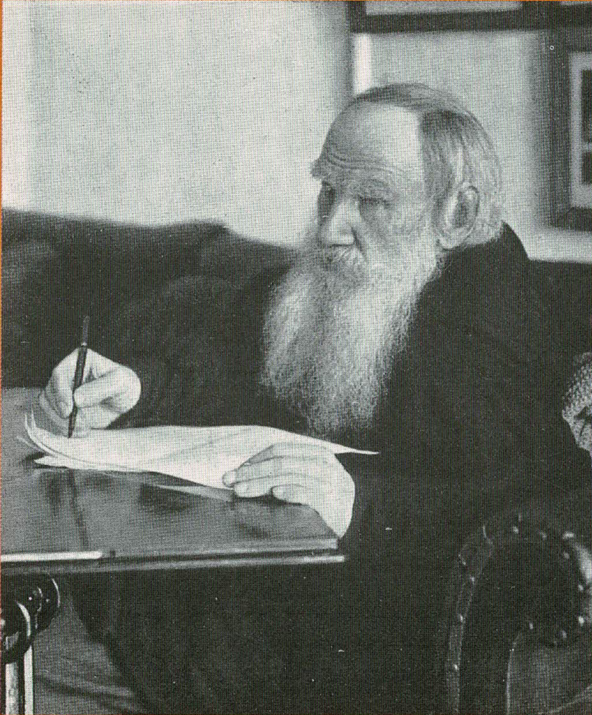


# Letter to a Hindoo

Taraknath Das,  
Leo Tolstoi and Mahatma Gandhi



Christian Bartolf (ed.)

**GANDHI-INFORMATIONS-ZENTRUM**

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Selbstverlag

**Letter to a Hindoo:** Taraknath Das, Leo Tolstoi and Mahatma  
Gandhi / Hrsg. Christian Bartolf.

1. Aufl. - Berlin: Gandhi-Informations-Zentrum, 1997

ISBN 3-930093-09-X

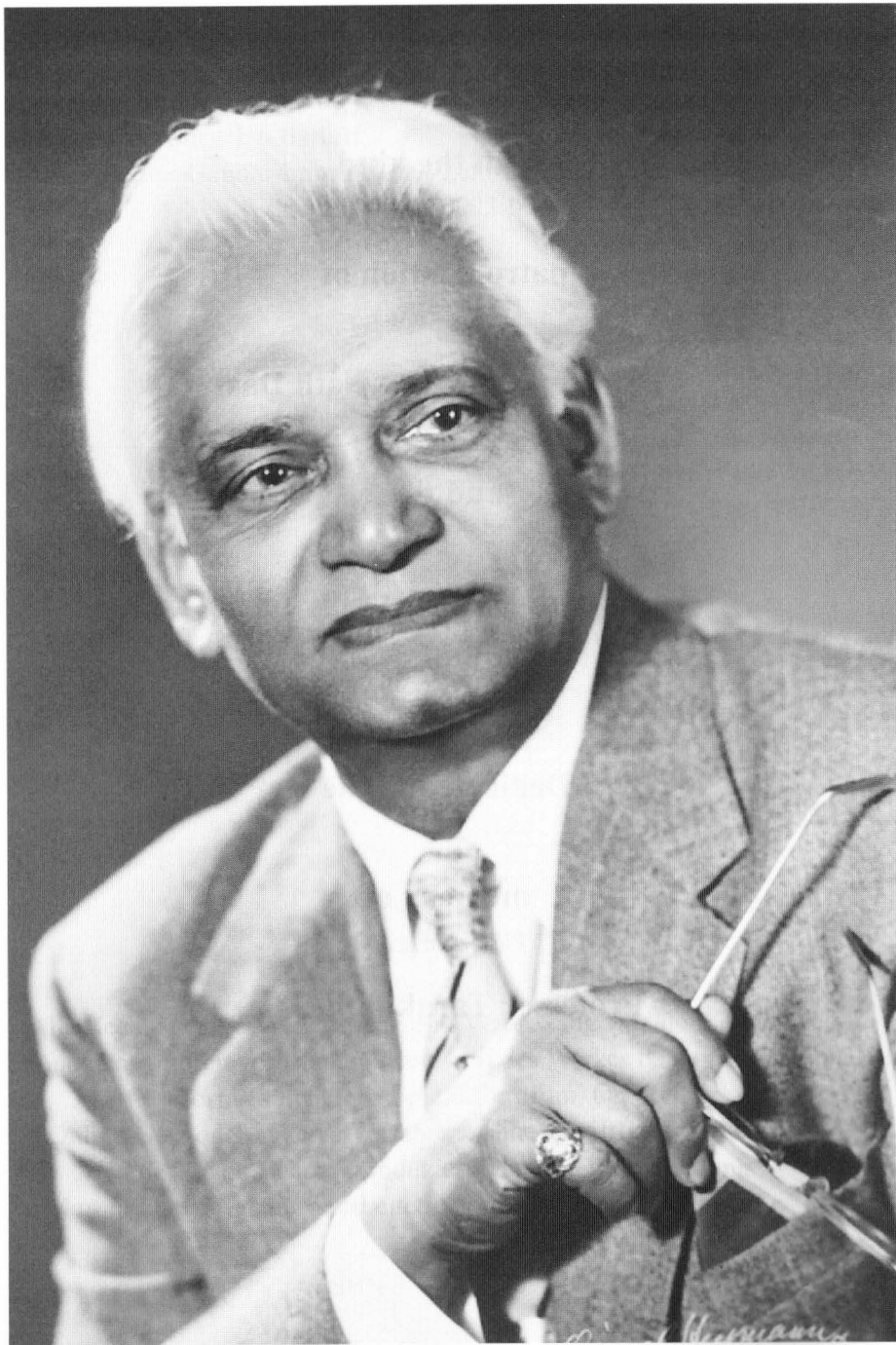
1. Auflage, 1997

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ISBN 3-930093-09-X

**With the kind  
patronization of  
Dr.-Ing. Ranendra Nath Das  
and the  
Taraknath-Das-Stiftung, Berlin.**

**Dedicated to the  
memory of  
Professor Taraknath Das.**



Professor Taraknath Das



Taraknath Das 1918/19 in Leavenworth Penitentiary



Dr. R. N. Das and Prof. Taraknath Das in Munich 1952



Taraknath Das, editor of „Free Hindustan“, Seattle, 1910

*Letter to a Hindoo.*

**Taraknath Das, Leo Tolstoi and Mahatma Gandhi**

**(ed. Christian Bartolf)**

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## 1) Introduction

Dear Readers,

This book grew in the years 1994 and 1997 out of the shared friendly cooperation with Dr. Ranendra Nath Das, chairman of the Taraknath Das Foundation in Berlin and nephew of Taraknath Das. As a document of the 20th Century, it will be published in German and English, no doubt finding interested readers in many parts of the world. We are glad to say that Dr. Tapan Mukherjee of the US National Science Foundation authorized his biographical article about Professor Dr. Taraknath Das to be used for this book. Dr. Ranendranath Das, the nephew of Taraknath Das, contributed to this biographical article.

Just living conditions cannot be successfully created through violence. However, the principles of a peaceful engagement can never lead to being passive and indifferent. Both ways of reacting to injustice would lead to dead ends. A third way can be found in the synopsis of contrary points of view, as Gandhi provided a third way, being able to read into the controversy between Taraknath Das and Leo Tolstoy. His answer was the non-violent service to Truth: "Satyagraha".

"Truth (Satya) implies love, and firmness (agraha) engenders, and therefore serves as a synonym for force."

And we find our new chance in this latent correlation, underlying these documents in our book. For the first time, the readers can decide themselves whether they activate their soul-force, as Martin Luther King later named it, to overcome the poverty and the wars of the present day. Only the truthful dialogue among generations and cultures renders possible a new beginning.

The readers might be interested to know that this book did not come into being as a matter of course. Leo Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindu" (1908) is being published for the first time since decades. In 1925, Leo Tolstoy's secretary, Pavel Birukoff, mistakenly thought that this letter had been addressed to the Bengali social-revolutionary, Chitta Ranjan Das. However, the Bengali Taraknath Das was the one, whom Leo Tolstoy encouraged to take a position on the terrible colonialism of the British in India, which robbed the lives of millions of Indians through the artificial famines and Opium dependency.

Taraknath Das, the Bengali social-revolutionary, freedom-fighter and social-scientist, lived of the greater part of his life in exile - before the First World War - in Canada and in the USA. He wanted to use Leo Tolstoy's authority to formulate an impressive case for world wide publicity, a case which the world's conscience no longer could ignore. In exile, he hoped to win unique sympathy for his movement "Free Hindusthan", if the irrevocable voice of the 80-year-old Russian sage were to speak out loud for the Indian freedom movement. However, the reply came differently as Taraknath Das had imagined. Leo Tolstoy stated clearly in his letter that the causes of the miserable situation were to be found in the "voluntary servitude" (Etienne de la Boetie) of the Indians themselves, not just in the singular severity and political tricks of the colonial power. Above all Leo Tolstoy, in accordance with his teaching of nonviolent resistance - which indicated the only way out of the oppressive situation, rejected the use of counter-violence. For the first time in the German language area, the extensive answer of Taraknath Das is documented. This answer makes clear that the British Empire held on to its colonial might through unilateral economic dependency. Colonial dependency was produced by the East India Company and was systematically pursued with the help of Indian mercenaries and political underlings. In the years 1908 to 1910, in the time of this correspondence, there seemed to be no way out. The death rate through famine in India had already exceeded by far the death rate of soldiers and civilians who had died in the wars of the nineteenth century. The horror of technological warfare in the First World War (1914-1918) were yet to come for Taraknath Das and his contemporaries. Leo Tolstoy died in the year 1910.

However, before that, Leo Tolstoy had transferred his testament of non-violence to a second Indian, through his correspondence with the lawyer Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. The correspondence between Tolstoy and Gandhi in the years 1909 and 1910, which are completely translated and documented in this book (for the first time), clarifies how urgently the teaching of non-violent resistance (used in this book in contrast to the terms "passive resistance", "non-resistance") intertwined Tolstoy and Gandhi. It was Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa who, through a prize competition, looked for a new word for this method of voluntary suffering for the Truth, a suffering persistently motivated towards reconciliation. "Satyagraha" (Firmness in Truth) was the solution, a modification of the word used by his relative Maganlal Gandhi, "Sadagraha" (Firmness in Being). There is no doubt that "Truth" and "Being" are no more firmly intertwined as in the Indian language Sanskrit. Gandhi wrote in his autobiography:

“The world rests upon the bedrock of satya or truth. Asatya meaning untruth also means non-existent, and satya or truth also means that which is. If untruth does not so much as exist, its victory is out of the question. And truth being that which is can never be destroyed. This is the doctrine of Satyagraha in a nutshell.”

During the time, in which he sent his first letter to Tolstoy, Gandhi was in London in conversation with the governing authorities, in order to abolish discriminatory laws against the Indian community in South Africa. The essay competition went through his head: “Ethics and Efficiency of Passive Resistance”; for at that time Gandhi had still called “passive” that which Socrates and Jesus, as witnesses to Truth, had exemplified in their lives. These examples inspired the oppressed to resist injustice in a non-violent way. Therefore, Gandhi wrote Tolstoy to ask his mentor for his advice; for it had become all too clear that Tolstoy had composed a new doctrine which rested upon old, prophetic insights.

Gandhi demonstrated in the Indian emancipation struggle in the Transvaal that the representatives of Truth (“Satyagrahi”) can claim their human rights free from the use of violence. Yet it was the adversaries in his own camp, who, by propagating counter-violence, most endangered the just struggle for emancipation. And it was a lucky coincidence for Gandhi that, in this situation, Leo Tolstoy sent Taraknath Das his “Letter to a Hindoo”. Gandhi asked for permission to print this letter in his weekly “Indian Opinion”. Yet he went beyond that and asked Tolstoy to make a slight change. The slight controversy about the concept of reincarnation and transmigration belongs to one of the most important passages in correspondences of the twentieth century, an open dialogue between East and West. Gandhi received the permission to publish, translated Tolstoy’s “Letter to a Hindoo” into the Indian languages, and contributed to a wide popularization of Tolstoy’s writings and concepts, not at least through the christening of the Tolstoy Farm together with Hermann Kallenbach, Gandhi’s Johannesburg architect friend. Yet what began in the year 1910 with the Tolstoy Farm in Johannesburg and was lead to a successful conclusion in 1913, “Satyagraha in South Africa”, was in itself none other than a practical example for successful non-violent resistance against an unjust system. And this far-shining, bright example which can be read in Gandhi’s first autobiography was long ignored by the war-torn European culture for decades after the Second World War. None the least,

Tolstoy’s letter of legacy to Gandhi which first arrived in South Africa when Tolstoy had already died clarifies the challenge of Thought and Action of the “last ancestor” as Elias Canetti called Tolstoy.

The “examination of the conscience” of the little girl in the young ladies’ boarding school which Leo Tolstoy describes will never disappear from the memory of the one who has read it. Indeed, conscientious objectors to military service are not the last ones who are being supported by Leo Tolstoy for they must answer these kinds of questions to the present day and reject on grounds of their principles any act of killing. This “Firmness in Truth” (Satyagraha) was highly esteemed by Gandhi. After reading Tolstoy, Gandhi, in his autobiography, held up the example of the Doukhobors (in English: “Spirit Wrestlers”), the Russian community of vegetarians and pacifists, to the same level with Socrates and Jesus. Leo Tolstoy had recommended the Doukhobors for the Noble Peace Prize. It remained no coincidence that neither the Doukhobors nor Leo Tolstoy nor Mahatma Gandhi ever received the Noble Peace Prize.

Now let us begin to recollect the “hidden tradition” of Non-violence.

The Editor

Berlin, August 1997

## 2) Editorial Note

We are grateful to Mrs. Sinaida Bogatcheva of the Leo Tolstoy Estate Museum at Yasnaya Polyana near Tula (Russia); from the archive of Tolstoy's handwritings and correspondences of the Tolstoy State Museum in Moscow she sent us, as copy of the original handwriting, the text of the first two letters, which Taraknath Das wrote to Leo Tolstoy in the year 1908. This is the first time these letters are reproduced and published in the correct version.

We are grateful to Professor Ram A. Mall (Niederkassel, Germany), because he improved the translation of Taraknath Das' response to Leo Tolstoy due to his knowledge of Vedanta philosophy.

Taraknath Das Foundation (Berlin, Germany) and Dr-Ing. Ranendra Nath Das granted us copyright for Taraknath Das' letters; the US Copyright Office (Reference and Bibliography Division) via Library of Congress, Washington D.C., U.S.A. informed us about the fact that articles of Twentieth Century Magazine (Boston, vols. 1-7, 1909-1913) may be published without any copyright restriction, because this magazine started before the year 1922. Part 1 of Taraknath Das' response to Leo Tolstoy was published in the "Twentieth Century Magazine", Vol. 2, No. 8, May 1910, pp. 16-19, part 2 in the "Twentieth Century Magazine", Vol. 2, No. 9, June 1910, pp. 20-23, part 3 in the "Twentieth Century Magazine", Vol. 2, No. 11, August 1910, pp. 24-29, part 4 in the "Twentieth Century Magazine", Vol. 2, No. 12, September 1910, pp. 30-32.

Letters of Leo Tolstoy (1828-1910) may be published without copyright restriction since Tolstoy died more than 70 years ago.

We are grateful to Mr. Jitendra Desai, Navajivan Trust (Ahmedabad, India) for copyright reproduction licence concerning Mahatma Gandhi's letters to Leo Tolstoy. These letters were published in: The Selected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Volume 5, Selected Letters, Navajivan Trust, Ahmedabad, 1968, pp. 10-26. Together with the Tolstoy-Gandhi correspondence, Tolstoy's "Letter to a Hindoo" has been reproduced by Dr. Kalidas Nag: Tolstoy and Gandhi, Patna 1950. The background of the Tolstoy-Gandhi correspondence has been illuminated by the Adviser to the Tolstoy State Museum, Alexander Shifman: Tolstoy and India, Delhi (Sahitya Akademi) 1969 (2nd edition 1978). Professor Shifman corrected

Nag who erroneously confused Taraknath Das with the Bengal revolutionary Chitta Ranjan Das.

We are grateful to Dr. J.I. Sarid (Haifa, Israel) granting us permission to publish her grand-uncle Hermann Kallenbach's letter to Leo Tolstoy for the first time. The letter written by Vladimir Chertkov, Tolstoy's secretary, to Hermann Kallenbach can be found in the private Kallenbach Archive which the editor of this volume had built up. The Kallenbach Biography has recently been published.

The essay on "Tolstoy and Gandhi" (Non-violent Resistance) - published by the Gandhi Information Centre, Berlin, Germany - has not been reproduced in this volume, part of it being recently published by Antony Copley and George Paxton (eds.) in their compilation "Gandhi and the Contemporary World", Essays to mark the 125th Anniversary of His Birth, published in 1997 by the Indo-British Historical Society, 21, Rajaram Metha Avenue, Chennai-600029, India (pp. 196-204).



### 3) Documents

#### 3a) Taraknath Das' Appeal to Leo Tolstoy

(1)

University Station  
Seattle, Wash(ington)  
U.S.A.  
May 24th 1908

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To

Count Leo Tolstoi.

Russia.

Honourable Sir,

Your name is now a household word for the people working for Humanity. Your works to represent the oppressed people of Russia has opened the eyes of the civilized world and attracted sympathy for them. Your moral force subdued the autocratic power of Russian Government which persistently opposed all liberal opinions but she is awed by your work and kept quiet.

Indeed Russian people are oppressed but they are not the most oppressed if we compare our condition - the condition of the people of India. - Your world wide knowledge of the history of nations knows how we are oppressed. In the book "Prosperous British India" by Sir William Digby it is proved that "19000000 nineteen millions of people died in India of famines during ten years (1891-1900) whereas the loss of life by war in all the world during 107 years (1793-1900) is 5000000 five millions." You hate war but in India famines are worse than war. Famines of India are not famines for the want of food production but it is caused by drainage + poverty of people created by the British Government. Is it not shocking that when millions are starving the same time thousands of tons of rice and other staple food are exported from India by the British merchants!

Humanity is suffering to the extreme in India, the British policy in India is a menace to the Christian Civilization !!

You did immense good by the literary works about Russia. We pray to you that if you have time at least to write an article about India and thus express your views about India!

By the name of the starving millions I appeal to your Christian spirit to take up the cause.

In a separate cover I am sending two copies of the "Free Hindustan" for your perusal.

Yours truly  
Taraknath Das.

(2)

Norwich University,  
Northfield, Vermont  
U.S.A.  
July 15th 1908

To

Count Leo Tolstoy

Highly respected Dear Sir,

I feel myself exceedingly fortunate just receiving the note of D.P. Makovsky written according to your direction. I am very glad to know that my humble idea has reached to a noble soul + there is no doubt that some good result must come out of it.

In a separate cover I beg to send you few publications concerning the present situation. I am very sorry that I have not very many books with me which I can send you just now but within a few days I hope to be able to send you few more books.

I most humbly beg your advice about our Free Hindusthan Movement so that it may become successful. With profound respect.

Yours truly  
Taraknath Das.

P.S. If it is possible we wish that you will kindly mention of the Free Hindusthan movement + my present address in your proposed article so that we can reach after people who might be interested by reading your article.

T. Das.

### 3b) Tolstoy's Letter to a Hindoo

*All that exists is One: people only call this One by different names.*

*The Vedas*

*God is love, and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him.  
1 John IV. 16.*

*God is one whole; we are the parts.*

*Exposition of the teaching of the Vedas by Vivekananda.*

I

*Do not seek quiet and rest in those earthly realms where delusions and desires are engendered, for if thou dost, thou wilt be dragged through the rough wilderness of life, which is far from Me. Whenever thou feelest that thy feet are becoming entangled in the interlaced roots of life, know that thou hast strayed from the path to which I beckon thee: for I have placed thee in broad, smooth paths, which are strewn with flowers. I have put a light before thee, which thou canst follow and thus run without stumbling. Krishna*

I have received your letter and two numbers of your periodical, both of which interest me extremely. The oppression of a majority by a minority, and the demoralization inevitably resulting from it, is a phenomenon that has always occupied me and has done so most particularly of late. I will try to explain to you what I think about that subject in general, and particularly about the cause from which the dreadful evils of which you write in your letter, and in the Hindu periodical you have sent me, have arisen and continue to arise.

The reason for the astonishing fact that a majority of working people submit to a handful of idlers who control their labour and their very lives is always and everywhere the same - whether the oppressors and oppressed are of one race or whether, as in India and elsewhere, the oppressors are of a different nation.

This phenomenon seems particularly strange in India, for there are more than two hundred million people, highly gifted both physically and mentally, find themselves in the power of a small group of people quite alien to them in thought, and immeasurably inferior to them in religious morality.

From your letter and the articles in Free Hindustan as well as from the very interesting writings of the Hindu Swami Vivekananda and others, it appears that, as is the case in our time with the ills of all nations, the reason lies in the lack of a reasonable religious teaching which by explaining the meaning of life would supply a supreme law for the guidance of conduct and would replace the more than dubious precepts of pseudo-religion and pseudo-science with the immoral conclusions deduced from them and commonly called 'civilization'.

Your letter, as well as the articles in Free Hindustan and Indian political literature generally, shows that most of the leaders of public opinion among your people no longer attach any significance to the religious teachings that were and are professed by the peoples of India, and recognize no possibility of freeing the people from the oppression they endure except by adopting the irreligious and profoundly immoral social arrangements under which the English and other pseudo-Christian nations live to-day.

And yet the chief if not the sole cause of the enslavement of the Indian peoples by the English lies in this very absence of a religious consciousness and of the guidance for conduct which should flow from it - a lack common in our day to all nations East and West, from Japan to England and America alike.

## II

*O ye, who see perplexities over your heads,  
beneath your feet, and to the right and left of  
you; you will be an eternal enigma unto  
yourselves until ye become humble and joyful  
as children. Then will ye find Me, and having  
found Me in yourselves, you will rule over  
worlds, and looking out from the great world  
within to the little world without, you will  
bless everything that is, and find all is well  
with time and with you.*

*Krishna*

To make my thoughts clear to you I must go farther back. We do not, cannot, and I venture to say need not, know how men lived millions of years ago or even ten thousand years ago, but we do know positively that, as far back as we have any knowledge of mankind, it has always lived in special groups of families, tribes, and nations in which the majority, in the conviction that it must be so, submissively and willingly bowed to the rule of one or more persons - that is to a very small minority. Despite all varieties of circumstances and personalities these relations manifested themselves among the various peoples of whose origin we have any knowledge; and the farther back we go the more absolutely necessary did this arrangement appear, both to the rulers and the ruled, to make it possible for people to live peacefully together.

So it was everywhere. But though this external form of life existed for centuries and still exists, very early - thousands of years before our time - amid this life based on coercion, one and the same thought constantly emerged among different nations, namely, that in every individual a spiritual element is manifested that gives life to all that exists, and that this spiritual element strives to unite with everything of a like nature to itself, and attains this aim through love. This thought appeared in most various forms at different times and places, with varying completeness and clarity. It found expression in Brahmanism, Judaism, Mazdaism (the teachings of Zoroaster), in Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and in the writings of the Greek and Roman sages, as well as in Christianity and Mohammedanism. The mere fact that this thought has sprung up among different nations and at different times indicates that it is inherent in human nature and contains the truth. But this truth was made known to people who considered that a community could only be kept together if some of them restrained others, and so it appeared quite irreconcilable with the existing order of society. Moreover it was at first expressed only fragmentarily, and so obscurely that though people admitted its theoretic truth they could not entirely accept it as guidance for their conduct. Then, too, the dissemination of the truth in a society based on coercion was always hindered in one and the same manner, namely, those in power, feeling that the recognition of this truth would undermine their position, consciously or sometimes unconsciously perverted it by explanations and additions quite foreign to it, and also opposed it by open violence. Thus the truth - that his life should be directed by the spiritual element which is its basis, which manifests itself as love, and which is so natural to man - this truth, in order to force a way to man's consciousness, had to struggle not merely against the obscurity with which it was expressed and the intentional and unintentional distortions surrounding it, but also against deliberate violence, which by means of persecutions and

punishments sought to compel men to accept religious laws authorized by the rulers and conflicting with the truth. Such a hindrance and misrepresentation of the truth - which had not yet achieved complete clarity - occurred everywhere: in Confucianism and Taoism, in Buddhism and in Christianity, in Mohammedanism, and in your Brahmanism.

### III

*My hand has sowed love everywhere, giving unto all that will receive. Blessings are offered unto all My children, but many times in their blindness they fail to see them. How few there are who gather the gifts which lie in profusion at their feet: how many there are, who, in wilful waywardness, turn their eyes away from them and complain with a wail that they have not that which I have given them; many of them defiantly repudiate not only My gifts, but Me also, Me, the Source of all blessings and the Author of their being. Krishna*

*I tarry awhile from the turmoil and strife of the world. I will beautify and quicken thy life with love and with joy, for the light of the soul is Love. Where Love is, there is contentment and peace, and where there is contentment and peace, there am I, also, in their midst. Krishna*

*The aim of the sinless One consists in acting without causing sorrow to others, although he could attain to great power by ignoring their feelings.*

*The aim of the sinless One lies in not doing evil unto those who have done evil unto him. If a man causes suffering even to those who hate him without any reason, he will ultimately have grief not to be overcome.*

*The punishment of evil doers consists in making them feel ashamed of themselves by doing them a great kindness.*

*Of what use is superior knowledge in the one, if he does not endeavour to relieve his neighbour's want as much as his own?*

*If, in the morning, a man wishes to do evil unto another, in the evening the evil will return to him. The Hindu Kural.*

Thus it went on everywhere. The recognition that love represents the highest morality was nowhere denied or contradicted, but this truth was so interwoven everywhere with all kinds of falsehoods which distorted it, that finally nothing of it remained but words. It was taught that this highest morality was only applicable to private life - for home use, as it were - but that in public life all forms of violence - such as imprisonment, executions, and wars - might be used for the protection of the majority against a minority of evil-doers, though such means were diametrically opposed to any vestige of love. And though common sense indicated that if some men claim to decide who is to be subjected to violence of all kinds for the benefit of others, these men to whom violence is applied may, in turn, arrive at a similar conclusion with regard to those who have employed violence to them, and though the great religious teachers of Brahmanism, Buddhism, and above all of Christianity, foreseeing such a perversion of the law of love, have constantly drawn attention to the one invariable condition of love (namely, the enduring of injuries, insults, and violence of all kinds without resisting evil by evil) people continued - regardless of all that leads man forward - to try to unite the incompatibles: the virtue of love, and what is opposed to love, namely, the restraining of evil by violence. And such a teaching, despite its inner contradiction, was so firmly established that the very people who recognize love as a virtue accept as lawful at the same time an order of life based on violence and allowing men not merely to torture but even to kill one another.

For a long time people lived in this obvious contradiction without noticing it. But a time arrived when this contradiction became more and more evident to thinkers of various nations. And the old and simple truth that it is natural for men to help and to love one another, but not to torture and to kill one another, became ever clearer, so that fewer and fewer people were able to believe the sophistries by which the distortion of the truth had been made so plausible.

In former times the chief method of justifying the use of violence and thereby infringing the law of love was by claiming a divine right for the rulers: the Tsars, Sultans, Rajahs, Shahs, and other heads of states. But the longer humanity lived the weaker grew the belief in this peculiar, God-given right of the ruler. That belief withered in the same way and almost simultaneously in the Christian and the Brahman world, as well as in Buddhist and Confucian spheres, and in recent times it has so faded away as to prevail no longer against man's reasonable understanding and the true religious feeling.

People saw more and more clearly, and now the majority see quite clearly, the senselessness and immorality of subordinating their wills to those of other people just like themselves, when they are bidden to do what is contrary not only to their interests but also to their moral sense. And so one might suppose that having lost confidence in any religious authority for a belief in the divinity of potentates of various kinds, people would try to free themselves from subjection to it. But unfortunately not only were the rulers, who were considered supernatural beings, benefited by having the peoples in subjection, but as a result of the belief in, and during the rule of, these pseudo-divine beings, ever larger and larger circles of people grouped and established themselves around them, and under an appearance of governing took advantage of the people. And when the old deception of a supernatural and God-appointed authority had dwindled away these men were only concerned to devise a new one which like its predecessor should make it possible to hold the people in bondage to a limited number of rulers.

#### IV

*Children, do you want to know by what your hearts should be guided? Throw aside your longings and strivings after that which is null and void; get rid of your erroneous thoughts about happiness and wisdom, and your empty and insincere desires. Dispense with these and you will know Love.*

*Krishna*

*Be not the destroyers of yourselves. Arise to your true Being, and then you will have nothing to fear.*

*Krishna*

New justifications have now appeared in place of the antiquated, obsolete, religious ones. These new justifications are just as inadequate as the old ones, but as they are new their futility cannot immediately be recognized by the majority of men. Besides this, those who enjoy power propagate these new sophistries and support them so skilfully that they seem irrefutable even to many of those who suffer from the oppression these theories seek to justify. These new justifications are termed 'scientific'. But by the term 'scientific' is understood just what was formerly understood by the term 'religious': just as formerly everything called 'religious' was held to be unquestionable simply because it was called religious, so now all that is called 'scientific' is held to be unquestionable. In the present case the obsolete religious justification of violence which consisted in the recognition of the supernatural personality of the God-ordained ruler ('there is no power but of God') has been superseded by the 'scientific' justification which puts forward, first, the assertion that because the coercion of man by man has existed in all ages, it follows that such coercion must continue to exist. This assertion that people should continue to live as they have done throughout past ages rather than as their reason and conscience indicate, is what 'science' calls 'the historic law'. A further 'scientific' justification lies in the statement that as among plants and wild beasts there is a constant struggle for existence which always results in the survival of the fittest, a similar struggle should be carried on among human beings - beings, that is, who are gifted with intelligence and love; faculties lacking in the creatures subject to the struggle for existence and survival of the fittest. Such is the second 'scientific' justification.

The third, most important, and unfortunately most widespread justification is, at bottom, the age-old religious one just a little altered: that in public life the suppression of some for the protection of the majority cannot be avoided - so that coercion is unavoidable however desirable reliance on love alone might be in human intercourse. The only difference in this justification by pseudo-science consists in the fact that, to the question why such and such people and not others have the right to decide against whom violence may and must be used, pseudo-science now gives a different reply to that given by religion - which declared that the right to decide was valid because it was pronounced by persons possessed of divine power. 'Science' says that these decisions represent the will of the people, which under a constitutional form of government is supposed to find expression in all the decisions and actions of those who are at the helm at the moment.

Such are the scientific justifications of the principle of coercion. They are not merely weak but absolutely invalid, yet they are so much needed by those who occupy privileged positions that they believe in them as blindly as they formerly believed in the immaculate conception, and propagate them just as confidently. And the unfortunate majority of men bound to toil is so dazzled by the pomp with which these 'scientific truths' are presented, that under this new influence it accepts these scientific stupidities for holy truth, just as it formerly accepted the pseudo-religious justifications; and it continues to submit to the present holders of power who are just as hard-hearted but rather more numerous than before.

V

*Who am I? I am that which thou hast searched  
for since thy baby eyes gazed wonderingly  
upon the world, whose horizon hides this real  
life from thee. I am that which in thy heart  
thou hast prayed for, demanded as thy  
birthright, although thou hast not known what  
it was. I am that which has lain in thy soul for  
hundreds and thousands of years. Sometimes I  
lay in thee grieving because thou didst not  
recognize me; sometimes I raised my head,  
opened my eyes, and extended my arms  
calling thee either tenderly and quietly, or  
strenuously, demanding that thou shouldst  
rebel against the iron chains which bound thee  
to the earth.* Krishna

So matters went on, and still go on, in the Christian world. But we might have hope that in the immense Brahman, Buddhist, and Confucian worlds this new scientific superstition would not establish itself, and that the Chinese, Japanese, and Hindus, once their eyes were opened to the religious fraud justifying violence, would advance directly to a recognition of the law of love inherent in humanity, and which had been so forcibly enunciated by the great Eastern teachers. But what has happened is that the scientific superstition replacing the religious one has been accepted and secured a stronger and stronger hold in the East.

In your periodical you set out as the basic principle which should guide the actions of your people the maxim that: 'Resistance to aggression is not simply justifiable but imperative, non-resistance hurts both Altruism and Egotism.'

Love is the only way to rescue humanity from all ills, and in it you too have the only method of saving your people from enslavement. In very ancient times love was proclaimed with special strength and clearness among your people to be the religious basis of human life. Love, and forcible resistance to evil-doers, involve such a mutual contradiction as to destroy utterly the whole sense and meaning of the conception of love. And what follows? With a light heart and in the twentieth century you, an adherent of a religious people, deny their law, feeling convinced of your scientific enlightenment and your right to do so, and you repeat (do not take this amiss) the amazing stupidity indoctrinated in you by the advocates of the use of violence - the enemies of truth, the servants first of theology and then of science - your European teachers.

You say that the English have enslaved your people and hold them in subjection because the latter have not resisted resolutely enough and have not met force by force.

But the case is just the opposite. If the English have enslaved the people of India it is just because the latter recognized, and still recognize, force as the fundamental principle of the social order. In accord with that principle they submitted to their little rajahs, and on their behalf struggled against one another, fought the Europeans, the English, and are now trying to fight with them again.

A commercial company enslaved a nation comprising two hundred millions. Tell this to a man free from superstition and he will fail to grasp what these words mean. What does it mean that thirty thousand men, not athletes but rather weak and ordinary people, have subdued two hundred million vigorous, clever, capable, and freedom-loving people? Do not the figures make it clear that it is not the English who have enslaved the Indians, but the Indians who have enslaved themselves?

When the Indians complain that the English have enslaved them it is as if drunkards complained that the spirit-dealers who have settled among them have enslaved them. You tell them that they might give up drinking, but they reply that they are so accustomed to it that they cannot abstain, and that they must

have alcohol to keep up their energy. Is it not the same thing with the millions of people who submit to thousands, or even to hundreds, of others - of their own or other nations?

If the people of India are enslaved by violence it is only because they themselves live and have lived by violence, and do not recognize the eternal law of love inherent in humanity.

*„Pitiful and foolish is the man who seeks what he already has, and does not know that he has it. Yes, pitiful and foolish is he who does not know the bliss of love which surrounds him and which I have given him.“* Krishna.

As soon as men live entirely in accord with the law of love natural to their hearts and now revealed to them, which excludes all resistance by violence, and therefore hold aloof from all participation in violence - as soon as this happens, not only will hundreds be unable to enslave a single individual. Do not resist the evil-doer and take no part in doing so, either in the violent deeds of the administration, in the law courts, the collection of taxes, or above all in soldiering, and no one in the world will be able to enslave you.

## VI

*O ye who sit in bondage and continually seek and pant for freedom, seek only for love. Love is peace in itself and peace which gives complete satisfaction. I am the key that opens the portal to the rarely discovered land where contentment alone is found.* Krishna

What is now happening to the people of the East as of the West is like what happens to every individual when he passes from childhood to adolescence and from youth to manhood. He loses what had hitherto guided his life and lives without direction, not having found a new standard suitable to his age, and so he invents all sorts of occupations, cares, distractions, and stupefactions to divert his attention from the misery and senselessness of his life. Such a condition may last a long time.

When an individual passes from one period of life to another, a time comes when he cannot go on in senseless activity and excitement as before, but has to understand that although he has outgrown what before used to direct him, this does not

mean that he must live without any reasonable guidance, but rather that he must formulate for himself an understanding of life corresponding to his age, and having elucidated it must be guided by it. And in the same way a similar time must come in the growth and development of humanity. I believe that such a time has now arrived - not in the sense that it has come in the year 1908, but that the inherent contradiction of human life has now reached an extreme degree of tension: on the one side there is the consciousness of the beneficence of the law of love, and on the other the existing order of life which has for centuries occasioned an empty, anxious, restless, and troubled mode of life, conflicting as it does with the law of love and built on the use of violence. This contradiction must be faced, and the solution will evidently not be favourable to the outlived law of violence, but to the truth which has dwelt in the hearts of men from remote antiquity: the truth that the law of love is in accord with the nature of man.

But men can only recognize this truth to its full extent when they have completely freed themselves from all religious and scientific superstitions and from all the consequent misrepresentations and sophistical distortions by which its recognition has been hindered for centuries.

To save a sinking ship it is necessary to throw overboard the ballast, which though it may once have been needed would now cause the ship to sink. And so it is with the scientific superstition which hides the truth of their welfare from mankind. In order that men should embrace the truth - not in the vague way they did in childhood, nor in the one-sided and perverted way presented to them by their religious and scientific teachers, but embrace it as their highest law - the complete liberation of this truth from all and every superstition (both pseudo-religious and pseudo-scientific) by which it is still obscured is essential: not a partial, timid attempt, reckoning with traditions sanctified by age and with the habits of the people - not such as was effected in the religious sphere by Guru-Nanak, the founder of the sect of the Sikhs, and in the Christian world by Luther, and by similar reformers in other religions - but a fundamental cleansing of religious consciousness from all ancient religious and modern scientific superstitions.

If only people freed themselves from their beliefs in all kinds of Ormuzds, Brahmas, Sabbaoths, and their incarnation as Krishnas and Christs, from beliefs in Paradises and Hells, in reincarnations and resurrections, from belief in the interference of the Gods in the external affairs of the universe, and above all, if they freed themselves from belief in the infallibility of all the various Vedas, Bibles,

Gospels, Tripitakas, Korans, and the like, and also freed themselves from blind belief in a variety of scientific teachings about infinitely small atoms and molecules and in all the infinitely great and infinitely remote worlds, their movements and origin, as well as from faith in the infallibility of the scientific law to which humanity is at present subjected: the historic law, the economic laws, the law of struggle and survival, and so on - if people only freed themselves from this terrible accumulation of futile exercises of our lower capacities of mind and memory called the 'Sciences', and from the innumerable divisions of all sorts of histories, anthropologies, homiletics, bacteriologies, jurisprudences, cosmographies, strategies - their name is legion - and freed themselves from all this harmful, stupefying ballast - the simple law of love, natural to man, accessible to all and solving all questions and perplexities, would of itself become clear and obligatory.

## VII

*Children, look at the flowers at your feet; do not trample upon them. Look at the love in your midst and do not repudiate it. Krishna*

*There is a higher reason which transcends all human minds. It is far and near. It permeates all the worlds and at the same time is infinitely higher than they.*

*A man who sees that all things are contained in the higher spirit cannot treat any being with contempt.*

*For him to whom all spiritual beings are equal to the highest there can be no room for deception of grief.*

*Those who are ignorant and are devoted to the religious rites only, are in a deep gloom, but those who are given up to fruitless meditations are in a still greater darkness.*

*Upanishads, from Vedas*

Yes, in our time all these things must be cleared away in order that mankind may escape from self-inflicted calamities that have reached an extreme intensity. Whether an Indian seeks liberation from subjection to the English, or anyone else struggles with an oppressor either of his own nationality or of another - whether it

be a Negro defending himself against the North Americans; or Persians, Russians, or Turks against the Persian, Russian, or Turkish governments, or any man seeking the greatest welfare for himself and for everybody else - they do not need explanations and justifications of old religious superstitions such as have been formulated by your Vivekanandas, Baba Bharatis, and others, or in the Christian world by a number of similar interpreters and exponents of things that nobody needs; nor the innumerable scientific theories about matters not only unnecessary but for the most part harmful. (In the spiritual realm nothing is indifferent: what is not useful is harmful.)

What are wanted for the Indians as for the Englishman, the Frenchman, the German, and the Russian, are not Constitutions and Revolutions, nor all sorts of Conferences and Congresses, nor the many ingenious devices for submarine navigation and aerial navigation, nor powerful explosives, nor all sorts of conveniences to add to the enjoyment of the rich, ruling classes; nor new schools and universities with innumerable faculties of science, nor an augmentation of papers and books, nor gramophones and cinematographs, nor those childish and for the most part corrupt stupidities termed art - but one thing only is needful; the knowledge of the simple and clear truth which finds place in every soul that is not stupefied by religious and scientific superstitions - the truth that for our life one law is valid - the law of love, which brings the highest happiness to every individual as well as to all mankind. Free your minds from those overgrown, mountainous imbecilities which hinder your recognition of it, and at once the truth will emerge from amid the pseudo-religious nonsense that has been smothering it: the indubitable, eternal truth inherent in man, which is one and the same in all the great religions of the world. It will in due time emerge and make its way to general recognition, and the nonsense that has obscured it will disappear of itself, and with it will go the evil from which humanity now suffers.

*"Children, look upwards with your beclouded eyes, and a world full of joy and love will disclose itself to you, a rational world made by My wisdom, the only real world. Then you will know what love has done with you, what love has bestowed upon you, what love demands from you." Krishna*

Yasnaya Polyana, December 14th, 1908



### 3c) Taranath Das' letter of response to Leo Tolstoy

#### Part I

Your open letter to us in reply to our private correspondence is unique and ideal in the way you have discussed the question of non-resistance and love. The world expects to hear a message of the like nature from a soul like yours, you who have experienced the sweetness and blessings of universal fellowship and unity of souls. An individual who really realizes but not theorizes that "All that exists is One; people only call this One by different names" - to him there is no need of constitutions, revolutions, conferences, congresses; to him, arts and sciences are stupidity; anything material is repulsive. The stage of which you speak is the stage of being above all material qualities - what the Hindu philosophers call "Gunatita".

According to the teachings of the prophet Krishna in the *Bagavat Gita*, the epitome of Hindoo philosophy, and according to our common sense, we see there are four stages of existence in individuals, societies and states. They are (1) dullness, (2) activity, (3) serenity, (4) "The stage of Gunatita." As we cannot expect the dogma relative to dullness to be fully applicable to activity, serenity and so on. The diet of a young man is quite different from that of an old man; so your ideas are different from ours. Your sphere is to live above the material plane and renounce it altogether, whereas ours is to perform the duties as long as we live in the material plane. To you, there is no duty, but we have duties. We are not worshippers of violence. Our mottoes, "Resistance to tyranny is service to humanity and a necessity to civilization," and "Resistance to aggression is not simply justifiable, but imperative; non-resistance hurts both Altruism and Egoism", are not inconsistent with the law of progress and service to humanity - theories in which you possibly do not believe. We advocate resistance. Resistance is an active effort to overcome obstacles. We would again like to say that our idea is progress and comfort to humanity at large. We never advocate, as you have supposed, that violence is the only possible way of uniting peoples into societies.

Our motto is not an absolute doctrine, but it is dependent upon the condition of society and state. If there is no trace of aggression and tyranny, there is no expression of our dogma. But, as long as good and evil exist, as long as the rights of the weak are usurped by the strong, and as long as there remains the diversity of nature among human beings, our principle stands true, and it will remain operative as the active expression and effort of love to humanity until the *millennium* comes.

Non-resistance is an absolute dogma. We deny the existence of absolute non-resistance. In fact, in the last analysis, non-resistance does not exist. From our standpoint, our mere existence is a struggle. And, sir, we see that you are a strong pillar to support our doctrine by your actions. You, as a lover of humanity and preacher of the blessed idea of universal fellowship, in which nearly all Hindoo political leaders - at least we - believe, have always raised your powerful voice against the oppression of the majority by the minority of a people. You, by your utterances and writings have strongly resisted the idea of special privilege which is tyranny and have preached the sacredness of equal rights. You have upheld the rights and dignity of human life; you are resisting the evil force and brute nature by your moral force, you are facing right and moving towards right, and thus resisting wrong in a beneficial sense. Your actions are all violence to the people against whose interests they are arrayed. Violence and benevolence are measured by the relative value of the actions and the motives underlying them.

The idea of absolute non-resistance is not always love, but often bespeaks dullness, weakness, leading to fatalism; and to establish this fact, I will give a concrete example as it is experienced in India.

A Hindoo gentleman with his wife was travelling in a train. They were alone in the compartment until two "Tommy Atkins" entered, as they frequently do. One of them reached the lady and showed activity to ignore the purity of womanhood, while the other stood at the door to stop the entrance of anyone from outside who might resist their vile actions. All means of escape were cut off. Sir, would you in this case ask the husband of that lady to use love, which you think must be consistent with non-resistance towards the brute, or would you ask him, for the sake of love towards his comrade and love of morality to use his manly force to resist the brutal action? Would you, sir, ask the lady not to resist the infamous deed? No, we believe that you would ask the parties subjected to such treatment to resist it to the last. Our position is just the same. We are believers in universal fellowship, but we are intolerant of any action of exploitation of any nation, race, society, family or individual by others. We advocate resistance - it may be moral or physical, active or passive, it may be direct or indirect - never to uphold the base instincts and deliberate actions of robbery of one nation by another as it is done in India to-day by the British Government, but to denounce it, and if possible, to abolish it; and we are glad to see, sir, that you have advised us to adopt passive resistance. You have advised our countrymen not to participate in the violent deeds of administration, of law courts, of collecting taxes and aiding the military rule of British Government in India by enlisting as soldiers. We appeal to our countrymen to follow your sound

advice, as we think passive resistance is often more effective than active opposition. We will ask our countrymen to adopt measures of active opposition only when they see that passive resistance leads to imprisonment and deportation without any kind of trial, as it does today in India. We advocate that when passive resistance becomes futile, we ought to adopt active resistance to stop aggression and tyranny.

We want to establish a kingdom of love; but how can we do it under the existing circumstances? Sir, you will accept the axiomatic truth, "two things cannot occupy the same space at the same time," and it is equally true psychologically with all ideas and incidents. In order to establish an order superior to the existing state of affairs it is first necessary to break down the undesirable system. And we advocate that we have to resist evil in order to uplift righteousness.

We, the Indian Nationalists, believe, and we think that you, sir, do not disagree with us, that the British Government in India is nothing but a commercial agency bartering the life-blood of millions of Indian people for mere pounds, shillings and pence. We do not care to go into the minute details of the matter, but will quote a passage from the issue of *Justice* for Feb. 27, 1909, to substantiate our statement:

"British rule in India is one long record of wrong and robbery. The people are being bled to death and made easy victims for the plague by our systematic extortion. Indians are deprived of all control over their own country. Free speech, free press, free trial, freedom of every sort is being relentlessly suppressed. Wholly innocent men are being transported and kept in prison without the chance of saying a word in their own defence, under enactments worthy of a Sergius or a Plehve. Young university students, guilty only of political offences of the mildest character, have been publicly flogged by Liberal orders till the blood ran down their backs. Torture in British prisons, both before and after trial, has been quite common, and is admitted to have been so by British officials, and as a manifest deduction from all these facts, such a government as this of ours in India is wholly infamous, and a curse alike to the people of India, the people of England and humanity at large."

To substantiate the above remarks, we produce some authoritative views on the moral, educational, sanitary, economic and civil condition of India under the British Rule. In a paper entitled "Success of British Government in India from the Moral Point of View", *The Harp* of New York, for May 1909, cites the following

from an exchange, which is of special value as containing the official orders that reveal the shame of England's army:

"The British army in India recruits women for the purpose of harlotry with an almost brutal disregard for even the God of Appearance. On June 17, 1886, Sir F. (now Lord) Roberts, issued his 'circular memorandum' addressed to general officers commanding divisions and districts. In it he says:

"In the regimental bazaars it is necessary to have a sufficient number of women; to take care that they are sufficiently attractive, and to provide them proper houses."

"In furtherance of these instructions, the officer commanding the Connaught Rangers at Jullender, wrote to the assistant quarter master as follows:

"The cantonment magistrate has already on more than one occasion been requested to obtain a number of younger and more attractive women, but with little or no success. He will again be appealed to. The Major-General commanding should invoke the aid of the local government by instructing the cantonment magistrates, whom they appoint, that they give all possible aid to commanding officers in procuring a sufficient number of young, attractive, and healthy women."

It will be observed that the magistrates are acting as procurers at the instigation of army officers.

When the British were introducing the opium trade into India, they sent commissioners into the territory they thought suitable for the cultivation of the poppy, and summoning all the *ryots* (peasant farmers) before them, these commissioners compelled each to set aside as much of his land as the commissioners wanted for the culture of this accursed drug.

When the natives would not buy or use the opium, the government spent a vast sum of money in giving it away free in order to cultivate among them a liking for it. The drug has ruined millions, body and soul, but it has brought a great revenue to the British Government.

The effect of this opium cultivation is demoralizing and disintegrating. "It depopulated the country and degenerated the people. From having once been a fine, manly race, the Assamees (natives of a province of the Hindustan) have become absolutely the most abject and worthless in all India. The growth of population among them was checked by it; the men became prematurely old; the women bore fewer children and the children rarely lived to become old men."

Truth can never be too strong. The British merchants and British government are the causes of the introduction of opium and liquor in Hindustan. Some years ago the distribution of free liquor was a common thing. Even to-day, the British government distributes liquor regularly in the native army, and the effect is to disintegrate our finest specimens of manhood. Opium is also secretly distributed among the people, and the Government has adopted the same plan as the British merchants did in China and Formosa. How opium was introduced into Formosa is thus set forth in Japanese Government records:-

"Opium was first imported into the island (Formosa) about thirty years ago and it was imported in the raw state. It was imported through Hong Kong by the English merchants who told the natives that their sickness would be cured if they took it as medicine. The natives were very glad to hear this and procured the same gratis from the merchants and for a short time seemed to be cured. This is how they became accustomed to smoking, and according to the English merchants, they thought it excellent medicine and from that time on consumed large quantities of it. It was several years afterward that they found it to be poisonous."

A careful writer in *Free Hindustan* for August, 1908, says:-

"We have seen in Vancouver, B.C., at least two hundred Sikhs, who use opium even with tea, and they testify that they were told first that opium was good medicine for head-ache, gout, trouble with stomach, and thus they began to use it and now they are slaves to the poison." This official drugging in India is daily increasing and we produce a British parliamentary report about it:

"In reply to a question in the English House of Commons on April 27, asking for the total net revenues from excisable liquors and drugs in India for a series of years, the following statement was made by Mr. Hobhouse on behalf of the Under Secretary for India, Mr. Buchanan: The figures of net revenue, stated in sterling at the rate of 15 rupees to the pound, are as follows: 1874-5, 1,561,000 Pounds; 1883-4,

2,538,000 Pounds; 1894-5, 3,620,000 Pounds; 1904-5, 5,295,000 Pounds; 1905-6, 5,621,000 Pounds; 1907-8, 5,163,000 Pounds; 1908-9, 7,342,000 Pounds; 1909-10, 6,717,000 Pounds. For the last two years the figures are estimates."

## Part II

Education is the bread of the soul. A misconception for want of accurate information about the British educational policy toward Hindustan, is very widely spread among people of civilized countries. The British Government and press trumpet all along that the British occupancy of India has been a great benefit to our people, and cite the spread of education. We do not wish to pass any opinion, but we are quoting solid facts and challenge contradiction of them.

"When in 1792, Wilberford proposed to add two clauses to the Charter of the year, for sending out schoolmasters to India, the directors of the company strongly objected to the proposal. On that occasion one of the directors stated that they had just lost America through their folly of having allowed the establishment of schools and colleges, and it would not do for them to repeat the same act of folly in regard to India: if the natives required anything in the way of education, they must come to England for it."(1)

"This policy still exists at the bottom of the educational system established by the British Government in Modern India. Although this policy, or rather fear, has apparently been modified and schools, colleges and universities have been founded, still the Government of India does not feel safe in giving the natives substantial higher education of the same nature as can be obtained in England, Europe and America."(2)

To clear this last remark, we would like to say, that even to-day if we desire the higher education, we must go to England or some other western country. This is not all: We must also go to England to qualify ourselves as Indian Civil Servants, because the Indian Civil Service examinations are held *only* in England, so that poor countrymen of ours may not get any opportunity of governing our own country. How noble it is!

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(1) J.C. Marshman's Evidence, Lord's Second Report, 1953.

(2) *India and Her People*, by Swami Abhedananda. Pp. 190-191

Rev. J. T. Sunderland, after a long residence in India, says:

“Much credit has been given to the Indian Government for education. It has done some good work in this direction, for which let it have full praise; but how little it has done when compared with the need, or compared with what the people want, or with its ability if it would only use its resources primarily for India’s good! Why has so little of the people’s money been spent for education? The munificent sum of one penny and a fifth, i.e., two cents per head of the population! Think of it. Is it any wonder that after a century and a half of British dominance the number of persons in India who can read and write is only about seven out of a hundred among males, and one in two hundred among females? With their native industries badly broken down the Indian people have special need of industrial, technical and practical education, but the rulers are giving them almost nothing of this kind. Britain’s neglect of education is a dark stain upon her treatment of India.”(3)

Mr. Keir Hardie, M.P., spoke at Arbroath in Scotland in April, 1908, in the following way: “Take for instance, education in India: How much were they spending for education? One penny, i.e. two cents per annum. How much for military? One shilling per annum. One meal in two days was a common experience for hundreds in the Indian Empire, yet there was no public school system and children were charged for being taught.”

The average income of our people according to different authorities, is \$10 per annum at the *very highest*, and down to \$6. The Government High School tuition fee is \$1.75 per month. Now you can easily realize whether the people will fail to educate their children or starve.

We would like to compare the Russian educational policy with the British, which might be interesting. *The Times* for April 17, 1908, contained the following: “The Duma has passed the first reading of a bill introduced by the minister of education, providing for the grant of 6,900,000 roubles annually for the introduction of universal elementary education.”

The Russian Government has granted a large sum of money for educational purposes; but according to the Budget debate and financial statement of the Viceroy’s Council

(3) Paper on *The Causes of Famines in India*, before the Canadian Institute, by Rev. J. T. Sunderland. Page 21.

for the year 1908-09, we do not find the grant of a single cent for adopting the system of free and universal elementary education; but we see the Government enormously extravagant for military affairs by sanctioning 20.75 million sterling, out of 59.19 million sterling, the total revenue of the country.

The British Government in Hindustan is not only inferior to the Russian Government, but also to native states in India (which the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy regards as extremely autocratic). The Gaekwar of Baroda has made elementary education free and compulsory in his state, while the British Government of India under the *régime* of Lord Curzon passed University Acts which abolished the autonomy of the universities and higher education. To stop private educational enterprise or national life, the British Government is persecuting teachers and students of private schools and colleges even for singing our national song “Bande Mataram” (Hail, Motherland).

It is known to all that since 1901, India has been annually ravaged by bubonic and pneumonic plague and these fearful diseases have become as common as malarial fever, smallpox, or cholera there. The highest medical authorities of the world have pronounced that the plague in India is caused by want of proper sanitation and want of sufficient food among the people. If want of proper sanitation is one of the undeniable causes of plague, we would like to place before our intelligent readers the government statistics concerning sanitation in India, as revealed by Hon. Mr. Gokhale, C.I.E., in his budget speech in March, 1908.

“These figures show the amount contributed by the several provincial revenues as grants-in-aid to the municipalities towards the capital outlay on drainage and water-works during the last five years, i.e., from 1902-3 to 1906-7. Total amount of dollars in five years:

Madras (exclusive of 3 lakhs given to the city of Madras)	\$215,666 00
Bombay	35,133 00
United Provinces	189,445 00
Punjab	75,000 00
Burma	nil
Eastern Bengal and Assam	4,666 00
Central Provinces	13,666 00
N.W. Provinces	nil
Total for all Provinces in five years	\$533,576 00

“This gives an annual average of a little over \$100,000 for the whole country (where the population is about three hundred millions). It may be noted that during these same five years, while the government contributed a mere pittance of a little over five hundred thousand dollars towards the sanitation of our own towns, which were being decimated by annual visitations of the plague, His Excellency, the Commander in Chief, was able to obtain for military charges a sum of about \$90,000,000 above the level of the military expenditure.

“In 1901-2, nearly 60 crores, i.e., \$200,000,000 were spent as capital outlay on railways, of which one-third, i.e., \$66,666,666 was found out of current revenues. My Lord, this treatment of sanitation as though the government has no responsibility in regard to it, has hitherto been one of the most melancholy features of the present scheme of financial decentralization, under which sanitation has been made over to the Local Bodies as their concern, *though they have admittedly no resources for undertaking large projects of improvement*. The analogy of England is often quoted to justify this arrangement, but on the same analogy, railway construction should have been left to private enterprise, but it is not.”

The above report proves that the British Government in India spent annually an average of a little more than \$100,000 of the revenue collected from the people for the sanitation of a population of about three hundred millions. Is this the best efficiency of the British ideal of sanitation? Is this the best sign of skill and devotion to improve the sanitary condition of the people of India?

The civilized world generally thinks that the British Government is doing a splendid work of irrigation in India to improve Indian agriculture and the sanitary condition of the country; but it is really a myth when we get into the motive and details of the action. We quote a part of the speech of Rai Bahadur Sitanath Roy, one of the merchant princes of Bengal, delivered before the last annual meeting of the National Chamber of Commerce, Calcutta:

“There is no country in the world which is blessed with such a magnificent river system as Bengal (including, of course, Eastern Bengal). These rivers served most useful purposes. They were not only useful from a sanitary point of view, but also from an economic point of view; they not only supplied good drinking water to the people, but served as arteries through which flowed the commerce of the country. But for some time these rivers, channels and creeks have been silting up and most of them have dried up, *with the result that many once flourishing towns and villages have been devastated by cholera and malarial fever.*”

He further observes, and very rightly: “Everywhere both in Europe and America, rivers are being kept open and navigable by means of powerful dredgers, but except in the case of the river Hooghly near Calcutta, no really useful and powerful dredger has ever been utilized in removing the slit deposits and for keeping up the natural flow of water through the numerous rivers in Bengal. While several countries in Europe and America have been spending millions for the improvement of their respective rivers, our Government, while so lavish in all other things, including railways, has been very slow in spending money on the improvement of the waterways of the country.”

This is not all. I am a Hindu and I wandered for over two years in different parts of India to study the real condition of the people, and what I have experienced is unimaginable by the American people. Except in a few big cities, Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Lahore, Allahabad and some others, it is very hard for the people to get pure drinking water. There is no water supply system in the Indian towns and villages. In villages, where ninety per cent of the people live, there are tanks, or reservoirs, dug by the people, and in most cases the water in those tanks, where the washerman washes dirty clothes, the dish-washer cleans the dishes and people in general take their baths, is used for cooking and drinking purposes. The British Government does not help materially to remedy these evils. It is regarded as a case of rare fortune if the villagers get any help from the government to dig a well when the reservoir is dried up. I thoroughly agree with Mr. Russell, the eminent sociologist and author of *The Uprising of the Many*, who observed that millions of people in India live in huts and hovels whose sanitary condition is worse than that provided for cattle in this country.

Mr. William Jennings Bryan, after visiting India, remarked wisely: “So great has been the drain, the injustice to the people and the tax upon the resources of the country, that famines have increased in frequency and severity. Mr. Gokhale, one of the ablest of India’s public men, presiding over the meeting of the last Indian National Congress held in December, declared in his opening speech that the death rate had steadily risen from 24 in the thousand in 1882-1884 to 30 in 1892-1894 and to 34 at the present time.

“I have more than once, within the last month, heard the plague referred to be a providential remedy for over-population. Think of it! British rule justified because ‘it keeps the people from killing each other,’ and the plague praised because it removes those whom the Government had saved from slaughter!”

Here we want to emphasize the fact that in England the death rate is decreasing, and the statistics read thus: "England has become successful in bringing down her death rate from 20 to 15.5 per thousand during the last twenty years."

Some people make the indiscreet remark that the people of India have no idea of sanitation, and that they never lived in a sanitary way; but such is not the case. Students of ancient history testify that when the Anglo-Saxons were living in caves, then India had her days of prosperity. Medical science, astronomy, ethics and philosophy flourished there. Megasthenes, an early Greek historian and contemporary of Alexander the Great, has fortunately left a very valuable testimony to this early Indian civilization.

Under the existing economic conditions, the people of India cannot undertake independently any work of sanitation, because they are poor - they are taxed to death. There are districts where the people are forced to pay a land tax of 65 per cent of the products. The average income of the people is now one and one-half cents a day, while it was four cents some fifty years ago.

All nations condemn the Spanish exploitation of South America, as they also condemn her treatment of Cuba. Under Spanish rule, Cuba was in a state of horror, but under the progressive and benevolent influence of the United States, the conditions are changed; there shines forth the success of the American democracy which raised Cuba, a country of enslaved people, a resort unfit for human habitation, to a land of free people, blessed with all the latest sanitary developments.

The United States saved the Cubans from the yawning jaws of yellow fever, while the British Government has become the cause of plague, malaria and famine in India. Then shall we call the British Government in India a colossal success?

### Part III

The economic condition of the people is the sure test of the success or failure of a government.

India, under British rule, is suffering from the worst kind of economic evil that any country has ever faced on earth. India is the poorest country, with vast resources, in the world.

Here is the table of average income of the people of the principal nations per capita per annum: United States, \$220.00; British Isles, \$180.00; France, \$156.00; Germany, \$124.00; Austria, \$84.00; Italy, \$80.00; Holland, \$110.00 (1900); Belgium, \$14.00 (1900); Norway, \$100.00; Spain, \$80.00 (1900); Russia, \$55.00 (1900); British India, \$5.00 (1900).

Sir William Digby in his exhaustive work, *The Prosperous British India*, has proved from the parliamentary documents of the British Government that the average annual income of the people in British India is \$5.00 per annum. Lord Cromer some twenty years ago estimated that the average income of our people in Hindustan was \$9.00 per year per capita, not deducting taxation. If we take Lord Cromer's estimate as correct, it proves that the people of Hindustan are daily getting poorer and poorer under the British rule. It has been very clearly shown in *Prosperous British India* (1901) that in 1850 we had an average income of 2d. (4 cents) a day. In 1880 it lowered to 1<sup>o</sup> (3 cents), and in 1900 it had been reduced to less than 3/4d. (1<sup>o</sup> cents).

This poverty of India is caused by the British plunder and legalized pillage and destruction of Indian industries. Poverty has become the source of chronic famines in India. There people are dying like flies, and the famines are caused by the British commercialism and exploitation. Try to realize that over thirty millions of people died for want of food, starved to death, while the British merchants were daily carrying away ship-loads of food from the people who worked hard to provide it. Humanity is suffering from the effects of slow poison. The civilized world abhors war, but compare the mortality of famines in India for ten years, from 1891 to 1900, with that of all the wars in the world from 1793 to 1900! The figures are nineteen millions and five millions respectively. The famines in India, I repeat, are the result of British exploitation, and are not, as may be supposed, caused by lack of rain or lack of production, or by over-population.

It is an economic famine of an enslaved nation caused by merciless plunder of at least \$175,000,000 a year, without a cent in return. The British Government in India is more oppressive than the Russian.

People are generally misled to think that India was always a famine-land; but it is not a fact. Before the advent of the British rule in India, famine was occasional, but the British plundering policy has made it chronic. The area of famine districts is increasing yearly, and not a year passes that millions do not fall victims of the dreadful calamity. We produce below statistics taken from Sir William Digby's *Prosperous British India*, to convince our readers of the true situation:

## FAMINES BEFORE THE BRITISH RULE

In the Eleventh Century,	2 famines,	both local.
In the Thirteenth Century,	1 famine,	around Delhi.
In the Fourteenth Century,	3 famines,	all local.
In the Fifteenth Century,	2 famines,	both local.
In the Sixteenth Century,	3 famines,	all local.
In the Seventeenth Century,	3 famines, general;	area not defined.
In the Eighteenth Century,	4 famines, Northwestern provinces:	
	Delhi, Sindh (twice)	all local.

## FAMINES UNDER THE BRITISH RULE DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

“How completely famine has gained a hold on the Empire may be judged from this summary:

1800 to 1825,	5 famines, perhaps	1,000,000 deaths
1825 to 1850,	2 famines, perhaps	500,000 deaths
1850 to 1875,	6 famines, perhaps	5,000,000 deaths
1875 to 1900,	18 famines estimate	26,000,000 deaths

Two British subjects passed away from starvation, or starvation-induced diseases, every minute of every day and night from January 1st to September 30th, 1901.

Rev. J.T. Sunderland, in his work *The Causes of Famines in India*, like all impartial writers, has conclusively proved that neither “failure of rains” nor “over-population” is the cause of famines in India. He has stated that the real cause of famine is the extreme, the abject, the awful poverty of the Indian people caused by “*enormous foreign tribute*”, “British Indian Imperialism” and the destruction of Indian industries.

Sir William Hunter, K.O.S.I., the historian of India, formerly of the Viceroy’s Council, says: “The government assessment does not leave enough food to the cultivator to support himself and his family throughout the year.”

Mr. Herbert Compton, in *Indian Life*, has this to say:

“There is no more pathetic figure in the British Empire than the Indian peasant. His masters have ever been unjust to him. He is ground until everything has been expressed, except the marrow of his bones.”

Hindustan is an extensive agricultural country and the average land produces two crops a year, and in Bengal there are lands which produce thrice a year. Bengal alone produces such large crops that they are quite sufficient to provide *all the population of Hindustan for two years*. It is therefore easy to understand that before the advent of the British in India, lack of means of transportation was the cause of famines; but since their coming, owing to their unjust and merciless taxation, wilful destruction of native industries and *never ending plunder*, it would not make any difference if all of India produced a hundred crops a year; our people would still know the gnawing pain of hunger. So we may say that the modern means of transportation has become an instrument for carrying crops away from India to the outside for Great Britain’s interest, rather than helping the famine-stricken districts of India.

We will quote a few authoritative statements to support the above facts:

The theory of over-population in India is a myth and we produce a part below from the statistics of the U.S. Government, covering area, population and foreign commerce of the principal countries of the world:

Country	Area	Population	Population per square mile	Year
Austro-Hungary	241,333	47,355,000	196.22	1905
Austria	115,903	27,241,000	233.03	1905
Belgium	11,373	7,161,000	627.95	1906
Denmark	15,360	2,574,000	167.58	1905
France	207,054	39,300,000	189.51	1906
German Empire	208,830	60,478,000	289.60	1905
Italy	110,646	33,604,000	303.71	1905
Japan	147,655	47,975,000	324.91	1906
Formosa	13,458	3,059,000	227.30	1905
Netherlands	12,563	5,592,000	445.12	1905
Switzerland	15,976	3,459,000	216.51	1906
United Kingdom	121,371	43,221,000	356.11	1906
India	1,766,642	294,361,000	166.62	1906

Of the plunder of India Adam Brooks, in *Laws of Civilization and Decay*, says: “Very soon after the Battle of Plassey (fought in 1757) the Bengal plunder began

to arrive in London and the effect appears to have been almost instantaneous. ... Probably since the world began no investment has yielded the profit reaped from the Indian plunder. The amount of treasure wrung from the conquered people and transferred from India to English banks between Plassey and Waterloo (57 years) has been variously estimated at from \$2,500,000,000 to \$5,000,000,000."

The methods of plunder and embezzlement by which every Briton in India enriched himself during the earlier history of the East India Company, gradually passed away, but the drain did not pass away. The difference between that earlier day and the present is, that India's tribute to England is obtained by "indirect methods" under forms of law. It is estimated by Mr. Hyndman that at least \$175,000,000 is drained away every year from India, without a cent of return.

The following extract from *India and Her People*, by Swami Abhedananda, will give an idea of how the Indian revenue is used for the interest of the British people, and how our people are really debarred from higher offices:

"India pays interest on England's debt, which in 1900 amounted to 224 millions sterling, and which annually increases, 'Besides this, she pays for all the officers, civil and military, and a huge standing army, pensions of officers, and even the cost of the India Building in London, as well as the salary of every menial servant in that house. For 1901-2 the total expenditure charged against revenue was \$356,971,410.00, out of which \$86,843,275.00 was spent in England as Home Charges, not including the pay of European officers in India, saved and remitted to England. These charges were as follows:

1. Interest on debt and management of debt	\$15,262,050.00
2. Cost of mail service, telegraph lines, etc., charged to India	1,136,440.00
3. Railways, state and guaranteed (interest and annuities)	32,081,865.00
4. Public works (absentee allowances, etc.)	256,070.00
5. Marine charges (including H.M. Ships in Indian Seas)	866,510.00
6. Military charges (including pensions)	14,728,070.00

7. Civil charges (including Secretary of State's establishment. Cooper Hill's College, Pensions, etc.)	10,176,850.00
8. Stores (including those for defence works)	10,289,670.00
Total	\$84,797,525.00

The following again, is a comparative table of salaries paid:

	Total Salaries of					
	Natives	Eurasians	Europeans	Natives	Eurasians	Europeans
Civil Department	55	10	1,211	\$316,000	\$50,333	\$8,424,666
Military	1	1	854	4,000	3,666	4,422,666
Public Works	3	4	239	11,000	15,000	1,138,353
Incorporated Local Funds	1	...	9	3,333	.....	37,666
	60	15	2,313	\$334,333	\$68,999	\$14,083,351

We find 421 natives in the civil department, as against 1,207 Europeans and 96 Eurasians. In the military department 25 natives are employed, 1,699 Europeans and 22 Eurasians; while in the department of Public Works, there are 85 natives as against 549 Europeans and 3 Eurasians.

Mr. Alfred Webb (late M.P.), who has studied the subject with care, says: "In charges for the India Office (in London); for recruiting (in Great Britain, for soldiers to serve in India); for civil and military pensions (to men now living in England, who were formerly in the Indian service); for pay and allowances on furloughs (to men on visits to England); for private remittances and consignments (from India to England); for interest on Indian Debt (paid to parties in England); and for interest on railways and other works (paid to shareholders in England), - there is annually drawn from India, and spent in the United Kingdom, a sum calculated at from 25,000,000 Pounds to 30,000,000 Pounds." (Between \$125,000,000 and \$150,000,000.)



Taxation in the British India, as observed by the impartial British writers:

“The present condition of affairs undoubtedly renders the struggle for existence a hard one, as may be realized when it is considered that a vast population of India not only from the inevitable droughts which so frequently occur, *but also from a narrow and short-sighted imperial policy which places every obstacle in the way of industrial development and imposes heavy taxes on the struggling people.* According to various authorities Russia’s demand upon land owners in her Central Asian possessions are not so exacting as are ours in India, *for the British Government insists on a fifth of the produce, making no allowance for good or bad years; while Russia is said to ask only a tenth and allow for variations of production.*”

The condition of the people of India is worse than it was fifteen years ago when Sir Archibald R. Colquhoun made the above statement. The taxes imposed upon the people had been unbearably heavy and since then the demand is growing unbearably heavier. In the twentieth century, when people are advocating the “single tax”, there are provinces in British India where the poor peasants are forced to pay 65% of their net income as land-revenue alone.

To substantiate our remarks we quote these lines from *The Causes of the Present Discontent in India*, by C.J. O’Donnell, M.P.:

“In replying to a question of mine (Mr. Donnell’s) in April last (1907), Mr. Morley (now Lord) stated that 50% of the net assets is the ordinary standard of assessment of land revenue alone throughout India. Net assets means the annual profit after paying the cost of cultivation, the income, in fact of the farmer. So we have it admitted that the normal land tax is ten shillings in the pound. The word ‘alone’ needs explanation. It means that the farmer has, besides his land tax, many other rates and taxes to pay for roads, police, irrigation, public works, etc. Mr. Morley’s answer suggested that 50% is the higher limit of land tax throughout India; so a few days later I questioned him definitely in regard to the Central Provinces, giving date and number of the Government of India’s order. The reply I received runs thus: ‘The rule at present in force in the Central Provinces is that the assessment should not be less than 50% and should not exceed 60%, but in exceptional cases, if the existing assessment has hitherto exceeded 65% and *been paid without difficulty*, it is provided that the assessment shall be fixed at 65%.’ It therefore appears that 50% is the lower limit, and it may be 65% if it can be paid without difficulty. We are always assured that the land tax is light and paid without difficulty,

which perhaps explains the fact that in the Central Provinces over a million people disappeared - died of starvation, between 1891-1901, as admitted in the census report of the late years.”

To give an adequate idea about the way the land revenue is increased even in famine years, we reproduce the following from the same work:

“The explanatory memorandum to the Indian Budget issued last July by the Secretary of State, gives on page 12, that the total land revenue of the Indian Empire collected in 1905-1906, was \$90,947,860.00 and his own budget of land revenue for the following year, 1907-8, \$97,726,000.00. The increase is \$7,078,140.00, or nearly eight per cent in twenty-four months - roundly at the rate of forty per cent in a single decade.”

The following statement by Mr. O’Donnell will prove the real motive of the British Government about the so-called “benevolent irrigation work” in India:

“The capital of \$35,000,000.00 invested in the Punjab canals, yielded in 1906-7 the large net profit of 10° per cent, whilst in the case of the Chemel Canal it rose to the extraordinary and unhealthy figures of nearly 22 per cent. It was in the Chemel Colonies the bitterest discontent existed.”

“The so-called famine relief fund is nothing more nor less than a mere subterfuge of taxing the starving to save the dying. This fund does not rain from heaven, nor does the British exchequer give it. If the British Government spends, says 5,000,000 Pounds, on the present famine, they will simply squeeze it out of the poverty-stricken surviving tax payers, who would, in turn, become victims of the next drought.

“The British people stand charged with the blood of the perishing millions and the starvation of scores of millions... Under the British Indian despot the man is at peace, there is no violence; his substance is drained away, unseen, peaceably and subtly; he starves in peace with law and order! I wonder how the British people would like the fate? The condition of the Indian people to-day is worse than that of the chattel slaves; because slaves used to get food to eat when they served their masters, but the Indian people work hard, produce and die without food, which the British enjoy.”

In speaking of the British policy of bleeding Indian people, Lord Salisbury says: “The injury is exaggerated in the case of India where so much of the revenue i

exported without a direct equivalent. As India must be bled, the lancet should be directed to the parts where the blood is congested, or at least sufficient, not to those already feeble of the want of it.”

Shall the people of India and the world at large calmly endure the bleeding of Indian people? If not, where is the remedy? In resisting it.

Says Sir William Hunter: “The government assessment does not leave enough food to the cultivator to support himself and his family throughout the year.”

“There is no more pathetic figure in the British Empire than the Indian peasant,” writes Mr. Herbert Compton. “His masters have ever been unjust to him. He is ground down until everything has been expressed except the marrow of his bones.”

“The number of human beings in India who subsist in perennial hunger, usually on one meal a day, was estimated by *The Pioneer*, at one hundred millions.”

Much has been said by the British officials about the “Famine Relief in India,” but it is really a mockery as far as the British Government is concerned. But we are grateful to the American people and others who have contributed to save the life of the starving people of India. No famine relief fund will save the people from the horrible calamity unless the British policy of exploiting the people is stopped.

#### Part IV

Recently about a dozen Indian Nationalist leaders have been deported from India without any trial. They were deported under the regulation of April 7, 1818. This regulation has different sections and it is an exhaustive one. I quote the principal part of the preamble to show whether or not the regulation is expressive of the greatest amount of self-government consonant with the retention of the dependent status of the people of India.

“Whereas reasons of state embracing the due maintenance of the alliances formed by the British Government with the foreign powers, the preservation of tranquillity in the territories of native princes entitled to its protection and the security of the British dominions from foreign hostility and from internal commotion, occasionally render it necessary to place under personal restraint individuals against whom there may not be sufficient grounds to institute any judicial proceedings, or when such proceeding may not be adapted to the nature of the case, or may for other reasons

be inadvisable or improper, and herein referred to; the determination to be taken should proceed immediately from the authority of the Governor General in Council.”

From the letter and spirit of the above regulation we see that persons may be put in restraint, against whom there is no sufficient ground to institute judicial proceedings. This idea is contrary to the principles of civil right, and the practice of restraining people without proper judgment is shocking to all who have any sympathy for the principle of civil rights. An individual is supposed to be innocent unless proved guilty of certain crime, and the innocent must not be punished or be deprived of personal liberty.

People in general are inclined to think that the British Government in India is a blessing to the people there, because it has guaranteed the people the enjoyment of civil rights; but the enforcement of a law of such an autocratic nature indicates that the people of India under British rule enjoy less liberty in the twentieth century than the British people enjoyed in the thirteenth. In the British Isles the right of trial by jury has long been regarded as one of the bulwarks of liberty.

In the celebrated Magna Charta, granted by King John in 1215, we find the following clause: “No freeman shall be taken or imprisoned or disseized or outlawed, or banished, or any way injured, nor will we pass upon him nor send upon him, unless by the legal judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.”

It is against the principle of humanity and justice that because a people are of a dependent state they may be deprived of the privilege of defending themselves from arbitrary executive orders. On this point the British constitution holds that no freeman shall be imprisoned without cause shown, to which he may make answer. The people of India are not slaves; they too are freemen.

Lord Morley, the eminent philosopher, is the Secretary of State for India now. Every line of his books breathes the idea of liberalism and the dignity of human rights. We of India do not understand why under his régime a law has been enforced in India which cannot be justified in any case except when the country is under martial law. Then are we to suppose that India is under martial law?

We see that the Russian Government gives some kind of trial to Russian revolutionists. We have seen that the British Government gave the Zulu leaders a chance of judicial trial. *Why, then*, will not the British Government give the Indian

Nationalists a chance of defending themselves before tribunals of justice instead of subjecting them to arbitrary deportation? No people enjoying civil rights and liberty can justify the measures taken by the British Government in India. A state of dependency which denies the people civil rights cannot be justified.

We believe in spirituality, and without spirituality there cannot be a nationality, and this spirituality of nationality is closely akin to service to humanity in general. Love is exquisite, and it is limitless; but self-preservation is also the first law of nature. When all means of escape are cut off, shall we embrace a deadly, poisonous snake, leave it alone, or resist it? The British Government is a deadly, poisonous snake in its inner nature, although outwardly covered with the garments of civilization, a deadly civilization, which you have denounced in your letter.

For the sake of self-preservation of the Indian people as well as others, and for the sake of love for humanity, we need activity in resisting aggression from without or within. Attainment of true manhood and womanhood is our aim and aspiration. We declare with all the emphasis that we can command, that it lies in the attainment of our national freedom. Slaves can never acquire ideal manhood or womanhood, simply because they are slaves, simply because they cannot get the opportunity. There is no question about the theory that slaves may have the same quality, power and faculty latent in them that are in a free people, but they cannot get any opportunity to cultivate and make the best use of them. This is not all; we hold the view that cultured men or women lose manhood or womanhood if they are put in slavery for a long time. Imprison a full grown skylark in a cage for a few years, and you will see that the sky-soaring bird has lost the power to fly even a few yards. Try to make it fly; it will not like to do it. It is the same thing with a nation as it is with an individual. Put a nation in slavery and the people lose their finer instincts. *Attainment of perfect manhood and womanhood through national independence is our goal.* We want to reconstruct the social, political and economic machines in operation in India which have forced over thirty millions of people within the last forty years to an untimely death by starvation. If we cease to exist, who will practise love? If the Indian people want to live, they must get rid of the British Government.

Sir, you have stated: "In the absence of the true religious consciousness and the guidance of conduct flowing from it, lies the chief, if not the sole cause of enslavement of the Indian people by the English." The true religious consciousness is according to your estimation, "manifestation of love with non-resistance"; but history does not prove it to be so. We see the flourishing days of India in the first

part of the Buddhistic age and prior to that time, but as soon as the Indian people began to lose their active spirit, with the growing spirit and practice of non-resistance, preached by the Buddhist monks, there came the downfall. India saw again her brighter days when Sankaracharya denounced the corrupt Buddhistic practices and preached the active religion of Vedanta philosophy. The idea of non-resistance has led to the people of India to dullness and fatalism, and fatalism has led them to ignorance and superstition, and there is the remote cause of our downfall. We want to eradicate by activity the superstition of fatalism arising from the idea of non-resistance.

We are not complaining that the British have enslaved us, but we are enslaved because of not resisting the wrong principle of tyranny which you have so well described. You have made no distinction between the oppressive rule and the government of the people. We believe in the government of the people, which must not be oppressive. As soon as we advocate resistance, we are not submissive to tyranny or coercion, and you have said: "The submission of the Hindoos to coercion is the cause of their enslavement to the British Government." According to your letter, we understand that the British Government in India is a self-inflicted calamity of the Indian people, and we want to avert this calamity by the performance of our self-imposed duty towards our country. We have chosen, once for all, the liberation of India from the foreign yoke as our solemn duty to our country, and shall ask our countrymen to take up the work as long as they are within the limit of duty. We firmly hold to our principle and declare with you that Love is God, but at the same time assert that the Divinity is best represented in humanity, and *resistance to despotism is the first of all human duties.* We do not know what were the guiding principles of the people in days of yore, but according to history, we think we are progressing. We cannot believe that the world was once governed by love only and has retrogressed to its present stage, because we believe in the law of eternal progress. The economic history of the world provides us with accounts of cannibalism, feudalism, slavery, serfdom, civil war, religious torture, and so on, which are no more in existence. We find instances of Christ dying on the cross, Buddha preaching love, Krishna and Ram fighting to do away with the tyrannical form of government, as a sure proof of the prevalence of some principles other than love at all periods of the world's history.

We are not influenced so much by the Western teachers as by our own teachers, Ram and Krishna. Krishna taught us in *The Gita* to "give up your lethargy and effeminacy and rise up to fight the battle for the right." He also says: "Whenever the righteousness is dwindled by the acts of the unrighteous, I incarnate myself in

the shape of popular spirit to save the followers of the right and truth and destroy the evil." Modern psychology dictates that reintegration and creation are correlative, so we again say that the principle of resistance to tyranny is *not* inconsistent with the spirit of love.

We advocate freedom of India for the sake of service to humanity and resistance to tyranny, and shall continue to do the same as long as it exists.

Our program is: (1) absolute self-government; (2) national education; (3) development of Indian industries, agriculture and commerce; and (4) no starvation caused by foreign exploitation.

We pray aid from humanity at large.

### ***3d) Correspondence Gandhi-Tolstoy***

(1)

Westminster Palace Hotel  
4, Victoria Street,  
London, S.W.  
1st. October, 1909.

I take the liberty of inviting your attention to what has been going on in the Transvaal (South Africa) for nearly three years.

"There is in that colony a British Indian population of nearly 13,000. These Indians have for several years laboured under the various legal disabilities. The prejudice against colour and in some respect against Asiatics is intense in that colony. It is largely due, so far as Asiatics are concerned, to trade jealousy. The climax was reached three years ago, with a law which I and many others considered to be degrading and calculated to unman those to whom it was applicable. I felt that submission to law of this nature was inconsistent with the spirit of true religion. I and some of my friends were and still are firm believers in the doctrine of non-resistance to evil. I had the privilege of studying your writings also, which left a deep impression on my mind. British Indians, before whom the position was fully explained, accepted the advice that we should not submit to the legislation, but that we should suffer imprisonment, or whatever other penalties the law may impose for its breach. The result has been that nearly one-half of the Indian population, that was unable to stand the heat of the struggle, to suffer the hardships of imprisonment, have withdrawn from the Transvaal rather than submit to law which they have considered degrading. Of the other half, nearly 2,500 have for conscience's sake allowed themselves to be imprisoned, some as many as five times. The imprisonments have varied from four days to six months; in the majority of cases with hard labour. Many have been financially ruined. At present there are over hundred passive resisters in the Transvaal gaols. Some of these have been very poor men, earning their livelihood from day to day. The result has been that their wives and children have had to be supported out of public contributions, also largely raised from passive resisters. This

has put a severe strain upon British Indians, but in my opinion they have risen to the occasion. The struggle still continues and one does not know when the end will come. This, however, some of us at least have seen most clearly, that passive resistance will and can succeed where brute force must fail. We also notice that in so far as the struggle has been prolonged, it has been due largely to our weakness, and hence to a belief having been engendered in the mind of the Government that we would not be able to stand continued suffering.

Together with a friend, I have come here to see the imperial authorities and to place before them the position, with a view to seeking redress. Passive resisters have recognised that they should have nothing to do with pleading with the Government, but the deputation has come at the instance of the weaker members of the community, and it therefore represents their weakness rather than their strength. But in the course of my observation here, I have felt that if a general competition for an essay on the Ethics and Efficacy of Passive Resistance were invited, it would popularise the movement and make people think. A friend has raised the question of morality in connexion with the proposed competition. He thinks that such an invitation would be inconsistent with the true spirit of passive resistance, and that it would amount to buying opinion. May I ask you to favour me with your opinion on the subject of morality? And if you consider that there is nothing wrong in inviting contributions, I would ask you also to give me the names of those whom I should specially approach to write upon the subject.

There is one thing more, with reference to which I would trespass upon your time. A copy of your letter addressed to a Hindu on the present unrest in India has been placed in my hands by a friend. On the face of it, it appears to represent your views. It is the intention of my friend, at his own expense, to have 20,000 copies printed and distributed and to have it translated also. We have, however, not been able to secure the original, and we do not feel justified in printing it, unless we are sure of the accuracy of the copy and of the fact that it is your letter. I venture to enclose herewith a copy of the copy, and should esteem it a favour if you kindly let me know whether it is your letter, whether it is an accurate copy and whether you approve of its publication in the above manner. If you will add anything further to the letter please do so. I would also venture to make a suggestion. In the concluding paragraph you seem to dissuade the reader from a belief in reincarnation. I do not know whether (if it is not impertinent on my part to

mention this) you have specially studied the question. Reincarnation or transmigration is a cherished belief with millions in India, indeed in China also. With many one might almost say it is a matter of experience, no longer a matter of academic acceptance. It explains reasonably the many mysteries of life. With some of the passive resisters who have gone through the gaols of the Transvaal, it has been their solace. My object in writing this is not to convince you of the truth of the doctrine, but to ask you if you will please remove the word "reincarnation" from the other things you have dissuaded your reader from. In the letter in question you have quoted largely from Krishna and given reference to passages. I should thank you to give me the title of the book from which the quotations have been made."

I have wearied you with this letter. I am aware that those who honour you and endeavour to follow you have no right to trespass upon your time, but it is rather their duty to refrain from giving you trouble, so far as possible. I have, however, who am an utter stranger to you, taken the liberty of addressing this communication in the interests of truth, and in order to have your advice on problems, the solution of which you have made your life work.

With respects, I remain,

Your obedient servant,

M. K. GANDHI.

(2)

M.K. Gandhi  
Transvaal

Yasnaya Polyana  
Oct. 7, 1909

Just now I have received your very interesting letter, which gives me great pleasure. May God help all our dear brothers and co-workers in the Transvaal. This fight between gentleness and brutality, between humility and love on one side, and conceit and violence on the other, makes itself ever more strongly felt here to us also - especially in the sharp conflicts between religious obligations and the laws of the State - expressed by the conscientious objection to render military service. Such objections are taking place very frequently.

I have written a letter to a Hindu and am very pleased to have it translated (into English). The title of the book on Krishna will be communicated to you from Moscow. As regards 're-birth' I, for my part, shall leave out nothing;

for, as it appears to me, the belief in a re-birth will never be able to strike such deep roots in and restrain mankind as the belief in the immortality of the soul and the faith in divine truth and love; of course I would accomodate you, if you so desire, to delete those passages in question. It will give me great pleasure to help your edition. Publication and circulation of my writings, translated into Indian dialects, can only be a matter of pleasure to me.

The question regarding monetary payment of Royalty should not at all be allowed to appear in religious undertakings.

I give my fraternal greetings and am glad to have come into personal contact with you.

LEO TOLSTOJ

(3)

WESTMINSTER PALACE HOTEL,  
4, Victoria Street,  
London W.C.  
10-11-1909

Dear Sir,

I beg to tender my thanks for your registered letter in connection with the letter addressed to a Hindu, and with the matters that I dealt with in my letter to you.

Having heard about your falling health I refrained, in order to save you the trouble, from sending an acknowledgement, knowing that a written expression of my thanks was a superfluous formality; but Mr. Aylmer Maude whom I have now been able to meet reassured me that you are keeping good health indeed and that unflinchingly and regularly you attend to your correspondence every morning. It was a very gladsome news to me and it encourages me to write to you further about matters which are, I know, of the greatest importance according to your teaching.

I beg to send you herewith a copy of a book written by a friend - an Englishman - who is at present in South Africa, in connection with my life, in so far it has a bearing on the struggle with which I am so connected and to

which my life is dedicated. As I am very anxious to engage your active interest and sympathy I thought that it would not be considered by you as out of the way for me to send you the book.

In my opinion, this struggle of the Indians in the Transvaal is the greatest of modern times, inasmuch as it has been idealised both as to the goal as also to the methods adopted to reach the goal. I am not aware of a struggle in which the participators are not to derive any personal advantage at the end of it and in which 50 per cent of the persons affected have undergone great suffering and trial for the sake of a principle. It has not been possible for me to advertise the struggle as much as I should like. You command, possibly, the widest public today. If you are satisfied as to the facts you will find set forth in Mr. Doke's book, and if you consider that the conclusions I have arrived at are justified by the facts, may I ask you to use your influence in any manner you think fit to popularise the movement? If it succeeds, it will be not only a triumph of religion, love and truth over irreligion, hatred, and falsehood but it is highly likely to serve as an example to the millions in India and to people in other parts of the world, who may be down-trodden and will certainly go a great way towards breaking up the party of violence, at least in India. If we hold out to the end, as I think we would, I entertain not the slightest doubt as to its ultimate success and your encouragement in the way suggested by you can only strengthen us in our resolve.

The negotiations that are going on for a settlement of the question have practically fallen through, and together with my colleagues I return to South Africa this week and invite imprisonment. I may add that my son has happily joined me in the struggle and is now undergoing imprisonment with hard labour for six months. This is his fourth imprisonment in the course of the struggle.

If you would be so good as to reply to this letter, may I ask you to address your reply to me at Johannesburg, S.A. Box 6522.

Hoping that this will find you in good health,

I remain, Your obedient servant,  
M. K. GANDHI.

(4)

Johannesburg,  
4th April, 1910

Dear Sir,

You may remember that I have written to you from London where I stopped temporarily. As your devoted follower I send you herewith a brief booklet which I have written. I have translated my own writings from Gujarati (my own language). What is remarkable is that my original book was confiscated by the Government of India. Therefore I was in a hurry to publish this translation. I am afraid I am burdening you; but if your health permits and you have time to go through my booklet, then I need not express how greatly I shall value your criticism of it. I am sending also a few copies of your A letter to a Hindu which you allowed me to publish. This letter will also be translated into an Indian dialect.

Yours respectfully,  
M. K. GANDHI.

In connexion with Gandhi-Tolstoy correspondence, Tolstoy wrote to V. Chertkov the following letter which is self-explanatory: -

(5)

22nd April, 1910.

"Today and last evening I read the book which was sent to me along with the letter. The book is by an Indian thinker and fighter against British autocracy, Gandhi, who is fighting by means of passive resistance. He is very close to us. He has read my writings. His book Indian Home Rule written in Indian language was banned by the British Government. He requests my opinion on his book. I want to write him in detail. Will you translate such a letter for me?"

LEO TOLSTOJ.

(6)

8th May, 1910.

Dear Friend,

Just now I have received your letter and your book, Indian Home Rule. I have read your book with great interest, because I think the question you have therein dealt with is important not only for Indians, but for the whole of Mankind.

I cannot find your first letter, but by discovering your biography by Doke, I happen to know you through that Biography which gripped me and it gave me a chance to know and understand you better.

I am not very well at present. So I am unable to write to you on all the questions which are inter-connected with your book and also with your activities in general, which I value very much. But I shall write to you as soon as I recover.

Your friend and brother,  
LEO TOLSTOJ.

(7)

M. K. Gandhi,  
Attorney.

21-24, Court Chambers,  
Johannesburg.  
15th August, 1910.

To Count Leo Tolstoy.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your encouraging and cordial letter of the 8th May last. I very much value your general approval of my booklet, Indian Home Rule. And if you have the time, I shall look forward to your detailed criticism of the work which you have been so good as to promise in your letter.

Mr. Kallenbach has written to you about Tolstoy Farm. Mr. Kallenbach and I have been friends for many years. I may state that he has gone through most of the experiences that you have so graphically described in your work My Confession. No writing has so deeply touched Mr. Kallenbach as yours; and, as a spur to further effort in living up to the ideals held before the world

by you, he has taken the liberty, after consultation with me, of naming his farm after you.

Of his generous action in giving the use of the farm for passive resisters, the numbers of Indian Opinion I am sending herewith will give you full information.

I should not have burdened you with these details but for the fact of your taking a personal interest in the passive resistance struggle that is going on in the Transvaal.

I remain,  
Your faithful servant,  
M. K. GANDHI.

In connexion with Gandhi-Tolstoy correspondence, Hermann Kallenbach wrote his letter to Leo Tolstoy:

(8)

August 14th 1910  
Count Leo Tolstoy  
Yasnaya Polyana

Dear Sir,

Without asking your permission, I have named my Farm Tolstoy Farm. I have read many of your works, and your teachings have impressed me deeply.

Mr. M.K. Gandhi, the leader of the Indian community in South Africa, I am privileged to call my friend, is living with me. The Farm - in size about 1100 Acres - I have placed at his disposal for the use of Passive Resisters & their families. Having made use of your name, I thought, I owe you this explanation, and may add in justification of having used this name that it will be my endeavour to live up to the ideas which you have so fearlessly given to the world.

Permit me to sign  
Yours sincerely,  
H. KALLENBACH

In reply to Gandhi's letter to Tolstoy (dated August 15, 1910), V. Chertkov wrote to Gandhi the following letter: -

(9)

„My friend Leo Tolstoy has requested me to acknowledge the receipt of your letter to him of August 15 and to translate into English his letter to you of September 7th (new style 20th September) written originally in Russian.

All that you communicate about Mr. Kallenbach has greatly interested Tolstoy, who has also asked me to answer for him to Mr. Kallenbach's letter.

Tolstoy sends you and your co-workers his heartiest greetings and warmest wishes for the success of your work, his appreciation of which you will gather from the enclosed translation of his letter to you. I must apologise for my mistakes in English in the translation; but, living in the country in Russia, I am unable to profit by the assistance of any Englishman for correcting my mistakes.

With Tolstoy's permission, his letter to you will be published in a small periodical printed by some friends of ours in London. A copy of the Magazine with the letter shall be forwarded to you, as also some English publications of Tolstoy's writings issued by The Free Age Press.

As it seems to me most desirable that more should be known in England about your movement, I am writing to a great friend of mine and of Tolstoy - Mrs. Fyvie Mayo of Glasgow - proposing that she should enter into communication with you. She possesses considerable literary talent and is well known in England as an author. It should be worth your while furnishing her with all your publications which might serve her as material for an article upon your movement which, if published, in England, would attract attention to your work and position. Mrs. Mayo will probably write to you herself.

With sincerest good wishes from myself. Kindly transmit to Mr. Kallenbach the enclosed letter."

V. CHERTKOV.



(10)

Jasnay Poliana. Toula. Russia  
H. Kallenbach

27. Sept. (19)10

Dear Sir,

Leo Tolstoy has requested me to answer your letter to him of Aug(ust) 14. He is most interested in the movement represented by Mr. Gandhi you have associated yourself with in so generous a way. Tolstoy was touched by your kind words relating to him, & wishes to reciprocate most cordially the sympathy you express. He sends you his warmest good wishes for the further success of your efforts.

Yours sincerely  
V. TCHERTKOFF

(11)

To  
M. K. Gandhi,  
Johannesburg,  
Transvaal, South Africa.

7th September, 1910.

"KOTCHETY"  
(Castle of the eldest daughter of Tolstoy).

I have received your Journal Indian Opinion and I am happy to know all that is written on non-resistance. I wish to communicate to you the thoughts which are aroused in me by the reading of those articles.

The more I live - and specially now that I am approaching death, the more I feel inclined to express to others the feelings which so strongly move my being, and which, according to my opinion, are of great importance. That is, what one calls non-resistance, is in reality nothing else but the discipline of love undeformed by false interpretation. Love is the aspiration for communion and solidarity with other souls, and that aspiration always liberates the source of noble activities. That love is the supreme and unique law of human life,

which everyone feels in the depth of one's soul. We find it manifested most clearly in the soul of the infants. Man feels it so long as he is not blinded by the false doctrines of the world.

That law of love has been promulgated by all the philosophies - Indian, Chinese, Hebrew, Greek and Roman. I think that it had been most clearly expressed by Christ, who said that in that law is contained both the law and the Prophets. But he has done more; anticipating the deformation to which that law is exposed, he indicated directly the danger of such deformation which is natural to people who live only for worldly interests. The danger consists precisely in permitting one's self to defend those interests by violence; that is to say, as he has expressed, returning blow by blows, and taking back by force things that have been taken from us, and so forth. Christ knew also, just as all reasonable human beings must know, that the employment of violence is incompatible with love, which is the fundamental law of life. He knew that, once violence is admitted, doesn't matter in even a single case, the law of love is thereby rendered futile. That is to say that the law of love ceases to exist. The whole Christian civilisation, so brilliant in the exterior, has grown up on this misunderstanding and this flagrant and strange contradiction, sometimes conscious but mostly unconscious.

In reality as soon as resistance is admitted by the side of love, love no longer exists and cannot exist as the law of existence; and if the law of love cannot exist, there remains no other law except that of violence, that is the right of the mighty. It was thus that the Christian Society has lived during these nineteen centuries. It is a fact that all the time people were following only violence in the organisation of Society. But the difference between the ideals of Christian peoples and that of other nations lies only in this: that, in Christianity the law of love had been expressed in any other religious doctrine; that the Christian world had solemnly accepted that law, although at the same time it had permitted the employment of violence and on that violence it had constructed their whole life. Consequently, the life of the Christian peoples is an absolute contradiction between their profession and the basis of their life; contradiction between love recognised as the law of life, and violence recognised as inevitable in different departments of life: like Governments, Tribunals, Army etc. which are recognised and praised. That contradiction developed with the inner development of the Christian world and has attained its paroxysm in recent days.

At present the question poses itself evidently in the following manner: either it must be admitted that we do not recognise any discipline, religious or moral, and that we are guided in the organisation of life only by the law of force, or that all the taxes that we exact by force, the judicial and police organisations and above all the army must be abolished.

This spring in the religious examination of a secondary school of girls in Moscow, the Professor of Catechism as well as the Bishop had questioned the young girls on the ten commandments and above all on the sixth "Thou shalt not kill". When the examiner received good reply, the Bishop generally paused for another question: Is killing proscribed by the sacred Law always and in all cases? And the poor young girls perverted by their teachers must reply: No, not always; killing is permitted during war, and for the execution of criminals. However one of those unfortunate girls, (what I relate is not a fiction but a fact that has been transmitted to me by an eye-witness) having been asked the same question, "Is killing always a crime?" was moved deeply, blushed and replied with decision "Yes, always." To all the sophisticated questions habitual to the Bishop she replied with firm conviction: killing is always forbidden in the Old Testament as well as by Christ who not only forbids killing but all wickedness against our neighbours. In spite of all his oratorical talent and all his imposing grandeur, the Bishop was obliged to beat a retreat and the young girl came out victorious.

Yes, we can discuss in our journals the progress in aviation and such other discoveries, the complicated diplomatic relations, the different clubs and alliances, the so-called artistic creations etc. and pass in silence what was affirmed by the young girl. But silence is futile in such cases, because every one of this Christian world is feeling the same, more or less vaguely, like that girl. Socialism, Communism, Anarchism, Salvation army, the growing criminalities, unemployment and absurd luxuries of the rich, augmented without limit, and the awful misery of the poor, the terribly increasing number of suicides - all these are the signs of that inner contradiction which must be there and which cannot be resolved; and without doubt, can only be resolved by acceptance of the law of Love and by the rejection of all sorts of violence. Consequently your work in Transvaal, which seems to be far away from the centre of our world, is yet the most fundamental and the most important to us supplying the most weighty practical proof in which the world can now share and with which must participate not only the Christians but all the peoples of the world.

I think that it would give you pleasure to know that with us in Russia, a similar movement is also developing rapidly under the form of the refusal of military services augmenting year after year. However small may be the number of your participators in non-resistance and the number of those in Russia who refuse military service, both the one and the other may assert with audacity that "God is with us" and that "God is more powerful than men".

Between the confession of Christianity, even under the perverted form in which it appears amongst us Christian peoples, and the simultaneous recognition of the necessity of armies and of the preparation for killing on an ever-increasing scale, there exists a contradiction so flagrant and crying that sooner or later, probably very soon, it must invariably manifest itself in utter nakedness; and it will lead us either to renounce the Christian religion, and to maintain the governmental power or to renounce the existence of the army and all the forms of violence which the state supports and which are more or less necessary to sustain its power. That contradiction is felt by all the governments, by your British Government as well as by our Russian Government; and therefore, by the spirit of conservatism natural to these governments, the opposition is persecuted, as we find in Russia as well as in the articles of your journal, more than any other anti-governmental activity. The governments know from which direction comes the principal danger and try to defend themselves with a great zeal in that trial not merely to preserve their interests but actually to fight for their very existence.

With my perfect esteem,  
LEO TOLSTOJ

#### **4) *Taraknath Das - A Concise Biography***

*by*

***Dr. R. N. Das and Dr. Tapan Mukherjee***

A revolutionary, exiled patriot, author, lecturer of international politics, and educationist, Taraknath Das championed the cause of India's freedom in the United States for over fifty years. He was born on 15 June 1884, in Mahjipara near Calcutta. From early boyhood he was obsessed with nationalistic ideals. While in high school, he joined an underground revolutionary cell in Calcutta where he attended study-circles, carried out secret propaganda against the British government, and learned rudimentary military tactics. Although he was a brilliant student, he left college after two years to organize secret societies in different towns in the Bengal province.

During 1904-1905, Taraknath wandered around North and South India disguised as a mendicant student (Brahmachari) preaching revolutionary ideas. Taraknath wholeheartedly believed that India could be freed only through armed uprising, and by paralyzing the civilian administration through widespread terrorist acts. On hearing that the government was about to arrest him, Taraknath left India for Japan in 1905. He took some courses in the University of Tokyo to prepare for enrollment as a regular student. His organization of the nationalistic Indian students studying in Japan, and anti-British propaganda came to the notice of the British Embassy in Tokyo. Pressured by the British government, the Japanese authorities suggested that Taraknath leave the country whereupon he came to the United States in July 1906.

He registered as a special student in the University of California at Berkeley, and immediately proceeded to organize the Indian students and immigrant Indian laborers. The plight of Indian laborers deeply moved Taraknath. Most of the Indians coming to the Pacific Coast States and Canada were illiterate laborers, and were subjected to humiliation and discrimination by the Immigration officials as well as by the local labor unions. The United States government and politicians in the Pacific Coast States condoned the vicious hate campaign of the Asiatic Exclusion League against the Chinese, Japanese, and Indian immigrants. While the Chinese and Japanese governments vigorously protested the discrimination of their nationals, it was encouraged by the Imperial Indian government. Taraknath started a night school in Oakland for the newly arrived Indians instructing them of their rights, and how to conduct themselves in America.

In 1907, he joined the US Civil Service as an interpreter for Indian immigrants at the US Immigration Office in Vancouver, BC. His constant protest against the illegal and capricious treatment of the arriving Indians by Canadian and American immigration inspectors caused a conflict with the authorities. He started the first nationalistic newspaper on the American continent entitled, *Free Hindustan*, which was an extremist forum for Indian independence. Taraknath wrote most of the articles repeatedly accusing the British government for the abject poverty, famines, frequent epidemics, and illiteracy in India. He was particularly critical of the British government's promotion of opium sale and use in India and China. Through his newspaper, he argued that the only way to escape the miserable conditions was through violent overthrow of the foreign rule. The *Free Hindustan* called the native soldiers in the British Indian army to prepare for revolt similar to the great Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. The British Foreign Office complained to the State Department for the seditious actions of an employee of the American government against a friendly country. The embarrassed immigration official ordered Taraknath to cease publication of his paper. Taraknath refused, and resigned from the Civil Service. He started a school for Indian immigrants in Millside near Vancouver where he taught English and gave lessons on nationalism. He convened the first Indian political rally on the American continent in protest of Canadian government's order to stop Indian immigration. Taraknath was accused of sedition for distributing to the local Indians instruction manual for making bombs. When the post office refused to accept *Free Hindustan*, Taraknath removed his paper to Seattle. The Irish nationalists in the United States helped Taraknath to continue publishing *Free Hindustan* from New York City.

Taraknath always believed that every revolutionary must be trained in military arts. In 1909, he enrolled in the Norwich Military Academy in Vermont. He was very popular among the cadets, and in nearby communities. Although he was a favorite student, his anti-British public lectures and the continued publication of *Free Hindustan* brought trouble to the school authorities. The British Ambassador in Washington lodged a strong protest against Taraknath with the State Department. Under orders from the US Army Headquarters in Washington, the academy authorities informed Taraknath that unless he stopped his anti-British propaganda and ceased publication of *Free Hindustan*, he will be court marshaled. Once again, Taraknath refused, and resigned from the school.

Taraknath's long correspondence with Count Leo Tolstoy on Indian nationalist cause was serialized in the *Twentieth Century* magazine.

Back in Seattle, Taraknath enrolled in the University of Washington majoring in political science. He established United India House in Seattle and Vancouver for meeting places of Indian students and immigrants. The atmosphere of these places was always charged with nationalism. Taraknath was constantly on the road talking to the Indians, on university campuses, in lumber camps, and in the sikh gurudwaras on India's freedom and immigration problems. He mastered the intricacies of Canadian and American immigration laws and regulations, and freely assisted the Indians who faced deportation or refused permission to land as immigrants.

In 1910, he graduated with a bachelor of arts degree. Next year, after receiving a master's degree and a teacher's certificate, he came back to Berkeley and enrolled for Ph. D. However, his preoccupation with the revolutionary cause and immigration problems of his countrymen left little time for serious studies. At this time the Gadhr (mutiny) Party was established in San Francisco. This was a serious attempt to organize the Indians in the United States for an armed revolution in India by sending money, men and weapons. Although he never joined the Gadhr Party as a formal member, Taraknath travelled extensively to the Pacific Coast Indian communities publicizing the coming revolt in India. He learnt his journalistic skill through the Gadhr magazine. With the help of an American couple, Taraknath secured a tract of land in a secluded region in Oregon. His plan to set up a military training camp for Gadhr revolutionaries, however, fell through. From Berkeley, he organized the Indian students in America under the Hindustan Association of America and established its magazine, Hindustanee Student. After several unsuccessful attempts over six years, Taraknath was granted American Citizenship in June 1914.

When the first World War broke out, the overseas Indian revolutionaries saw an opportunity of German assistance to realize their goal of freedom of India. With lavish funding from the German Foreign Office, the self-exiled revolutionaries in Berlin quickly formed the Indian Independence Committee as the center of operation of world-wide network of Indian revolutionaries. Elaborate plans to smuggle arms, money and men to India were drawn up. Pro-German and anti-British propaganda literature were prepared and distributed throughout Europe. A plan to mount an overland armed expedition through Northwest India was drawn up. Nationalistic students and other Indians residing in the United States were called to Berlin to participate in the various phases of armed incursion into India. The British government barred Taraknath's entry into India under the Defence of the Realm Act which was promulgated at the beginning of the war. The order was enforced until the British left India in 1946.

Taraknath went to Berlin in December 1914 where he nominally registered in the Berlin University but spent all his time to revolutionary activities. He went to the prisoners-of-war camps to recruit Indian soldiers captured by the Germans on the battlefields of Europe. He wrote several revolutionary pamphlets and held a prominent position on the Committee. In March 1915, Taraknath accompanied a German-Indian military mission to Istanbul in Turkey. In Istanbul, the mission was split in two directions. One party went to Kabul, capital of Afghanistan, with a band of German, Turkish and captured prisoners-of-war soldiers. This party hoped to convince the Emir of Afghanistan to invade India from the Northwest. The second party proceeded towards the Suez Canal to sabotage the Canal so that the supply of arms and soldiers from India and Australia could not reach the Allied Forces in Europe. Taraknath accompanied the Suez Canal mission. The plan was to destroy the British controlled railway tracks along the canal, and to place bombs under ship hulls. Anti-British pamphlets were carried for smuggling to the native soldiers in the British Indian Army stationed along the Canal. The Suez Canal mission, however, did not achieve its goals due to enemy's heavy fortification as well as inadequate Turkish and German support. Taraknath returned to Hebron in Palestine to recuperate from desert sickness. During his stay in the Near East, he wrote several anti-British propaganda articles for the Pan-Islamic Movement.

In August 1916, the Indian Independence Committee sent Taraknath to China and Japan to organize the Pan-Asiatic League and to spread the doctrine of 'Asia for the Asiatics'. Germany's interest was to keep China out of the war. The Indian revolutionaries saw a danger in China's declaration of war on the side of the Allied Powers for it would ruin the chances of overland transport of arms and weapons into India. Taraknath published from Shanghai, an English and Chinese pamphlet entitled, China's Future in Danger. He argued that since China had been no more injured by Germany than by Great Britain, France, Russia or Japan there was no reason for China to declare war against Germany. China's participation in the war, he wrote, would place her more completely under foreign domination and will ultimately ruin her. His book, Is Japan A Menace to Asia?, was published from Japan. In this book, the 'mischievous' influence of the great powers in the political situation in China was discussed. The role of Japan in China, Korea, and in whole of Asia was discussed in the light of 'Asia for Asiatics' viewpoint. His thesis was that Japan is not keen for Asiatic supremacy but she can be a potential threat to the European, particularly British, aggression in Asia. The author also demanded that India must be free, and European domination of Asia must be terminated by joint opposition of India, China and Japan. Shanghai's Anglo-phile magazine, The Far

Eastern Review, called the book the ‘magnum opus’ of the Pan-Asiatic Movement, and ranked Taraknath along with Asian leaders like Sun Yat-sen, Tong Shao-yi and Ichiro Tokunami.

Taraknath published a Japanese version of his *The Isolation of Japan in World Politics* in which he advocated for an alliance of peace between Japan and Germany, with later inclusion of Russia. Although the book was concerned with Japan and her relations with other countries, the author spent considerable space on freedom of India demanding expulsion of the British from the whole of Asia. This book made a sensation with the radical Japanese readers. The English version was later published in the United States. When the United States declared war against the Central Powers on 6 April 1917, the Indians suspected to be plotting with Germany to overthrow the British government in India were arrested for conspiring to violate the Neutrality Act. A warrant to arrest Taraknath was issued. The Japanese Foreign Minister offered him the choice of asylum or a safe passage to Russia. Taraknath decided to return to the United States to stand trial. He was convicted along with other Indian revolutionaries and German agents in the famous Hindu-German Conspiracy case of San Francisco, and served 18 months of a 22 month sentence in the US Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas. Immediately after his release the American government brought a suit to cancel his citizenship on the ground that his antagonistic and revolutionary ideas were not suitable for an American citizen. The suit was later dismissed.

Taraknath settled in the New York City and became the foremost spokesman of the Indian community’s struggle against the discriminatory immigration policy of the government. Following the passage of the restrictive Immigration Law in February 1917 which included the Indians in the ‘barred zone’, the government proceeded to deport already landed immigrants. While in prison, Taraknath advised Agnes Smedley and Sailendranath Ghose to form a society called Friends for Freedom of India (FFI). On behalf of FFI, he launched a full scale campaign to educate the American public about the government’s discrimination of Indians. He regularly visited the Ellis Island Detention Center to argue on behalf of the Indians held there for deportation and effected release of a number of detainees. He traveled extensively promoting the cause of Indian freedom and their right of immigration and naturalization. He was closely associated with the Irish nationalists and accompanied Eamon De Valera in his lecture tour in the USA and earned his support for India’s freedom. At his urging De Valera wrote an article favoring Independence of India.

In 1923, Taraknath completed a dissertation on India in World Politics for which he was awarded the first Ph. D. degree by the International Politics Department of Georgetown University, Washington, DC. He was invited to testify before the House Committee of Foreign Affairs on a resolution on limiting world production of opium and other narcotics to strictly medicinal and scientific purposes. In an emotional testimony using government data, Taraknath told the House Committee that opium is the monopoly of the British India government. Although Great Britain is a civilized Christian nation, she fought two wars against China to monopolize opium trade. He was particularly angry for the government sponsored proliferation of opium use in India. He complained that in self-governments, like Canada and Australia in the British Empire, opium is banned. But the Indian people have no self-government and the British government freely carried out an extensive program for the sale of opium among the poor and starved.

In 1924, Taraknath married Mary Keatinge. She came from a respected Quaker family of revolutionary war heritage. Mary Keatinge was previously married to Frank J. Sprague who was known as the father of electric subway and elevator. In the same year, the US government ordered the cancellation of Taraknath’s citizenship along with nearly sixty Indians on the dubious allegation that their naturalization certificates were illegally obtained. By an accompanying law, Mary also lost her citizenship for marrying an Indian ineligible for citizenship. They went to court challenging the government order. In a series of articles in *Modern Review* and *Calcutta Review*, Taraknath showed that the government decision to denaturalize the Indians was not based on judicial precedent but instead reflected the prevailing mood of racism. Taraknath convinced Chief Justice William Howard Taft that a mistake was made but Taft suggested that a legislation was necessary to correct it. Taraknath unsuccessfully lobbied with the State, Labor and Justice department officials. By his persistence, he was able to gain sympathy of a number of congressmen and senators. But all legislations introduced to redress the injustice either died in committees or were opposed by labor unions, and some racist congressmen and senators. In 1926, Taraknath and his wife testified before the Senate Committee on Immigration on a bill to ratify and confirm the citizenship of the denaturalized Indians. However, not until 1927 after the government lost a case in the Supreme Court did the commissioner of naturalization recommend that all pending denaturalization cases be dismissed.

Between 1924 and 1934, Taraknath and Mary traveled in Europe for extended periods. He did journalistic work and lectured in Geneva, Rome, Paris, Munich

and other European cities. In the years of travelling in Europe from 1924 to 1934, Dr. Taraknath Das mostly stayed in Germany and there, first of all, in the city of Munich.

Already in 1927, Dr. Taraknath Das submitted a proposal to the President of the German Academy Munich, Professor Dr. Haushofer, to form an “India Institute” at the Academy. Supported by the President and the Senate an “India Institute” at the Deutsche Akademie Munich could be formed in the academic year 1928/29 with Dr. Franz Thierfelder as Secretary General.

The “India Institute” granted scholarships for about 100 Indian students during the years 1929 to 1938, among them was Triguna Charan Sen who graduated with Ph. D. from the Technical Highschool Munich in 1932.

Supported by Dr. Taraknath Das, the first “Conference of Indian Students in Germany” took place in Munich from October 21 to October 25, 1931.

Already before a “Hindustan Students’ Club of Munich” was formed with help and participation of Dr. Taraknath Das.

Prominent personalities from India visited the “India Institute” as for instance Sir C.V. Raman, Professor Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Sir. J.C. Bose, Rabindranath Tagore and Humayun Kabir.

Dr. Taraknath Das, who initiated the “India Institute”, became its Honorary Life Member and worked in the Executive Committee, too.

In 1932, sponsored by “India Institute”, Dr. Taraknath Das’ famous book “India in World Politics” was translated into German and published by Callwey Publishing House, Munich.

Taraknath Das had also sent one complimentary copy of the book to Adolf Hitler, at that time not yet in power, who acknowledged the receipt of the book, but did probably never read it, because he had no appreciation for Indians.

Mary and Taraknath Das left Germany and Europe in 1934 for USA. They detested the cruelties of the new Nazi government against Jews and antifascists, what they did see with their own eyes.

Back in USA Taraknath dedicated himself to lecturing, but also to publicly commenting social and international affairs. In 1943, Taraknath testified before the House Committee on Immigration and Naturalization supporting the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Acts and to permit their naturalization.

After the Second World War Professor Dr. Taraknath Das revived and renewed the cooperation with his German friend Professor Dr. Franz Thierfelder. Initiated by the two professors already in 1949, the “India Institute” was refounded in Munich. Since the German Academy did no longer exist at Munich, the new partners for cooperation were the “Wiesbadener Ausschuss e.V.” and the “Taraknath-Das-Foundation” in New York. Professor Thierfelder was elected Chairman of the “India Institute” and Professor Dr. Taraknath Das Honorary Chairman. The “India Institute” from October 1953 onward published an “India Magazine” which was issued for about four years. The “India Institute” expired in 1960 and partly succeeded in an “Indien-Institut e.V.” which is existing in Munich until now.

Professor Dr. Taraknath Das started his first world tour after the war in 1952. After an absence of forty six years, Taraknath visited free India in 1952 on his visiting fellowship from the Watumall Foundation. Wherever he went, large crowds greeted the return of the aged patriot. The major newspapers in Calcutta and New Delhi covered his visit on front pages and editorials. He gave a series of lectures at the Calcutta University.

He visited Asian and afterwards European countries including Germany. At Munich he met Professor Thierfelder, at Bonn his old Catholic and antifascist friend Ritter von Lex, now Secretary of State in the new Home Ministry, and in Hamburg the East Asia Association gave a big reception for him after he had received the honour to sign the Golden Book of the city.

May 24, 1954, was the day when Professor Dr. Taraknath Das got the Honorary Doctorate of the Ludwig-Maximilian-University of Munich. For that special event he came again to Germany. He received this great honour for his services for India and the mankind as well as for his contributions to develop and to promote friendly relations between India and Germany. The “India Institute” gave a big reception for the great friend of Germany, for thus honoured Dr. honoris causa Taraknath Das. Many German papers reported about this honour for an Indian scholar.

During this stay in Germany Taraknath also visited for the first time the divided Berlin. In Berlin (West) he met me as his nephew and did some sight-seeing.

His last visit to Germany was in 1956 when he together with his niece Nilima saw my wedding in Berlin. Also in 1956, on December 12, the Taraknath-Das-Foundation Berlin, inspired by and honouring my uncle, got registered and started its activities.

In 1930, Taraknath and Mary Keatinge co-founded the Taraknath Das Foundation for the promotion of cultural and educational cooperation between India and the United States. The object of the Taraknath Das Foundation (registered in 1935) is to promote human welfare, friendly relations and cultural cooperation in general, but usually with the purpose of improving the respectful relationship and mutual understanding towards Asian countries, especially India, within the American community.

Based in the Columbia University with branches in Calcutta, and in Berlin, the Foundation awards scholarships and prizes, and supports India related educational and cultural activities. It maintains a scholarship program at Shukutoku Senior College at Tokyo. The foundation is represented in several endowments throughout the world, e.g. in Jadavpur University and the Ramakrishna Mission Cultural Center, both Calcutta. The Foundation provides annual grants to 12 American Universities for India studies.

Since his final return from Europe, Taraknath devoted his life to the Taraknath Das Foundation and teaching. As a special lecturer in Oriental and Indian history and politics, he taught courses in Columbia University, City College of New York, Catholic University, and several other academic institutions. He was a traveling lecturer and radio commentator on contemporary politics.

Taraknath died in New York City on 22 December, 1958. During his lifetime he wrote a dozen books on international politics and published more than one hundred articles in American, Indian, German and Japanese magazines.

All his life Taraknath Das urged the wealthy to share their fortune with the contemporaries of the Society by bestowing charities for self-help like a cooperative enterprise. The recipient or beneficiary should pay back the aid received and where possible even more, so that the wealth of the fund grows instead of being consumed and lost. It should be available in future for others. His philanthropic movement depended on recycling of wealth voluntarily. It discarded giving gifts excepting to the disabled and the miserably poor. Giving and taking should be reciprocal in a dynamic society. Receiving without a due return makes the beneficiary dependent, opens the door for nepotism and the society tends to be corrupt. "Charity must be treated as business, demanding accountability and efficiency." He thus helped people through his Foundation only. In all his lectures publicly held, he appealed to

everybody to give one day's earnings per year for charitable purposes to uplift the society with voluntary and individual efforts.

Literatur:

Taraknath Das – Ein Lebensbild des indischen Revolutionärs, Freiheitskämpfer und Gelehrten (author: Dr. Lothar Günther), Berlin 1996–

Taraknath Das: Life and Letters of a Revolutionary in Exile (author: Dr. Tapan Mukherjee), National Council of Education, Bengal, Jadavpur University, Calcutta 700 032 - India.

## ***5) The Taraknath Das Foundations***

The object of the Taraknath Das Foundation is to promote human welfare, friendly relations and cultural cooperation between the United States and other nations through educational and philanthropic activities. It has for many years made modest contributions for university lectures, prizes, scholarships, travelling fellowships and student loans. It has assisted in the establishment and the programs of additional Taraknath Das foundations in other countries. Its activities have been devoted particularly to the development of relations with India, and to assisting and encouraging those interested in this field.

The Founders

The Taraknath Das Foundation is the outgrowth of the educational activities and practical philanthropy of Mary Keatinge Das and Dr. Taraknath Das, who were deeply interested in developing better understanding among nations through cultural cooperation. Together they set up the Foundation and followed the practice of contributing annually a portion of their income to its programs.

Taraknath Das was born in Majiparah, a village near Calcutta, on June 15, 1884. He came to the United States in 1906 as an advocate of freedom for India. Working his way, he earned an A.B. and an A.M. from the University of Washington, and became an American citizen in 1914. He continued his graduate studies at the University of California and the University of Berlin, and in 1924 received his Ph.D. in the School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University.

Dr. Das was on the faculties of Columbia and New York universities until his retirement in 1956, and by invitation lectured at various other universities in the

United States and abroad. On his return to India in 1952, after a forty-seven year absence, the city of Calcutta held a civic reception in his honor; a scroll presented to him on this occasion hailed his strenuous fight for the cause of Indian independence, and recalled also the assistance which Mary Keatinge Das had given to Indian students in America and in Europe. An honorary doctor's degree was conferred on Dr. Das in 1954 by the University of Munich.

Mary Keatinge Das was born in Columbia, South Carolina. Her mother's ancestors were Quakers who had migrated to America with William Penn, while her father had come from Ireland. Always public spirited, Mrs. Das was a founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and the National Woman's Party, Washington, D.C. She and Dr. Das were married in 1924 and for the next ten years spent most of their time in Europe.

#### Development of the Foundation

While they were living in Europe, their educational activities were devoted primarily to assisting Indian students engaged in graduate study. Through their efforts and with the support of German educators, the India Institute was established in Munich in 1928. Two years later, Dr. and Mrs. Das decided to establish a special fund to carry on their educational and philanthropic activities. On July 4th, 1930, the idea took definite form, and the name and object of the Foundation were decided upon.

Returning to the United States in 1935, Dr. and Mrs. Das incorporated the Foundation under the laws of the District of Columbia. They decided not to seek support from outsiders until some substantial work had been done. Thus for several years they were the sole contributors, and the activities of the Foundation were limited in scope.

In 1945, a number of their friends became interested in the work of the Foundation and began making contributions. As income from invested capital and contributions increased, activities were expanded. The original and additional capital investment were never drawn upon.

After the death of Mrs. Das in January 1948, Dr. Das continued the work of the Foundation. Since his death in December 1958, the program of the Foundation has been carried on by its board of trustees, which included many of his friends, associates and students. His niece, Nilima Das, was director, secretary-treasurer.

#### Activities of the Foundation

Starting with the Mary Keatinge Das Memorial Lecture at Columbia University in 1948, other memorial lectures have been established at American University, the State University of Iowa, the University of Virginia, the University of Chicago, the University of Wisconsin, Yale University, and Howard University. Honoring great names in Indian thought and history, these lectures are presented by outstanding governmental, educational and spiritual leaders. Wherever such lectureships have been established, the efforts of the Foundation have been directed toward building up an endowment sufficient to perpetuate them.

Student prizes for the best work in Asian studies have been established at New York University, the University of Hawaii, Columbia University and the University of Pittsburgh.

Funds have been given for occasional travelling fellowships to enable American scholars to study or do research abroad.

A special Taraknath Das Foundation Prize is awarded in cooperation with Columbia University to individuals doing effective work toward better understanding among nations through cultural activities.

In addition to these programs, the Foundation has made contributions to help foster Asian studies at Pace College and Grinnell College. Indian and American students have been helped by timely loans and by scholarships. The Foundation has made contributions also to other charitable and educational organizations.

Lastly, the Foundation has helped to establish, together with the nationals of the local areas, other Taraknath Das foundations in India, Israel, Japan, West Germany and Hawaii, where similar programs of lectures, prizes and scholarships have been developed.



In accordance with the expressed wish of Dr. Das, his personal library consisting of some 2.000 volumes on history and foreign affairs, should be sent to Jadavpur University in Calcutta. Dr. Das has established a student fund at this university, which he believed to have played an important part in India's struggle for independence. The books should be housed in a room dedicated to his memory, and it was hoped that this library became a nucleus for the training of foreign service personnel in India.

Taraknath Das Foundation

c/o Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University, 420 West 118th Street, New York, NY 10027 tel. (212) 854-3616

President: Feliks Gross, Vice-President and Director: Leonard A. Gordon, 276 Riverside Drive, New York, NY 10025 tel. (212) 666-4282

## 6) *The Gandhi Information Center*

Established in 1990 the Gandhi Information Centre has been freely available for Education and Culture. It has more than a hundred members at home and abroad, amongst them well-known scientists, artists and authors as e.g. the Nobel Peace Prize winner Adolfo Perez Esquivel, Count Serge Tolstoy and Professor Joseph Needham. This year the Gandhi Information Centre became well-known all over the world on account of the distribution of the Manifesto against Conscription and the Military System. This Manifesto revives attention to two manifestoes signed by Gandhi, Einstein, Buber, Freud and Tolstoy's assistants Birukoff and Bulgakov against military training of youth. In the meantime this Manifesto has been translated into 25 languages and has been signed by more than 200 outstanding personalities from over thirty different countries. The Manifesto has been sent to local peace activists and all the international signatories once a year.

Since 1990 the Gandhi Information Centre, home of research and teaching about Non-violence, has organised educational activities with publications about the Life and Achievement of Mahatma Gandhi. The Library of the Gandhi Information Centre and its archives of audio and visual material make it an extensive collection for a Culture of Non-violence. Almost exclusively this collection consists of generous loans of members. The Gandhi Information Centre has made contacts all over the world and contributes to an international network.

The non-violent, active resistance as developed and lived by Gandhi is to serve as focus and support. Connected with this the active members wish to document the origins of Non-violence in multifold traditions (e.g. the non-violent doctrine of Tolstoy in Russia, the Civil Disobedience of Henry David Thoreau, the Civil Rights Movement of Martin Luther King in the USA, the Social Ethics of John Ruskin in England, the Arc communities of Lanza del Vasto in France as well as the reasons of conscience of religious conscientious objectors in Austria and Germany).

Our series of Tracts on Non-violence contain introductory essays which form a thematic and easily accessible introduction to theory and practice of Non-violence. They are suitable for pupils and students as well as adults. Booklets in print are the following:

*Emancipation by 'Conscious Pariah' (Introduction) / Christian Bartolf*

*Gandhi's Educational Philosophy / Christian Bartolf*

*Tolstoy - Gandhi (in German) / Christian Bartolf*

*The Gandhi I knew / Herbert Fischer*

*Gandhi's Ethic of Non-violence /Ija Lazari-Pawłowska*

*Tolstoy - Gandhi (in English) / Christian Bartolf*

The catalogue of our extensive exhibition is called "My Life Is My Message: the Life and Work of M.K. Gandhi" and provides a detailed history of Gandhi's life and work as well as of the history of India and South Africa with numerous photographs, documents and illustrations, articles and speeches by Gandhi, commentaries by contemporaries, articles from the German press between 1931 and 1948 and caricatures from Indian and English newspapers as well as a bibliography of Gandhi literature in German and also a list of addresses of Gandhi organisations all over the world.

We recommend our recent German-language publication "Die erste Stufe. Tolstoj, Gandhi und die Ethik der vegetarischen Ernährung" (The First Step. Tolstoy, Gandhi and the Ethics of Vegetarianism) to those who want to practically interweave Non-violence into their daily life.

*Satyagraha* was the title under which the Gandhi Information Centre has recently published information for its members. The first two issues were dedicated to the commemoration of Gandhi's 125th birthday and our correspondences to the followers of Leo Tolstoy in Russia.

Support the Gandhi Information Centre, Lübecker Straße 44, 10559 Berlin (P.O.Box 210109, 10501 Berlin), tel/fax (with answering machine) +(49)-(30)-3941420. Individual and group of visitors are welcome according to appointment. The annual membership is 360 German Marks, reduced membership is 120 German Marks. Financial support of the volunteer work of our Centre is requested for account number 495283-106, Postbank Berlin, Post code 100 100 10.



Mahatma Gandhi

ISBN 3-930093-09X