பத்தின் ஆலோசகரும் ..... எனது விடுமுறையில் எங்களைச் சந்திக்க நேர்ந்தது. என் தாய் மற்றும் மூத்த சகோதரருடன் உரையாடியபோது, அவர் எனது படிப்புகளைப் பற்றி விசாரித்தார். நான் சமல்தாஸ் கல்லூரியில் இருந்தேன் என்பதை அறிந்து அவர் கூறினார்: 'காலம் மாறிவிட்டது ..... நீங்கள் அவரை இங்கிலாந்துக்கு அனுப்பியதை விட நான் விரும்புகிறேன். எனது மகன் கெவல்ராம் ஒரு பேரறிஞராக மாறுவது மிகவும் எளிதானது என்கிறார். மூன்று ஆண்டுகளில் அவர் திரும்புவார். மேலும் செலவுகள் நான்கைந்தாயிரம் ரூபாய்க்கு மேல் இருக்காது. இங்கிலாந்திலிருந்து திரும்பி வந்த அந்த பேரறிஞரை நினைத்துப் பாருங்கள். அவர் எவ்வளவு ஸ்டைலாக வாழ்கிறார்! அவர் கேட்பதற்கு திவான்ஷிப்பைப் பெற முடியும். இந்த ஆண்டுதான் மோகன்தாஸை இங்கிலாந்துக்கு அனுப்ப நான் கடுமையாக அறிவுறுத்துகிறேன். ' (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 52-53)

என் அம்மா மிகவும் குழப்பமடைந்தார் ..... இங்கிலாந்தில் இளைஞர்கள் தொலைந்து போனதாக யாரோ அவளிடம் கூறியிருந்தார்கள். வேறொருவர் இறைச்சியை எடுத்துக் கொண்டதாகச் சொன்னார்; இன்னொருவர் மதுபானம் இல்லாமல்

அங்கு வாழ முடியாது. 'இதெல்லாம் எப்படி?' அவள் என்னிடம் கேட்டாள். நான் சொன்னேன்: 'நீங்கள் என்னை நம்பமாட்டீர்களா? நான் உங்களிடம் பொய் சொல்ல மாட்டேன். அந்த விஷயங்களில் எதையும் நான் தொட மாட்டேன் என்று சத்தியம் செய்கிறேன். அத்தகைய ஆபத்து ஏதேனும் இருந்தால், ஜோஷிஜி என்னை விடுவிப்பாரா? '... மது, பெண் மற்றும் இறைச்சியைத் தொடமாட்டேன் என்று சபதம் செய்தேன். இது முடிந்தது, என் அம்மா அவளுக்கு அனுமதி கொடுத்தார். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 54)

படிப்பிற்காக லண்டனுக்கு வருவதற்கான நோக்கம் உண்மையில் உருவாகுவதற்கு முன்பு, லண்டன் என்றால் என்ன என்பதை அறிந்து கொள்ளும் ஆர்வத்தை பூர்த்தி செய்வதற்காக இங்கு வருவது என் மனதில் ஒரு ரகசிய வடிவமைப்பு இருந்தது. (சி.டபிள்யூ.எம்.ஜி, நான், 3)

பதினெட்டு வயதில் நான் இங்கிலாந்து சென்றேன் ..... எல்லாம் விசித்திரமாக இருந்தது-மக்கள், அவர்களின் வழிகள், மற்றும் அவர்களின் குடியிருப்புகள் கூட. நான் ஆங்கில ஆசாரம் விஷயத்தில் ஒரு முழுமையான புதியவராக இருந்தேன், தொடர்ந்து எனது பாதுகாப்பில் இருக்க வேண்டியிருந்தது. சைவ சபதத்தின் கூடுதல் சிரமம் இருந்தது. நான் சாப்பிடக்கூடிய உணவுகள் கூட சுவையற்றவை. நான் ஸ்கைலாவிற்கும் சாரிப்டிஸுக்கும் இடையில் என்னைக் கண்டேன். இங்கிலாந்து என்னால் தாங்க முடியவில்லை, ஆனால் இந்தியாவுக்கு திரும்புவது பற்றி யோசிக்க வேண்டியதில்லை. இப்போது நான் வந்துவிட்டேன், நான் மூன்று வருடங்களை முடிக்க வேண்டும், உள் குரல் கூறினார். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 63)

எனக்கு என்ன தயார் செய்வது என்று தெரியாமல் வீட்டு உரிமையாளர் நஷ்டத்தில் இருந்தார் ..... நண்பர் (அவர் ஒரு மாதம் ரிச்மண்டில் தங்கியிருந்த ஒரு மனிதர்.) தொடர்ந்து என்னுடன் இறைச்சி சாப்பிட நியாயப்படுத்தினார், ஆனால் நான் எப்போதும் என் சபதத்தை மன்றாடி, பின்னர் அமைதியாக இருந்தேன் ... ஒரு நாள் நண்பர் பெந்தாமின்என்னிடம் படிக்கத் தொடங்கினார் *பயன்பாட்டு கோட்பாட்டை*. நான் என் விட்ஸின் முடிவில் இருந்தேன். மொழி எனக்கு புரிய மிகவும் கடினமாக இருந்தது. அவர் அதை விளக்கத் தொடங்கினார். நான் சொன்னேன்: 'பிரார்த்தனை மன்னிக்கவும். இந்த சுருக்கமான விஷயங்கள் எனக்கு அப்பாற்பட்டவை. இறைச்சி சாப்பிடுவது அவசியம் என்று ஒப்புக்கொள்கிறேன். ஆனால் என்னால் என் சபதத்தை மீற முடியாது. நான் அதைப் பற்றி விவாதிக்க முடியாது. ' (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 64-65)

நான் ஒவ்வொரு நாளும் பத்து அல்லது பன்னிரண்டு மைல்கள் பயணிப்பேன், மலிவான உணவகத்திற்குச் சென்று, என் ரொட்டி நிரப்புவேன், ஆனால் ஒருபோதும் திருப்தி அடைய மாட்டேன். இந்த அலைந்து திரிபுகளின் போது நான் ஒரு முறை ஃபரிங்டன் தெருவில் உள்ள ஒரு சைவ உணவகத்தில் அடித்தேன். ஒரு குழந்தை தனது சொந்த இருதயத்திற்குப் பிறகு ஒரு பொருளைப் பெறுவதில்

உணரும் அதே மகிழ்ச்சியை அதைப் பார்த்தேன். நான் நுழைவதற்கு முன்பு கதவு அருகே ஒரு கண்ணாடி ஜன்னலின் கீழ் விற்பனைக்கு வந்த புத்தகங்களை கவனித்தேன்.உப்புக் கோரிக்கையை நான் அவர்களிடையே பார்த்தேன் *சைவ உணவுக்கான*. இதை நான் ஒரு ஷில்லிங்கிற்காக வாங்கி நேராக சாப்பாட்டு அறைக்குச் சென்றேன். நான் இங்கிலாந்திற்கு வந்த பிறகு இது எனது முதல் மனம் நிறைந்த உணவு. கடவுள் எனக்கு உதவி செய்தார்.

நான் சால்ட்டின் புத்தகத்தை அட்டைப்படத்திலிருந்து கவர் வரை படித்தேன், அதனால் மிகவும் ஈர்க்கப்பட்டேன். இந்த புத்தகத்தைப் படித்த நாளிலிருந்து, நான் விருப்பப்படி சைவமாகிவிட்டேன் என்று கூறலாம். நான் என் அம்மாவுக்கு முன் சபதம் எடுத்த நாளை ஆசீர்வதித்தேன். சத்தியத்தின் நலன்களுக்காகவும், நான் எடுத்த சபதத்துக்காகவும் நான் இறைச்சியிலிருந்து விலகியிருந்தேன், ஆனால் அதே நேரத்தில் ஒவ்வொரு இந்தியனும் ஒரு இறைச்சி உண்பவராக இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று விரும்பினேன், மேலும் ஒரு நாள் சுதந்திரமாகவும் வெளிப்படையாகவும் நானாக இருப்பேன் என்று எதிர்பார்த்தேன்,

மற்றும் பிறரை காரணத்திற்காக சேர்ப்பது. தேர்வு இப்போது சைவ உணவுக்கு ஆதரவாக செய்யப்பட்டது, இதன் பரவல் இனிமேல் எனது பணியாக மாறியது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 66- 67)

ஒரு மதமாற்றம் செய்பவர் தனது புதிய மதத்தின் மீதான உற்சாகம் அதில் பிறந்த ஒரு நபரை விட அதிகமாகும். சைவ உணவு என்பது இங்கிலாந்தில் ஒரு புதிய வழிபாடாக இருந்தது, அதேபோல் எனக்கும், ஏனென்றால், நாம் பார்த்தபடி, நான் அங்கு ஒரு இறைச்சி உண்பவனாகச் சென்றிருந்தேன், பின்னர் அறிவார்ந்த முறையில் சைவ உணவுக்கு மாற்றப்பட்டேன். சைவத்திற்கான நியோபீட்டின் ஆர்வம் நிறைந்த நான், எனது வட்டாரமான பேஸ்வாட்டரில் ஒரு சைவ கிளப்பைத் தொடங்க முடிவு செய்தேன். அங்கு வசித்த சர் எட்வின் அர்னால்டை துணைத் தலைவராக அழைத்தேன்.பத்திரிகையின் ஆசிரியராக இருந்த டாக்டர் ஓல்ட்ஃபீல்ட் *தி வெஜிடேரியன்* ஜனாதிபதியானார். நானே செயலாளரானேன். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி., 79-80)

நான் சைவ சங்கத்தின் செயற்குழுவுக்குத் தேர்ந்தெடுக்கப்பட்டேன், அதன் ஒவ்வொரு கூட்டத்திலும் கலந்துகொள்வதை ஒரு புள்ளியாக மாற்றினேன், ஆனால் நான் எப்போதும் நாக்குடன் இணைந்திருப்பதை உணர்ந்தேன் …… நான் ஒருபோதும் உணரவில்லை பேச ஆசை. ஆனால் என்னை எப்படி வெளிப்படுத்துவது என்று தெரியாமல் நான் நஷ்டத்தில் இருந்தேன் …… இந்த கூச்சத்தை நான் இங்கிலாந்தில் தங்கியிருந்த காலம் முழுவதும் தக்க வைத்துக் கொண்டேன். நான் ஒரு சமூக அழைப்பைச் செலுத்தும்போது கூட அரை டஜன் அல்லது அதற்கு மேற்பட்டவர்கள் இருப்பது என்னை ஊமையாகத் தாக்கும். (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 81-82)

எப்போதாவது என்னை சிரிப்பதை வெளிப்படுத்துவதைத் தாண்டி, எனது அரசியலமைப்பு கூச்சம் எதுவுமே பாதகமாக இல்லை என்று நான் சொல்ல வேண்டும். உண்மையில், நான் அதை பார்க்க

முடியும், மாறாக, இது எனக்கு சாதகமாக இருந்தது. ஒரு காலத்தில் எரிச்சலாக இருந்த பேச்சில் என் தயக்கம் இப்போது ஒரு மகிழ்ச்சி அளிக்கிறது. அதன் மிகப்பெரிய நன்மை என்னவென்றால், அது வார்த்தைகளின் பொருளாதாரத்தை எனக்குக் கற்றுக் கொடுத்தது. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 84)

1890 இல் பாரிஸில் ஒரு பெரிய கண்காட்சி இருந்தது. அதன் விரிவான தயாரிப்பு பற்றி நான் படித்தேன், மேலும் பாரிஸைப் பார்க்க எனக்கு மிகுந்த விருப்பமும் இருந்தது. ஆகவே, ஒன்றில் இரண்டு விஷயங்களை ஒன்றிணைத்து, இந்த நேரத்தில் அங்கு செல்வது நல்லது என்று நினைத்தேன். கண்காட்சியின் ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட ஈர்ப்பு ஈபிள் கோபுரம், இது முற்றிலும் இரும்பினால் கட்டப்பட்டது, கிட்டத்தட்ட 1,000 அடி உயரம் கொண்டது. ஆர்வமுள்ள பல விஷயங்கள் நிச்சயமாக இருந்தன, ஆனால் கோபுரம் முதன்மையானதுஒருமுடியாது என்று அதுவரை கருதப்பட்டது

, அந்த உயரத்தின்கட்டமைப்பை பாதுகாப்பாக நிற்க. (ஏ.எம்.ஜி, 101)

கண்காட்சியின் அளவு மற்றும் வகையைத் தவிர வேறு எதுவும் எனக்கு நினைவில் இல்லை. ஈபிள் கோபுரத்தை நான் இரண்டு அல்லது மூன்று முறை ஏறினேன். முதல் மேடையில் ஒரு உணவகம் இருந்தது, நான் மதிய உணவை ஒரு பெரிய உயரத்தில் வைத்திருந்தேன் என்று சொல்ல முடிந்த திருப்திக்காக, நான் ஏழு ஷில்லிங்கை எறிந்தேன்.

பாரிஸின் பண்டைய தேவாலயங்கள் இன்னும் என் நினைவில் உள்ளன. அவர்களின் ஆடம்பரமும் அமைதியும் மறக்க முடியாதவை. The wonderful construction of Notre Dame and the elaborate decoration of the interior with its beautiful sculptures cannot be forgotten. I felt then that those who expended millions on such divine cathedrals could not but have the love of God in their hearts. (AMG, 101)

I must say a word about the Eiffel Tower. I do not know what purpose it serves today. But I then heard it greatly disparaged as well as praised. I remember that Tolstoy was the chief among those who disparaged it. He said that the Eiffel Tower was a monument of man's folly, not of his wisdom. Tobacco, he argued, was the worst of all intoxicants, inasmuch as a man addicted to it was tempted to commit crimes which a drunkard never dared to do; liquor made a man mad, but tobacco clouded his intellect and made him build castles in the air. The Eiffel Tower was one of the creations of a man under such influence. “There is no art about the Eiffel Tower. In no way can it be said to have contributed to the real beauty of the exhibition. Men flocked to see it and ascended it as it was a novelty and of unique dimensions. It was the toy of the exhibition. So long as we are children we are attracted by toys, and the tower was a good demonstration of the fact that we are all children attracted by trinkets. That may be claimed to be the purpose served by the Eiffel Tower. (AMG, 102)

I passed my examinations, was called to the Bar on the tenth of June 1891, and

enrolled in the High Court on the eleventh. On the twelfth I sailed home. (AMG,

105)

My elder brother had built high hopes on me. The desire for wealth and name and fame was great in him. He had a big heart, generous to a fault. This, combined with his simple nature, had attracted to him many friends, and through them he expected to get me briefs. He had also assumed that I should have a swinging practice and had, in that expectation, allowed the household expenses to become top-heavy. He had also left no stone unturned in preparing the field for my practice. (AMG, 115)

But it was impossible for me to get along in Bombay for more than four or five months, there being no income to square with the ever-increasing expenditure. This was how I began life. I found the barrister's profession a bad job—much show and little knowledge. I felt a crushing sense of my responsibility. (AMG, 118)

Disappointed, I left Bombay and went to Rajkot where I set up my own office. Here I got along moderately well. Drafting applications and memorials brought me in on an average Rs. 300 a month. (AMG, 123)

In the meantime a Meman firm from Porbandar wrote to my brother making the following offer: 'We have business in South Africa. Ours is a big firm, and we have a big case there in the Court, our claim being £40,000. It has been going on for a long time. We have engaged the services of the best *vakils* and barristers. If you sent your brother there, he would be useful to us and also to himself. He would be able to instruct our counsel better than ourselves. And he would have the advantage of seeing a new part of the world, and of making new acquaintances.' (AMG, 128)

This was hardly going there as a barrister. It was going as a servant of the firm. But I wanted somehow to leave India. There was also the tempting opportunity

of seeing a new country, and of having new experience. Also I could send £105 to my brother and help in the expenses of the household. I closed with the offer without any higgling, and got ready to go to South Africa. (AMG, 129)

When starting for South Africa I did not feel the wrench of separation which I had experienced when leaving for England. My mother was now no more. I had gained some knowledge of the world and of travel abroad, and going from Rajkot to Bombay was no unusual affair.

This time I only felt the pang of parting with my wife. Another baby had been born to us since my return from England. Our love could not yet be called free from lust, but it was getting gradually purer. Since my return from Europe, we had lived very little together; and as I had now become her teacher, however indifferent, and helped her to make certain reforms, we both felt the necessity of being more together, if only to continue the reforms. But the attraction of South Africa rendered the separation bearable. (AMG, 130)

The port of Natal is Durban also known as Port Natal. Abdulla Sheth was there to receive me. As the ship arrived at the quay and I watched the people coming on board to meet their friends, I observed that the Indians were not held in much respect. I could not fail to notice a sort of snobbishness about the manner in which those who knew Abdulla Sheth behaved towards him, and it stung me. Abdulla Sheth had got used to it. Those who looked at me did so with a certain amount of curiosity. My dress marked me out from other Indians. I had a frock-coat and a turban. (AMG, 134)

On the second or third day of my arrival, he took me to see the Durban court. There he introduced me to several people and seated me next to his attorney. The magistrate kept staring at me and finally asked me to take off my turban. This I refused to do and left the court. (AMG, 135)

On the seventh or eighth day after my arrival, I left Durban (for Pretoria). A first class seat was booked for me.....The train reached Maritzburg, the capital of Natal, at about 9 pm Beddings used to be provided at this station. A railway servant came and asked me if I wanted one. 'No,' said I, 'I have one with me.' He went away. But a passenger came next, and looked me up and down. He saw that I was a 'coloured' man. This disturbed him. Out he went and came in again with one or two officials. They all kept quiet, when another official came to me and said, 'Come along, you must go to the van compartment.' 'But I have a first class ticket,' said I.

'That doesn't matter,' rejoined the other. 'I tell you, you must go to the van compartment.'

'I tell you, I was permitted to travel in this compartment at Durban, and I insist on going on in it.'

'No, you won't', said the official. 'You must leave this compartment, or else I shall have to call a police constable to push you out.'

'Yes, you may. I refuse to get out voluntarily.'

The constable came. He took me by the hand and pushed me out. My luggage was also taken out. I refused to go to the other compartment and the train steamed away. I went and sat in the waiting room, keeping my hand-bag with me, and leaving the other luggage where it was. The railway authorities had taken charge of it.

It was winter, and winter in the higher regions of South Africa is severely cold. Maritzburg being at a high altitude, the cold was extremely bitter. My overcoat was in my luggage, but I did not dare to ask for it lest I should be insulted again, so I sat and shivered. There was no light in the room. A passenger came in at about midnight and possibly wanted to talk to me. But I was in no mood to talk.

I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial—only a

symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice.

So I decided to take the next available train to Pretoria. (AMG, 140-41)

My first step was to call a meeting of all the Indians in Pretoria and to present to them a picture of their condition in the Transvaal. (AMG, 157)

My speech at this meeting may be said to have been the first public speech in my life. I went fairly prepared with my subject, which was about observing truthfulness in business. I had always heard the merchants say that truth was not possible in business. I did not think so then, nor do now. Even today there are merchant friends who contend that truth is inconsistent with business. Business, they say, is a very practical affair, and truth a matter of religion; and they argue that practical affairs are one thing, while religion is quite another. Pure truth, they hold, is out of the question in business, one can speak it only so far as is suitable. I strongly contested the position in my speech and awakened the merchants to a sense of their duty, which was twofold. Their responsibility to be truthful was all the greater in a foreign land, because the conduct of a few Indians was the measure of that of the millions of their fellow-countrymen. (AMG, 157-58)

The consequences of the regulation regarding the use of footpaths were rather serious for me. I always went out for a walk through President Street to an open plain. President Kruger's house was in this street—a very modest, unostentatious building, without a garden, and not distinguishable from other houses in its neighbourhood. The houses of many of the millionaires in Pretoria were far more pretentious, and were surrounded by gardens. Indeed President Kruger's simplicity was proverbial. Only the presence of a police patrol before the house indicated that it belonged to some official. I nearly always went

along the footpath past this patrol without the slightest hitch or hindrance. Now the man on duty used to be changed from time to time. Once one of these men, without giving me the slightest warning, without even asking me to leave the footpath, pushed and kicked me into the street. I was dismayed. Before I could question him as to his behaviour, Mr. Coates, who happened to be passing the spot on horseback, hailed me and said:

'Gandhi, I have seen everything. I shall gladly be your witness in court if you proceed against the man. I am very sorry you have been so rudely assaulted.' 'You need not be sorry,' I said. 'What does the poor man know? All coloured people are the same to him. He no doubt treats Negroes just as he has treated me. I have made it a rule not to go to court in respect of any personal grievance. So I do not intend to proceed against him.' (AMG, 162-63)

The incident deepened my feeling for the Indian settlers...I thus made an intimate study of the hard condition of the Indian settlers, not only by reading and hearing about it, but by personal experience. I saw that South Africa was no country for a self-respecting Indian, and my mind became more and more occupied with the question as to how this state of things might be improved. (AMG, 163-64)

The year's stay in Pretoria was a most valuable experience in my life. Here it was that I had opportunities of learning public work and acquired some measure of my capacity for it. Here it was that the religious spirit within me became a living force, and here too I acquired a true knowledge of legal practice. (AMG, 165)

I realized that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven asunder. The lesson was so indelibly burnt into me that a large part of my time during the twenty years of practice as a lawyer was occupied in bringing about private compromises of hundreds of cases. I lost nothing thereby—not even money,

certainly not my soul. (AMG, 168)

The heart's earnest and pure desire is always fulfilled. In my own experience I have often seen this rule verified. Service of the poor has been my heart's desire, and it has always thrown me amongst the poor and enabled me to identify myself with them. (AMG, 190)

I had put in scarcely three or four months' practice, and the Congress (Natal Indian Congress organized by Gandhi to agitate against the Bill in the Natal Legislative Assembly to disfranchise Indians) also was still in its infancy, when a Tamil man in tattered clothes, head-gear in hand, two front teeth broken and his mouth bleeding, stood before me trembling and weeping. He had been heavily belaboured by his master. I learnt all about him from my clerk, who was a Tamilian. Balasundaram—as that was the visitor's name—was serving his indenture under a well-known European resident of Durban. The master, getting angry with him, had lost self-control, and had beaten Balasundaram severely, breaking two of his teeth.

I sent him to a doctor. In those days only white doctors were available. I wanted a certificate from the doctor about the nature of the injury Balasundaram had sustained. I secured the certificate, and straight away took the injured man to the magistrate, to whom I submitted his affidavit. The magistrate was indignant when he read it, and issued a summons against the employer. (AMG, 190-91)

Balasundaram's case reached the ears of every indentured labourer, and I came to be regarded as their friend. I hailed this connection with delight. A regular stream of indentured labourers began to pour into my office, and I got the best opportunity of learning their joys and sorrows. (AMG, 191-92)

It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow-beings. (AMG, 192)

If I found myself entirely absorbed in the service of the community, the reason behind it was my desire for self-realization. I had made the religion of service my own, as I felt that God could be realized only through service. And service for me was the service of India, because it came to me without my seeking, because I had an aptitude for it. I had gone to South Africa for travel, for finding an escape from Kathiawad intrigues and for gaining my own livelihood. But as I have said, I found myself in search of God and striving for self-realization. (AMG, 197)

Hardly ever have I know anybody to cherish such loyalty as I did to the British Constitution. I can see now that my love of truth was at the root of this loyalty. It has never been possible for me to simulate loyalty or, for that matter, any other virtue. The National Anthem used to be sung at every meeting that I attended in Natal. I then felt that I must also join in the singing. Not that I was unaware of the defects in British rule, but I thought that it was on the whole acceptable. In those days I believed that British rule was on the whole beneficial to the ruled.

The colour prejudice that I saw in South Africa was, I thought, quite contrary to British traditions, and I believed that it was only temporary and local. I therefore vied with Englishmen in loyalty to the throne. With careful perseverance I learnt the tune of the 'national anthem' and joined in the singing whenever it was sung. Whenever there was an occasion for the expression of loyalty without fuss or ostentation, I readily took part in it. Never in my life did I exploit this loyalty, never did I seek to gain a selfish end by its means. It was for me more in the nature of an obligation, and I rendered it without expecting a reward. (AMG, 212)

By now I had been three years in South Africa. I had got to know the people and they had got to know me. In 1896 I asked permission to go home for six

months, for I saw that I was in for a long stay there. I had established a fairly good practice, and could see that people felt the need of my presence. So I made up my mind to go home, fetch my wife and children, and then return and settle out there. (AMG, 205)

This was my first voyage with my wife and children ....I believed, at the time of which I am writing, that in order to look civilized, our dress and manners had as far as possible to approximate to the European standard. Because, I thought, only thus could we have some influence, and without influence it would not be possible to serve the community.... I therefore determined the style of dress for my wife and children.... The Parsis used then to be regarded as the most civilized people amongst Indians, and so, when the complete European style seemed to be unsuited, we adopted the Parsi style ....In the same spirit and with even more reluctance they adopted the use of knives and forks. When my infatuation for these signs of civilization wore away, they gave up the knives, and forks. After having become long accustomed to the new style, it was perhaps no less irksome for them to return to the original mode. But I can see today that we feel all the freer and lighter for having cast off the tinsel of 'civilization'. (AMG, 229-30)

The ship cast anchor in the port of Durban on the eighteenth or nineteenth of December. (AMG, 231)

Our ship was ordered to be put in quarantine until the twenty-third day of our sailing from Bombay. But this quarantine order had more than health reasons behind it.

The white residents of Durban had been agitating for our repatriation, and the agitation was one of the reasons for the order..... The real object of the quarantine was thus to coerce the passengers into returning to India by somehow intimidating them or the agent company. For now threats began to be addressed to us also: 'If you do not go back, you will surely be pushed into the sea. But if you consent to return, you may even get your passage money

back.' I

constantly moved amongst my fellow passengers cheering them up. (AMG, 232-33)

At last ultimatums were served on the passengers and me. We were asked to submit, if we would escape with our lives. In our reply the passengers and I both maintained our right to land at Port Natal, and intimated our determination to enter Natal at any risk.

At the end of twenty-three days the ships were permitted to enter the harbour, and orders permitting the passengers to land were passed. (AMG, 235)

As soon as we landed, some youngsters recognized me and shouted 'Gandhi, Gandhi'. About half a dozen men rushed to the spot and joined in the shouting.... As we went ahead, the crowd continued to swell, until it became impossible to proceed further.... Then they pelted me with stones, brickbats and rotten eggs. Someone snatched away my turban, whilst others began to batter and kick me. I fainted and caught hold of the front railings of a house and stood there to get my breath. But it was impossible. They came upon me boxing and battering. The wife of the Police Superintendent, who knew me, happened to be passing by. The brave lady came up, opened her parasol, though there was no sun then, and stood between the crowd and me. This checked the fury of the mob, as it was difficult for them to deliver blows on me without harming Mrs. Alexander. (AMG, 236-37)

The late Mr. Chamberlain, who was then Secretary of State for the Colonies, cabled asking the Natal Government to prosecute my assailants. Mr. Escombe sent for me, expressed his regret for the injuries I had sustained, and said: 'Believe me, I cannot feel happy over the least little injury done to your person .... If you can identify the assailants, I am prepared to arrest and prosecute them. Mr. Chamberlain also desires me to do so.'

To which I gave the following reply:

'I do not want to prosecute anyone. It is possible that I may be able to identify one or two of them, but what is the use of getting them punished? Besides, I do not hold the assailants to blame. They were given to understand that I had made exaggerated statements in India about the whites in Natal and calumniated them. If they believed these reports, it is no wonder that they were enraged. The leaders and, if you will permit me to say so, you are to blame. You could have guided the people properly, but you also believed Reuter and assumed that I must have indulged in exaggeration. I do not want to bring anyone to book. I am sure that, when the truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.' (AMG, 239-40)

On the day of landing, as soon as the yellow flag was lowered, a representative of *The Natal Advertiser* had come to interview me. He had asked me a number of questions, and in reply I had been able to refute every one of the charges that had been levelled against me..... This interview and my refusal to prosecute the assailants produced such a profound impression that the Europeans of Durban were ashamed of their conduct. The press declared me to be innocent and condemned the mob. Thus the lynching ultimately proved to be a blessing for me, that is, for the cause. It enhanced the prestige of the Indian community in South Africa and made my work easier. (AMG, 241)

My profession progressed satisfactorily, but that was far from satisfying me... I was still ill at ease. I longed for some humanitarian work of a permanent nature... So I found time to serve in the small hospital. This meant two hours every morning, including the time taken in going to and from the hospital. This work brought me some peace. It consisted in ascertaining the patient's complaints, laying the facts before the doctor and dispensing the prescriptions. It brought me in close touch with suffering Indians, most of them indentured Tamil, Telugu or North Indian men.

The experience stood me in good stead, when during the Boer War I offered my services for nursing the sick and wounded soldiers. (AMG, 249-50)

The birth of the last child put me to the severest test. The travail came on suddenly. The doctor was not immediately available, and some time was lost in fetching the midwife. Even if she had been on the spot, she could not have helped delivery. I had to see through the safe delivery of the baby. (AMG, 250)

I am convinced that for the proper upbringing of children the parents ought to have a general knowledge of the care and nursing of babies. At every step I have seen the advantages of my careful study of the subject. My children would not have enjoyed the general health that they do today, had I not studied the subject and turned my knowledge to account. We labour under a sort of superstition that the child has nothing to learn during the first five years of its life. On the contrary the fact is that the child never learns in after life what it does in its first five years. The education of the child begins with conception. (AMG, 250-51)

The couple who realize these things will never have sexual union for the fulfillment of their lust, but only when they desire issue. I think it is the height of ignorance to believe that the sexual act is an independent function necessary like sleeping or eating. The world depends for its existence on the act of generation, and as the world is the playground of God and a reflection of His glory, the act of generation should be controlled for the ordered growth of the world. He who realizes this will control his lust at any cost, equip himself with the knowledge necessary for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of his progeny, and give the benefit of that knowledge to posterity. (AMG, 251)

After full discussion and mature deliberation I took the vow (of *brahmacharya*) in 1906. I had not shared my thoughts with my wife until then, but only consulted her at the time of taking the vow. She had no objection. But I had great difficulty in making the final resolve. I had not the necessary strength. How was I to control my passions? The elimination of carnal relationship with one's wife seemed then a strange thing. But I launched forth with faith in the sustaining power of God.

As I look back upon the twenty years of the vow, I am filled with pleasure and wonderment. The more or less successful practice of self-control had been going on since 1901. But the freedom and joy that came to me after taking the vow had never been experienced before 1906. Before the vow I had been open to being overcome by temptation at any moment. Now the vow was a sure shield against temptation. (AMG, 256)

But if it was a matter of ever-increasing joy, let no one believe that it was an easy thing for me. Even when I am past fifty-six years, I realize how hard a thing it is. Every day I realize more and more that it is like walking on the sword's edge, and I see every moment the necessity for eternal vigilance.

Control of the palate is the first essential in the observance of the vow. I found that complete control of the palate made the observance very easy, and so I now pursued my dietetic experiments not merely from the vegetarian's but also from the *brahmachari's* point of view. (AMG, 257)

I know it is argued that the soul has nothing to do with what one eats or drinks, as the soul neither eats nor drinks; that it is not what you put inside from without, but what you express outwardly from within, that matters. There is no doubt some force in this. But rather than examine this reasoning, I shall content myself with merely declaring my firm conviction that, for the seeker who would live in fear of God and who would see Him face to face, restraint in diet both as to quantity and quality is as essential as restraint in thought and speech. (AMG, 334)

I had started on a life of ease and comfort, but the experiment was short lived. Although I had furnished the house with care, yet it failed to have any hold on me. So no sooner had I launched forth on that life, than I began to cut down expenses. The washerman's bill was heavy, and as he was besides by no means noted for his punctuality, even two to three dozen shirts and collars proved insufficient for me. Collars had to be changed daily and shirts, if not daily, at least every alternate day. This meant a double expense which appeared to me

unnecessary. So I equipped myself with a washing outfit to save it. I bought a book on washing, studied the art and taught it also to my wife. This no doubt added to my work, but its novelty made it a pleasure.

I shall never forget the first collar that I washed myself. I had used more starch than necessary, the iron had not been made hot enough, and for fear of burning the collar I had not pressed it sufficiently. The result was that, though the collar was fairly stiff, the superfluous starch continually dropped off it. I went to court with the collar on, thus inviting the ridicule of brother barristers, but even in those days I could be impervious to ridicule. (AMG, 261)

In the same way, as I freed myself from slavery to the washerman, I threw off dependence on the barber. All people who go to England learn there at least the art of shaving, but none, to my knowledge, learn to cut their own hair. I had to learn that too. I once went to an English hair-cutter in Pretoria. He contemptuously refused to cut my hair. I certainly felt hurt, but immediately purchased a pair of clippers and cut my hair before the mirror. I succeeded more or less in cutting the front hair, but I spoiled the back. The friends in the court shook with laughter.

'What's wrong with your hair, Gandhi? Rats have been at it?'

'No. The white barber would not condescend to touch my black hair,' said I, 'so I preferred to cut it myself, no matter how badly.'

The reply did not surprise the friends.

The barber was not at fault in having refused to cut my hair. There were every chance of his losing his custom, if he should serve black men. (AMG, 262 -63)

When the war [Boer] was declared, my personal sympathies were all with the Boers, but I believed then that I had yet no right, in such cases, to enforce my individual convictions. I have minutely dealt with the inner struggle regarding this in my history of the *Satyagraha* in South Africa, and I must not repeat the argument here. I invite the curious to turn to those pages. Suffice it to say that my loyalty to the British rule drove me to participation with the British in that

war. I felt that, if I demanded rights as a British citizen, it was also my duty, as such, to participate in the defence of the British Empire. I held then that India could achieve her complete emancipation only within and through the British Empire. So I collected together as many comrades as possible, and with very great difficulty got their services accepted as an ambulance corps. (AMG, 264)

Thus service of the Indians in South Africa ever revealed to me new implications of truth at every stage. Truth is like a vast tree, which yields more and more fruit the more you nurture it. The deeper the search in the mine of truth the richer the discovery of the gems buried there, in the shape of openings for an ever greater variety of service. (AMG, 268)

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect or pity as the case may be. 'Hate the sin and not the sinner' is a precept which, though easy enough to understand, is rarely practised, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world.

This *ahimsa* is the basis of the search for truth. I am realizing every day that the search is vain unless it is founded on *ahimsa* as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tant amount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being but with him the whole world. (AMG, 337)

A variety of incidents in my life have conspired to bring me in close contact with people of many creeds and many communities, and my experience with all of them warrants the statement that I have known no distinction between relatives and strangers, countrymen and foreigners, white and coloured, Hindus and Indians of other faiths, whether Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians or Jews. I

may say that my heart has been incapable of making any such distinctions. (AMG, 338)

I am not a profound scholar of Sanskrit. I have read the *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* only in translations. Naturally, therefore, mine is not a scholarly study of them. My knowledge of them is in no way profound, but I have studied them as I should do as a Hindu and I claim to have grasped their true spirit. By the time I had reached the age of twenty-one, I had studied other religions also. There was a time when I was wavering between Hinduism and Christianity. When I recovered my balance of mind, I felt that to me salvation was possible only through the Hindu religion and my faith in Hinduism grew deeper and more enlightened.

But even then I believed that untouchability was not part of Hinduism; and that, if it was, such Hinduism was not for me. (MT, II, 49)

I understand more clearly today what I read long ago about the inadequacy of all autobiography as history. I know that I do not set down in this story all that I remember. Who can say how much I must give and how much omit in the interest of truth? And what would be the value in a court of law of the inadequate *ex parte* evidence being tendered by me of certain events in my life? If some busybody were to cross-examine me on the chapters already written, he could probably shed much more light on them, and if it were a hostile critic's cross-examination, he might even flatter himself for having shown up 'the hollowness of many of my pretensions'.

I therefore wonder for a moment whether it might not be proper to stop writing these chapters. But so long as there is no prohibition from the voice within, I must continue the writing. I must follow the sage maxim that nothing once begun should be abandoned unless it is proved to be morally wrong. (AMG, 342)

In the very first month of *Indian Opinion* (A journal founded by Gandhi in South Africa), I realized that the sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper press is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges whole countrysides and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy. If the control is from without, it proves more poisonous than want of control. It can be profitable only when exercised from within. If this line of reasoning is correct, how many of the journals in the world would stand the test? But who would stop those that are useless? And who should be the judge? The useful and the useless must, like good and evil generally, go on together, and man must make his choice. (AMG, 349)

This [*Unto This Last*] was the first book of Ruskin I had ever read. During the days of my education I had read practically nothing outside textbooks, and after I launched into active life I had very little time for reading. I cannot therefore claim much book knowledge. However, I believe I have not lost much because of this enforced restraint. On the contrary, the limited reading may be said to have enabled me thoroughly to digest what I did read. Of these books, the one that brought about an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life was *Unto This Last*. I translated it later into Gujarati, entitling it *Sarvodaya* (the welfare of all).

I believe that I discovered some of my deepest convictions reflected in this great book of Ruskin, and that is why it so captured me and made me transform my life. A poet is one who can call forth the good latent in the human breast. Poets do not influence all alike, for everyone is not evolved in an equal measure. (AMG, 364-65)

Even after I thought I had settled down in Johannesburg, there was to be no settled life for me. Just when I felt that I should be breathing in peace, an unexpected event happened. The papers brought the news of the outbreak of the Zulu 'rebellion' in Natal. I bore no grudge against the Zulus, they had harmed no Indian. I had doubts about the 'rebellion' itself. But I then believed that the British Empire existed for the welfare of the world. A genuine sense of

loyalty prevented me from even wishing ill to the Empire. The rightness or otherwise of the 'rebellion' was therefore not likely to affect my decision. Natal had a Volunteer Defence Force, and it was open to it to recruit more men. I read that this force had already been mobilized to quell the 'rebellion'. (AMG, 383)

On reaching the scene of the 'rebellion' I saw that there was nothing there to justify the name of 'rebellion'. There was no resistance that one could see. The reason why the disturbance had been magnified into a rebellion was that a Zulu chief had advised non-payment of a new tax imposed on his people, and had assagaied a sergeant who had gone to collect the tax. At any rate my heart was with the Zulus, and I was delighted, on reaching headquarters, to hear that our main work was to be the nursing of the wounded Zulus. The medical officer in charge welcomed us. He said the white people were not willing nurses for the wounded Zulus, that their wounds were festering, and that he was at his wits' end. He hailed our arrival as a godsend for those innocent people, and he equipped us with bandages, disinfectants, etc., and took us to the improvised hospital. The Zulus were delighted to see us. White soldiers used to peep through the railings that separated us from them and tried to dissuade us from attending to the wounds. And as we would not heed them, they became enraged and poured unspeakable abuse on the Zulus. (AMG, 384)

The wounded in our charge were not wounded in battle. A section of them had been taken prisoners as suspects. The general had sentenced them to be flogged. The flogging had caused severe sores. These, being unattended to, were festering. The others were Zulu friendlies. Although these had badges given them to distinguish them from the 'enemy' they had been shot at by the soldiers by mistake. (AMG, 385)

The Zulu 'rebellion' was full of new experiences and gave me much food for thought. The Boer War had not brought home to me the horrors of war with anything like the vividness that the 'rebellion' did. This was no war but a man-

hunt, not only in my opinion, but also in that of many Englishmen with whom I had occasion to talk. To hear every morning reports of soldiers' rifles exploding like crackers in innocent hamlets, and to live in the midst of them was a trial. But I swallowed the bitter draught, especially as the work of my Corps consisted only in nursing the wounded Zulus. I could see that but for us the Zulus would have been uncared for. This work, therefore, eased my conscience. (AMG, 386)

I was anxious to observe *brahmacharya* in thought, word and deed, and equally anxious to devote the maximum of time to the *Satyagraha* struggle and fit myself for it by cultivating purity. I was therefore led to make further changes and to impose greater restraints upon myself in the matter of food. The motive for the previous changes had been largely hygienic, but the new experiments were made from a religious standpoint.

Fasting and restriction in diet now played a more important part in my life. Passion in man is generally co-existent with a hankering after the pleasures of the palate. And so it was with me. I have encountered many difficulties in trying to control passion as well as taste, and I cannot claim even now to have brought them under complete subjection. I have considered myself to be a heavy eater. What friends have thought to be my restraint has never appeared to me in that light. If I had failed to develop restraint to the extent that I have, I should have descended lower than the beasts and met my doom long ago. However, as I had adequately realized my shortcomings, I made great efforts to get rid of them, and thanks to this endeavour I have all these years pulled on with my body and put in with it my share of work. (AMG, 391)

I began with a fruit diet, but from the standpoint of restraint I did not find much to choose between a fruit diet and a diet of food grains. I observed that the same indulgence of taste was possible with the former as with the latter, and even more, when one got accustomed to it. I therefore came to attach greater importance to fasting or having only one meal a day on holidays. And if

there was some occasion for penance or the like, I gladly utilized it too for the purpose of fasting.

But I also saw that, the body now being drained more effectively, the food yielded greater relish and appetite grew keener. It dawned upon me that fasting could be made as powerful a weapon of indulgence as of restraint. Many similar later experiences of mine as well as of others can be adduced as evidence of this startling fact. I wanted to improve and train my body, but as my chief object now was to achieve restraint and a conquest of the palate, I selected first one food and then another, and at the same time, restricted the amount. But the relish was after me, as it were. As I gave up one thing and took up another, this latter afforded me a fresher and greater relish than its predecessor. (AMG, 391-92)

Experience has taught me, however, that it was wrong to have dwelt upon the relish of food. One should eat not in order to please the palate, but just to keep the body going. When each organ of sense subserves the body and through the body the soul, its special relish disappears, and then alone does it begin to function in the way nature intended it to do.

Any number of experiments is too small and no sacrifice is too great for attaining this symphony with nature. But unfortunately the current is nowadays flowing strongly in the opposite direction. We are not ashamed to sacrifice a multitude of other lives in decorating the perishable body and trying to prolong its existence for a few fleeting moments, with the result that we kill ourselves, both body and soul. (AMG, 392-93)

My first experience of jail life was in 1908. I saw that some of the regulations that the prisoners had to observe were such as should be voluntarily observed by a *brahmachari,* that is, one desiring to practice self-restraint. Such, for instance, was the regulation requiring the last meal to be finished before sunset. Neither the Indian nor the African prisoners were allowed tea or coffee. They could add salt to the cooked food if they wished, but they might not have

anything for the mere satisfaction of the palate. (AMG, 398)

Ultimately these restrictions were modified, though not without much difficulty, but both were wholesome rules of self-restraint. Inhibitions imposed from without rarely succeed, but when they are self-imposed, they have a decidedly salutary effect. So, immediately after release from jail, I imposed on myself the two rules. As far as was then possible I stopped taking tea, and finished my last meal before sunset. Both these now require no effort in the observance. (AMG, 398)

Fasting can help to curb animal passion, only if it is undertaken with a view to self-restraint. Some of my friends have actually found their animal passion and palate stimulated as an after-effect of fasts. That is to say, fasting is futile unless it is accompanied by an incessant longing for self-restraint. (AMG, 406)

Fasting and similar discipline is, therefore, one of the means to the end of self-restraint, but it is not all, and if physical fasting is not accompanied by mental fasting, it is bound to end in hypocrisy and disaster. (AMG, 406)

On Tolstoy Farm (Tolstoy Farm and the Phoenix Colony were the two settlements or *ashrams* founded by Gandhi in South Africa where he and his co-workers lived a life of self-discipline and service) we made it a rule that the youngsters should not be asked to do what the teachers did not do, and therefore, when they were asked to do any work, there was always a teacher co-operating and actually working with them. Hence whatever the youngsters learnt, they learnt cheerfully. (AMG, 409)

Of textbooks, about which we hear so much, I never felt the want. I do not even remember having made much use of the books that were available. I did not find it at all necessary to load the boys with quantities of books. I have always felt that the true textbook for the pupil is his teacher. I remember very

little that my teachers taught me from books, but I have even now a clear recollection of the things they taught me independently of books. Children take in much more and with less labour through their ears than through their eyes. I do not remember having read any book from cover to cover with my boys. But I gave them, in my own language, all that I had digested from my reading of various books, and l dare say they are still carrying a recollection of it in their minds. It was labourious for them to remember what they learnt from books, but what I imparted to them by word of mouth they could repeat with the greatest case. Reading was a task for them, but listening to me was a pleasure, when I did not bore them by failure to make my subject interesting. And from the questions that my talks prompted them to put, I had a measure of their power of understanding. (AMG, 411-12)

Just as physical training was to be imparted through physical exercise, even so the training of the spirit was possible only through the exercise of the spirit. And the exercise of the spirit entirely depended on the life and character of the teacher. The teacher had always to be mindful of his p's and q's, whether he was in the midst of his boys or not. (AMG, 414)

It would be idle for me, if I were a liar, to teach boys to tell the truth. A cowardly teacher would never succeed in making his boys valiant, and a stranger to self-restraint could never teach his pupils the value of self-restraint. I saw, therefore, that I must be an eternal object-lesson to the boys and girls living with me. They thus became my teachers, and I learnt I must be good and live straight if only for their sakes. I may say that the increasing discipline and restraint I imposed on myself at Tolstoy Farm was mostly due to those wards of mine.

One of them was wild, unruly, given to lying, and quarrelsome. On one occasion he broke out most violently. I was exasperated. I never punished my boys, but this time I was very angry. I tried to reason with him. But he was adamant and even tried to overreach me. At last I picked up a ruler lying at hand and delivered a blow on his arm. I trembled as I struck him. I dare say he

noticed it. This was an entirely novel experience for them all. The boy cried out and begged to be forgiven. He cried not because the beating was painful to him; he could, if he had been so minded, have paid me back in the same coin, being a stoutly built youth of seventeen; but he realized my pain in being driven to this violent resource. Never again after this incident did he disobey me. But I still repent that violence. I am afraid I exhibited before him that day not the spirit, but the brute, in me.

I have always been opposed to corporal punishment. I remember only one occasion on which I physically punished one of my sons. I have therefore never until this day been able to decide whether I was right or wrong in using the ruler. Probably it was improper, for it was prompted by anger and a desire to punish. Had it been an expression only of my distress, I should have considered it justified. But the motive in this case was mixed. (AMG, 414-15)

Cases of misconduct on the part of the boys often occurred after this, but I never resorted to corporal punishment. Thus in my endeavour to impart spiritual training to the boys and girls under me, I came to understand better and better the power of the spirit. (AMG, 415)

In those days I had to move between Johannesburg and Phoenix. Once when I was in Johannesburg I received tidings of the moral fall of two of the inmates of the ashram. News of an apparent failure or reverse in the Satyagraha struggle would not have shocked me, but this news came upon me like a thunderbolt. The same day I took the train for Phoenix. (AMG, 418)

During the journey my duty seemed clear to me. I felt that the guardian or teacher was responsible, to some extent at least, for the lapse of his ward or pupil. So my responsibility regarding the incident in question became clear to me as daylight. My wife had already warned me in the matter, but being of a trusting nature, I had ignored her caution. I felt that the only way the guilty parties could be made to realize my distress and the depth of their own fall would be for me to do some penance. So I imposed upon myself a fast for seven

days and a vow to have only one meal a day for a period of four months and a half. (AMG, 418-19)

My penance pained everybody, but it cleared the atmosphere. Everyone came to realize what a terrible thing it was to be sinful, and the bond that bound me to the boys and girls became stronger and truer. (AMG, 419)

I never resorted to untruth in my profession, and....a large part of my legal practice was in the interest of public work, for which I charged nothing beyond out-of-pocket expenses, and these too I sometimes met myself.... As a student I had heard that the lawyer's profession was a liar's profession. But this did not influence me, as I had no intention of earning either position or money by lying.... My principle was put to the test many a time in South Africa. Often I knew that my opponents had tutored their witnesses, and if I only encouraged my client or his witnesses to lie, we could win the case. But I always resisted the temptation. I remember only one occasion, when, after having won a case, I suspected that my client had deceived me. In my heart of hearts I always wished that I should win only if my client's case was right. In fixing my fees I do not recall ever having made them conditional on my winning the case. Whether my client won or lost, I expected nothing more nor less than my fees. I warned every new client at the outset that he should not expect me to take up a false case or to coach the witnesses, with the result that I built up such a reputation that no false cases used to come to me. Indeed some of my clients would keep their clean cases for me, and take the doubtful ones elsewhere. (AMG, 443-44)

During my professional work it was also my habit never to conceal my ignorance from my clients or my colleagues. Wherever I felt myself at sea, I would advise my client to consult some other counsel. This frankness earned me the unbounded affection and trust of my clients. They were always willing to pay the fee whenever consultation with senior counsel was necessary. This

affection and trust served me in good stead in my public work. (AMG, 449)

At the conclusion of the *Satyagraha* struggle in 1914, I received Gokhale's instruction to return home via London... War was declared on the fourth of August. We reached London on the sixth. (AMG, 421-23)

I felt that Indians residing in England ought to do their bit in the war. English students had volunteered to serve in the army, and Indians might do no less. A number of objections were taken to this line of argument. There was, it was contended, a world of difference between the Indians and the English. We were slaves and they were masters. How could a slave co-operate with the master in the hour of the latter's need? Was it not the duty of the slave, seeking to be free, to make the master's need his opportunity? This argument failed to appeal to me then. I knew the difference of status between an Indian and an Englishman, but I did not believe that we had been quite reduced to slavery. I felt then that it was more the fault of individual British officials than of the British system, and that we could convert them by love. If we would improve our status through the help and co-operation of the British, it was our duty to win their help by standing by them in their hour of need. Though the system was faulty, it did not seem to me to be intolerable as it does today. But if, having lost my faith in the system, I refuse to co-operate with the British Government today, how could those friends then do so, having lost their faith not only in the system but in the officials as well? (AMG, 424-25)

I thought that England's need should not be turned into our opportunity, and that it was more becoming and farsighted not to press our demands while the war lasted. I therefore adhered to my advice and invited those who would enlist as volunteers. (AMG, 425)

All of us recognized the immorality of war. If I was not prepared to prosecute my assailant, much less should I be willing to participate in a war, especially when I knew nothing of the justice or otherwise of the cause of the

combatants. Friends of course knew that I had previously served in the Boer War, but they assumed that my views had since undergone a change. As a matter of fact the very same line of argument that persuaded me to take part in the Boer War had weighed with me on this occasion. It was quite clear to me that participation in war could never be consistent with *ahimsa*. But it is not always given to one to be equally clear about one's duty. A votary of truth is often obliged to grope in the dark. (AMG, 427)

By enlisting men for ambulance work in South Africa and in England, and recruits for field service in India, I helped not the cause of war, but I helped the institution called the British Empire in whose ultimate beneficial character I then believed. My repugnance to war was as strong then as it is today; and I could not then have and would not have shouldered a rifle. But one's life is not a single straight line; it is a bundle of duties very often conflicting. And one is called upon continually to make one's choice between one duty and another. As a citizen not then, and not even now, a reformer leading an agitation against the institution of war, I had to advise and lead men who believed in war but who from cowardice or from base motives, or from anger against the British Government, refrained from enlisting. I did not hesitate to advise them that so long as they believed in war and professed loyalty to the British constitution they were in duty bound to support it by enlistment.... I do not believe in retaliation, but I did not hesitate to tell the villagers near Bettia four years ago that they who knew nothing of *ahimsa* were guilty of cowardice in failing to defend the honour of their womenfolk and their property by force of arms. And I have not hesitated....only recently to tell the Hindus that if they do not believe in out-and-out *ahimsa* and cannot practise it they will be guilty of a crime against their religion and humanity if they failed to defend by force of arms the honour of their women against a kidnapper who chooses to take away their women. And all this advice and my previous practice I hold to be not only consistent with my profession of the religion of *ahimsa* out-and-out, but a direct result of it. To state that noble doctrine is simple enough; to know it and to practise it in the midst of a world full of strife, turmoil and passions is a task

whose difficulty I realize more and more day by day. And yet the conviction too that without it life is not worth living is growing daily deeper. (SB, 167-68)

There is no defence for my conduct weighed only in the scales of *ahimsa*, I draw no distinction between those who wield the weapons of destruction and those who do Red Cross work. Both participate in war and advance its cause. Both are guilty of the crime of war. But even after introspection during all these years, I feel that in the circumstances in which I found myself I was bound to adopt the course I did both during the Boer War and the Great European War and for that matter the so-called Zulu 'Rebellion' of Natal in 1906.

Life is governed by a multitude of forces. It would be smooth sailing, if one could determine the course of one's actions only by one general principle whose application at a given moment was too obvious to need even a moment's reflection. But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined. Being a confirmed war resister I have never given myself training in the use of destructive weapons in spite of opportunities to take such training. It was perhaps thus that I escaped direct destruction of human life. But so long as I lived under a system of government based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for me, I was bound to help that government to the extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war unless I non-co-operated with that government and renounced to the utmost of my capacity the privileges it offered me.

Let me take an illustration. I am a member of an institution which holds a few acres of land whose crops are in imminent peril from monkeys. I believe in the sacredness of all life and hence I regard it a breach of *ahimsa* to inflict any injury on the monkeys. But I do not hesitate to instigate and direct an attack on the monkeys in order to save the crops. I would like to avoid this evil. I can avoid it by leaving or breaking up the institution. I do not do so because I do not expect to be able to find a society where there will be no agriculture and therefore no destruction of some life. In fear and trembling, in humility and

penance, I therefore participate in the injury inflicted on the monkeys, hoping someday to find a way out.

Even so did I participate in the three acts of war. I could not, it would be madness for me to sever my connections with the society to which I belong. And on those three occasions I had no thought of non-co-operating with the British Government. My position regarding the government is totally different today and hence I should not voluntarily participate in its wars and I should risk imprisonment and even the gallows if I was forced to take up arms or otherwise take part in its military operations.

But that still does not solve the riddle. If there was a national government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non -violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion.

Non-violence works in a most mysterious manner. Often a man's actions defy analysis in terms of non-violence; equally often his actions may wear the appearance of violence when he is absolutely non-violent in the highest sense of the term and is subsequently found so to be. All I can then claim for my conduct is that it was in the instances cited actuated in the interests of non-violence. There was no thought of sordid national or other interest. I do not believe in the promotion of national or any other interest. I do not believe in the promotion of national or any other interest at the sacrifice of some other interest.

I may not carry my argument any further. Language at best is but a poor vehicle for expressing one's thoughts in full. For me non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and the breath of my life. I know I fail often, sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously. It is a matter not of the intellect but of the heart. True guidance comes by constant waiting upon God, by utmost humility, self-abnegation, by being ever ready to sacrifice one's self. Its practice requires fearlessness and courage of the highest order. I am painfully aware of my failings.

But the Light within me is steady and clear. There is no escape for any of us save through truth and non-violence. I know that war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil. I know too that it has got to go. I firmly believe that freedom won through bloodshed or fraud is no freedom. Would that all the acts alleged against me were found to be wholly indefensible rather than that by any act of mine non-violence was held to be compromised or that I was ever thought to be in favour of violence or untruth in any shape or form! Not violence, not untruth but non-violence, Truth is the law of our being. (SB, 168-70)

I am conscious of my own limitations. That consciousness is my only strength. Whatever I might have been able to do in my life has proceeded more than anything else out of the realization of my own limitations. (SB, 214)

I am used to misrepresentation all my life. It is the lot of every public worker. He has to have a tough hide. Life would be burdensome if every misrepresentation has to be answered and cleared. It is a rule of life with me never to explain misrepresentations except when the cause required correction. This rule has saved much time and worry. (SB, 214)

The only virtue I want to claim is truth and non-violence. I lay no claim to superhuman powers. I want none. I wear the same corruptible flesh that the weakest of my fellow beings wears and am liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has up to now blessed them in spite of the imperfections.

For, confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. I feel stronger for my confession. And the cause must prosper for the retracing. Never has man reached his destination by persistence in deviation from the straight path. (MT, II, 113)

The mahatma I leave to his fate. Though a non-co-operator I shall gladly subscribe to a Bill to make it criminal for anybody to call me mahatma and to touch my feet. Where I can impose the law myself, at the *ashram*, the practice

is criminal. (MT, II, 340)

The time has now come to bring these chapters to a close... My life from this point onward has been so public that there is hardly anything about it that people do not know... My life has been an open book. I have no secrets and I encourage no secrets. (AMG, 614; see also MM, 4)

My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters does not proclaim to the reader that the only means for the realization of Truth is *ahimsa*, I shall deem all my labour in writing these chapters to have been in vain. And, even though my efforts in this behalf may prove fruitless, let the readers know that the vehicle, not the great principle, is at fault. (AMG, 615)

Ever since my return to India I have had the experiences of the dormant passions lying hidden within me. The knowledge of them has made me feel humiliated though not defeated. The experiences and experiments have sustained me and given me great joy. But I know that I have still before me a difficult path to traverse. I must reduce myself to zero. So long as a man does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him. Ahimsa is the farthest limit of humility. (AMG, 616)

I have become literally sick of the adoration of the unthinking multitude. I would feel certain of my ground if I was spat upon by them. Then there would be no need for confession of Himalayan and other miscalculations, no retracing, no re-arranging. (MM, 7)

I have no desire for prestige anywhere. It is furniture required in courts of kings. I am a servant of Mussalman, Christians, Parsis and Jews as I am of Hindus. And a servant is in need of love, not prestige. That is assured to me so

long as I remain a faithful servant. (MM, 8)

Somehow or other I dread a visit to Europe and America. Not that I distrust the peoples of these great continents any more than I distrust my own, but I distrust myself. I have no desire to go to the West in search of health or for sightseeing. I have no desire to deliver public speeches. I detest being lionized. I wonder if I shall ever again have the health to stand the awful strain of public speaking and public demonstrations. If God ever sent me to the West, I should go there to penetrate the hearts of the masses, to have quiet talks with the youth of the West and have the privilege of meeting kindred spirits—lovers of peace at any price save that of truth.

But I feel that I have as yet no message to deliver personally to the West. I believe my message to be universal but as yet I feel that I can best deliver it through my work in my own country. If I can show visible success in India, the delivery of the message becomes complete. If I came to the conclusion that India had no use for my message, I should not care to go elsewhere in search of listeners even though I still retained faith in it. If I ventured out of India, I should do so because I have faith, though I cannot demonstrate it to the satisfaction of all, that the message is being received by India, be it ever so slowly.

Thus whilst I was hesitatingly carrying on the correspondence with friends who had invited me, I saw that there was need for me to go to Europe, if only to see Romain Rolland. Owing to my distrust of myself over a general visit, I wanted to make my visit to that wise man of the West the primary cause of my journey to Europe. I, therefore, referred my difficulty to him and asked him in the frankest manner possible whether he would let me make my desire to meet him the primary cause of my visit to Europe. He says that in the name of truth itself, he will not think of letting me go to Europe if a visit to him is to be the primary cause. He will not let me interrupt my labours here for the sake of our meeting. Apart from this visit I felt within me no imperative call. I regret my decision but it seems to be the correct one. For whilst there is no urge within to go to Europe, there is an incessant call within for so much to do here. (MT,

II, 417)

I hold myself to be incapable of hating any being on earth. By a long course of prayerful discipline, I have ceased for over forty years to hate anybody. I know this is a big claim. Nevertheless, I make it in all humility. But I can and do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible. But I do not hate the domineering Englishmen as I refuse to hate the domineering Hindus. I seek to reform them in all the loving ways that are open to me. (SB, 150)

Some days back a calf having been maimed lay in agony in the *ashram*. Whatever treatment and nursing was possible was given to it. The surgeon whose advice was sought in the matter declared the case to be past help and past hope. The suffering of the animal was so great that it could not even turn its side without excruciating pain.

In these circumstances I felt that humanity demanded that the agony should be ended by ending life itself. The matter was placed before the whole *ashram*. At the discussion, a worthy neighbour vehemently opposed the idea of killing even to end pain. The ground of his opposition was that one has no right to take life which one cannot create. His argument seemed to me to be pointless here. It would have point, if the taking of life was actuated by self-interest. Finally in all humility but with the clearest of convictions I got in my presence a doctor kindly to administer the calf a quietus by means of a poison injection. The whole thing was over in less than two minutes.

I knew that public opinion especially in Ahmedabad would not approve of my action and that it would read nothing but *himsa* in it. But I know too that performance of one's duty should be independent of public opinion. I have all along held that one is bound to act according to what to one appears to be right, though it may appear wrong to others. And experience has shown that that is the only correct course. That is why the poet has sung: 'The pathway of

love is the ordeal of fire, the shrinker's turn away from it.' The pathway of *ahimsa*, that is, of love, one has often to tread all alone.

The question may legitimately be put to me: Would I apply to human beings the principle I have enunciated in connection with the calf? Would I like it to be applied in my own case? My reply is 'Yes'; the same law holds good in both the cases. The law, 'as with one so with all', admits of no exceptions, or the killing of the calf was wrong and violent. In practice, however, we do not cut short the sufferings of our ailing dear ones by death because, as a rule, we have always means at our disposal to help them and they have the capacity to think and decide for themselves. But supposing that in the case of an ailing friend, I am unable to render any aid and recovery is out of the question and the patient is lying in an unconscious state in the throes of agony, then I would not see any *himsa* in putting an end to his suffering by death.

Just as a surgeon does not commit *himsa* but practices the purest *ahimsa* when he wields his knife, one may find it necessary, under certain imperative circumstances, to go a step further and sever life from the body in the interest of the sufferer. It may be objected that whereas the surgeon performs his operation to save the life of the patient, in the other case we do just the reverse. But on a deeper analysis it will be found that the ultimate object sought to be served in both the cases is the same, namely, to relieve the suffering soul within from pain. In the one case you do it by severing the diseased portion from the body, in the other you do it by severing from the soul the body that has become an instrument of torture to it. In either case it is the relief of the soul from pain that is aimed at, the body without the life within being incapable of feeling either pleasure or pain. Other circumstances can be imagined in which not to kill would spell *himsa*, while killing would be *ahimsa*. Suppose, for instance, that I find my daughter, whose wish at the moment I have no means of ascertaining, is threatened with violation and there is no way by which I can save her, then it would be the purest form of *ahimsa* on my part to put an end to her life and surrender myself to the fury of the incensed ruffian.

The trouble with our votaries of *ahimsa* is that they have made of *ahimsa* a

blind fetish and put the greatest obstacle in the way of the spread of true *ahimsa* in our midst. The current—and, in my opinion, mistaken—view of *ahimsa* has drugged our conscience and rendered us insensible to a host of other and more insidious forms of *himsa* like harsh words, harsh judgements, ill will, anger, spite and lust of cruelty; it has made us forget that there may be far more *himsa* in the slow torture of men and animals, the starvation and exploitation to which they are subjected out of selfish greed, the wanton humiliation and oppression of the weak and the killing of their self-respect that we witness all around us today than in mere benevolent taking of life. Does anyone doubt for a moment that it would have been far more humane to have summarily put to death those who in the infamous lane of Amritsar were made by their tortures to crawl on their bellies like worms? If anyone desires to retort by saying that these people themselves today feel otherwise, that they are none the worse for crawling, I shall have no hesitation in telling him that he does not know even the elements of *ahimsa*. There arise occasions in a man's life when it becomes his imperative duty to meet them by laying down his life; not to appreciate this fundamental fact of man's estate is to betray an ignorance of the foundation of *ahimsa*. For instance, a votary of truth would pray to God to give him death to save him from a life of falsehood. Similarly a votary of *ahimsa* would on bent knees implore his enemy to put him to death rather than humiliate him or make him do things unbecoming the dignity of a human being. As the poet has sung: 'The Way of the Lord is meant for heroes, not for cowards.'

It is this fundamental misconception about the nature and the scope of *ahimsa*, this confusion about the relative values that is responsible for our mistaking mere non-killing for *ahimsa* and for the fearful amount of *himsa* that goes on in the name of *ahimsa* in our country. (MT, II, 421-23)

Truth to me is infinitely dearer than the 'mahatmaship', which is purely a burden. It is my knowledge of my limitations and my nothingness which has so far saved me from the oppressiveness of 'mahatmaship'. I am painfully aware of the fact that my desire to continue life in the body involves me in

constant *himsa*, that is why I am becoming growingly indifferent to this physical body of mine. For instance, I know that in the act of respiration I destroy innumerable invisible germs floating in the air. I But I do not stop breathing. The consumption of vegetables involves *himsa* but I cannot give them up. Again, there is *himsa* in the use of antiseptics yet I cannot bring myself to discard the use of disinfectants like the kerosene, to rid myself of the mosquito pest and the like. I suffer snakes to be killed in the *ashram* when it is impossible to catch and put them out of harm's way. I even tolerate the use of the stick to drive the bullocks in the *ashram*. Thus there is no end of *himsa* which I directly and indirectly commit. And now I find myself confronted with this monkey problem. Let me assure the reader that I am in no hurry to take the extreme step of killing them. In fact I am not sure that I would at all be able finally to make up my mind to kill them. But I cannot promise that I shall never kill the monkeys even though they may destroy all the crop in the *ashram*. If as a result of this confession of mine, friends choose to give me up as lost I would be sorry, but nothing will induce me to try to conceal my imperfections in the practice of *ahimsa*. All I claim for myself is that I am ceaselessly trying to understand the implications of great ideals like *ahimsa* and to practice them in thought, word and deed and that not without a certain measure of success, as I think. But I know that I have a long distance yet to cover in this direction. (MT, II, 425-26)

I am a poor mendicant. My earthly possessions consist of six spinning wheels, prison dishes, a can of goat's milk, six homespun loin-cloths and towels, and my reputation which cannot be worth much. (To the customs official at Marseilles, 11 September 1931.) (MT, III, 142)

When I found myself drawn into the political coil, I asked myself what was necessary for me, in order to remain untouched by immorality, by untruth, by what is known as political gain. I came definitely to the conclusion that, if I had to serve the people in whose midst my life was cast and of whose difficulties I was a witness from day to day, I must discard all wealth, all

possession.

I cannot tell you with truth that, when this belief came to me, I discarded everything immediately. I must confess to you that progress at first was slow. And now, as I recall those days of struggle, I remember that it was also painful in the beginning. But, as days went by, I saw that I had to throw overboard many other things which I used to consider as mine, and a time came when it became a matter of positive joy to give up those things. One after another then, by almost geometric progression, things slipped away from me. And, as I am describing my experiences, I can say a great burden fell off my shoulders , and I felt that I could now walk with ease and do my work also in the service of my fellow men with great comfort and still greater joy. The possession of anything then became a troublesome thing and a burden.

Exploring the cause of that joy, I found that if I kept anything as my own, I had to defend it against the whole world. I found that there were many people who did not have the thing, although they wanted it; and I would have to seek police assistance also if some hungry famine-stricken people, finding me in a lonely place, wanted not only to divide the thing with me but to dispossess me. And I said to myself: if they want it and would take it, they do so not from any malicious motive, but they would do it because theirs was a greater need than mine.

And I said to myself: possession seems to me to be a crime; I can only possess certain things when I know that others, who also want to possess similar things are able to do so. But we know—every one of us can speak from experience—that such a thing is an impossibility. Therefore, the only thing that can be possessed by all is non-possession, not to have anything whatsoever. Or, in other words, a willing surrender....Therefore, having that absolute conviction in me, such must be my constant desire that this body also may be surrendered at the will of God, and while it is at my disposal, must be used not for dissipation, not for self-indulgence, not for pleasure, but merely for service and service the whole of your waking hours. And if this is true with reference to the body, how much more with reference to clothing and other things that we use?

And those who have followed out this vow of voluntary poverty to the fullest extent possible—to reach absolute perfection is an impossibility, but the fullest possible for a human being—those who have reached the ideal of that state, testify that when you dispossess yourself of everything you have, you really possess all the treasures of the world. (From an address delivered at the Guild Hall, London, on 27 September 1931.) (MT, III, 155-57)

From my youth upward I learnt the art of estimating the value of scriptures on the basis of their ethical teaching. Miracles had no interest for me. The miracles said to have been performed by Jesus, even if I had believed them literally, would not have reconciled me to any teaching that did not satisfy universal ethics. Somehow, words of religious teachers have for me, as I presume for the millions, a living force which the same words uttered by ordinary mortals do not possess.

Jesus, to me, is a great world teacher among others. He was to the devotees of his generation no doubt 'the only begotten son of God'. Their belief need not be mine. He affects my life no less because I regard him as one among the many begotten sons of God. The adjective 'begotten' has a deeper and possibly a grander meaning than its spiritual birth. In his own times he was the nearest to God.

Jesus atoned for the sins of those who accepted his teachings, by being an infallible example to them. But the example was worth nothing to those who never troubled to change their own lives. A regenerate outgrows the original taint, even as purified gold outgrows the original alloy.

I have made the frankest admission of many sins. But I do not carry their burden on my shoulders. If I am journeying Godward, as I feel I am, it is safe with me. For I feel the warmth of the sunshine of His presence. My austerities, fasting and prayers are, I know, of no value, if I rely upon them for reforming me. But they have an inestimable value, if they represent, as I hope they do, the yearnings of a soul, striving to lay his weary head in the lap of his Maker.

(MT IV, 93)

An English friend has been at me for the past thirty years trying to persuade me that there is nothing but damnation in Hinduism and I must accept Christianity. When I was in jail I got from separate sources no less than three copies of *Life of Sister Therese*, in the hope that I should follow her example and accept Jesus as the only begotten son of God and my Saviour. I read the book prayerfully but I could not accept even St. Therese's testimony. I must say I have an open mind, if indeed at this stage and age of my life I can be said to have an open mind on this question. Anyway, I claim to have an open mind in this sense that if things were to happen to me as they did to Saul before he became Paul, I should not hesitate to be converted. But today I rebel against orthodox Christianity, as I am convinced that it has distorted the message of Jesus. He was an Asiatic whose message was delivered through many media and when it had the backing of a Roman emperor, it became an imperialist faith as it remains to this day. Of course, there are noble but rare exceptions, but the general trend is as I have indicated. (MT, IV, 95)

My mind is narrow. I have not read much literature. I have not seen much of the world. I have concentrated upon certain things in life and beyond that I have no other interest. (MT, VI, 356)

I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith. (SB, 216)

I fancy I know the art of living and dying non-violently. But I have yet to demonstrate it by one perfect act. (MGP, II, 475)

There is no such thing as 'Gandhism' and I do not want to leave any sect after me. I do not claim to have originated any new principle or doctrine. I have

simply tried in my own way to apply the eternal truths to our daily life and problems. There is, therefore, no question of my leaving any code like the code of Manu. There can be no comparison between that great law-giver and me. The opinions I have formed and the conclusions I have arrived at are not final, I may change them tomorrow. I have nothing new to teach the world. Truth and non-violence are as old as the hills. All I have done is to try experiments in both on as vast a scale as I could do. In doing so, I have sometimes erred and learnt by my errors. Life and its problems have thus become to me so many experiments in the practice of truth and non-violence. By instinct, I have been truthful, but not non-violent. As a Jain *muni* once rightly said, I was not so much a votary of *ahimsa*, as I was of truth, and I put the latter in the first place and the former in the second. For, as he put it, I was capable of sacrificing non-violence for the sake of truth. In fact, it was in course of my pursuit of truth that I discovered non-violence. Our scriptures have declared that there is no *dharma* higher than truth. But non-violence, they say, is the highest duty. The word *dharma*, in my opinion, has different connotations as used in the two aphorisms.

Well, all my philosophy, if it may be called by that pretentious name, is contained in what I have said. But, you will not call it 'Gandhism'; there is no 'ism' about it. And no elaborate literature or propaganda is needed about it. The scriptures have been quoted against my position, but I have held faster than ever to the position that truth may not be sacrificed for anything whatsoever. Those who believe in the simple truths I have laid down can propagate them only by living them. People have laughed at my spinning wheel, and an acute critic observed that when I died the wheels would serve to make the funeral pyre. That, however, has not shaken my firm faith in the spinning wheel. How am I to convince the world by means of books that the whole of my constructive programme is rooted in non-violence? My life alone can demonstrate it. (MT, IV, 66-67)

You have given me a teacher in Thoreau, who furnished me through his essay on the 'Duty of Civil Disobedience' scientific confirmation of what I was doing in

South Africa. Great Britain gave me Ruskin, whose *Unto This Last* transformed me overnight from a lawyer and city dweller into a rustic living away from Durban on a farm, three miles from the nearest railway station; and Russian gave me in Tolstoy a teacher who furnished a reasoned basis for my non-violence. Tolstoy blessed my movement in South Africa when it was still in its infancy and of whose wonderful possibilities I had yet to learn. It was he who had prophesied in his letter to me that I was leading a movement which was destined to bring a message of hope to the down-trodden people of the earth. So you will see that I have not approached the present task in any spirit of enmity to Great Britain and the West. After having imbibed and assimilated the message of *Unto This Last*, I could not be guilty of approving fascism or Nazism, whose cult is suppression of the individual and his liberty. (MT, VI, 177)

I have no secrets of my own in this life. I have owned my weaknesses. If I were sensually inclined, I would have the courage to make the confession. It was when I developed detestation of the sensual connection even with my own wife and had sufficiently tested myself that I took the vow of *brahmacharya* in 1906, and that for the sake of better dedication to the service of the country. From that day, began my open life....And from that day when I began *brahmacharya*, our freedom began. My wife became a free woman, free from my authority as her lord and master, and I became free from my slavery to my own appetite which she had to satisfy. No other woman had any attraction for me in the same sense that my wife had. I was too loyal to her as husband and too loyal to the vow I had taken before my mother to be slave to any other woman. But the manner in which my *brahmacharya* came to me irresistibly drew me to woman as the mother of man.... My *brahmacharya* knew nothing of the orthodox laws governing its observance. I framed my own rules as occasion necessitated. But I have never believed that all contact with woman was to be shunned for the due observance of *brahmacharya*. That restraint which demands abstention from all contact, no matter how innocent, with the opposite sex is a forced growth, having little or no vital value. Therefore, the natural contacts for service were never restrained. And I found myself enjoying the confidence of

many sisters, European and Indian, in South Africa. And when I invited the Indian sisters in South Africa to join the civil resistance movement, I found myself one of them. I discovered that I was specially fitted to serve the womankind. To cut the—for me enthralling—story short, my return to India found me in no time one with India's women. The easy access I had to their hearts was an agreeable revelation to me. Muslim sisters never kept purdah before me here, even as they did not in South Africa. I sleep in the *ashram* surrounded by women, for they feel safe with me in every respect. It should be remembered that there is no privacy in the Segaon *Ashram*. If I were sexually attracted towards women, I have courage enough, even at this time of life, to become a polygamist. I do not believe in free love—secret or open. Free open love I have looked upon as dog's love. Secret love is besides cowardly. (MT, V, 241-42)

'You have failed to take even your son with you,' wrote a correspondent. 'May it not, therefore, be well for you to rest content with putting your own house in order?'

This may be taken to be a taunt, but I do not take it so. For the question had occurred to me, before it did to anyone else. I am a believer in previous births and rebirths. All our relationships are the result of the *samskars* we carry from our previous births. God's laws are inscrutable and are the subject of endless search. No one will fathom them.

This is how I regard the case of my son. I regard the birth of a bad son to me as the result of my evil past, whether of this life or previous. My first son was born, when I was in a state of infatuation. Besides, he grew up whilst I was myself growing and whilst I knew myself very little. I do not claim to know myself fully even today, but I certainly know myself better than I did then. For years he remained away from me, and his upbringing was not entirely in my hands. This is why, he has always been at a loose end. His grievance against me has always been that I sacrificed him and his brothers at the altar of what I wrongly believed to be the public good. My other sons have laid more or less the same blame at my door, but with a good deal of hesitation, and they have generously forgiven me. My eldest son was the direct victim of experiments –

radical changes in my life and so he cannot forget what he regards as my blunders. Under the circumstances I believe I am myself the cause of the loss of my son, and have, therefore, learnt patiently to bear it. And yet, it is not quite correct to say that I have lost him. For it is my constant prayer that God may make him see the error of his ways and forgive me my shortcomings, if any, in serving him. It is my firm faith that man is by nature going higher, and so I have not at all lost the hope that, some day, he will wake up from his slumber and ignorance. Thus, he is part of my field of the experiments in non- violence. When or whether I shall succeed, I have never bothered to know. It is enough for my satisfaction that I do not slacken my efforts in doing what I know to be my duty. (MT, V, 378-79)

I read a newspaper cutting sent by a correspondent to the effect that a temple has been erected where my image is being worshipped. This I consider to be a gross form of idolatry. The person who has erected the temple has wasted his resources by misusing them, the villagers who are drawn there are misled, and I am being insulted in that the whole of my life has been caricatured in that temple. The meaning that I have given to worship is distorted. The worship of the *charkha* lies in plying it for a living, or as a sacrifice for ushering in *swaraj*. Gita is worshipped not by a parrot-like recitation but by following its teaching. Recitation is good and proper only as an aid to action according to its teaching. A man is worshipped only to the extent that he is followed not in his weaknesses, but in his strength. Hinduism is degraded when it is brought down to the level of the worship of the image of a living being. No man can be said to be good before his death. After death too, he is good for the person who believes him to have possessed certain qualities attributed to him. As a matter of fact, God alone knows a man's heart. And hence, the safest thing is not to worship any person, living or dead, but to worship perfection which resides only in God, known as Truth. The question then certainly arises, as to whether possession of photographs is not a form of worship, carrying no merit with it. I have said as much before now in my writings. Nevertheless, I have tolerated the practice, as it has become an innocent though a costly fashion. But this

toleration will become ludicrous and harmful, if I were to give directly or indirectly the slightest encouragement to the practice above described. It would be a welcome relief, if the owner of the temple removed the image and converted the building into a spinning centre, where the poor will card and spin for wages, and the others for sacrifice and all will be wearers of *khaddar*. This will be the teaching of the Gita in action, and true worship of it and me. (MT, VII, 100)

My imperfections and failures are as much a blessing from God as my successes and my talents, and I lay them both at His feet. Why should He have chosen me an imperfect instrument, for such a mighty experiment? I think He deliberately did so. He had to serve the poor dumb ignorant millions. A perfect man might have been their despair. When they found that one with their failings was marching on towards *ahimsa*, they too had confidence in their own capacity. We should not have recognized a perfect man if he had come as our leader, and we might have driven him to a cave. May be he who follows me will be more perfect and you will be able to receive his message. (MGP, II, 801)

I did not move a muscle, when I first heard that an atom bomb had wiped out Hiroshima. On the contrary I to myself, 'Unless now the world adopts non-violence, it will spell certain suicide for mankind.' (MGP, II, 808)

I do not sit in judgement upon the world for is many misdeeds. Being imperfect myself and needing toleration and charity, I tolerate the world's imperfections till I find or create an opportunity for fruitful expostulation. (MT, I, 285)

When I have become incapable of evil and when nothing harsh or haughty occupies, be it momentarily, my thought-world, then, and not till then, my non-violence will move all the hearts of all the world. (MGP, II, 800)

If one has completely merged oneself with Him, he should be content to leave good and bad, success and failure to Him and be careful for nothing. I feel I have not attained that state, and, therefore, my striving is incomplete. (MGP, II, 453)

There is a stage in life when a man does not need even to proclaim his thoughts much less to show them by outward action. Mere thoughts act. They attain that power. Then it can be said of him that his seeming inaction constitutes his action.... My striving is in that direction. (MGP, II, 463)

I would love to attempt an answer to a question which has been addressed to me from more than one quarter of the globe. It is: How can you account for the growing violence among your own people on the part of political parties for the furtherance of political ends? Is this the result of the thirty years of non -violent practice for ending the British rule? Does your message of non-violence still hold good for the world? I have condensed the sentiments of my correspondents in my own language.

In reply I must confess my bankruptcy, not that of non-violence. I have already said that the non-violence that was offered during the past thirty years was that of the weak. Whether it is a good enough answer or not is for the others to judge. It must be further admitted that such non-violence can have no play in the altered circumstances. India has no experience of the non-violence of the strong. It serves no purpose for me to continue to repeat that the non-violence of the strong is the strongest force in the world. The truth requires constant and extensive demonstration. This I am now endeavouring to do to the best of my ability. What if the best of my ability is very little? May I not be living in a fool's paradise? Why should I ask the people to follow me in the fruitless search? These are pertinent questions. My answer is quite simple. I ask nobody to follow me. Everyone should follow his or her own inner voice. If he or she has no ears to listen to it, he or she should do the best he or she can. In no case, should he or she imitate others sheeplike.

One more question has been and is being asked. If you are certain that India is going the wrong way, why do you associate with the wrongdoers? Why do you not plough your own lonely furrow and have faith that if you are right, your erstwhile friends and your followers will seek you out? I regard this as a very fair question. I must not attempt to argue against it. All I can say is that my faith is as strong as ever. It is quite possible that my technique is faulty. There are old and tried precedents to guide one in such a complexity. Only, no one should act mechanically. Hence, I can say to all my counsellors that they should have patience with me and even share my belief that there is no hope for the aching world except through the narrow and straight path of non-violence. Millions like me may fail to prove the truth in their own lives, that would be their failure, never of the eternal law. (MT, VIII, 22-23)

The partition has come in spite of me. It has hurt me. But it is the way in which the partition has come that has hurt me more. I have pledged myself to do or die in the attempt to put down the present conflagration. I love all mankind as I love my own countrymen, because God dwells in the heart of every human being, and I aspire to realize the highest in life through the service of humanity. It is true that the non-violence that we practised was the non-violence of the weak, ie, no non-violence at all. But I maintain that this was not what I presented to my countrymen. Nor did I present to them the weapon of non-violence because they were weak or disarmed or without military training, but because my study of history has taught me that hatred and violence used in howsoever noble a cause only breed their kind and instead of bringing peace jeopardize it. Thanks to the tradition of our ancient seers, sages and saints, if there is a heritage that India can share with the world, it is this gospel of forgiveness and faith which is her proud possession. I have faith that in time to come, India will pit that against the threat of destruction which the world has invited upon itself by the discovery of the atom bomb. The weapon of truth and love is infallible, but there is something wrong in us, its votaries, which has plunged us into the present suicidal strife. I am, therefore, trying to

examine myself. (MGP, II, 246)

I have passed through many an ordeal in my life. But perhaps this is to be the hardest. I like it. The fiercer it becomes, the closer is the communion with God that I experience and the deeper grows my faith in His abundant grace. So long as it persists, I know it is well with me. (MGP, II, 246)

If I were a perfect man, I own, I should not feel the miseries of neighbours as I do. As a perfect man I should take note of them, prescribe a remedy, and compel adoption by the force of unchallengeable Truth in me. But as yet I only see as through a glass darkly and therefore have to carry conviction by slow and labourious processes, and then, too, not always with success... I would be less human if, with all my knowledge of the avoidable misery pervading the land... I did not feel with and for all the suffering of the dumb millions of India. (MGP, II, 324)

I want to declare to the world that, whatever may be said to the contrary, and although I might have forfeited the regard and even the trust of many in the West—and I bow my head low – but even for their friendship or their love, I must not suppress that voice within, call it conscience, call it the prompting of my inner basic nature. There is something within me impelling me to cry out my agony. I have known exactly what it is. That something in me which never deceives me tells me now: 'You have to stand against the whole world although you may have to stand alone. You have to stare the world in the face although the world may look at you with blood-shot eyes. Do not fear. Trust that little thing in you which resides in the heart and says: Forsake friends, wife, all; but testify to that for which you have lived and for which you have to die.' (MM, 16)

My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite

direction. There is freedom from the action of these two forces but that freedom is attainable only by slow and painful stages. I cannot attain freedom by a mechanical refusal to act, but only by intelligent action in a detached manner. This struggle resolves itself into an incessant crucifixion of the flesh so that the spirit may become entirely free. (MGP, II, 324)

I believe in the message of truth delivered by all the religious teachers of the world. And it is my constant prayer that I may never have a feeling of anger against my traducers, that even if I fall a victim to an assassin's bullet, I may deliver up my soul with the remembrance of God upon my lips. I shall be content to be written down an impostor if my lips utter a word of anger or abuse against my assailant at the last moment. (MGP, II, 101)

Have I that non-violence of the brave in me? My death alone will show that. If someone killed me and I died with prayer for the assassin on my lips, and God's remembrance and consciousness of His living presence in the sanctuary of my heart, then alone would I be said to have had the non-violence of the brave. (MGP, II, 327)

I do not want to die....of a creeping paralysis of my faculties—a defeated man. An assassin's bullet may put an end to my life. I would welcome it. But I would love, above all, to fade out doing my duty with my last breath. (MGP, I, 562)
I am not aching for martyrdom, but if it comes in my way in the prosecution of what I consider to be the supreme duty in defence of the faith I hold... I shall have earned it. (MM, 9)

Assaults have been made on my life in the past, but God has spared me till now, and the assailants have repented for their action. But if someone were to shoot me in the belief that he was getting rid of a rascal, he would kill not the real Gandhi, but the one that appeared to him a rascal. (MM, 9)

If I die of a lingering illness, nay even by as much as a boil or a pimple, it will be your duty to proclaim to the world, even at the risk of making people angry with you, that I was not the man of God that I claimed to be. If you do that it will give my spirit peace. Note down this also that if someone were to end my life by putting a bullet through me—as someone tried to do with a bomb the other day—and I met his bullet without a groan, and breathed my last taking God's name, then alone would I have made good my claim. (This was uttered on the night of 29 January 1948, less than twenty hours before he was shot.) (MGP, II, 766)

If anybody tried to take out my body in a procession after I died, I would certainly tell them—if my corpse could speak—to spare me and cremate me where I had died. (MGP, II, 417)

After I am gone, no single person will be able completely to represent me. But a little bit of me will live in many of you. If each puts the cause first and himself last, the vacuum will to a large extent be filled. (MGP, II, 782)

I do not want to be reborn. But if I have to be reborn, I should be born an untouchable, so that I may share their sorrows, sufferings, and affronts levelled at them, in order that I may endeavour to free myself and them from that miserable condition. (SB, 238)

CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND TRUTH

By religion, I do not mean formal religion, or customary religion, but that religion which underlies all religions, which brings us face to face with our Maker. (MM, 85)

Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion which I certainly prize above all other religions, but the religion which transcends Hinduism, which changes one's very nature, which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and whichever purifies. It is the permanent element in human nature which counts no cost too great in order to find full expression and which leaves the soul utterly restless until it has found itself, known its Maker and appreciated the true correspondence between the Maker and itself. (SB, 223)

I have not seen Him, neither have I known Him. I have made the world's faith in God my own, and as my faith is ineffaceable, I regard that faith as amounting to experience. However, as it may be said that to describe faith as experience is to tamper with truth, it may perhaps be more correct to say that I have no word for characterizing my belief in God. (MG, 341)

There is an indefinable mysterious Power that pervades everything. I feel it, though I do not see it. It is this unseen power which makes itself felt and yet defies all proof, because it is so unlike all that I perceive through my senses. It transcends the senses. But it is possible to reason out the existence of God to a limited extent. (MM, 21)

I do dimly perceive that whilst everything around me is ever-changing, ever-dying, there is underlying all that change a Living Power that is changeless, that holds all together, that creates, dissolves, and re-creates. That informing

Power or Spirit is God. And since nothing else I see merely through the senses can or will persist, He alone is. (MM, 22)

And is this Power benevolent or malevolent? I see it as purely benevolent. For I can see that in the midst of death life persists, in the midst of untruth truth persists, in the midst of darkness light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love. He is the Supreme God. (MM, 22)

I know, too, that I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself. I am fortified in the belief by my own humble and limited experience. The purer I try to become the nearer to God I feel myself to be. How much more should I be near to Him when my faith is not a mere apology, as it is today, but has become as immovable as the Himalayas and as white and bright as the snows on their peaks? (MM, 22)

This belief in God has to be based on faith which transcends reason. Indeed, even the so-called realization has at bottom an element of faith without which it cannot be sustained. In the very nature of things it must be so. Who can transgress the limitations of his being? I hold that complete realization is impossible in this embodied life. Nor is it necessary. A living immovable faith is all that is required for reaching the full spiritual height attainable by human beings. God is not outside this earthly case of ours. Therefore, exterior proof is not of much avail, if any at all. We must ever fail to perceive Him through the senses, because He is beyond them. We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves from the senses. The divine music is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud senses drown the delicate music, which is unlike and infinitely superior to anything we can perceive or hear with our senses. (MM, 22-23)

But He is no God who merely satisfies the intellect, if He ever does. God to be God must rule the heart and transform it. He must express Himself in even the smallest act of His votary. This can only be done through a definite realization

more real than the five senses can ever produce. Sense perceptions can be, often are, false and deceptive, however real they may appear to us. Where there is realization outside the senses it is infallible. It is proved not by extraneous evidence but in the transformed conduct and character of those who have felt the real presence of God within. Such testimony is to be found in the experiences of an unbroken line of prophets and sages in all countries and climes. To reject this evidence is to deny oneself. (SB, 9)

To me God is Truth and Love; God is ethics and morality; God is fearlessness. God is the source of Light and Life and yet He is above and beyond all these. God is conscience. He is even the atheism of the atheist.... He transcends speech and reason.... He is a personal God to those who need His personal presence. He is embodied to those who need His touch. He is the purest essence. He simply is to those who have faith. He is all things to all men. He is in us and yet above and beyond us.... He is long-suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible..... With Him ignorance is no excuse. And withal He is ever forgiving for He always gives us the chance to repent. He is the greatest democrat the world knows, for He leaves us 'unfettered' to make our own choice between evil and good. He is the greatest tyrant ever known, for He often dashes the cup from our lips and under the cover of free will leaves us a margin so wholly inadequate as to provide only mirth for Himself Therefore Hinduism calls it all His sport. (MGP, I, 421-422)

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means. (AMG, 615)

Identification with everything that lives is impossible without self-purification; without self-purification the observance of the law of *ahimsa* must remain an

empty dream; God can never be realized by one who is not pure of heart. Self-purification therefore must mean purification in all walks of life. And purification being highly infectious, purification of oneself necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings. (AMG, 615-16)

But the path of self-purification is hard and steep. To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion. I know that I have not in me as yet that triple purity, in spite of constant, ceaseless striving for it. That is why the world's praise fails to move me, indeed it very often stings me. To conquer the subtle passions seems to me to be far harder than the physical conquest of the world by the force of arms. (AMG, 616)

I am but a poor struggling soul yearning to be wholly good—wholly truthful and wholly non-violent in thought, word and deed; but ever failing to reach the ideal which I know to be true. It is a painful climb, but the pain of it is a positive pleasure to me. Each step upward makes me feel stronger and fit for the next. (SB, 8)

I am endeavouring to see God through service of humanity, for I know that God is neither in heaven, nor down below, but in every one. (MM, 24)

Indeed religion should pervade every one of our actions. Here religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief in ordered moral government of the universe. It is not less real because it is unseen. This religion transcends Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, etc. It does not supersede them. It harmonizes them and gives them reality. (SB, 224)

Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads, so long as we reach the same goal? In reality,

there are as many religions as there are individuals. (SB, 224)

If a man reaches the heart of his own religion, he has reached the heart of the others too. (SB, 225)

So long as there are different religions, every one of them may need some distinctive symbol. But when the symbol is made into a fetish and an instrument of proving the superiority of one's religion over other's, it is fit only to be discarded. (SB, 225)

After long study and experience, I have come to the conclusion that (1) all religions are true; (2) all religions have some error in them; (3) all religions are almost as dear to me as my own Hinduism, in as much as all human beings should be as dear to one as one's own close relatives. My own veneration for other faiths is the same as that for my own faith; therefore no thought of conversion is possible. (SB, 226-27)

God has created different faiths just as He has the votaries thereof. How can I even secretly harbour the thought that my neighbour's faith is inferior to mine and wish that he should give up his faith and embrace mine? As a true and loyal friend, I can only wish and pray that he may live and grow perfect in his own faith. In God's house there are many mansions and they are equally holy. (SB, 228)

Let no one even for a moment entertain the fear that a reverent study of other religions is likely to weaken or shake one's faith in one's own. The Hindu system of philosophy regards all religions as containing the elements of truth in them and enjoins an attitude of respect and reverence towards them all. This of course presupposes regard for one's own religion. Study and appreciation of other religions need not cause a weakening of that regard; it should mean

extension of' that regard to other religions. (SB, 226)

It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words. God did not bear the Cross only 1,900 years ago, but He bears it today, and He dies and is resurrected from day to day. It would be poor comfort to the world if it had to depend upon a historical God who died 2,000 years ago. Do not then preach the God of history, but show Him as He lives today through you. (SB, 227-28)

I do not believe in people telling others of their faith, especially with a view to conversion. Faith does not admit of telling. It has to be lived and then it becomes self-propagating. (SB, 228)

Divine knowledge is not borrowed from books. It has to be realized in oneself. Books are at best an aid, often even a hindrance. (SB, 228)

I believe in the fundamental truth of all great religions of the world. I believe that they are all God-given, and I believe that they were necessary for the people to whom these religions were revealed. And I believe that, if only we could all of us read the scriptures of the different faiths from the standpoint of the followers of those faiths, we should find that they were at the bottom all one and were all helpful to one another. (MM, 84)

Belief in one God is the corner-stone of all religions. But I do not foresee a time when there would be only one religion on earth in practice. In theory, since there is one God, there can be only one religion. But in practice, no two persons I have known have had the same identical conception of God. Therefore, there will, perhaps, always be different religions answering to different temperaments and climatic conditions. (MM, 84)

I believe that all the great religions of the world are true more or less. I say 'more or less' because I believe that everything the human hand touches, by

reason of the very fact that human beings are imperfect, becomes imperfect. Perfection is the exclusive attribute of God and it is indescribable, untranslatable. I do believe that it is possible for every human being to become perfect even as God is perfect. It is necessary for us all to aspire after perfection, but when that blessed state is attained, it becomes indescribable, indefinable. And, I, therefore, admit, in all humility, that even the Vedas, the Koran and the Bible are imperfect word of God and, imperfect beings that we are, swayed to and fro by a multitude of passions, it is impossible for us even to understand this word of God in its fullness. (MM, 82)

I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the Bible, the Koran and the Zend Avesta, to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. My belief in the Hindu scriptures does not require me to accept every word and every verse as divinely inspired..... I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however learned it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense. (MM, 86)

Temples or mosques or churches... I make no distinction between these different abodes of God. They are what faith has made them. They are an answer to man's craving somehow to reach the Unseen. (MM, 96)

The prayer has saved my life. Without it, I should have been a lunatic long ago. I had my share of the bitterest public and private experiences. They threw me in temporary despair. If I was able to get rid of that despair, it was because of prayer. It has not been a part of my life as truth has been. It came out of sheer necessity, as I found myself in a plight where I could not possibly be happy without it. And as time went on, my faith in God increased, and more irresistible became the yearning for prayer. Life seemed to be dull and vacant without it. I had attended the Christian service in South Africa, but it had failed to grip me. I could not join them in it. They supplicated God, I could not; I failed egregiously. I started with disbelief in God and prayer, and until at a late stage in life I did not feel anything like a void in life. But at that stage, I

felt that as food is indispensable for the body, so was prayer indispensable for the soul. In fact food for the body is not so necessary as prayer for the soul. For starvation is often necessary to keep the body in health, but there is no such thing as prayer starvation. You cannot possibly have a surfeit of prayer. Three of the greatest teachers of the world—Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed—have left unimpeachable testimony, that they found illumination through prayer and could not possibly live without it. Millions of Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians find their only solace in life in prayer. Either you call them liars or self-deluded people. I will say that this 'lying' has a charm for me, a truth-seeker, if it is 'lying' that has given me that mainstay or staff of life without which I could not live for a moment. In spite of despair staring me in the face on the political horizon, I have never lost my peace. In fact, I have found people who envy my peace. That peace comes from prayer. I am not a man of learning, but I humbly claim to be a man of prayer. I am indifferent as to the form. Everyone is a law unto himself in that respect. But there are some well-marked roads, and it is safe to walk along the beaten tracks, trodden by the ancient teachers. I have given my personal testimony. Let everyone try and find that as a result of daily prayer he adds something new to his life. (MT, III, 139-40)

Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, political, social and religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. And this cannot be done except through one's country. I am a part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of the humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so resourceless, so inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity. (MT, IV, 108-09)

It is a tragedy that religion for us means today nothing more than restrictions on food and drink, nothing more than adherence to a sense of superiority and inferiority. Let me tell you that there cannot be any grosser ignorance than this. Birth and observance of forms cannot determine one's superiority and inferiority. Character is the only determining factor. God did not create men with the badge of superiority or inferiority; no scripture which labels a human being as inferior or untouchable because of his or her birth can command our allegiance, it is a denial of God and Truth which is God. (MT, III, 343)

It is my conviction that all the great faiths of the world are true, are God-ordained and that they serve the purpose of God and of those who have been brought up in those surroundings and those faiths. I do not believe that the time will ever come when we shall be able to say there is only one religion in the world. In a sense, even today there is one fundamental religion in the world. But there is no such thing as a straight line in nature. Religion is one tree with many branches. As branches, you may say religions are many, but as tree, religion is only one. (MT, III, 300)

Supposing a Christian came to me and said he was captivated by the reading of *Bhagavat* and so wanted to declare himself a Hindu, I should say to him: 'No. What *Bhagavat* offers, the Bible also offers. You have not made the attempt to find it out. Make the attempt and be a good Christian.' (MT, IV, 121)

I do not conceive religion as one of the many activities of mankind. The same activity may be governed by the spirit either of religion or of irreligion. There is no such thing for me therefore as leaving politics for religion. For me every, the tiniest, activity is governed by what I consider to be my religion. (DM, 138)

There can be no manner of doubt that this universe of sentient beings is governed by a Law. If you can think of Law without its Giver, I would say that the Law is the Law-giver, that is God. When we pray to the Law we simply yearn after knowing the Law and obeying it. We become what we yearn after.

Hence the necessity for prayer. Though our present life is governed by our past, our future must by that very law of cause and effect be affected by what we do now. To the extent therefore that we feel the choice between two or more courses we must make that choice.

Why evil exists and what it is are questions which appear to be beyond our limited reason. It should be enough to know that both good and evil exist. And as often we can distinguish between good and evil, we must choose the one and shun the other. (DM, 227-28)

Those who believe in God's guidance just do the best they can and never worry. The sun has never been known to suffer from overstrain and yet who slaves with such unexampled regularity as he! And why should we think that the sun is inanimate? The difference between him and us may be that he has no choice, we have a margin, no matter how precarious it may be. But no more speculation of this sort. Suffice it for us that we have his brilliant example in the matter of tireless energy. If we completely surrender to His will and really become *ciphers,* we too voluntarily give up the right of choice and then we need no wear and tear. (BM, 171)

Yes, there are subjects where reason cannot take us far and we have to accept things on faith. Faith then does not contradict reason but transcends it. Faith is a kind of sixth sense which works in cases which are without the purview of reason. Well then, given these three criteria, I can have no difficulty in examining all claims made on behalf of religion. Thus to believe that Jesus is the only begotten son of God is to me against reason, for God can't marry and beget children. The word 'son' can only be used in a figurative sense. In that sense everyone who stands in the position of Jesus is a begotten son of God. If a man is spiritually miles ahead of us, we may say that he is in a special sense the son of God, though we are all children of God. We repudiate the relationship in our lives, whereas his life is a witness to that relationship. (MT, IV, 167-68)

God is not a person..... God is the force. He is the essence of life. He is pure and undefiled consciousness. He is eternal. And yet, strangely enough, all are not able to derive either benefit from or shelter in the all-pervading living presence.

Electricity is a powerful force. Not all can benefit from it. It can only be produced by following certain laws. It is a lifeless force. Man can utilize it if he labours hard enough to acquire the knowledge of its laws.

The living force which we call God can similarly be found if we know and follow His law leading to the discovery of Him in us. (MGP, I, 599)

To seek God one need not go on a pilgrimage or light lamps and burn incense before or anoint the image of the deity or paint it with red vermilion. For He resides in our hearts. If we could completely obliterate in us the consciousness of our physical body, we would see Him face to face. (MGP, II, 247)

No search is possible without some workable assumptions. If we grant nothing, we find nothing. Ever since its commencement, the world, the wise and the foolish included, has proceeded upon the assumption that if we are, God is, and that, if God is not, we are not. And since belief in God is co-existent with the humankind, existence of God is treated as a fact more definite than the fact that the sun is. This living faith has solved a large number of puzzles of life. It has alleviated our misery. It sustains us in life, it is our solace in death. The very search for Truth becomes interesting and worthwhile because of this belief. But search for Truth is search for God. Truth is God. God is, because Truth is. We embark upon the search, because we believe that there is Truth and that it can be found by diligent search and meticulous observance of the well-known and well-tried rules of search. There is no record in history of the failure of such search. Even the atheists who have pretended to disbelieve in God have believed in Truth. The trick they have performed is that of giving God another, not a new, name. His names are legion. Truth is the crown of them all.

What is true of God is true, though in a less degree, of the assumption of the

truth of some fundamental moralities. As a matter of fact, they are implied in the belief in God or Truth. Departure from these has landed the truants in endless misery. Difficulty of practice should not be confused with disbelief. A Himalayan expedition has also its prescribed conditions of success. Difficulty of fulfilling the conditions does not make the expedition impossible. It only adds interest and zest to the search. Well, this expedition in search of God or Truth is infinitely more than numberless Himalayan expeditions and, therefore, much more interesting. If we have no zest for it, it is because of the weakness of our faith. What we see with our physical eyes is more real to us than the only Reality. We know that the appearances are deceptive. And yet we treat trivialities as realities. To see the trivialities as such is half the battle won. It constitutes more than half the search after Truth or God. Unless we disengage ourselves from these trivialities, we have not even the leisure for the great search, or is to be reserved for our leisure hours? (MT, III, 359-60)

There are innumerable definitions of God, because His manifestations are innumerable. They overwhelm me with wonder and awe and for a moment stun me. But I worship God as Truth only. I have not yet found Him, but I am seeking after Him. I am prepared to sacrifice the things dearest to me in pursuit of this quest. Even if the sacrifice demanded be my very life, I hope I may be prepared to give it. But as long as I have not realized this Absolute Truth, so long must I hold by the relative truth as I have conceived it. (AMG, 6)

Often in my progress I have had faint glimpses of the Absolute Truth, God, and daily the conviction is growing upon me that He alone is real and all else is unreal. Let those, who wish, realize how the conviction has grown upon me; let them share my experiments and share also my conviction if they can. The further conviction has been growing upon me that whatever is possible for me is possible even for a child, and I have sound reasons for saying so. The instruments for the quest of Truth are as simple as they are difficult. They may appear quite impossible to an arrogant person, and quite possible to an innocent child. The seeker after truth should be humbler than the dust. (AMG,

6-7)

If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realized religion in its perfection, even as we have not realized God. Religion of our conception, being thus imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect, and liable to error. Reverence for other faiths need not blind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account, but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate, but would think it our duty, to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so there is one true and perfect Religion, but it becomes many, as it passes through the human medium. The one Religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command, and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Whose interpretation is to be held to be the right one? Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not impossible that everybody is wrong. Hence the necessity of tolerance, which does not mean indifference to one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love for it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the North Pole from the South. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith. (SB, 225)

I believe that we can all become messengers of God, if we cease to fear man and seek only God's Truth. I do believe I am seeking only God's Truth and have lost all fear of man. (MM, 23)

I have no special revelation of God's will. My firm belief is that He reveals Himself daily to every human being, but we shut our ears to the 'still small voice'. We shut our eyes to the 'pillar of fire' in front of us. (MM, 23)

I must go.... with God as my only guide. He is a jealous Lord. He will allow no one to share His authority. One has, therefore, to appear before Him in all one's weakness, empty-handed and in a spirit of full surrender, and then He enables you to stand before a whole world and protects you from all harm. (MM, 24)

If I did not feel the presence of God within me, I see so much of misery and disappointment every day that I would be a raving maniac and my destination would be the Hooghli. (MM, 24)

In a strictly scientific sense God is at the bottom of both good and evil. He directs the assassin's dagger no less than the surgeon's knife. But for all that good and evil are, for human purposes, from each other distinct and incompatible, being symbolical of light and darkness, God and Satan. (MM, 27)

I am surer of His existence than of the fact that you and I are sitting in this room. Then I can also testify that I may live without air and water but not without Him. You may pluck out my eyes, but that cannot kill me. But blast my belief in God, and I am dead. You may call this a superstition, but I confess it is a superstition that I hug, even as I used to do the name of Rama in my childhood when there was any cause of danger or alarm. That was what an old nurse had taught me. (MM, 27)

Not until we have reduced ourselves to nothingness can we conquer the evil in us. God demands nothing less than complete self-surrender as the price for the only real freedom that is worth having. And when a man thus loses himself he immediately finds himself in the service of all that lives. It becomes his delight

and his recreation. He is a new man, never weary of spending himself in the service of God's creation. (MM, 30)

There are moments in your life when you must act, even though you cannot carry your best friends with you. The 'still small voice' within you must always be the final arbiter when there is a conflict of duty. (MM, 33)

I could not live for a single second without religion. Many of my political friends despair of me because they say that even my politics are derived from religion. And they are right. My politics and all other activities of mine are derived from my religion. I go further and say that every activity of a man of religion must be derived from his religion, because religion means being bound to God, that is to say God rules your every breath. (MM, 70)

For me, politics bereft of religion are absolute dirt, ever to be shunned. Politics concern nations and that which concerns the welfare of nations must be one of the concerns of a man who is religiously inclined, in other words, a seeker after God and Truth. For me God and Truth are convertible terms, and if anyone told me that God was a God of untruth or a God of torture, I would decline to worship Him. Therefore, in politics also we have to establish the Kingdom of Heaven. (MM, 70)

I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The whole gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of 'sound and fury signifying nothing'. (MM, 71)

It is faith that steers us through stormy seas, faith that moves mountains and faith that jumps across the ocean. That faith is nothing but a living, wide-awake consciousness of God within. He who has achieved that faith wants nothing. Bodily diseased, he is spiritually healthy; physically poor, he rolls in spiritual riches. (MM, 80)

The forms are many, but the informing spirit is one. How can there be room for distinctions of high and low where there is this all embracing fundamental unity underlying the outward diversity? For that is a fact meeting you at every step in daily life. The final goal of all religions is to realize this essential oneness. (MM, 78)

In my early youth I was taught to repeat what in Hindu scriptures are known as the one thousand names of God. But these one thousand names of God were by no means exhaustive. We believe, and I think it is the truth, that God has as many names as there are creatures. Therefore, we also say that God is nameless, and since God has many forms, we consider Him formless, and since He speaks through many tongues, we consider Him to be speechless and so on. And, so, when I came to study Islam, I found Islam too had many names of God. I would say with those who say 'God is Love', God is Love. But deep down in me I used to say that though God may be Love, God is Truth above all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, I have come to the conclusion that God is Truth. Two years ago I went a step further and said that Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements, 'God is Truth' and 'Truth is God'. I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after truth which began fifty years ago. I then found that the nearest approach to truth was through love. But I also found that love has many meanings in the English language, and that human love in the sense of passion could become a degrading thing. I found too that love in the sense of *ahimsa* had only a limited number of votaries in the world. But I never found a double meaning in connection with truth and even atheists had not demurred to the necessity of power of truth. But in their passion for

discovering truth, atheists have not hesitated to deny the very existence of God—from their own point of view rightly. It was because of this reasoning that I saw that rather than say that God is Truth, I should say that Truth is God. Add to this the great difficulty, that millions have taken the name of God and in His name committed nameless atrocities. Not that the scientists very often do not commit atrocities in the name of Truth. Then there is another thing in Hindu philosophy, namely, God alone is and nothing else exists, and the same truth you see emphasized and exemplified in the *kalma* of Islam. And there you find it clearly stated that God alone is, and nothing else exists. In fact, the Sanskrit word for truth is a word which literally means that which exists, *sat*. For these and many other reasons, I have come to the conclusion that the definition—Truth is God—gives me the greatest satisfaction. And when you want to find Truth as God, the only inevitable means is love, that is, non-violence, and since I believe that ultimately the means and ends are convertible terms, I should not hesitate to say that God is Love. (MT, III, 176-77)

From the standpoint of pure Truth, the body too is a possession. It has been truly said that desire for enjoyment creates bodies for the soul. When this desire vanishes, there remains no further need for the body, and man is free from the vicious cycle of births and deaths. The soul is omnipresent; why should she care to be confined within the cage-like body, or do evil and even kill for the sake of that cage? We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation, and learn to use the body for the purposes of service so long as it exists, so much so that service, and not bread, becomes with us the staff of life. We eat and drink, sleep and wake, for service alone. Such an attitude of mind brings us real happiness and the beatific vision in the fullness of time. (SB, 17)

What... is Truth? A difficult question; but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you. How then, you ask, different people think of different and contrary truths? Well, seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that the evolution of the human mind is not

the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another, and hence those who have made these experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to be observed in making those experiments..... It is because we have at the present moment everybody claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever that there is so much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All that I can in true humility present to you is that Truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth you must reduce yourself to a zero. (MM, 17)

Truth resides in every human heart, and one has to search for it there, and to be guided by truth as one sees it. But no one has a right to coerce others to act according to his own view of truth. (MM, 19-20)

Life is an aspiration. Its mission is to strive after perfection, which is self-realization. The ideal must not be lowered because of our weaknesses or imperfections. I am painfully conscious of both in me. The silent cry daily goes out to Truth to help me to remove these weaknesses and imperfections of mine. (MM, 20)

There can be no room for untruth in my writings, because it is my unshakable belief that there is no religion other than truth and because I am capable of rejecting aught obtained at the cost of truth. My writings cannot but be free from hatred towards any individual because it is my firm belief that it is love that sustains the earth. There only is life where there is love. Life without love is death. Love is the reverse of the coin of which the obverse is truth. It is my firm faith....that we can conquer the whole world by truth and love. (MM, 21)

I am devoted to none but Truth and I owe no discipline to anybody but Truth. (MM, 23)

Truth is the first thing to be sought for, and Beauty and Goodness will then be added unto you. That is what Christ really taught in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus was, to my mind, a supreme artist because he saw and expressed Truth; and so was Muhammad, the Koran being the most perfect composition in all Arabic literature—at any rate, that is what scholars say. It is because both of them strove first for Truth that the grace of expression naturally came in and yet neither Jesus nor Muhammad wrote on Art. That is the Truth and Beauty I crave for, live for, and would die for. (MM, 38)

As regards God it is difficult to define Him; but the definition of truth is deposited in every human heart. Truth is that which you believe to be true at this moment, and that is your God. If a man worships this relative truth, he is sure to attain the Absolute Truth, ie God, in course of time. (DM, 249-50)

I know the path. It is straight and narrow. It is like the edge of a sword. I rejoice to walk on it. I weep when I slip. God's word is: 'He who strives never perishes.' I have implicit faith in that promise. Though, therefore, from my weakness I fail a thousand times, I will not lose faith but hope that I shall see the Light when the flesh has been brought under perfect subjection, as some day it must. (MM, 12)

I am but a seeker after Truth. I claim to have found a way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. To find Truth completely is to realize oneself and one's destiny, ie, to become perfect. I am painfully conscious of my imperfections, and therein lies all the strength I possess, because it is a rare thing for a man to know his own limitations. (MM, 13)

I am in the world feeling my way to light 'amid the encircling gloom'. I often err and miscalculate..... My trust is solely in God. And I trust men only because I trust God. If I had no God to rely upon, I should be, like Timon, a hater of my

species. (MM, 13)

I am not a 'statesman in the garb of a saint'. But since Truth is the highest wisdom, sometimes my acts appear to be consistent with the highest statesmanship. But, I hope I have no policy in me save the policy of Truth and *ahimsa*. I will not sacrifice Truth and *ahimsa* even for the deliverance of my country or religion. That is as much as to say that neither can be so delivered. (MM, 1)

It seems to me that I understand the ideal of truth better than that of *ahimsa*, and my experience tells me that if I let go my hold of truth, I shall never be able to solve the riddle of *ahimsa*.... In other words, perhaps, I have not the courage to follow the straight course. Both at bottom mean one and the same thing, for doubt is invariably the result of want or weakness of faith. 'Lord, give me faith' is, therefore, my prayer day and night. (MM, 5)

In the midst of humiliation and so-called defeat and a tempestuous life, I am able to retain my peace, because of an underlying faith in God, translated as Truth. We can describe God as millions of things, but I have for myself adopted to formula—*Truth is God*. (MM, 10)

I claim to have no infallible guidance or inspiration. So far as my experience goes, the claim to infallibility on the part of a human being would be untenable, seeing that inspiration too can come only to one who is free from the action of opposites, and it will be difficult to judge on a given occasion whether the claim to freedom from pairs of opposites is justified. The claim to infallibility would thus always be a most dangerous claim to make. This, however, does not leave us without any guidance whatsoever. The sum-total of the experience of the sages of the world is available to us and would be for all time to come. Moreover, there are not many fundamental truths, but there is only one fundamental truth which is Truth itself, otherwise known as Non-

violence. Finite human beings shall never know in its fullness Truth and Love which is in itself infinite. But we do know enough for our guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But man is a self-governing being, and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made. (MM, 15)

I may be a despicable person, but when Truth speaks through me I am invincible. (MM, 23)

I have in my life never been guilty of saying things I did not mean—my nature is to go straight to the heart and if often I fail in doing so for the time being, I know that Truth will ultimately make itself heard and felt, as it has often done in my experience. (MM, 20)

I am a humble but very earnest seeker after Truth. And in my search, I take all fellow-seekers in uttermost confidence so that I may know my mistakes and correct them. I confess that I have often erred in my estimates and judgements.....And inasmuch as in every case I retraced my steps, no permanent harm was done. On the contrary, the fundamental truth of non-violence has been made infinitely more manifest than it ever has been, and the country has in no way been permanently injured. (MM, 20)

I see and find beauty in Truth or through Truth. All Truth, not merely true ideas, but truthful faces, truthful pictures or songs are highly beautiful. People generally fail to see beauty in Truth, the ordinary man runs away from and becomes blind to the beauty in it. Whenever men begin to see beauty in Truth, then true art will arise. (MM, 37)

To a true artist only that face is beautiful which, quite apart from its exterior, shines with the truth within the soul. There is ... no beauty apart from Truth. On the other hand, Truth may manifest itself in forms which may not outwardly

beautiful at all. Socrates, we are told, was the most truthful man of his time, and yet his features are said to have been the ugliest in Greece. To my mind he was beautiful because all his life was a striving after Truth, and may remember that this outward form did not prevent Phidias from appreciating the beauty of Truth in him, though as an artist he was accustomed to see beauty in outward forms also. (MM, 38)

But it is impossible for us to realize perfect Truth so long as we are imprisoned in this mortal frame. We can only visualize it in our imagination. We cannot, through the instrumentality of this ephemeral body, see face to face Truth which is eternal. That is why in the last resort one must depend on faith. (SB, 9)

I lay claim to nothing exclusively divine in me. I do not claim prophetship. I am but a humble seeker after Truth and bent upon finding it. I count no sacrifice too great for the sake of seeing God face to face. The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical is directed to that end. And as I know that God is found more often in the lowliest of His creatures than in the high and mighty, I am struggling to reach the status of these. I cannot do so without their service. Hence my passion for the service of the suppressed classes. And as I cannot render this service without entering politics, I find myself in them. Thus I am no master, I am but a struggling, erring, humble servant of India and, there through, of humanity. (SB, 46-47)

There is no religion higher than Truth and Righteousness. (SB, 223)

True religion and true morality are inseparably bound up with each other. Religion is to morality what water is to the seed that is sown in the soil. (SB, 223)

I reject any religious doctrine that does not appeal to reason and is in conflict with morality. I tolerate unreasonable religious sentiment when it is not immoral. (SB, 223)

As soon as we lose the moral basis, we cease to be religious. There is no such thing as religion overriding morality. Man for instance cannot be untruthful, cruel and incontinent and claim to have God on his side. (SB, 223)

Our desires and motives may be divided into two classes—selfish and unselfish. All selfish desires are immoral, while the desire to improve ourselves for the sake of doing good to others is truly moral. The highest moral law is that we should unremittingly work for the good of mankind. (SB, 223)

If any action of mine claimed to be spiritual is proved to be impracticable it must be pronounced to be a failure. I do believe that the most spiritual act is the most practical in the true sense of the term. (SB, 224)

Scriptures cannot transcend reason and truth. They are intended to purify reason and illuminate truth. (SB, 229)

Error can claim no exemption even if it can be supported by the scriptures of the world. (SB, 229)

An error does not become truth by reason of multiplied propagation, nor does truth become error because nobody sees it. (SB, 229)

I do not hold that everything ancient is good because it is ancient. I do not advocate surrender of God-given reasoning faculty in the face of ancient tradition. Any tradition, however ancient, if inconsistent with morality, is fit to be banished from the land. Untouchability may be considered to be an ancient tradition, the institution of child widowhood and child marriage may be

considered to be an ancient tradition, and even so many an ancient horrible belief and superstitious practice. I would sweep them out of existence if I had the power. (SB, 229)

I do not disbelieve in idol worship. An idol does not excite any feeling of veneration in me. But I think that idol worship is part of human nature. We hanker after symbolism. (SB, 230)

I do not forbid the use of images in prayer. I only prefer the worship of the Formless. This preference is perhaps improper. One thing suits one man; another thing will suit another man, and no comparison can fairly be made between the two. (DM, 168)

I have come to feel that like human beings words have their evolution from stage to stage in the contents they hold. For instance the contents of the richest word—God—are not the same to every one of us. They will vary with the experience of each. (SB, 238)

I see neither contradiction nor insanity in my life. It is true that as a man cannot see his back, so can he not see his errors or insanity. But the sages have often likened a man of *religion* to a lunatic. I therefore hug the belief that I may not be insane and may be truly religious. Which of the two I am in truth can only be decided after my death. (MM, 1)

Whenever I see an erring man, I say to myself I have also erred; when I see a lustful man I say to myself, so was I once; and in this way I feel kinship with everyone in the world and feel that I cannot be happy without the humblest of us being happy. (MM, 2-3)

I shall have to answer my God and my Maker if I give anyone less than his due, but I am sure that He will bless me if He knows that I gave one more than his

due. (MM, 3)

Mine is a life full of joy, in the midst of incessant work. In not wanting to think of what tomorrow will bring for me I feel as free as a bird.... The thought that I am ceaselessly and honestly struggling against the requirements of the flesh sustains me. (MM, 3)

I am too conscious of the imperfections of the species to which I belong to be irritated against any member thereof. My remedy is to deal with the wrong wherever I see it, not to hurt the wrong-doer, even as I would not like to be hurt for the wrongs I continually do. (MM, 3)

I remain an optimist, not that there is any evidence that I can give that right is going to prosper, but because of my unflinching faith that right must prosper in the end... Our inspiration can come only from our faith that right must ultimately prevail. (MM, 5)

There are limits to the capacity of an individual, and the moment he flatters himself that he can undertake all tasks, God is there to humble his pride. For myself, I am gifted with enough humility to look even to babes and suckling s for help. (MM, 5)

A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent although it is unconscious of it. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. We do not exaggerate when we say that life is a mere bubble. (MM, 5)

I am an irrepressible optimist, because I believe in myself. That sounds very arrogant, doesn't it? But I say it from the depths of my humility. I believe in the supreme power of God. I believe in Truth and, therefore, I have no doubt in the

future of this country or the future of humanity. (MM, 10)

Mine is not a religion of the prison-house. It has room for the least among God's creation. But it is proof against insolence, pride of race, religion or colour. (MM, 81)

I do not share the belief that there can or will be on earth one religion. I am striving, therefore, to find a common factor and to induce mutual tolerance. (MM, 82)

I hold that a life of perfect continence in thought, speech and action is necessary for reaching spiritual perfection. And a nation that does not possess such men is poorer for the want. (MM, 106)

A sinner is equal to the saint in the eye of God. Both will have equal justice, and both an equal opportunity either to go forward or to go backward. Both are His children, His creation. A saint who considers himself superior to a sinner forfeits his sainthood and becomes worse than the sinner, who, unlike the proud saint, knows not what he is doing. (MM, 167)

We often confuse spiritual knowledge with spiritual attainment. Spirituality is not a matter of knowing scriptures and engaging in philosophical discussions. It is a matter of heart culture, of unmeasurable strength. Fearlessness is the first requisite of spirituality. Cowards can never be moral. (SB, 210)

Man should earnestly desire the well-being of all God's creation and pray that he might have the strength to do so. In desiring the well-being of all lies his own welfare; he who desires only his own or his community's welfare is selfish and it can never be well with him..... It is essential for man to discriminate between what he may consider to be good and what is really good for him.

(MGP, I, 348)

I believe in the absolute oneness of God and, therefore, of humanity. What though we have many bodies? We have but one soul. The rays of the sun are many through refraction. But they have the same source. I cannot, therefore, detach myself from the wickedest soul nor may I be denied identity with the most virtuous. (MGP, II, 784)

If I were a dictator, religion and State would be separate. I swear by my religion. I will die for it. But it is my personal affair. The State has nothing to do with it. The State would look after secular welfare, health, communications, foreign relations, currency and so on, but not your or my religion. That is everybody's personal concern. (MT, VII, 264)

I am surrounded by exaggeration and untruth. In spite of my best efforts to find it, I do not know where Truth lies. But it seems to me that I have come nearer to God and Truth. It has cost me old friendships but I am not sorry for it. To me it is a sign of my having come nearer to God that I can write and speak to everybody plainly and fearlessly about the delicate issue in the teeth of the fiercest opposition, practice in full the eleven vows which I have professed, without the slightest feeling of perturbation or unrest. Sixty years of striving have at last enabled me to realize the ideal of truth and purity which I have ever set before myself. (MGP, II, 143)

All that we know is that one should do one's duty and leave the results in the hands of God. Man is supposed to be master of his own destiny, but it is only partly true. He can make his own destiny only in so far as he is allowed by the Great Power which overrides all our intentions, all our plans and carries out His own plans. I call that Power not by the name of Allah, Khuda or God but Truth. The whole truth is embodied only within the heart of that Great Power—Truth.

(MGP, II, 91)

I know of no greater sin than to oppress the innocent in the name of God.
(MGP, II, 143)

When I think of my littleness and my limitations on the one hand and of the expectations raised about me on the other, I become dazed for the moment, but I come to myself as soon as I realize that these expectations are a tribute not to me, a curious mixture of Jekyll and Hyde, but to the incarnation, however imperfect but comparatively great in me, of the two priceless qualities of truth and non-violence. (MM, 14)

There is nothing on earth that I would not give up for the sake of the country excepting of course two things and two only, namely, truth and non -violence. I would not sacrifice these two for all the world. For to me Truth is God and there is no way to find Truth except the way of non-violence. I do not seek to serve India at the sacrifice of Truth or God. For I know that a man who forsakes Truth can forsake his country, and his nearest and dearest ones. (MT, II, 312)

CHAPTER III

MEANS AND ENDS

Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life. (SB, 13)

They say 'means are after all means'. I would say 'means are after all everything'. As the means so the end. There is no wall of separation between means and end. Indeed the Creator has given us control (and that too very limited) over means, none over the end. Realization of the goal is in exact proportion to that of the means. This is a proposition that admits of no exception. (SB, 37)

Ahimsa and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like the two sides of a coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse, and which the reverse? Nevertheless, *ahimsa* is the means; Truth is the end. Means to be means must always be within our reach, and so *ahimsa* is our supreme duty. If we take care of the means, we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. When once we have grasped this point final victory is beyond question. Whatever difficulties we encounter, whatever apparent reverses we sustain, we may not give up the quest for Truth which alone is, being God Himself. (SB, 14)

I do not believe in short-violent-cuts to success.... However much I may sympathize with and admire worthy motives, I am an uncompromising opponent of violent methods even to serve the noblest of causes. There is, therefore, really no meeting-ground between the school of violence and myself. But my creed of non-violence not only does not preclude me but compels me even to associate with anarchists and all those who believe in violence. But that association is always with the sole object of weaning them from what appears

to me their error. For experience convinces me that permanent good can never be the outcome of untruth and violence. Even if my belief is a fond delusion, it will be admitted that it is a fascinating delusion. (MM, 126)

Your belief that there is no connection between the means and the end is a great mistake. Through that mistake even men who have been considered religious have committed grievous crimes. Your reasoning is the same as saying that we can get a rose through planting a noxious weed. If I want to cross the ocean, I can do so only by means of a vessel; if I were to use a cart for that purpose, both the cart and I would soon find the bottom. 'As is the God, so is the votary' is a maxim worth considering. Its meaning has been distorted and men have gone astray. The means may be likened to a seed, the end to a tree; and there is just the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. I am not likely to obtain the result flowing from the worship of God by laying myself prostrate before Satan. If, therefore, anyone were to say: 'I want to worship God; it does not matter that I do so by means of Satan', it would be set down as ignorant folly. We reap exactly as we sow. (HS, 51-52)

Socialism is a beautiful word and, so far as I am aware, in socialism all the members of society are equal— none low, none high. In the individual body, the head is not high because it is the top of the body, nor are the soles of the feet low because they touch the earth. Even as members of the individual body are equal, so are the members of society. This is socialism.

In it the prince and the peasant, the wealthy and the poor, the employer and the employee are all on the same level. In terms of religion, there is no duality in socialism. It is all unity. Looking at society all the world over, there is nothing but duality or plurality. Unity is conspicuous by its absence.... In the unity of my conception there is perfect unity in the plurality of designs. In order to reach this state, we may not look on things philosophically and say that we need not make a move until all are converted to socialism. Without changing our life we may go on giving addresses, forming parties and hawk-like

seize the game when it comes our way. This is no socialism. The more we treat it as game to be seized, the farther it must recede from us.

Socialism begins with the first convert. If there is one such you can add zeroes to the one and the first zero will account for ten and every addition will account for ten times the previous number. If, however, the beginner is a zero, in other words, no one makes the beginning, multiplicity of zeroes will also produce zero value. Time and paper occupied in writing zeroes will be so much waste.

This socialism is as pure as crystal. It, therefore, requires crystal-like means to achieve it. Impure means result in an impure end. Hence the prince and the peasant will not be equalled by cutting off the prince's head, nor can the process of cutting off equalize the employer and the employed. One cannot reach truth by untruthfulness. Truthful conduct alone can reach truth. Are not non-violence and truth twins? The answer is an emphatic 'No'. Non-violence is embedded in truth and vice versa. Hence has it been said that they are faces of the same coin. Either is inseparable from the other. Read the coin either way—the spelling of words will be different; the value is the same. This blessed state is unattainable without perfect purity. Harbour impurity of mind or body and you have untruth and violence in you.

Therefore only truthful, non-violent and pure-hearted socialists will be able to establish a socialistic society in India and the world. (MGP, II, 140-41)

The spiritual weapon of self-purification, intangible as it seems, is the most potent means of revolutionizing one's environment and loosening external shackles. It works subtly and invisibly; it is an intense process though it might often seem a weary and long-drawn process, it is the straightest way to liberation, the surest and quickest and no effort can be too great for it. What it requires is faith—an unshakable mountain-like faith that flinches from nothing. (SB, 160-61)

I am more concerned in preventing the brutalization of human nature than in the prevention of the sufferings of my own people. I know that people who voluntarily undergo a course of suffering raise themselves and the whole of humanity; but I also know that people who become brutalized in their desperate efforts to get victory over their opponents or to exploit weaker nations or weaker men, not only drag down themselves but mankind also. And it cannot be a matter of pleasure to me or anyone else to see human nature dragged to the mire. If we are all sons of the same God and partake of the same divine essence, we must partake of the sin of every person whether he belongs to us or to another race. You can understand how repugnant it must be to invoke the beast in any human being, how much more so in Englishmen, among whom I count numerous friends. (SB, 161)

The method of passive resistance is the clearest and safest, because, if the cause is not true, it is the resisters, and they alone, who suffer. (SB, 162)