good will and resist disturbances . . . I must have the ability to do so, and I cannot . . . unless my country has come into its own. . . . For so long as India is a subject nation, not only is she a danger to peace but also England, which exploits India. Other nations may tolerate today England's imperialist policy and her exploitation of other nations, but they certainly do not appreciate it, and they would gladly help in the prevention of England's becoming a greater and greater menace. . . . Of course, you will say that India free can become a menace herself. But let us assume she will behave herself with her doctrines of non-violence if she achieves her freedom through it, and for all her bitter experiences of being a victim of exploitation.[33]

Man does not live by bread alone. Many prefer self-respect to food.[34]

[33] *Young India,* November 12, 1931.
[34] *Young India,* February 5, 1925.

[15]

GANDHI'S MESSAGE TO ALL MEN

. . . The more efficient a force is, the more silent and the more subtle it is. Love is the subtlest force in the world. . . .[1]

[The] force of love . . . truly comes into play only when it meets with causes of hatred. True Non-violence does not ignore or blind itself to causes of hatred, but in spite of the knowledge of their existence, operates upon the person setting those causes in motion. . . . The law of Non-violence—returning good for evil, loving one's enemy—involves a knowledge of the blemishes of the "enemy." Hence do the Scriptures say . . . "Forgiveness is an attribute of the brave."[2]

. . . I can no more preach Non-violence to a coward than I can tempt a blind man to enjoy healthy scenes. Non-violence is the summit of bravery. . . .[3]

. . . Suffering in one's own person is . . . the essence of non-violence and is the chosen substitute for violence to others. It is not because I value life low that I can countenance with joy thousands voluntarily losing their lives for Satyagraha, but because I know that it results in the long run in the least loss of life, and what is more, it ennobles those who lose their lives. . . . [Unless] Europe is to commit suicide, some nation will have to dare to disarm herself and take large risks. The level of non-violence in that nation . . . will naturally have risen so high as to command universal respect. Her judgments will be unerring, her decisions will be firm, her capacity for heroic self-sacrifice will be great, and she will want to live as much for other nations as for herself. . . .[4]

. . . They say "means are after all [just] means." I would say "means are after all everything." As the means, so the end. Violent

[1] *Young India,* December 4, 1924.
[2] *Young India,* September 29, 1927.
[3] *Young India,* May 29, 1924.
[4] *Young India,* October 8, 1925.

means will give violent Swaraj. . . . There is no wall of separation between means and end. . . . I have been endeavoring to keep the country to means that are purely peaceful and legitimate.[5]

. . . If we take care of the means we are bound to reach the end sooner or later. . . .[6]

. . . Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realizing Him. . . .[7]

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 Non-violence. . . .[8]

[To] me . . . there is no way to find Truth except the way of Non-violence. . . . For I know that a man who forsakes Truth can forsake his country and his nearest and dearest ones. . . .[9]

. . . I will not sacrifice Truth and Non-violence even for the deliverance of my country or religion. . . .[10]

. . . The movement of non-violent non-coöperation has nothing in common with the historical struggles for freedom in the West. It is not based on brute force or hatred. It does not aim at destroying the tyrant. It is a movement of self-purification. It therefore seeks to convert the tyrant. . . .[11]

. . . A revolutionary murders or robs not for the good of his victims, whom he often considers to be fit only to be injured, but for the supposed good of society.[12]

. . . Conscience is the ripe fruit of strictest discipline. . . . There is no such thing, therefore, as mass conscience. . . .

. . . The introduction of conscience into our public life is welcome . . . if it has taught a few of us to stand up for human dignity and rights in the face of the heaviest odds. . . .[13]

[5] *Young India,* July 17, 1924.
[6] M. K. Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir* (Ahmedabad: Navajivan Press, 1937), Chapter 3, p. 13.
[7] *Young India,* January 8, 1925.
[8] *Young India,* January 20, 1927.
[9] Speech at Wardha on Hindu-Moslem riots, December, 1920, in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: The Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi,* Volume II, p. 312.
[10] *Young India,* January 20, 1927.
[11] *Young India,* February 11, 1926.
[12] *Young India,* May 21, 1925.
[13] *Young India,* August 21, 1924.

. . . I have no secret methods. I know no diplomacy save that of truth. I have no weapon but non-violence. I may be unconsciously led astray for a while but not for all time. I have therefore well-defined limitations. . . .

I am yet ignorant of what exactly Bolshevism is. I have not been able to study it. I do not know whether it is for the good of Russia in the long run. But I do know that in so far as it is based on violence and denial of God, it repels me. I do not believe in short-violent-cuts to success. Those Bolshevik friends who are bestowing their attention on me should realize that 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. . . . [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.[14]

There is no principle worth the name if it is not wholly good. I swear by non-violence because I know that it alone conduces to the highest good of mankind, not merely in the next world, but in this also. I object to violence because, when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary, the evil it does is permanent. . . .[15]

. . . Terrorism set up by reformers may be just as bad as Government terrorism, and it is often worse because it draws a certain amount of false sympathy. . . .[16]

. . . I invite the revolutionaries not to commit suicide and drag with them unwilling victims. India's way is not Europe's. India is not Calcutta and Bombay. India lives in her seven hundred thousand villages. If the revolutionaries are as many let them spread out into these villages and try to bring sunshine into the dark dungeons of the millions of their countrymen. That would be worthier of their ambition and love of the land than the exciting and unquenchable thirst for the blood of English officials and those who are assisting them. It is nobler to try to change their spirit than to take their lives.[17]

[A friend] says that non-violence cannot be attained by the mass of people. And yet, we find the general work of mankind is being

[14] *Young India,* December 11, 1924.
[15] *Young India,* May 21, 1925.
[16] *Young India,* December 18, 1924.
[17] *Young India,* March 12, 1925.

carried on from day to day by the mass of people acting in harmony as if by instinct. If they were instinctively violent, the world would end in no time. They remain peaceful. . . . It is when the mass mind is unnaturally influenced by wicked men that the mass of mankind commit violence. But they forget it as quickly as they commit it because they return to their peaceful nature immediately the evil influence of the directing mind has been removed.[18]

. . . I hope to demonstrate that real Swaraj [Self-Rule] will come not by the acquisition of authority by a few but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when abused. In other words, Swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.[19]

. . . If we all discharge our duties, rights will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed, we run after rights, they will escape us like a will o' the wisp. . . . The same teaching has been embodied by Krishna in the immortal words: "Action alone is thine. Leave thou the fruit severely alone." Action is duty, fruit is the right.

. . . He who understands the doctrine of self-help blames himself for failure. It is on this ground that I object to violence. If we blame others where we should blame ourselves, and wish for or bring about their destruction, [it] does not remove the root cause of the disease, which, on the contrary sinks all the deeper for . . . ignorance. . . .[20]

[It] is necessary for workers to become self-reliant and dare to prosecute their plans if they so desire, without hankering after the backing of . . . persons supposed to be great and influential. Let them rely upon the strength of their own conviction and the cause they seek to espouse. Mistakes there will be. Suffering, even avoidable, there must be. But nations are not easily made. . . .[21]

. . . The way of peace insures internal growth and stability. We reject it because we fancy that it involves submission to the will of the ruler who has imposed himself upon us. . . . The suffering to be undergone . . . will be nothing compared to the physical suffering and the moral loss we must incur in trying the way of war. And the

[18] *Young India,* July 8, 1926.
[19] *Young India,* January 29, 1925.
[20] *Young India,* January 8, 1925.
[21] *Young India,* May 19, 1927.

suffering in following the way of peace must benefit both. It will be like the pleasurable travail of a new birth.[22]

[He] alone is truly non-violent who remains nonviolent even though he has the ability to strike. . . . I have had in my life many an opportunity of shooting my opponents and earning the crown of martyrdom but I had not the heart to shoot any of them. For I did not want them to shoot me, however much they disliked my methods. I wanted them to convince me of my error as I was trying to convince them of theirs. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you."[23]

Most people do not understand the complicated machinery of the government. They do not realize every citizen silently but none the less certainly sustains the government of the day in ways of which he has no knowledge. Every citizen therefore renders himself responsible for every act of his government. And it is quite proper to support it so long as the actions of the government are bearable. But when they hurt him and his nation it becomes his duty to withdraw his support.[24]

. . . I cannot satisfy myself with false coöperation—anything inferior to twenty-four carats gold. . . . [My non-coöperation] harms no one, it is non-coöperation with evil, with an evil system, and not with the evildoer. My religion teaches me to love even an evildoer. . . .[25]

What are . . . our countrymen in South Africa to do [in the way of preventing further oppressive legislation]? There is nothing in the world like self-help. . . . Self-help in this case, as perhaps in every other, means self-suffering, self-suffering means Satyagraha. When their honor is at stake, when their rights are being taken away, when their livelihood is threatened, they have the right and it becomes their duty to offer Satyagraha. . . .

. . . We may be justly entitled to many things but Satyagraha is offered for things without which self-respect, or which is the same thing, honorable existence, is impossible.

[22] *Young India,* May 20, 1925.
[23] *Young India,* May 7, 1925.
[24] *Young India,* July 28, 1920.
[25] Speech for an "at home" given by the Indian Association, printed in *Young India,* August 25, 1925.

They must count the cost. Satyagraha cannot be offered in bravado or as a mere trial. It is therefore offered because it becomes irresistible. No price is too dear to pay for it—truth. . . .[26]

Bravery and self-sacrifice need not kill. . . .[27]

. . . Civil Disobedience means capacity for unlimited suffering without the intoxicating excitement of killing. . . .[28]

The hardest heart and the grossest ignorance must disappear before the rising sun of suffering without anger and without malice.[29]

. . . A slave is a slave because he consents to slavery. If training in physical resistance is possible, why should that in spiritual resistance be impossible? . . .[30]

The acquisition of the spirit of non-resistance is a matter of long training in self-denial and appreciation of the hidden forces within ourselves. It changes one's outlook upon life. It puts different values upon things and upsets previous calculations. And when once it is set in motion its effect . . . can overtake the whole universe. It is the greatest force because it is the highest expression of the soul. All need not possess the same measure of conscious non-resistance for its full operation. It is enough for one person only to possess it, even as one general is enough to regulate and dispose of the energy of millions of soldiers who enlist under his banner, even though they know not the why and wherefor of his dispositions. . . .[31]

Those who can suffer for one to three years will find themselves inured to suffering for thirty years.[32]

. . . Man is superior to the brute in as much as he is capable of self-restraint and sacrifice, of which the brute is incapable.[33]

. . . If every young man found himself in plenty and never knew what it was to go without . . . he may be found wanting when the trial comes. Sacrifice is joy.

[26] *Young India,* February 18, 1926.
[27] *Young India,* May 7, 1925.
[28] *Young India,* November 27, 1924.
[29] *Young India,* February 19, 1925.
[30] *Young India,* February 4, 1926.
[31] *Young India,* September 23, 1926.
[32] *Young India,* July 24, 1924.
[33] *Young India,* June 3, 1926.

. . . No sacrifice is worth the name unless it is a joy. Sacrifice and a long face go ill together. . . .[34]

Do you think anything on earth can be done without trouble?[35]

[With] me, the safety of the cause has not lain in numbers. . . . A general with a large army cannot march as swiftly as he would like to. He has to take note of all the different units in his army. My position is not unlike such a general's. . . . If it often means strength, it sometimes means a positive hindrance. . . . I am not without hope that I shall not be found wanting if I am left with but two human comrades or without any. . . .[36]

Strength of numbers is the delight of the timid. The valiant of spirit glory in fighting alone. . . .[37]

. . . I suggest the following prescription of Civil Disobedience, which even one man can offer. . . . Let a batch, or only one person . . . march on foot to the Government House . . . and walk on to the point where he or she is stopped. There let him or her stop and demand the release of detenues or his or her own arrest. To preserve intact the civil nature of this disobedience, the Satyagrahi must be wholly unarmed, and in spite of insults, kicks or worse, must meekly stand the ground and be arrested without the slightest opposition. He may carry his own food in his pocket, a bottle full of water, take his Gita, the Koran, the Bible . . . as the case may be, and his [spinning device]. If there are many such real Satyagrahis they will certainly transform the atmosphere in an immensely short time, even as one gentle shower transforms the plains of India into a beautiful green carpet in one single day.[38]

Love is the strongest force the world possesses and yet it is the humblest imaginable.[39]

. . . Who has not seen strong-bodied bullies surrendering helplessly to their mothers? Love conquers the brute in the son. . . .

[We] think it impossible to evoke the hidden powers of the soul. Well, I am engaged in trying to show, if I have any of these powers,

[34] *Young India,* June 25, 1925.
[35] Letter to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, April 4, 1922.
[36] *Young India,* December 4, 1924.
[37] *Young India,* June 17, 1926.
[38] *Young India,* July 14, 1927.
[39] *Young India,* August 6, 1925.

that I am as frail a mortal as any of us and I never had anything extraordinary about me nor have any now. I claim to be a simple individual liable to err like any other fellow mortal. I own, however, that I have humility enough in me to confess my errors and to retrace my steps. I own that I have an immovable faith in God and His goodness and unconsumable passion for truth and love. But is that not what every person has latent in him? If we are to make progress, we must not repeat history but make new history. . . . If we may make new discoveries and inventions in the phenomenal world, must we declare our bankruptcy in the spiritual domain? Is it impossible to multiply the exceptions so as to make them the rule? Must man always be brute first and man after, if at all?[40]

[When] I was passing through a severe crisis of scepticism and doubt . . . I came across Tolstoy's book *The Kingdom of God Is Within You,* and was deeply impressed by it. I was at that time a believer in violence. Its reading cured me of my scepticism and made me a firm believer in [non-violence]. What has appealed to me most in Tolstoy's life is that he practised what he preached and reckoned no cost too great in his pursuit of truth. . . .

He was the greatest apostle of non-violence the present age has produced. No one in the West before him or since has written and spoken on non-violence so fully or insistently and with such penetration and insight. . . . [His] remarkable development of this doctrine puts to shame the present-day narrow and lop-sided interpretation put upon it by the votaries of Ahimsa in this land of ours. . . . True Ahimsa should mean a complete freedom from ill will and anger and hate and an overflowing love for all. For inculcating this true and higher type of Ahimsa amongst us, Tolstoy's life with its oceanlike love should serve as a beacon light and a never-failing source of inspiration. . . .[41]

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. . . . But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined.

[40] *Young India,* May 6, 1926.
[41] 1928, in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma,* Volume II, pp. 418–420.

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Let me take an illustration. I am a member of an institution which holds a few acres of land whose crops are in imminent perils from monkeys. I believe in the sacredness of all life and hence I regard it as a breach of non-violence 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. . . .

Even so did I participate in three acts of War [the Boer War, the Zulu Rebellion, World War I]. I could not—it would be madness for me—to sever my connection with the society to which I belong. And on those occasions I had no thought of non-coöperating with the British Government. My position regarding that Government is totally different today and hence I should not participate voluntarily 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.

. . . 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 [everyone] does 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.

[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. . . .[42]

[42] *Young India,* September 13, 1928.

[16]

GANDHI'S POLITICAL PRINCIPLES

[On September 18, 1924, Gandhi started a twenty-one day fast for Hindu-Moslem friendship.

Gandhi had been ill for months in jail. Then came the urgent appendectomy. He was fifty-five. He knew a twenty-one day fast might be fatal. He did not want to die. There were too many unfinished tasks. It gave him no pleasure to suffer.

The fast was dictated by duty to the highest cause—the universal brotherhood of man.]

. . . My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray. . . .[1]

Fasting cannot be undertaken against an opponent. Fasting can be resorted to only against one's nearest and dearest, and that solely for his or her good.[2]

. . . Fasting can be resorted to only against a lover, not to extort rights but to reform him, as when a son fasts for a father who drinks. . . . I fasted to reform those who loved me. But I will not fast to reform General Dyer, who not only does not love me but who regards himself as my enemy. . . .[3]

[Be] most careful about accusing the opponent of wickedness. . . . Those whom we regard as wicked as a rule return the compliment. . . . Mind is its own place, it can make hell of heaven. . . .[4]

. . . Let us . . . honor our opponents for the same honesty of purpose and patriotic motive that we claim for ourselves. . . . I believe in trusting. Trust begets trust. Suspicion is foetid and only stinks.

[1] Statement issued from New Delhi, *Young India,* September 18, 1924.
[2] *Young India,* September 30, 1926.
[3] *Young India,* May 1, 1924.
[4] *Young India,* December 26, 1924.

He who trusts has never yet lost in the world. A suspicious man is lost to himself and the world. . . . Suspicion is of the brood of violence. Non-violence cannot but trust. . . .[5]

Lying is the mother of violence. A truthful man cannot long remain violent. He will perceive in the course of his search that he has no need to be violent and he will further discover that so long as there is the slightest trace of violence in him, he will fail to find the truth for which he is searching.[6]

[If] I listen to . . . Mr. Worldly-Wise, I am lost already. I do not want to foresee the future. I am concerned with taking care of the present. God has given me no control over the moment following. . . . It is true that I have often been let down. Many have deceived me and many have been found wanting. But I do not repent of my association with them. . . . The most practical, the most dignified way of going on in the world is to take people at their word, when you have no positive reason to the contrary.[7]

. . . A man who is truthful will not believe charges even against his foes. He will, however, try to understand the viewpoints of his opponents and will always keep an open mind and seek every opportunity of serving his opponents. I have endeavored to apply this law in my relations with Englishmen and Europeans in general in South Africa as well as here and not without some success. How much more then should we apply this law in our homes, in our relations, in our domestic affairs, in connection with our own kith and kin?[8]

. . . Madness answered with madness simply deepens, it never dispels it. Hinduism will be sorry stuff if it has to exist on cowardly vengeance that pursues those who can offer no effective resistance.[9]

. . . Few men are wantonly wicked. The most heinous and the most cruel crimes of which history has record have been committed under cover of religion or equally other noble motive. But . . . we are no better off for the destruction that has gone on even under

[5] *Young India,* June 4, 1925.
[6] *Young India,* May 20, 1925.
[7] *Young India,* December 26, 1924.
[8] *Young India,* September 29, 1927.
[9] Nirmal Kumar Bose, *Studies in Gandhism* (Calcutta: India Associated Publishing Company, 1947), Hindi Edition.

the highest sanction . . . religion. . . . We have no right to destroy life that we cannot create. . . .

. . . Perhaps it is as well that we are beset with danger at every point in our life, for, in spite of our knowledge of the danger and our precarious existence, our indifference to the Source of all life is excelled only by our amazing arrogance.[10]

. . . Both reason and heart refuse to reconcile themselves to torture for any crime no matter how vile the crime may be.[11]

. . . The sword is the emblem of Islam. But Islam was born in an environment where the sword was and still remains the supreme law. The message of Jesus has proved ineffective because the environment was unready to receive it. So with the message of the Prophet. The sword is too much in evidence among Mussalmans. It must be sheathed if Islam is to be what it means—peace. . . .[12]

. . . If we have no charity, and no tolerance, we shall never settle our differences amicably and must therefore always submit to the arbitrament of a third party—foreign domination. . . .[13]

. . . I came to the conclusion long ago, after prayerful search and study and discussion with as many people as I could meet, that all religions were true, and also that all had some error in them, and whilst I hold my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism. . . . So we can only pray, if we are Hindus, that not a Christian should become a Hindu, or if we are Moslems that not a Hindu or a Christian should become a Moslem, nor should we even secretly pray that anyone should be converted, but our inmost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Moslem a better Moslem and a Christian a better Christian. . . . I broaden my Hinduism by loving other religions as my own. . . .[14]

I disbelieve in the conversion of one person by another. My effort should never be to undermine another's faith but to make him a better follower of his own faith. This implies the belief in the truth of all religions and respect for them. . . .[15]

[10] *Young India,* July 7, 1927.
[11] *Young India,* February 26, 1925.
[12] *Young India,* December 30, 1926.
[13] *Young India,* April 17, 1924.
[14] *Young India,* January 19, 1928.
[15] Talk with Dr. John Mott, an evangelist, in 1929, in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma,* Volume II, p. 450.

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. . . . Study and appreciation of other religions need not cause a weakening of [regard for one's own religion], it should mean extension of that regard to other religions.[16]

. . . Hinduism leaves the individual absolutely free to do what he or she likes for the sake of self-realization for which and which alone he or she is born.[17]

. . . I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas [Hindu scriptures]. I believe the Bible [and the] Koran to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas. . . .[18]

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.[19]

Mankind is one. . . . There are, of course, differences of race and status and the like, but the higher the status of a man, the greater is his responsibility.[20]

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.[21]

[All] religions are more or less true. All proceed from the same God but all are imperfect because they come down to us through imperfect human instrumentality. . . . [No] propaganda can be allowed which reviles other religions. . . . The best way of dealing with such propaganda is to publicly condemn it. . . .[22]

The golden rule of conduct . . . is mutual toleration, seeing that we will never all think alike and that we shall always see *Truth* in fragment and from different angles of vision. Conscience is not the

[16] *Young India,* December 6, 1928.
[17] *Young India,* October 21, 1926.
[18] *Young India,* October 6, 1921.
[19] M. K. Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj,* Chapter 2, p. 16.
[20] M. K. Gandhi, *Ethical Religion,* Chapter 6, p. 59.
[21] *Young India,* May 25, 1921.
[22] *Young India,* May 24, 1924.

same thing for all. Whilst, therefore, it is a good guide for individual conduct, imposition of that conduct upon all will be an insufferable interference with everybody else's freedom of conscience. . . . [Mutual toleration] can be inculcated among and practiced by all, irrespective of their status and training.[23]

. . . We must measure people with their own measure and see how far they come up to it. . . .[24]

. . . No doubt religion has to answer for some of the most terrible crimes in history. But that is the fault not of religion but of the ungovernable brute in man. . . .[25]

. . . True religion being the greatest thing in life and in the world, it has been exploited the most. And those who have seen the exploiters and the exploitation and missed the reality naturally get disgusted with the thing itself. But religion is after all a matter for each individual, and then too a matter of the heart, call it then by whatever name you like, that which gives one the greatest solace in the midst of the severest fire is God. . . .[26]

Rationalists are admirable beings, rationalism is a hideous monster when it claims for itself omnipotence. Attribution of omnipotence to reason is as bad a piece of idolatry as is worship of stock and stone, believing it to be God.[27]

True morality consists not in following the beaten track but in finding out the true path for ourselves and fearlessly following it.[28]

. . . Unfortunately or fortunately, we have to pass through many an ebb and flow before we settle down to real peace.[29]

. . . 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.[30]

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[23] *Young India,* September 23, 1926.

[24] Letter to Mira Behn from Sholapur, February 21, 1927, in M. K. Gandhi, *Letters to a Disciple,* p. 26.

[25] *Young India,* October 14, 1926.

[26] Letter to Nehru, April 25, 1925, in Jawaharlal Nehru, *Old Letters,* p. 42.

[27] *Young India,* October 14, 1926.

[28] M. K. Gandhi, *Ethical Religion,* Chapter 2, p. 38.

[29] Letter to Mira Behn, May 2, 1927, in M. K. Gandhi, *Letters to a Disciple,* p. 33.

[30] *Young India,* November 24, 1921.

Churches, mosques and temples which cover so much hypocrisy and humbug and shut the poorest out of them seem but a mockery of God and His worship, when one sees the eternally renewed temple of worship under the vast blue canopy inviting every one of us to real worship, instead of abusing His name by quarreling in the name of religion.[31]

. . . That religion and that nation will be blotted out of the face of the earth which pins its faith to injustice, untruth or violence. God is Light, not darkness. God is Love, not hate. God is Truth, not untruth. . . .[32]

[There] is not a single offense which does not, directly or indirectly, affect many others besides the actual offender. Hence, whether an individual is good or bad is not merely his own concern but really the concern of the whole community, nay, of the whole world.[33]

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.[34]

I see there is an instinctive horror of killing living beings under any circumstances whatever. For instance, an alternative has been suggested in the shape of confining even rabid dogs in a certain place and allowing them to die a slow death. Now my idea of compassion makes this thing impossible for me. I cannot for a moment bear to see a dog, or for that matter any other living being, helplessly suffering the torture of a slow death. I do not kill a human being thus circumstanced because I have more hopeful remedies. I should kill a dog similarly situated because in its case I am without a remedy. Should my child be attacked with rabies and there was no helpful remedy to relieve his agony, I should consider it my duty to take his life. Fatalism has its limits. We leave things to fate after

[31] Speech to members of the Young Men's Christian Association, Colombo, Ceylon, in *Young India,* December 8, 1927.

[32] Congress Party Presidential Address, in *Young India,* December 26, 1924.

[33] M. K. Gandhi, *Ethical Religion,* Chapter 6, p. 57.

[34] *Ibid.,* Chapter 2, p. 39.

exhausting all the remedies. One of the remedies and the final one to relieve the agony of a tortured child is to take his life.[35]

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 . . . declared the case to be past help and past hope. . . .

. . . I felt that humanity demanded the agony should be ended by ending life itself. . . . With the clearest of convictions I got . . . 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 [of the Hindus believing cattle to be sacred] would not approve of my action and that it would read nothing but himsa [violence] 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 shrinkers turn away from it." The pathway of ahimsa, that is, of love, one has often to tread all alone.[36]

I do not want to live at the cost of the life even of a snake. I should let him bite me to death rather than kill him. But it is likely that if God puts me to that cruel test . . . I may not have the courage to die but the beast in me may assert itself and I may seek to kill the snake in defending this perishable body. I admit that my belief has not become so incarnate in me as to warrant my stating emphatically that I have shed all fear of snakes so as to befriend them as I would like to be able to do.[37]

[Gandhi's friends argued that his retirement from politics would split the Congress Party between those who followed his work with the masses—his "Constructive Program"—and those who advocated political work in the legislative and municipal councils set up by the British Government. Gandhi was persuaded to take the presidency of the Congress Party for 1925.]

[35] *Young India,* November 18, 1926.
[36] 1928, in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma,* Volume II, pp. 421–423.
[37] *Young India,* April 14, 1927.

For me, politics bereft of religion are absolute dirt, ever to be shunned. Politics concern nations and that which concerns the welfare of others must be one of the concerns of a man who is religiously inclined, in other words, a seeker after God and Truth. . . . 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.[38]

. . . I am unable to subscribe to the methods of bribery and deceit even for gaining entrance into heaven, much less for gaining India's freedom. For heaven will not be heaven and freedom will not be freedom if either is gained through such methods.[39]

. . . I remain loyal to an institution so long as that institution conduces to my growth, to the growth of the nation. Immediately I find that the institution, instead of conducing to [this] growth, impedes it, I hold it my bounden duty to be disloyal to it. . . .

. . . What the ultimate destiny of India will be, we do not know, or we know only that . . . it will be what every one of us whose lot is cast in India wants it to be. . . . But everyone should become an optimist and then there is nothing but the brightest future for this land. . . . I want you, therefore, to approach the question in a spirit of service. . . . "Loyalty" or "disloyalty" does not matter much when a person really wants to serve.[40]

. . . There is but one God and one means. There is unity in disease, therefore there is unity in remedy. [There] is only one sovereign remedy, namely, nonviolent non-coöperation. My "followers" will therefore do well to set up their own organization of work and no talk. They must cut their way to the nation's heart through service. . . . [No one] who wants to spin or . . . promote Hindu-Moslem unity, or . . . remove untouchability requires any organization. . . .[41]

. . . Everyone who either may not see eye to eye with the Congress in all its program, or because of weakness or circumstances . . . can still work as effectively as if he were in the executive. There is

[38] *Young India,* June 18, 1925.
[39] *Young India,* May 7, 1925.
[40] *Young India,* August 13, 1925.
[41] *Young India,* July 17, 1924.

nothing, for instance, to prevent [one] from enlisting members, spinning, carrying on khaddar [hand-spinning] propaganda . . . etc. Indeed, a sincere worker prefers work to the responsibility of office, and by not being on the executive [side] escapes the terrible wrangling that takes place therein.

. . . It is necessary . . . to bring into being workers who would want no office and yet would render as effective service as the strongest official. Such men and women are the pride of a nation. They are its reserve force.[42]

. . . My [Congress Party] presidential address must be a thesis on hand-spinning, complete surrender by Hindus of their material ambition to the Moslems and other minorities, and . . . asking Hindus to regard untouchability as a sin. If these things cannot enthuse the nation, I should be a useless President. How would it do for the Congress [Party] to have as President a man who sketched a program of putting the whole nation in pantaloons? . . . We would not have him because he would not suit us. So may the case be with me.

I must not therefore allow myself to be elected. . . .[43]

. . . I would guide the Congress next year only if all parties [factions] wish me to. . . . I fight out of love. . . . But I must, I see, first prove my love. I thought I had proved it. . . . I am therefore retracing my steps. I ask everyone to help me. . . .[44]

Power is of two kinds. One is obtained by the fear of punishment, and the other by arts of love. Power based on love is a thousand times more effective and permanent than the one derived from fear of punishment. . . .

. . . I am fascinated by the law of love. It is the philosopher's stone for me. . . .[45]

After much prayer, after much heart-searching and not without fear and trembling, I have decided to [preside] at the forthcoming Congress. . . .

I have abundant faith in my cause and humanity. . . .

[42] *Young India,* July 3, 1924.
[43] *Young India,* July 17, 1924.
[44] *Young India,* September 11, 1924.
[45] *Young India,* January 8, 1925.

There is a heavy duty resting on the shoulders of Congressmen. . . . They have to show their program on their persons and in their daily conduct. They will attend the Congress as servants and not as masters demanding service. . . . They will show their faith in unity between different religious sects. . . . Hindus will show their faith in the removal of untouchability by going out of their way to be attentive to those of [the untouchables] who may attend the Congress.

. . . I have no patent remedy [for attaining self-rule]. The remedy is to be found with the delegates and visitors themselves. . . .[46]

[The masses] are as yet untouched by politics. . . . Their politics are confined to bread and salt—I dare not say butter, for millions do not know the taste of ghee or even oil. . . . It is right, however, to say that we, the politicians do represent the masses in opposition to the Government. But if we begin to use them before they are ready, we shall cease to represent them. . . . We must share their sorrows, understand their difficulties and anticipate their wants. With the pariahs [untouchables] we must be pariahs and see how we feel to clean the closets of the upper classes and have the remains of their table thrown at us. We must see how we like being in the boxes, miscalled houses, of the laborers of Bombay. We must identify ourselves with the villagers who toil under the hot sun beating down on their bent backs and see how we would like to drink water from the pool in which the villagers bathe, wash their clothes and pots and in which their cattle drink and roll. Then and not till then shall we truly represent the masses, and they will . . . respond to every call.[47]

. . . My faith in non-coöperation is as bright as ever. . . . But I cannot impose my personal faith on others . . . I can but try to convince the nation of its beauty and usefulness. . . . I may misread the mind of the Congress. When that happens, I shall cease to be any force in the Congress. . . .[48]

[When] a respectable minority objects to any rule of conduct, it would be dignified for the majority . . . to yield. . . . Numerical strength savors of violence when it acts in total disregard of any

[46] *Young India,* November 27, 1924.
[47] *Young India,* September 11, 1924.
[48] *Young India,* November 20, 1924.

strongly felt opinion of a minority. . . . No organization can run smoothly when it is divided into camps, each growling at the other and each determined to have its own way by hook or by crook. . . .[49]

[When] Swaraj comes different parties will work in the same Swaraj Parliament. The Congress is intended to be a forerunner . . . of such a Parliament.[50]

. . . What is applicable to Hindu-Moslem unity is . . . applicable to the unity among different political groups. We must tolerate each other, and trust to time to convert the one or the other to the opposite belief. . . .[51]

. . . No special legislation without a change of heart can possibly bring about organic unity. And when there is a change of heart, no such legislation can possibly be necessary. . . .[52]

The spirit of democracy is not a mechanical thing to be adjusted by abolition of forms. It requires change of the heart. . . . The spirit of democracy requires the inculcation of the spirit of brotherhood. . . .[53]

. . . Democracy is not a state in which people act like sheep. Under democracy individual liberty of opinion and action is jealousy guarded. . . .[54]

[In 1924, 1925, 1926, and 1927, the popularizing of khadi—the material woven from homespun cotton thread—possessed Gandhi's mind. His price for accepting the Congress Party Presidency was the wearing of khadi as a strict condition of membership in the party. Where possible, Gandhi believed, Congress members should spin each day.]

I would like the Congress to become . . . popular. I would therefore man it with mercantile, artisan and agricultural classes. . . . It should be the privilege of educated classes to be behind and push into public life those who have . . . kept aloof.[55]

[It] is impossible for us to establish a living vital connection with

[49] *Young India,* June 9, 1927.
[50] *Young India,* December 4, 1924.
[51] Congress Presidential Address, December 24, 1924, *Young India.*
[52] *Young India,* July 14, 1927.
[53] *Young India,* December 8, 1920.
[54] *Young India,* March 2, 1922.
[55] *Young India,* July 10, 1924.

the masses unless we will work for them, through them and in their midst, not as their patrons but as their servants.[56]

A starving man thinks first of satisfying his hunger before anything else. He will sell his liberty and all for the sake of getting a morsel of food. Such is the position of millions of the people of India. For them liberty, God and all such words are merely letters put together without the slightest meaning. . . . If we want to give these people a sense of freedom we shall have to provide them with work which they can easily do in their desolate homes and which would give them at least the barest living. This can only be done by the spinning wheel. And when they have become self-reliant and are able to support themselves we are in a position to talk to them about freedom, about [the] Congress [Party], etc. Those, therefore, who bring them work and means of getting a crust of bread will be their deliverers and will be also the people who will make them hunger for liberty.[57]

. . . I would like . . . to keep the Congress a mass organization. . . . The masses do not yet actively participate in or understand our method of work. Only workers in their midst can gain influence over them. . . .[58]

[To prepare for home-rule] individuals must cultivate the spirit of service, renunciation, truth, nonviolence, self-restraint, patience. . . . They must engage in constructive work [the term Gandhi gave for his three-point program: removal of untouchability, Hindu-Moslem unity and universal spinning] in order to develop these qualities. Many reforms would be effected automatically if we put in a good deal of silent work among the people.[59]

I do not believe the spiritual law works on a field of its own. On the contrary, it expresses itself only through the ordinary activities of life. It thus affects the economic, the social and the political fields.[60]

[Experience] shows we cannot be truthful and peaceful on some occasions and for some people only, if we are not so on all occasions.

[56] *Young India,* February 3, 1927.
[57] *Young India,* March 18, 1926.
[58] *Young India,* July 31, 1924.
[59] *Young India,* January 8, 1925.
[60] *Young India,* September 3, 1935.

And if we will not be considerate toward one another, we shall not be considerate to the world outside. All the prestige acquired by the Congress will be gone if we are not scrupulously clean in our dealings within or without in every detail. Pounds will take care of themselves if we could but take care of the pennies.

A true Congressman is a true servant. He ever gives, ever wants service. He is easily satisfied so long as his own comfort is concerned. He is always content to take a back seat. He is never communal or provincial. His country is his paramount consideration. He is brave to a fault because he has shed all earthly ambition, fear of Death himself. And he is generous because he is brave, forgiving because he is humble and conscious of his own failings and limitations.[61]

. . . My invitation to all to spin, if only for half an hour daily, for the sake of the starving millions of this land makes the movement at once both political and spiritual. . . .[62]

In our country manual labor is regarded as a low occupation. . . . We should spin, therefore, if only to guard against the pernicious tendency of regarding the toilers as being low in the social scale. Spinning is therefore as obligatory on the prince as on the peasant.[63]

. . . I am interested in producing the spinning atmosphere. . . . I want that atmosphere so that the idle hands I have described will be irresistibly drawn to the wheel. They will be so drawn when they see people spinning who do not need to. . . .[64]

[The spinning wheel] is not remunerative enough for individuals. . . . It is, however, enough to raise at a bound the national prosperity. . . . An increase of one rupee [about 20 cents] per head per year may mean nothing to the individual. But 5,000 rupees in a village containing [five thousand inhabitants] would mean the payment of land revenue or other dues. Thus the spinning wheel means national consciousness and a contribution by every individual to a definite constructive national work. If India can demonstrate her capacity for such an achievement by voluntary effort she

[61] *Young India,* November 19, 1925.
[62] *Young India,* November 10, 1925.
[63] *Young India,* May 20, 1926.
[64] *Young India,* April 16, 1925.

is ready for political Swaraj. Any lawful demand of a nation with a will of its own must prove irresistible. . . .[65]

. . . For me, the spinning wheel is not only a symbol of simplicity and economic freedom, but it is also a symbol of peace. For if we Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews, unite in achieving the universalization of the wheel in India, we shall have arrived at not only real unity . . . but we shall also have acquired self-confidence and organizing ability which render violence wholly unnecessary for regaining our freedom. . . .[66]

[The] spinning movement is bringing out women from their seclusion as nothing else could have done. . . . It has given them a dignity and self-confidence which no university degree could give them. They are realizing that their active assistance is just as indispensable as that of men. . . .[67]

. . . I cannot imagine anything nobler or more national than that for, say, one hour in the day we should all do the labor the poor must do, and thus identify ourselves with them and through them, with all mankind. I cannot imagine better worship of God than that in His name I should labor for the poor even as they do.[68]

Man becomes great exactly in the degree in which he works for the welfare of his fellow-men.[69]

[Idleness], whether it be regarded as enforced or voluntary, is killing the very soul of the nation. The more I penetrate the villages, the greater is the shock delivered as I perceive the blank stare in the eyes of the villagers I meet. Having nothing else to do but to work as laborers side by side with their bullocks, they have become almost like them. It is a tragedy of the first magnitude that millions have ceased to use their hands as hands. Nature is revenging herself upon us with terrible effect for this criminal waste of the gift she has bestowed upon us human beings. . . . And it is the exquisite mechanism of the hands that among a few other things separates us from the beast. . . .

The spinning wheel alone can stop this reckless waste. It can do

[65] *Young India,* January 29, 1925.
[66] *Young India,* June 25, 1925.
[67] *Young India,* January 1, 1925.
[68] *Young India,* October 20, 1921.
[69] M. K. Gandhi, *Ethical Religion,* Chapter 8, p. 68.

that now and without any extraordinary outlay of money or intelligence. . . . With it will at once revive the ancient rustic art and the rustic song. A semi-starved nation can have neither religion nor art nor organization.[70]

[It] is not merely the wages earned by the spinners that are to be counted but it is the whole reconstruction that follows in the wake of the spinning wheel. The village weaver, the village dyer, the village washerman, the village blacksmith, the village carpenter, all and many others will then find themselves reinstated in their ancient dignity, as is already happening wherever the spinning wheel has gained a footing.[71]

. . . The plan . . . is not merely to induce the peasant to refuse to buy the cheap and nice-looking foreign fabric, but also by teaching him to utilize his spare hours in carding and spinning cotton and getting it woven by the village weavers, to dress himself in khaddar so woven and thus to save him the cost of buying foreign, and for that matter, even Indian mill-made cloth. . . .

[Enforced idleness or penury] hurt a man's soul and body just as much as intoxication. Depression is but excitement upside down and hence equally disastrous . . . and often more so, because we have not yet learnt to regard [it] as immoral or sinful. . . .[72]

[Persons] not wearing khaddar [homespun cloth] or not spinning should [not] be boycotted. On the contrary, it would be our duty to embrace them and win them ultimately to the side of khaddar by our love, certainly not by talking or thinking ill of them. . . . True boycott can be only . . . refusal to accept personal service and denying oneself the advantages of association with the person so dealt with, while being ever-ready to render him help in case of need. I would welcome that kind of boycott in the case of a person addicted to drink but not in the case of those who don't wear khaddar. . . .[73]

[The] vast majority of us . . . will find it necessary to wear khaddar on all occasions if we have to wear it on all Congress occasions. For an ardent Congressman, every occasion is a Congress occasion

[70] *Young India,* February 17, 1927.
[71] *Young India,* March 10, 1927.
[72] Congress Presidential Address, December 26, 1924, *Young India.*
[73] Conversation between Gandhi and Charles Freer Andrews, in *Young India,* October 31, 1924.

and he and she would be an indifferent Congressman or Congresswoman who has no Congress work during . . . twenty-four hours. [Congress members] cannot have many uniforms nor can they have money to buy yarn spun by others. They must spin themselves and thus give at least half an hour's labor to the nation. And a Congress volunteer who does not spin himself will be hard put to it to convince the candidates for Congress membership of the necessity of spinning. . . .[74]

[The suggestion to make hand-spinning the test for the vote] may be fantastical, but it is neither immoral nor harmful to the nation. Had it been workmen who had been the most influential people and not capitalists or educated men, and a property or an education test had been proposed, the powerful workmen would have ridiculed the suggestion, and might have even called it immoral. For, they could have argued, while capital or education were the possession of a few, bodily labor was common to all. . . .[75]

. . . I can only take up the wheel or speak or write about it and commend it. . . . In my loneliness, it is my only infallible friend and comforter. . . .[76]

. . . I had a long chat with [a group of nationalists from Poona]. They will not agree to spin and they will not agree to my leaving the Congress. They do not realize that I shall cease to be useful as soon as I cease to be myself. It is a wretched situation but I do not despair. . . . I know only the moment's duty. It is given to me to know no more. Why then should I worry?[77]

[74] *Young India,* November 13, 1924.
[75] *Young India,* November 27, 1924.
[76] *Young India,* September 4, 1924.
[77] Letter to Nehru, September 15, 1924, in Jawaharlal Nehru, *Old Letters,* pp. 40–41.

[17]

BELIEF AND HUMAN WELFARE

[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 recreates. That informing power or spirit is God. . . .

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 Good.

. . . I shall never know God if I do not wrestle with and against evil even at the cost of life itself. . . .[1]

To me God is Truth and Love, God is ethics and morality, God is fearlessness. . . . He is all things to all men . . . 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. . . .[2]

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.[3]

I am endeavoring to see God through service of humanity, for I know God is neither in heaven nor down below, but in everyone.[4]

. . . If we could all give our own definitions of God there would be as many definitions as there are men and women. But behind all

[1] *Young India,* October 11, 1928.
[2] *Young India,* March 5, 1925.
[3] *Young India,* September 25, 1924.
[4] *Young India,* August 4, 1927.

that variety . . . there would be also a certain sameness. . . . For the root is one. God is that indefinable something which we all feel but which we do not know. . . . He is all things to all men. . . .[5]

. . . We have one thousand names to denote God, and 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. . . .[6]

. . . Religion is the service of the helpless. . . .

. . . The Brahman [Priest] who has understood the religion of today will certainly give Vedic [Scriptural] learning a secondary place and propagate the religion of the spinning wheel, relieve the hunger of the millions of his starving countrymen, and only then . . . lose himself in Vedic studies.

. . . If I have to make the choice between counting beads or turning the wheel, I would certainly decide in favor of the wheel, making it my rosary, so long as I found poverty and starvation stalking the land. . . .[7]

Some time ago, I was taken to a magnificent mansion called the "Marble Palace" in Calcutta. . . . The owners feed . . . in front of the palace, all the beggars who choose to go there. . . . [The] incongruity of this ragged humanity feeding whilst the majestic palace is . . . mocking at their wretched condition does not seem to strike the donors at all. . . . In Suri . . . the motor car that drove me . . . was slowly taken through the line of the beggars as they were eating. I felt humiliated, more so to think this was all done in my honor, because . . . I was "a friend of the poor." My friendship for them must be a sorry affair if I could be satisfied with a large part of humanity being reduced to beggary. Little did my friends know that my friendship for the paupers of India has made me hard-hearted enough to contemplate their utter starvation with equanimity in preference to their utter reduction to beggary. . . . [If] I had the power I would stop every Sadavrata [Donation] where free meals are given. It has degraded the nation and it has encouraged laziness, idleness, hypocrisy and even crime. Such misplaced charity adds nothing to the wealth of the country . . . and gives a false sense of meritoriousness to the donor. How nice and wise it would

[5] *Young India,* March 5, 1925.
[6] *Young India,* August 6, 1925.
[7] *Young India,* August 14, 1924.

be if the donor were to open institutions where they would give meals under healthy, clean surroundings to men and women who would work for them. . . . [The] rule should be "No labor, no meal." . . . I know it is easier to fling free meals in the faces of idlers, but much more difficult to organize an institution where honest work has to be done. [In] the initial stages . . . the cost of feeding people after taking work from them will be more than the cost of the present free kitchens. But . . . it will be cheaper in the long run, if we do not want to increase . . . the race of loafers which is fast overrunning this land.[8]

. . . It is the duty of society to support the blind and the infirm, but everyone may not take the task upon himself. The head of Society—the State—should undertake the task and the philanthropically inclined should subscribe funds. . . .[9]

If each retained possession of only what he needed, no one would be in want and all would live in contentment.[10]

I cannot picture to myself a time when no man shall be richer than another. But I do picture to myself a time when the rich will spurn to enrich themselves at the expense of the poor and the poor will cease to envy the rich. Even in a most perfect world we shall fail to avoid inequalities but we can and must avoid strife and bitterness. . . .[11]

[The] economic constitution of India and for that matter of the world should be such that no one under it should suffer from want of food and clothing. . . . [Everybody] should be able to get sufficient work to enable him to make the two ends meet. And this ideal can be universally realized only if the means of production of the elementary necessaries of life remain in the control of the masses. These should be freely available to all as God's air and water are or ought to be, they should not be made a vehicle of traffic for the exploitation of others. Their monopolization by any country, nation or group of persons would be unjust. The neglect of this simple principle is the cause of the destitution we witness

[8] *Young India,* August 13, 1925.
[9] *Young India,* November 18, 1926.
[10] M. K. Gandhi, *From Yeravda Mandir,* Chapter 9, p. 37.
[11] *Young India,* October 7, 1926.

today not only in this unhappy land but in other parts of the world too.[12]

. . . I pride myself on calling myself a scavenger, weaver, spinner, farmer . . . and do not feel ashamed that some of these things I know but indifferently. It is a pleasure to me to identify myself with the laboring classes, because without labor we can do nothing. . . . "He who eats without labor eats sin, is verily a thief" . . . is the literal meaning of a verse in the Bhagavad Gita. . . .

. . . But none of my activities are one-sided, and as my religion begins and ends with Truth and non-violence, my identification with labor does not conflict with my friendship with capital. . . .

Capital . . . and labor should supplement and help each other. They should be a great family living in unity and harmony, capital not only looking to the material welfare of the laborers but their moral welfare also, capitalists being trustees for the welfare of the laboring classes under them.[13]

. . . Throughout thirty-five years' unbroken experience of public service in several parts of the world, I have not yet understood that there is anything like spiritual or moral value apart from work and action. . . .

Come with me to Orissa, in November, to Puri, a holy place and a sanatorium, where you will find soldiers and the Governor's residence during the summer months. Within ten miles' radius . . . you will see skin and bone. . . . Talk to them of modern progress. Insult them by taking the name of God before them in vain. They will call you and me fiends if we talk about God to them. They know, if they know any God at all, a God of terror, vengeance, a pitiless tyrant. They do not know what love is. . . . They have not lost all sense of decency, but I assure you we have. We are naked in spite of our clothing, and they are clothed in spite of their nakedness. It is because of these that I wander about from place to place, I humor my people. I humor my American friends. I humored two stripling youths from Harvard. When they wanted my autograph, I said, "No autographs for Americans." We struck a bargain. "I give you my autograph and you take to khadi." . . .

[12] *Young India,* November 15, 1928.
[13] Speech to the Indian Association, in *Young India,* August 20, 1925.

But I cannot be satisfied, not till every man and woman in India is working at his or her wheel. . . . This is the one and only work which can supply the needs of the millions without disturbing them from their homes. It is a mighty task and I know that I cannot do it. . . . But I shall not lose faith in you. . . .[14]

. . . The world knows little of how much my so-called greatness depends upon the incessant drudgery and toil of silent, devoted, able and pure workers, men as well as women. . . .[15]

. . . You come in daily touch with me by doing my work as if it was your own. And this can, must and will outlast the existence of this physical body of mine. . . .[16]

. . . We really live through and in our work. We perish through our perishable bodies, if instead of using them as temporary instruments, we identify ourselves with them.[17]

. . . Let us not seek to prop virtue by imagining hellish torture after death for vice and houris hereafter as a reward for virtue in this life. If virtue has no attraction in itself, it must be a poor thing. . . . Both heaven and hell are within us. Life after Death there is, but it is not so unlike our present experiences as either to terrify us or make us delirious with joy. "He is steadfast who rises above joy and sorrow," says the Gita. The wise are unaffected either by death or life. These are but faces of the same coin.[18]

[Gandhi appealed for aid to the masses from everyone. Several times he addressed Christian missionary groups working in India.]

It is better to allow our lives to speak for us than our words. . . . Faith does not admit of telling. It has to be lived and then it becomes self-propagating.[19]

[All] are judged not according to their labels or [what they profess] but according to their actions irrespective of their professions. . . .[20]

[14] *Young India,* September 15, 1927.
[15] *Young India,* April 26, 1928.
[16] Letter to Mira Behn, May 8, 1927, in M. K. Ghandi, *Gandhi's Letters to a Disciple,* p. 34.
[17] Letter to Mira Behn, April 27, 1927, *ibid.,* p. 31.
[18] *Young India,* October 25, 1928.
[19] *Young India,* August 11, 1927.
[20] *Young India,* September 2, 1926.

. . . The founding of leper asylums, etc. is only one of the ways, and perhaps not the best, of serving humanity. But even such noble service loses much of its nobility when conversion is the motive behind it. That service is the noblest which is rendered for its own sake. But . . . the missionaries that selflessly work away in such asylums command my respect. I am ashamed to have to confess that Hindus have become so callous as to care little for the waifs and strays of India, let alone the world.[21]

If you give me statistics that so many orphans have been reclaimed and brought to the Christian faith, I would accept them, but I do not feel convinced thereby that it is your mission. In my opinion your mission is infinitely superior to that. [Go] to the lowly cottages, not to give them something [but] to take something from them. . . .

. . . One of the greatest Christian Divines, Bishop Heber, wrote the two lines which have always left a sting with me: "Where every prospect please, and Man alone is vile." . . . I have gone from one end of the country to the other, without any prejudice, in a relentless search after truth, and I am not able to say that here in this fair land, watered by the great Ganges, the Brahmaputra and the Jumna, man is vile. He is not vile. He is as much a seeker after truth as you and I are, possibly more so. . . . You are here to find out the distress of the people of India and remove it. But I hope you are here also in a receptive mood and if there is anything that India has to give, you will not stop your ears, you will not close your eyes and steel your hearts but open up your ears, eyes and most of all, your hearts, to receive all that may be good in this land. I give you my assurance that there is a great deal of good in India. . . . I know many men who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ or have even rejected the official interpretation of Christianity *would* probably, if Jesus came in our midst today . . . be owned by him more than many of us. . . .

[If] you will refuse to see the other side, if you will refuse to understand what India is thinking, then you will deny yourselves the real privilege of service.[22]

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[21] *Young India,* February 26, 1925.
[22] An address to Christian missionaries, in *Young India,* August 6, 1925.

[An American clergyman once asked Gandhi what caused him most concern.] The hardness of heart of the educated [Gandhi replied].[23]

. . . If you [students] spend your next vacation in some far-off village in the interior you . . . will find the people cheerless and fear-stricken. You will find houses in ruins. You will look in vain for any sanitary or hygienic conditions. You will find the cattle in a miserable way, and yet you will see idleness stalking there. The people will tell you of the spinning wheel's having been in their homes long ago. . . . They have no hope left in them. They live, for they cannot die at will. They will spin only if *you* spin. Even if a hundred out of a population of three hundred in a village spin, you assure them of an additional income of 1,800 rupees [$360] a year. You can lay the foundation of solid reform on this income in every village. . . . "I am alone, how can I reach seven hundred thousand villages?" This is the argument pride whispers to us. Start with the faith that if you fix yourself up in one single village and succeed, the rest will follow. . . .

. . . The education is not "national" that takes no count of the starving millions of India, and that devises no means for their relief. . . .[24]

. . . Students have to react upon the dumb millions. They have to learn to think not in terms of a province or a town or a class or a caste, but in terms of a continent and of the millions who include untouchables, drunkards, hooligans and even prostitutes, for whose existence in our midst every one of us is responsible. . . .[25]

Our self-sacrifice must . . . be in terms of the requirements of the country. . . .

. . . We dare not support able-bodied members of the family—men or women—who will not work. We may not contribute a single pice towards the expenses of conforming to meaningless or superstitious customs, such as caste-dinners or towards forming expensive marriage connections. Every marriage and every death brings an unnecessary cruel burden upon the head of the family. . . .

. . . When it is difficult for millions to make even the two ends

[23] Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi,* Part II, Chapter 27, p. 226.
[24] *Young India,* June 17, 1926.
[25] *Young India,* June 9, 1927.

meet, when millions are dying of starvation, it is monstrous to think of giving our relatives a costly education. Expansion of the mind will come from hard experience, not necessarily in the college or the schoolroom. . . . The golden rule to apply in all such cases is resolutely to refuse to have what millions cannot. This ability to refuse will not descend upon us all of a sudden. The first thing is to cultivate the mental attitude that we will not have possessions or facilities denied to millions, and the next immediate thing is to rearrange our lives as fast as possible in accordance with our mentality.

. . . Progress towards self-rule will be in exact proportion to the increase in the number of workers who will dare to sacrifice their all for the cause of the poor.[26]

If America has to model her schools and colleges so as to enable students to earn their scholastic expenses, how much more necessary it must be for our schools and colleges? Is it not far better that we find work for poor students than that we pauperize them by providing free studentships? It is impossible to exaggerate the harm we do to India's youth by filling their minds with the false notion that it is ungentlemanly to labor with one's hands and feet for one's livelihood or schooling. . . . No one likes to be reminded in after-life that he had to depend upon charity for his education. . . .[27]

I value education in the different sciences. Our children cannot have too much of chemistry and physics. . . .

. . . I do regard spinning and weaving as the necessary part of any national system of education. I do not aim at taking the whole of the children's time for this purpose. Like a skilled physician I tend, and concentrate my attention on, the diseased limb knowing that is the best way of looking after the others. I would develop in the child his hands, his brain and his soul. The hands have atrophied. . . .[28]

. . . An academic grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look at but nothing to inspire or ennoble. . . .[29]

[26] *Young India,* June 24, 1926.
[27] *Young India,* August 2, 1928.
[28] *Young India,* March 12, 1925.
[29] *Young India,* September 1, 1921.

. . . [The British Government schools] have made us what we were intended to become—clerks and interpreters. . . .[30]

. . . The worst thing that can happen to boys in school is to have to render blind obedience to everything the teacher says. On the contrary, if teachers are to stimulate the reasoning faculty of boys and girls under their care, they would continuously tax their reason and make them think for themselves. . . .

. . . Pupils should . . . learn something about the deep poverty of the masses. They should have an ocular demonstration of some villages that are crumbling down to pieces. They should know the population of India. They should know the extent of this peninsula and they should know what it is that all the many millions can do to add to their scanty resources. They should learn to identify themselves with the poor and the downtrodden in the land. They should be taught to deny themselves, so far as possible, things the poorest cannot have. . . .[31]

[Please do] not look to my life, but take me even as a finger-post, a lamp-post on the road that indicates the way but cannot walk the way itself. I cannot present my life as an example. . . . Whomsoever you follow, howsoever great he might be, see to it that you follow the spirit of the master and not imitate him mechanically. . . . Let each follow . . . according to his individual development. . . .

. . . Higher education stands for unity, for catholicity, for toleration and wide outlook. The culture a university imparts should make you find the points of contact, and avoid those of conflict. If you could see the inner springs of actions and not the outward manifestations thereof, you would find a wonderful unity. . . . Leave the outward expression, the doctrine, the dogma and the form and behold the unity and oneness of spirit. . . . Then there will be no need to divide this universe of ours between heaven and hell, no need to divide fellow-beings into virtuous and vicious, the eternally saved and the eternally damned. Love shall inform your actions and pervade your life.[32]

[30] *Young India,* June 1, 1921.
[31] *Young India,* June 24, 1926.
[32] *Young India,* February 9, 1928.

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SEX, SANITATION, AND SEGREGATION

[Gandhi's year as President of the Congress Party ended in December 1925. He then took a vow of a year's "political silence." In the silent year there were fifty-two silent Mondays when Gandhi did not speak. On those days, he would listen to an interviewer and occasionally tear off a corner of a piece of paper and pencil a few words in reply. Since this was not the best way to conduct a conversation, the weekly day of silence gave him some privacy.]

. . . It has often occurred to me that a seeker after truth has to be silent. I know the wonderful efficacy of silence. I visited a Trappist monastery in South Africa. A beautiful place it was. Most of the inmates of that place were under a vow of silence. I enquired of the Father the motive of it, and he said the motive is apparent. We are frail human beings. We do not know very often what we say. If we want to listen to the still small voice that is always speaking within us, it will not be heard if we continually speak. I understood that precious lesson. . . .[1]

[The silences] happened when I was being torn to pieces. I was working very hard, traveling in hot trains incessantly, speaking at many meetings, and being approached in trains and elsewhere by thousands of people who asked questions, made pleas, and wished to pray with me. I wanted to rest for one day a week. So I instituted the day of silence. Later of course I clothed it with all kinds of virtues and gave it a spiritual cloak. But the motivation was really nothing more than that I wanted to have a day off.

Silence is very relaxing. It is not relaxing in itself. But when you can talk and don't, it gives you great relief—and there is time for thought.[2]

[1] *Young India,* August 6, 1925.
[2] Interview, June 6, 1942, in Louis Fischer, *A Week with Gandhi,* p. 42.