

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE 1

*Jawaharlal Nehru on Babar: Extracts from Glimpses of World History*¹

I have told you of the court of the Great Khan of Karakorum;... They were a strange people, these Mongols; highly efficient in some ways, and almost childish in some other matters. Even their ferocity and cruelty, shocking as it was, has a childish element in it. It is the childishness in them, I think, that makes these warriors rather attractive. Some hundreds of years later a Mongol, or Mughal, as they were called in India, conquered this country. He was Baber (sic) and his mother was a descendant of Chengiz Khan. Having conquered India, he sighed for the cool breezes and the flowers and gardens and water-melons of Kabul and the north. He was a delightful person and the memoirs he wrote make him still a very human and attractive figure.

Glimpses, vol. I, p. 350
Letter dated June 27, 1932

I have told you something of Babar already. Descended from Chengiz and Timur, he had something of their greatness and military ability. But the Mongols had become more civilised since the days of Chengiz, and Babar was one of the most cultured and delightful persons one could meet. There was no sectarianism in him, no religious bigotry, and he did not destroy as his ancestors used to do. He

1. Page references are to J. L. Nehru, *Glimpses of World History*, Kitabistan, Allahabad, 1934 (vol. I) and 1935 (vol. II). As is well known, the *Glimpses* are a collection of letters written by Pandit Nehru to his daughter, Indira Priyadarshini, as Srimati Gandhi was known in her maiden days. These letters were written between 1930 and 1933, when Srimati Gandhi was at an impressionable young age. The first letter in these volumes is addressed from the Naini jail 'for Indira Priyadarshini, on her thirteenth birthday', which in that year fell on October 26, 1930. The last letter is dated August 9, 1933.

was devoted to art and literature, and was himself a poet in Persian. Flowers and gardens he loved, and in the heat of India he thought often of his home in Central Asia. “The violets are lovely in Farghana,” he says in his memoirs, “it is a mass of tulips and roses.”

Babar was only a boy of eleven when his father died and he became ruler of Samarkand. It was not a soft job. There were enemies all around. So, at the age when little boys and girls are at school, he had to take to the field with his sword. He lost his throne and had many a great adventure in his stormy career. And yet he managed to cultivate literature and art. Ambition drove him on. Having conquered Kabul, he crossed the Indus to India...

Babar wrote his memoirs and this delightful book gives intimate glimpses of the man. He tells us of Hindustan and of its animals and flowers and trees and fruits – not forgetting the frogs! He sighs for the melons and grapes and flowers of his native country. And he expresses his great disappointment at the people. According to him they have not a single good point in their favour. Perhaps he did not get to know them in his four years of war and the more cultured classes kept away from the new conqueror...

“The Empire of Hindustan,” Babar tells us, “is extensive, populous and rich...” Babar goes on with his description of India... He then gives lists of the animals, flowers, trees and fruits of Hindustan.

And then we come to the people. “The country of Hindustan has few pleasures to recommend it. The people are not handsome. They have no idea of the charms of friendly society, or of frankly mixing together or of familiar intercourse. They have no genius, no comprehension of mind, no politeness of manner, no kindness or fellow feeling, no ingenuity or mechanical invention in planning or executing their handicraft works, no skill or knowledge in design or architecture; they have no good horses, no good flesh, no grapes or musk-melons, no good fruits, no ice or cold water, no good food, or bread in their bazaars, no baths or colleges, no candles, no torches, not a candle stick.” What *have* they got, one is tempted to ask! Babar must have been thoroughly fed up when he wrote this...

Babar died in 1530 when he was 49 years of age... They carried Babar’s body to Kabul and there they buried it in a garden he loved. He had gone back at last to the flowers he longed for.

Glimpses, vol. I, pp.476-479.
Letter dated September 3, 1932

In India, we have seen Babar, the Mughal, come down from north-west and establish a new dynasty. This was in 1526, when Charles V was Emperor in Europe and Suleiman was ruling in Constantinople. We shall have a great deal to say of Babar and his brilliant descendants. It is interesting to note here, however, that Babar was himself a Renaissance type of prince, but a better one than the European type of the period. He was an adventurer, but gallant knight, with a passion for literature and art. In the Italy of that period there were also princes who were adventurers and lovers of literature and art and their petty courts had a superficial brilliance. The Medici family of Florence and the Borgias were famous then. But these Italian princes, and most others in Europe at the time, were true followers of Machiavelli, unscrupulous, intriguing, and despotic, using the poison cup and the dagger of the assassin for their opponents. It is hardly fair to compare the knightly Babar with this crowd, just as it would be out of place to compare their petty courts with the court of the Mughal Emperors at Delhi or Agra – Akbar and Shah Jahan and others...

Glimpses, vol. I, pp. 450-51
Letter dated August 26, 1932

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES 2

*Selections from classical Indian texts on polity*¹

किमुक्षणाऽवहता कृत्यं किं धेन्वा चाप्यदुग्धया ।
वन्ध्यया भार्यया कोऽर्थः कोऽर्थो राज्ञाऽप्यरक्षता ॥
यथा दारुमयो हस्ती यथा चर्ममयो मृगः ।
यथा ह्यनेत्रः शकटः पथि क्षेत्रं यथोषरम् ॥
एवं ब्रह्मानधीयानं राजा यश्च न रक्षिता ।
न वर्षति च यो मेघः सर्व एते निरर्थकाः ॥

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम् ७९.४०-२
धर्मकोशः, ४.५.२३९८

कृषिगोरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं लोकानामिह जीवनम् ।
ऊर्ध्वं चैव त्रयी विद्या सा भूतान् भावयत्युत ॥
तस्यां प्रयतमानायां ये स्युस्तत्परिपन्थिनः ।
दस्यवस्तद्वधायेह ब्रह्मा क्षत्रमथासृजत् ॥
शत्रूञ्जहि प्रजा रक्ष यजस्व क्रतुभिर्नृप ।
युध्यस्व समरे वीरो भूत्वा कौरवनन्दन ॥

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम् ९०.७-१
धर्मकोशः, ४.२.१०७१

अरक्षितारं हर्तारं विलोप्तारमदायकम् ।
तं स्म राजकलिं हन्युः प्रजाः संभूय निर्घृणम् ॥
अहं वो रक्षितेत्युक्त्वा यो न रक्षति भूमिपः ।
स संहत्य निहन्तव्यः श्वेव सोन्माद आतुरः ॥

महाभारतम्, अनुशासनपर्वम् ६०.१९-२०
धर्मकोशः, ४.२.६५७

¹The selections here are presented in the order in which the corresponding concepts and quotations appear in the text. Page references are to Laxmanshastri Joshi (ed.), *Dharmakosha*, which is being published in several volumes since 1935. Most of the references here are from volume 4, '*Rajanitikanda*', various parts of which appeared during 1973-79. The chapter and verse references are to the editions referred to in *Dharmakosha*. The selections from the *Sukraniti*, however, are taken from Chowkhamba, Varanasi edition of 1968.

लोकरञ्जनमेवात्र राज्ञां धर्मः सनातनः ।

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम् ५७.११

धर्मकोशः, ४.२.५६७

राजमूला महाराज योगक्षेमसुवृष्टयः ।

प्रजासु व्याधयश्चैव मरणं च भयानि च ॥

कृतं त्रेता द्वापरश्च कलिश्च भरतर्षभ ।

राजमूलानि सर्वाणि मम नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम् १३९.९.१०

धर्मकोशः, ४.२.६३४

देशधर्मा जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माः सनातनाः ।

मुनिप्रोक्ताश्च ये धर्माः प्राचीना नूतनाश्च ये ।

ते राष्ट्रगुप्त्यै सन्धार्या ज्ञात्वा यत्नेन सन्तृपैः ।

धर्मसंस्थापनाद्राजा श्रियं कीर्तिं प्रविन्दति ॥

शुक्रनीतिः, चतुर्थाध्याये

राष्ट्रप्रकरणम् १-१०, पृ: २२२

पाषण्डनैगमश्रेणीपूगव्रातगणादिषु ।

संरक्षेत्समये राजा दुर्गे जनपदे तथा ॥

विष्णुधर्मोत्तरपुराणम्, ३.३३६.९

धर्मकोशः, ४.२.७४५

यस्मिन् देशे य आचारो व्यवहारः कुलस्थितिः ।

तथैव परिपाल्योऽसौ यदा वशमुपागतः ॥

याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृतिः, १.३४३

धर्मकोशः, ४.५.२८२३

तथा

सर्वेषां तु विदित्वैषां समासेन चिकीर्षितम् ।

स्थापयेत्तत्र तद्वंशं कुर्याच्च समयक्रियाम् ॥

प्रमाणानि च कुर्वीत तेषां धर्म्यान् यथोदितान् ।
रत्नैश्च पूजयेदेनं प्रधानपुरुषैः सह ॥

मनुस्मृतिः, ७.२०२-३

धर्मकोशः, ४.५.२८२१

सोऽयं त्वमिह संक्रान्तो विक्रमेण वसुन्धराम ।
निर्जिताश्च महीपाला विक्रमेण त्वयाऽनघ ॥
तेषां पुराणि राष्ट्राणि गत्वा राजन् सुहृद्वृतः ।
भ्रातृ न् पुत्रांश्च पौत्रांश्च स्वे स्वे राज्येऽभिषेचय ॥
बालानपि च गर्भस्थान् सान्त्वानि समुदाचरन् ।
रञ्जयन् प्रकृतीः सर्वाः परिपाहि वसुंधराम् ॥
कुमारो नास्ति येषां च कन्यास्तत्राभिषेचय ।
कामाशयो हि स्त्रीवर्गः शोकमेवं प्रहास्यति ॥
एवमाश्वासनं कृत्वा सर्वाराष्ट्रेषु भारत ।
यजस्व वाजिमेधेन यथेन्द्रो विजयी पुरा ॥

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम्, ३४.३०-४

धर्मकोशः, ४.५.२८१५

भवत्यधर्मो धर्मो हि धर्माधर्मावुभावपि ।

कारणाद्देशकालस्य देशकालः स तादृशः ॥

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम्, ७९.३१

धर्मकोशः, ४.५.२३७९

तथा

नैतच्छ्रद्धागमादेव तव धर्मानुशासनम् ।

प्रज्ञासमवतारोऽयं कविभिः संभृतं मधु ॥

बह्वयः प्रतिविधात्वयाः प्रज्ञा राज्ञा ततस्तः ।

नैकशाखेन धर्मेण यात्रैषा संप्रवर्तते ॥

महाभारतम्, शांतिपर्वम्, १४०.३-४

धर्मकोशः, ४.२.६४३

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE 3

Note on the composition of the draft scrutiny committee of the constituent assembly

The constituent assembly, through a resolution adopted on August 29, 1947, appointed a committee to scrutinise the draft of the text of the constitution prepared by the constitutional advisor and his secretariat. Members of the constitution drafting committee were:¹

1. B. R. Ambedkar, Chairman,
2. B. L. Mitter, who soon after his appointment ceased to be a member of the assembly,
3. N. G. Ayyangar,
4. A. K. Ayyar,
5. K. M. Munshi,
6. Mohammed Saadulla,
7. N. Madhava Rau,
8. D. P. Khaitan who died in 1948, and
9. T. T. Krishnamachari, who joined the committee in January 1949.

Of these only K. M. Munshi was an active participant in the independence movement. Though he resigned from the Congress in July 1941, he was one of the early associates of Mahatma Gandhi, who served on the Congress working committee in 1930, and was a member of the AICC from 1931-37. In 1932, he was sentenced to two years in prison for his participation in the civil disobedience movement. During the crucial phases of the drafting of the constitution in 1947-48, however, he was serving as government of India's agent in Hyderabad, and that job must have kept him fairly busy.

Dewan Bahadur (Sir) N. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar was a civil servant under the British, who joined the Madras civil service in 1905 and rose to become collector, deputy magistrate and secretary to the government in the public works department. He served as

¹Biographical notes on the members of the drafting committee are largely reproduced from the appendices to Granville Austin, *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation*, Oxford, 1966.

prime minister of Kashmir from 1937 to 1943 and was knighted by the British government during this period.

Dewan Bahadur (Sir) Alladi Krishnaswami Ayyar was an advocate of Madras high court, who served as advocate-general from 1929 to 1944 and was knighted by the British Government in 1931.

N. Madhava Rau was a civil servant, who joined Mysore civil service in 1907 and rose to become the dewan of Mysore, in which capacity he served from 1941-46. He was associated with the constituent assembly as constitutional adviser to the eastern states and was became a member only in July 1947.

Saiyid Mohammed Saadulla was a lawyer and a leader of the Muslim League in Assam. He was Prime Minister of Assam from April 1937 to September 1938, from November 1939 to June 1942 and from August 1942 until March 1945. He was knighted by the British government in 1928 and made K.C.I.E. in 1946.

T. T. Krishnamachari was a businessman of Madras, who was elected to Madras assembly in 1937-42 from Indian commerce constituency, and who was a member of the central assembly during 1942-45.

Thus of the seven effective members of the drafting committee, three were high civil servants and could not have had anything to do with the independence movement. Two of them had received knighthoods for their services to the British empire. A fourth member was an anti-congress politician, who had been twice decorated by the British. And the Chairman, Dr. Bhimarao Ambedkar, of course, was an opponent of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress, and had deep reservations about the objectives of the independence movement.

Sir Benegal Narsing Rau, the constitutional advisor to the assembly, was also a civil servant who joined the service in 1910, and became a judge of the Calcutta high court in 1935. During his career in the service he served the British government as a legal expert on various committees and commissions, and was prime minister of Kashmir in 1944-45. Sri Rau was appointed constitutional advisor in July 1946, long before the first meeting of the assembly in December 1946. The constituent assembly discussed the resolution on the aims and objectives of the constitution during a couple of sessions in December 1946 and January 1947, after which it adjourned

for nearly six months. During this period, Sri Rau and his secretariat produced a draft text of the constitution, which was presented before the assembly in August 1947, when the draft scrutiny committee was constituted.

About the functioning of the drafting committee the following was stated by T. T. Krishnamachari during the general debate at the start of the second reading on the draft constitution on November 5, 1948:²

“At the same time, I do realise that that amount of attention that was necessary for the purpose of drafting a constitution so important to us at this moment has not been given to it by the drafting committee. The house is perhaps aware that of the seven members nominated by you, one had resigned from the house and was not replaced. One died and was not replaced. One was away in America and his place was not filled up and another person was engaged in state affairs and there was a void to that extent. One or two people were away from Delhi and perhaps reasons of health did not permit them to attend. So it happened ultimately that the burden of drafting this constitution fell on Dr. Ambedkar and I have no doubt that we are grateful to him for having achieved this task in a manner which is undoubtedly commendable. But my point really is that the attention that was due to a matter like this has not been given to it by the committee as a whole. Some time in April the secretariat of the constituent assembly had intimated me and others besides myself that you had decided that the union power committee, the union constitution committee and the provincial constitution committee, at any rate the members thereof, and a few other selected people should meet and discuss the various amendments that had been suggested by the members of the house and also by the general public. A meeting was held for two days in April last and I believe a certain amount of good work was done and I see that Dr. Ambedkar has chosen to accept certain recommendations of the committee, but nothing was heard of the committee thereafter. I understand that the drafting committee – at any rate Dr. Ambedkar and Mr. Madhava Rau – met thereafter and scrutinised the amendments and they have

²Quoted from Dharampal, *Panchayat Raj as the Basis of Indian Polity: An exploration into the proceedings of the constituent assembly*, AVARD, New Delhi, 1962, pp.17-18.

made certain suggestions, but technically perhaps this was not a drafting committee. Though I would not question your ruling on this matter, one would concede that the moment a committee had reported that committee became *functus officio*, and I do not remember your having reconstituted the drafting committee. The point why I mention all these is that certain aspects of our constitution have not had the amount of expert attention that could have been provided to it if a person like Mr. Gopalaswami Ayyangar or Mr. Munshi or certain other persons had attended the meetings all through.”

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES 4

Translation of Hyder Ally Cawn's Remonstrance to the Princes, Nabobs, Rajahs and all the Natives of India

The English nation, on account of their former good faith, humanity, and justice, were suffered to reside in different parts of this continent, and permitted to carry on trade, commerce, and merchandise; also to protect the same, they have been allowed to establish factories, and erect towns and fortifications on our coasts; and have at different times been invited to assist the weaker powers of India in war, and to preserve the balance among the Emperors, Potentates, and Nabobs in those extended dominions; and while the great leaders remained tolerably moderate in their views, and kept their plighted faith with any degree of honour, no ground of jealousy, sufficient to alarm our country appeared.

But our generosity in permitting all this to foreigners, and loading each man of rank with rich presents, as a mark of our esteem, has lately drawn out persons of a very different cast; who have construed those acts of bounty, into timorous fear, and have attempted, in consequence, to exact, by threats and menaces and force, the wealth of individuals; many thousands of whom they have imprisoned, murdered and reduced to beggary, by means that would disgrace the most savage barbarians in Arabia. Till at length the great men and leaders in Bengal, whose thirst for gold all the wealth of that country could not satisfy, formed a scheme, and attempted to put it in execution, for plundering the whole country of Hindoostan; and for that purpose they have marched troops quite across to rob the rich diamond countries, and then, by forming a chain of posts, to hem in all the country, and render every power tributary; while their fleets and armies ravaged our sea coasts: and to complete this execrable plan, some of the most infamous of our natives are kept in pay by them, to commit every act of violence, cruelty, and oppression, and to extort money from individuals, till their leaders, by their great wealth, have rendered themselves justly dreaded by any single prince or power.

But besides these men, others of a more infamous cost have lately arrived at Bengal, who affect the solemn gravity of old age sinking into eternity. Their heads, as my Vakeel informs me, are covered with a vast quantity of grey hair, taken from the horse, or

some other animal; they wear long robes, ornamented with the skin of mongoose, or some thing like it; and are at times placed on high seats, covered with black, and ornamented with gold; and are called sometimes Lords, sometimes Judges, which ever name they can get the most money by; and to all appearance, are of a different nation from the English. These men assume powers far superior to the Princes and Emperors; they demand large sum of money today, and if that is given to them, they repeat their demands for a much larger sum tomorrow; they send their servant for a larger sum the next day; and when they have stripped a man of his whole substance, and he cannot satisfy their voracious demands any farther, he is then dragged from his family by force, carried many hundred miles to Calcutta, and there shut up for life in an old house, among the meanest wretches; or has a rope put about his neck, and there swung in the air till he is dead, and his wives and children are left to starve and perish. These hateful men have committed innumerable robberies and murders, by the help of their servants, who wear long black robes, and retain in their pay the most wicked and notorious of our countrymen, to single out the wealthiest inhabitants of India; and we have lately found them attempting to put the Rajahs and Princes of the country to death, and all this by talking with their servants in a language we do not understand. Their thirst for gold and diamonds is so great, that they have even robbed the East-India Company of immense sums, and ruined numbers of Englishmen: they are now attempting to hire forces to spread death and desolation over great parts of this land, and to raise themselves, on our ruins, to imperial dignities; and if any individual attempt to resist their force, his destruction is the inevitable consequence. If we do not, my fellow countrymen, unite our interests, and drive away those infamous invaders of rights and properties, we have nothing to expect but one by one to fall victims to their avarice and ambition. If we join our forces and interests, our numbers are so infinitely superior to any the British nation can bring into the field to support those cursed men, that they will soon be necessitated to fly into the salt waters. The difficulties that we can throw into their way, by cutting off all provisions and supplies, will soon put all their fortifications into our hands, without the risk of storming them; and you may be assured that the differences among themselves have so much oppressed the lower class of the British subjects, that

we may have any number of them we please, to assist in fighting our battles. The divisions among them here are great; their wars with France, Spain, and their own friends in America, will prevent England from sending any large armaments to the assistance of those wicked oppressors; and the quarrels and animosities of every settlement in India have lately extended to such a height, that they have poisoned their leading men, and murdered their governor for the sake of sharing our gold; they have not only plundered the defenceless natives, but they rob and butcher each other, and have stripped their very masters of all their wealth, and are ready to seize on their possessions. The immense sums of money and diamonds that have been collected throughout this continent, for a few years past, by these men called Lords, and the several governors and their servants, as presents for the King of England, I am well assured have never come to his hands, but are intended to be employed against us and the East-India Company, to bring all under the subjection of those avaricious men, who set no bounds to their ambition.

But in such a state of confusion and disorder, what have we to fear from a number so trifling, when compared to ours? If we are united together, we can destroy them or drive them on board their ships at pleasure. If we are divided among ourselves, my fellow countrymen, these wicked men will swallow us up one after another. Let us therefore resist this torrent of foreign outrage, while we have it in our power. As to their allies, they are too insignificant to deserve notice; they have, by their own villainy, outwitted themselves; they have plotted and executed schemes of the most atrocious nature, and have been encouraged in their wickedness by those Lords and great men, till they have completed the measure of their villainy, and then have been obliged to bribe those very men that countenanced them with their substance, to screen them from the rage and resentment of the public. And there is not an officer or soldier in the service of any of their allies, that is not ready to mutiny for want of pay, and to quit their service, and to enter into any other person's employment that will pay them regularly. As to their ships, though they may do us some damage on the sea coast, yet that damage cannot exceed the distance of canon shot, and they will soon leave our coasts, when the sources of their darling gold, and their provisions are cut off. And as to recruiting their army from Europe, the distance is too great to do it with any effect. In short, my countrymen, the millions we have at command,

if we are determined to use our united strength, are sufficient to confine them at once within the walls of their forts, and either make them submit to our terms, or drive them into sea, as we please. Let us therefore not hesitate a moment, not give those monsters in human form an opportunity to stir up dissensions among us. Let us pledge our honours, and all that is sacred to warriors, to drive away for ever those common enemies, robbers, and disturbers of mankind, and set an example worthy of men and princes. I with pleasure will take the lead in this undertaking, and neither spare labour nor expense till it is fully accomplished. What can I say more?

British Museum: T 686(5)

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES 5

*Mahatma Gandhi's Discussion with C. F. Andrews on Proselytization*¹

GANDHIJI: Their behaviour has been as bad as that of the rest who are in the field to add to their numbers. What pains one is their frantic attempt to exploit the weakness of Harijans. If they said, 'Hinduism is a diabolical religion and you come to us,' I should understand. But they dangle earthly paradises in front of them and make promises to them which they can never keep. When in Bangalore a deputation of Indian Christians came to me with a number of resolutions which they thought would please me, I said to them: 'This is no matter for bargain. You must say definitely that this is a matter to be settled by the Hindus themselves. Where is the sense of talking of a sudden awakening of spiritual hunger among the untouchables and then trying to exploit a particular situation? The poor Harijans have no mind, no intelligence, no sense of difference between God and non-God. It is absurd for a single individual to talk of taking all the Harijans with himself. Are they all bricks that they could be moved from one structure to another? If Christian Missions here want to play the game, and for that matter Mussalmans and others, they should have no such idea as that of adding to their ranks whilst a great reform in Hinduism is going on.'

C. F. A.: Let me ask one question. I said in Australia that all the talk of Dr. Ambedkar and his followers was not in terms of religion, and I said also that it was cruelty to bargain with unsophisticated people like the Harijans as they are in most parts of India. Then came the London Missionary Society's statement that the Ezhavas of Travancore had asked for Christian instruction. I said then that the Ezhavas were quite enlightened and if they had really asked to be instructed in Christianity, it would be an entirely different matter. Was I right?

GANDHIJI: I do not think so. Whilst there are individual Ezhavas who are doctors and barristers and so on, the vast majority of them

¹[The following discussion reproduced from *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. LXIV, pp. 18-20, took place on or after November 9, 1936, in the context of C. F. Andrews queries following his visit to New Zealand, Fiji and Australia, and his subsequent correspondence with the missionaries there.]

are just the same as the Harijans elsewhere. I can assure you that no one representing the vast body of Ezhavas could have asked for Christian instruction. You should ascertain the fact from our principal workers there.

C. F. A.: I see what you mean. Only I wanted to say that the London Missionary Society is a liberal body and would not make an irresponsible statement.

GANDHIJI: But they at the centre cannot know, as the Parliament cannot know the truth of what is happening in India.

C. F. A.: But that apart, I should like to discuss the fundamental position with you. What would you say to a man who after considerable thought and prayer said that he could not have his peace and salvation except by becoming a Christian?

GANDHIJI: I would say that if a non-Christian, say a Hindu, came to a Christian and made that statement, he should ask him to become a good Hindu rather than find goodness in change of faith.

C. F. A.: I cannot in this go the whole length with you, though you know my own position. I discarded the position that there is no salvation except through Christ long ago. But supposing the Oxford Group Movement people changed the life of your son, and he felt like being converted, what would you say?

GANDHIJI: I would say that the Oxford Group may change the lives of as many as they like, but not their religion. They can draw their attention to the best in their respective religions and change their lives by asking them to live according to them. There came to me a man, the son of Brahmin parents, who said his reading of your book had led him to embrace Christianity. I asked him if he thought that the religion of his forefathers was wrong. He said 'No.' Then I said: 'Is there any difficulty about your accepting the Bible as one of the great religious books of the world and Christ as one of the great teachers?' I said to him that you had never through your books asked Indians to take up the Bible and embrace Christianity, and that he had misread your book – unless of course your position is like that of the late Maulana Mahomed Ali's, viz., that a believing Mussalman, however bad his life, is better than a good Hindu.

C. F. A.: I do not accept Maulana Mahomed Ali's position at all. But I do say that if a person really needs a change of faith I should not stand in his way.

GANDHIJI: But don't you see that you do not even give him a

chance? You do not even cross-examine him. Supposing a Christian came to me and said he was captivated by a reading of the Bhagavata and so wanted to declare himself a Hindu, I should say to him: 'No. What the Bhagavata offers the Bible also offers. You have not yet made the attempt to find it out. Make the attempt and be a good Christian.'

C. F. A.: I don't know. If someone earnestly says that he will become a good Christian, I should say, 'You may become one,' though you know that I have in my own life strongly dissuaded ardent enthusiasts who came to me. I said to them, 'Certainly not on my account will you do anything of the kind.' But human nature does require a concrete faith.

GANDHIJI: If a person wants to believe in the Bible let him say so, but why should he disregard his own religion? This proselytization will mean no peace in the world. Religion is a very personal matter. We should, by living the life according to our lights, share the best with one another, thus adding to the sum total of human effort to reach God.

Consider whether you are going to accept the position of mutual toleration or of equality of all religions. My position is that all the great religions are fundamentally equal. We must have the innate respect for other religions as we have for our own. Mind you, not mutual toleration, but equal respect.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES 6

The views of the Parmacharya of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham on the place of Temples in Hindu Society: As reported by A. Koestler¹

[A. Koestler]: ...I again changed the subject, and brought up the din and noise in Indian temples. Was this the reason why Indians with a meditative disposition had to resort to the solitude of the mountains or bury themselves in lonely caves?

H. H. [the Parmacharya]: 'The case is just the reverse. Because solitude and a secluded spot have been prescribed, from oldest times, for contemplation, temples do not have to serve that purpose. Our temples are not organised as places of meditation, nor for congregational worship. The purpose of a temple is different. We enjoy the goods of life such as house, food, clothing, ornaments, music, dance, etc. ...[We] are bound to tender our gratitude to God who has primarily given us the good things of life. We offer a part of these good things as a token of our gratitude to Him in the temple. We first offer to Him all that He has given to us, in the shape of food, clothing, jewels, music, flowers, lights, incense, and so on, with the grateful consciousness that they are His gifts to us; and we receive them back from Him as His prasada. The temple is the place where these offerings are made on behalf of the collective community where it is situated. Even if people do not go to the temple, it is enough that these offerings are made to God on behalf of the community. The duty of the people at the place is to see that these offerings are made in a proper manner. There have been people who

¹Arthur Koestler met the Parmacharya on January 10, 1959 at Madras. Mr. Koestler wrote about the interview in his *The Lotus and the Robot*, Hutchinson, London, 1960, from where it was reproduced by V. Raghavan in his collection of interviews of the Parmacharya with visitors from abroad, *The Jagadaguru*, Madras, 1965. The excerpts here are from this latter reference, pp. 47-49.

V. Raghavan, who then was a professor of Sanskrit at the University of Madras had arranged this meeting of Mr. Koestler with the Parmacharya, and P. Sankranarayanan, then a professor of philosophy in the Vivekananda college at Madras, had acted as the interpreter. Mr. Koestler was highly impressed by the 'gentle, saintly personality, lovable and loving, peaceful and peace-giving' and felt that, "If one tried to project him on to the European scene, one would have to go back several centuries to find a Christian mystic of equal depth and stature." Yet, as it comes out to some extent from his report of the interview above, and much more strikingly in his other writings, he remains deeply caught up in his western biases on non-western ways of thought and being.

would not take their day's meal till the temple bell announced that the offering to God of food for the day had been done. Then only do they take their meal as God's prasada.

Question: 'Where, then, can an individual meditate in silence and enjoy the feeling of being alone with God?'

H. H. [the Paramacharya]: 'In almost every Hindu home, and in riverside structures, there is a place of daily worship. We can obtain in it the seclusion and silence needed for meditation.'

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES 7

Note on the Indian Peasant by Mr. Justice Le Maistre (around 1775)

In a country, that has been subject to so many revolution, to expect the proof of customs and usages with all the technical exactness by the law of England, would be perhaps to expect an impossibility.

This is a country of considerable manufactures as well as agriculture; and the good policy of the despot must, I think, have intervened to control his power. Nor can I think that this country without such regulations, could have been in the flourishing state it was, when it came into the hands of the Company.

The timid natives of this country, tho inured to slavery for so many generations, still have a sense of the injustice of this legislative authority in the despot. It is notorious that the ryot, who does not pay perhaps above twenty rupees a year for his taxes for the ground upon which (p 10) he and his ancestors have subsisted for ages, keeps his account in columns in this manner: so much, says he, in the first was the original payment which was made by my ancestors. So much, says he, in another, it was increased by Aliverdi Cawn upon such a pretence. So much, says he, by Surajhul Dowla upon another. So much by Jaffier Ally Khan, upon another. So much, by Mr. Sykes, for Muttoot. And so much by the collectors of the East India Company on another pretext.

Having made the sum total of those, he makes his deductions; such a tax taken off by Jaffier Ally Khan: such another by the East India Company: and having made such deduction, the remainder is what he is to pay.

Where arises this mode of keeping his accounts? Evidently upon this principle of natural justice, which he feels. (p 11)

These new importations have been lain upon me oppressively, at the will and pleasure of the ruling power; a time may come of law, justice, and humanity: I will be able to shew what was the original payment, which I admit to be due from time immemorial. I will keep every imposition separate and distinct, together with the pretext upon which it was raised; that, when the time of justice and humanity shall come, there may be materials upon which it may be decided whether I have been rightfully burdened or not.