The Universal Spirit and an Indigenous Leader

Already in the Old Testament the Spirit is referred to be universally present, not territorially limited: "Where could I go away from your Spirit? Where could I get away from your presence? ...If I flew away from beyond the east, or lived in the farthest place in the west, you would be there to lead me" (Ps 139:7&8). The same Spirit is also presented as the source of wisdom, present among all humans: "Since the Lord's Spirit fills the entire world, and holds everything in it together, she knows every word that people say" (Wis 1:7). The Spirit, (together with the Father and Son) is said to have been present already in creation, the beginning of God's salvific self-communication (Gen 1:2). The role of the Spirit is particularly evident in the creation of the first human being. It is by breathing His Spirit into the nostrils that God made the first human being live (Gen 2:7). It is obvious therefore that the Spirit is universally present in the whole of humankind.

Also the New Testament acknowledges a universal activity of the Spirit. Thus for instance St. John, using a simile about the 'wind',[1] explains the mysterious and universal activity of the Spirit. "It blows where it wishes. You hear the sound it makes. But you do not know where it comes from and where it is going" (Jn 3:8). In the Cornelius-incident St. Peter witnessed the out-pouring of the Spirit on the Gentiles even before they were administered with the sacrament of baptism, so much so that he made an open declaration in the Jerusalem Council thus: "God showed his approval of the Gentiles by giving them

1. It is good to observe that the Hebrew word *ruach* as well as its Greek equivalent *pneuma* means breath, air, wind or soul all meaning dynamic realities and used interchangeably.

the Holy Spirit just as he had to us. He made no difference between us and them" (Acts 15:8&9). Thus the universality of the Spirit's presence as well as action is beyond doubt.

With this perspective in mind, it may be of use to us, Christians in India, to study the leadership-pattern of the Father of the nation. For, I believe, this indigenous leader exemplifies not only a sound response to the call of the universal Spirit but also a typically Christic model of leadership that is liberative in approach. Especially if one knows clearly the nature of the earlier Gandhi, then one will easily realise that he became a leader only at the instance of the call of the Spirit. So the first part of this article devotes to describe how weak, timid, ambitious and worldly Gandhi was before he emerged a leader in the Spirit. The second part brings out the one thing extraordinary in him namely his fundamental openness to the Spirit, which he manifested in and through his commitment to truth. The third part is an attempt to explicate some of the factors of his 'spiritual' leadership.

Part 1 The weak young man that Gandhi was

A close look at the first few chapters of Gandhi's Autobiography will reveal that Gandhi was a most ordinary boy. He was weak in every respect.

1.1. **Physically** he was not a very strong person. Compared with his own brother and a friend, Gandhi acknowledges, he certainly looked feeble-bodied.[2] While they both were hardier, physically stronger, and more daring, Gandhi could hardly jump or run. Probably on account of the puny structure of his body he always wanted to be aloof, so much so that he never took part in any exercise, cricket or football till they were made compulsory in

2. Part I Chapter VI.

his school [3] If again Gandhi yielded to the persuations of his Muslim friend and decided to go in for meat-eating, much against his own will and family taboos, it was only because he raised to himself this question; "Why should not I also be as strong as he?"

1.2 **Psychologically** also Gandhi was a weak person. To put it in his own words, he was a coward. He used to be haunted by the fear of thieves, ghosts and serpents. He would not dare to stir out of doors at night. Darkness was a terror to him. It was almost impossible for him to sleep in the dark, as he would imagine ghosts coming from one direction. thieves from another and serpents from a third. He could not bear to sleep without a light in the room.[4]

1.3. **Intellectually** Gandhi was no better either. Certainly he was not at all a brilliant student. While recalling his experiences at school, Gandhi says: "It was with some difficulty that I got through the multiplication tables. The fact that I could recollect nothing more of those days than having learnt, in company with other boys, to call our teacher all kinds of names, would strongly suggest that my intellect must have been sluggish, and my memory raw".[5] Further, Gandhi accepts that "there was hardly anything to note about my studies. I could only have been a mediocre student".[6] As a rule he had a distaste for any reading beyond his school books. The daily lessons had to be done, because he disliked being taken to task by his teacher as much as he disliked deceiving him. Therefore he would do the lessons, but often without setting his mind in them.

3. Part I Ch. V.

4. Part I Ch. VI.

5. Part I Ch. I.

6. Part I Ch. II.

1.4 **Personality makeup :** May be, as a result of his awareness of the varied kinds of his weakness, Gandhi became shy and reserved. When the boy went from the primary school to a suburban school and thence to the high school, Gandhi used to be very shy and avoided all company. His books and lessons were his sole companions. To be at school at the stroke of the hour and to run back home as soon as the school closed - that was his daily habit. He literally ran back, because he could not bear to talk to anybody. He was even afraid lest anyone should poke fun at him'.[7] The shyness of his personality was with him even when he had gone to London for barrister studies. Even in a meeting of half a dozen people (the Executive Committee of the Vegetarian Society) he always felt tongue-tied. He was at a loss to know how to express himself. All the rest of the members appeared to him to be better informed than himself.[8] Once he was determined to express his ideas by all means. He had even set down his ideas in writing. But he did not find himself equal even to reading it. He could not proceed beyond the first sentence. He made himself ridiculous and sat down. It was only in South Africa that he got over this shyness. How and why, we will see later.

1 5. **The young man's morality :** Looked from the moral point of view also, Gandhi was very weak. He succumbed himself to almost all the vices of a teenager. Much against the warnings by his mother, eldest brother, his wife and others, he fell in the company of boys who had taken to the habits of smoking, stealing and brothel-visiting.[9] Under the influence of his relative, the boy Gandhi became fond of smoking. He imagined a sort of pleasure in emitting clouds of smoke from the mouth. He began pilfering stumps

7. Ibid.

8. Part I Ch. XVIII.

9. Cf. Part I Ch. VII.

of cigarettes thrown away by his uncle. He was not satisfied with it. So he decided to buy fresh cigarettes. As he had no money, he even stole a few coins from the pocket money of servants. It was not sufficient. He therefore stole a bit of gold from his brother's armlet to pay off a debt of about Rs. 25/- in a petty shop. He had even paid a visit to a brothel house. And once he attempted to commit suicide!

1.6. **Ambitious and worldly:** Despite his shyness and other weaknesses, Gandhi was an ambitious and a worldly person too. After he passed the matriculation examination, his elder brother wanted him to pursue his studies at college. Gandhi would rather prefer to pursue barrister studies in England, because that would get Diwanship for the asking whereas his B.A. degree obtainable through college studies would at best qualify him for a sixty rupees' post. When an old friend and adviser of the family suggested it, Gandhi jumped at the proposal. He was ready even to be outlawed by his caste men.[10]

When he arrived at London, he put aside the brand new clothes that he had brought with him from India. For, they had been stiched after the Bombay cut and as such unsuitable to English society. In their place, he bought a new set of clothes at the Army and Navy Stores. He went in for a chimney-pot hat at an expensive price of 10 Shillings. He also bought a costly tie. Further, he wasted ten pounds on an evening suit, made in Bond Street, the centre of fashionable life in London. All this because the young man who went to London to study began to undertake the all too impossible task of becoming an Englishman. Not satisfied with it, he made his brother send him a double watch-chain of gold. He even wasted ten minutes everyday before a

10. Cf. Part I Chs. XI & XII.

huge mirror, watching himself arranging his tie and parting his hair in the correct fashion.[11]

1.7. **Infatuated Youth :** Not content with the externals, the youthful vigour in Gandhi directed his attention to many other details that were supposed to go towards the making of an English gentleman. First it was necessary for him, he felt, to take tuition in French. For, it was supposed to be the *lingua franca* of the Continent to which he had a desire to travel. Moreover, he decided to take dancing lessons at a class and paid down three pounds for a term. Just within three weeks he came to realise that it was beyond him to achieve anything like rhythmic movements. He could not follow piano since he found it impossible to keep time. Then, he thought he should learn to play the violin in order to cultivate an ear for Western music. So he invested three pounds in a violin and something more in fees. Further, he sought a third teacher to give him lessons in elocution after duly paying him the preliminary fees. This infatuation lasted about three months.[12] How and why did he get over it, we will see later.

1.8 **Professionally a Failure :** On his return to India, Gandhi decided to stay in Bombay for some time in order to gain experience of the High Court. However he had not the courage to conduct a case. Finally, he did take up a case. It was the case of one Mamibai. It was an easy case. Gandhi charged Rs. 30 for his fees. The case was not likely to last longer than a day. And his debut was to take place in the Small Causes Court. Gandhi appeared for the defendant and had thus to cross-examine the plaintiff's witnesses. But the moment he stood up, his heart sank into his boots. His head was reeling and he felt as though the whole court was doing likewise. He could not think of any

11. Cf. Part I Ch. XV.

12. Cf. Ibid.

question to ask. So he simply sat down and told the agent that he better engage a certain Patel. He was duly engaged for Rs. 51 and to him the case was child's play. Gandhi was so ashamed of himself that he decided not to take any more cases until he had courage to conduct them. Indeed he did not go to Court again until he went to South Africa.[13]

1.9. **An Escapist Attitude:** Disappointed at his professional failure in Bombay, Gandhi decided to settle in Rajkot. There his brother's partner, already a petty pleader himself, could give him some work in the shape of drafting applications and memorials on behalf of his poor clients. And that brought him on an average, Rs. 300 a month. However, his stay at Rajkot became embittered because of an insulting encounter with the Political Agent. He was prejudiced against his brother. Since Gandhi had known this officer when he was in England he might have been fairly friendly with him. So, his brother wanted Gandhi to speak to him and disabuse him of his prejudice. With great hesitation Gandhi decided to meet him. But the way that British Officer treated him, insulted Gandhi so much that it was beyond him to conciliate him. He had no desire to curry favour with him. At the same time most of his work would naturally be in his court. How to face this man any more? That was the problem now for Gandhi! The atmosphere appeared to him to be poisonous, and how to remain unscathed was a perpetual problem for him. He was thoroughly depressed And he felt that if he could get some job, he should be free from this atmosphere of intrigue.

Just at that time an offer from a merchant from South Africa came to his brother. Dada Abdulla and Co, the firm in question had a big case there in the Court with a claim of £40,000. It had been going on for a long time. They

13. Cf. Part II Ch. III.

had engaged the services of an Attorney General. If Gandhi was sent there, they said, he would be able to instruct their cousel better. Moreover, since much of their correspondence was in English, he could help them with that too. And they made it clear that they required his services just for a year. They had also stipulated that his payment would be a consolidated amount of £105 with a first class return fare. Gandhi was clear that he was going there harldly as a barrister. He was going merely as a servant of the firm. Even then he decided to go because "he wanted somehow to leave India". What else then, if it was not en escapist attitude?

Part 2 What was then that made him a Mahatma?

If, despite the numerous points of weakness, Gandhi became a *Mahatma*, it was only on account of his total openness to the guidance of the Spirit. Already as a boy he had committed himself to truth. Once when he happened to watch a play of Harichandra, he asked himself "Why should not all be truthful like him?" He thought about it day and night. Finally as for himself, he decided he would always play the role of Harichandra. "To follow truth and to go through all the ordeals Harichandra went through was the one ideal it inspired in me".[14] It was this quest for truth that refrained the boy Gandhi from copying the spelling of the word kettle although his own class teacher prompted him to do so. Again it was against the background of his ideal that even when the teenage-Gandhi had fallen into variety of vices, he could also overcome them firmly. Especially when he had committed stealing, it was more than he could bear. He was seized with such remorse of conscience that he made it a point to confess it to his father. Gandhi was too timid a boy. He did not dare to speak. He was afraid of the pain it would cause his father. However, he

14. Cf. Part I Ch. II.

felt that the risk should be taken and that there could be no cleansing without a clean confession.[15] Strangely enough Gandhi went through all the steps required for a good Catholic Confession. First, he recalled the sin. Secondly, he firmly resolved never to steal again. Thirdly, he decided to confess it to the one who has authority. In his case it was his father. As he could not dare speak to him, he wrote it out and submitted it to his father. Fourthly, he humbly asked for forgiveness in that very same letter. Fifthly, he also asked adequate punishment for it.

Gandhi had closed his confession pledging himself never to steal in future. After handing it over to his father, Gandhi was patiently waiting at the door-step for punishment. But to his own surprise Gandhi found a sublime response from his father. As soon as his father read it through, tear-drops trickled down his cheeks and wetted the paper. For a moment he closed his eyes in thought, and then tore up the note, forgiving the boy completely. This was for Gandhi an object-lesson in Ahimsa. It was not merely a father's love but also an act of pure Ahimsa, transforming others whom it touches. More than that this incident taught Gandhi a double-pronged lesson on the *power of truth and love*: how truth can arouse love and in turn can silently and effectively cleanse the heart.

Over and above this receptive attitude of the young man what was needed was just one decisive light from the Spirit. That indeed was given to him through a crucial instance in South Africa. The famous train-incident[16] in all outward appearance was just an accident. But it was the turning point of Gandhi's life. It was in and through that incident this timid, weak and infatuated individual was filled with the Spirit, and all the accompanying power, dynamism

15. Cf. Part I Ch. VIII.

16. Cf. Part II Ch. VIII.

and determination to fight against a powerful, exploitative and imperialistic nation. It was almost like the Spirit that came upon Othniel (Judg 3:10) or the Spirit that took control of Gideon (Judg 6:24) or the One that came upon Jephthah (Judg 11:9).

Weak as he was, Gandhi was shaken to the core by the train-incident. He did not even dare to collect his luggage that was thrown out on the platform along with him. The railway authorities had already collected the luggage and kept it in the station master's room He just went to the waiting room. It was winter, and winter in the higher regions of South Africa. It was therefore biting cold. His overcoat was in his lugguge. But he did not dare to ask for it lest he should be insulted further. So, he sat down and was shivering.

Thus it was an enforced meditation for Gandhi. And there he was engrossed in thinking of his duty. Three questions were creeping up in his mind again and again: "Should I fight for my rights? Should I go back to India? Should I carry on without minding the insults and return to India after finishing the case?" Gandhi could not go back to India without fulfilling his obligations. He has come on a contract. But, given his nature, he could not just go on as if nothing had taken place or putting up with insults. The hardship to which he was subjected was superficial - only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. So the light he got was this :

> *I should try, if possible to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice.*[17]

17. Ibid.

Finally, Gandhi decided to follow the light given him from that enforced meditation. He did take the option generously. Once having taken the option, he pursued the path unmindful of the costs. He went there just for a year. He tried to do whatever he could during that year. He organised the indentured labourers from India into an Association He taught them the language of the oppressor. He taught them to be clean in all possible ways, because it was their uncleanness that shunned the English from them. Above all, he gave them a method to resist injustice, a handy and non-violent one which anybody could use and yet the most powerful and spiritual one.

When Gandhi made a fundamental option to fight against injustice, he was not at all clear about the method with which he would fight. It is in that utter helplessness that the Spirit revealed to him the proper method. And the man's soul was so receptive that it could immediately capture it and execute it effectively. Gandhi's determination to fight against oppression was so strong that on the very following day he exercised his option. It is through a life-experience that the Spirit inspires people to do the things that ought to be done for the welfare of humanity. Through the coach-incident Gandhi learned the value of non-violent method that made use of the "soul-force". This he would later elaborate into a full-fledged science of satyagraha, drawing resources from the religious traditions, especially from the Sermon on the Mount.

The one-year contract was over. On the eve of his departure to India, he was attending a fare-well party. The headline news about Indian Franchise Bill drew the attention of Gandhi. As he explained the implications of the proposed Bill for the Indian masses living in the far-off land, people readily gave the consent to fight against the passing of the Bill. But they were all illiterate. And they requested him to lead them. Again, the Spirit shows him

the way. He too readily responds to the Spirit, decides to stay on. The fare-well party turns out to be the "Nataal National Congress". The price he had to pay for his decision to lead his people was too dear. And he paid it all generously. For, he was convinced of the certainty of the call of the Spirit. He has learnt to discern the ways of the Spirit. He is used to the whisperings of the Spirit. Once he made sure that it was the Spirit that spoke to him in and through the events of life, he would immediately respond to it generously. It all meant he had to cut off all family ties. He had to give up even the legitimate comforts and conveniences in life. He had to involve himself in a prolonged struggle with the most potent power of the imperialists in the world. He had to initiate new experiments in life, like the Brahmacharya experiment, the Phoenix Settlement, Tolstoy Farm — all inspired then and there by the Spirit, may be through a magic spell of a book, or the adamant and assertive voice of his wife, or the friendly suggestions given by his friends. Whatever the way the Spirit chose to speak to him, he was ever-ready to listen to him and put it into practice always weaving them into one whole experiment of the Soul's Search, or a Pilgrim's Progress. That is why at the end of his life he could clearly say that his whole life was an Experiment with Truth.

The man that was the most ordinary, weak and fearful, mediocre and shy, ambitious and worldly, infatuated and unsuccessful became an extraordinarily strong, determined, courageous, renounced, spiritual and the most respected and successful person. The secret of his transformation is that he gave a bounteous response to the guidance of the Spirit, and he identified with the cause of the poor and the marginalized as his own. He recognised the presence of the Spirit not only in him and the oppressed, but also in the oppressor. Accordingly, he developed a method of liberation that would enliven the Spirit in both the classes. That is why his leadership is of a spiritual kind. What are the

fac ors that constitute this kind of leadership we will try to explicate in the following section.

In the course of his stay in South Africa Gandhi became a very famous lawyer whose monthly income was now more than 300 pounds. However, the affluence of the South African region did not attract Gandhi except that he was fond of the nutritious fruits of the country. He had already adopted a simple life-style, and lived it along with the other members of his community. It seemed to him that he had no other interests except those of the others. He realised that it was his duty to understand truly and rightly the interests of others and to help them to live better. Sharing his life with others gave him the greatest joy of life. His service to others was not like the strong man patronising the weak but complete identification of the strong with the weak. He was a nurse and a stretcher-bearer to the suffering humanity in the Boer-war and the Zulu rebellion. He was a teacher, a doctor, and a counsellor in the Tolstoy Farm. He gave his skills and vision to efficiently manage the moral warfare against the colour bias.

He had no inhibitions for imbibing the values presented by any religion, be it Christianity or Islam. The moment he became convinced regarding the goals, he started to live them instantly. Ruskin, Tolstoy, Thoreau came to clarify his conception of life and the method he had to adopt in his campaign against injustice. The tremendous energy he generated by the love for others, his integrity and honesty of purpose and truthfulness in his approach attracted many members of the white class like C.F. Andrews, H.S.L. Polak, Joseph Doke, H. Kallenbach etc., all of whom supported the cause he was fighting for. They partook in all his experiments like those of the Phoenix settlement and Tolstoy Farm. Thus in South Africa a man of truth and service was emerging slowly and steadily as a great leader of the century, called the *Mahatma* (the Great Soul), so much so that

he was even considered by people abroad as an incomparable leader of the world. Just to cite one example, Louis Fisher wrote thus :

> "I have met Lenin, Churchill, Lituinon, Atlee, Einstein, Lloyd George, Roosevelt and many other famous people. I have never met a more remarkable person than Gandhi. He had great charm... He had more than influence, he had authority which is...better than power".

Part 3 Factors of the Satyagraha Leadership of Gandhi

From the foregoing it is clear that the timid, shy and reserved type of man was transformed into a leader only because he died to himself and identified himself with the suffering humanity. The moment he resolved to resist injustice at any cost, and bring out the human dignity hidden in oppressed humanity he got rid of his shyness, timidity, reservation etc. The secret of his transformation lay basically on his firm resolve to fight against oppression and identify himself with the oppressed. When he made the resolve to fight against injustice, he did not know what would be the method of his fight. But he evolved it gradually, through his involvement-prayer-action-reflection process. From the very following day of the train-incident, he got an inkling of the nature of his method. Encouraged by the success produced through his "patient - suffering and resistance - method", Gandhi began to apply the same on various other occasions. And with his deep reflections on each of his actions (application) he developed a theory of non-violent resistance. He named it *Satyagraha*. The factors contributing to it are the following :

1 Non-Violence

It does not mean non-action, but a positive action of resistance, by voluntarily undergoing the suffering inflicted

by the oppressor rather than inflicting suffering on the oppressor.

The value of self-suffering, which he realized in his own life during the coach-incident, had already been realized by his wife Kasturba whom he married at the age of 13. She was an illiterate girl, whereas he was already a high school boy. So he wanted to exercice his authority on Ba. Besides, he was a jealous husband. So he ordered her not to go anywhere without his explicit permission. In all her innocence, Ba thought that to go to the temple or her friends' house she need not get permission from the husband. And when he came to know about it, he punished her. A submissive wife as she was, Ba accepted those sufferings patiently. But still, she would later also go to the temple without getting his permission because it seemed silly to get permission for such little things from the husband. Finally, Gandhi was made to realize the silliness of his position, so much so he later acknowledged that Ba was the teacher of non-violence for him.

Now, it is precisely a similar impact Gandhi was able to exert on the whites in the coach, by his patiently accepting suffering from the coach attendant, and not yielding to his unjust demands.

Even in the case of children at home it is this sort of non-violent technique that proved to be successful.

2. Truth

Probing the reasons for this successful impact of non-violent resistance on the oppressors (be it as husband, traveller or parent), Gandhi arrived at a striking analysis of Human Nature. The truth of human nature according to him is that "Animality and Rationality" are not the only components of human nature, as is ordinarily thought out to be. Rather there are three components that constitute human

nature : "Animality and Rationality and Divinity" or (Spirit within). Each of these is integrated into the next higher principle, the soul being the climax of human nature. Of these three components, Gandhi said, "Rationality" is precarious because it can support either animality or divinity.

Now, in a case of oppression, the oppressor makes use of rationality in favour of animality; therefore he degrades from the truth. If the oppressed makes use of rationality (violence) in resisting oppressor, he would only stimulate the brutality of the oppressor all the more, and there would be only "brutality". On the contrary, when the oppressed refrains from using the brutal force and voluntarily accepts the sufferings inflicted on him by the oppresser for resisting his oppression, he actually makes use of his divine force and this in turn enkindles the divine spark that lies dormant in the oppressor.

So non-violence is not a question of expediency, not even a result of a policy or decision making process; it is befitting the truth of human nature.

That's why Gandhi named his movement of non-violence as a *Satyagraha Movement* ("Satya means Truth "Agraha" means "holding on" or "clinging to"). The whole movement is one that "holds on to Truth".

The oppressed have to witness their "truth" by availing themselves of the "soul-force" within, bearing patiently and voluntarily all the sufferings inflicted by the oppressor, and at the same time non-cooperating with the oppression of the oppressor firmly. The cooperation of the oppressed (implicit or explicit) with the oppressor is a constitutive principle of any act of exploitation or oppression. "If I can withhold my cooperation I make the oppressor invalid in his exploitative designs. He may inflict sufferings on me. But by patiently undergoing them without any retort or anger or

hatred against him, I will not only vindicate the truth-position of mine but also will be able to enkindle the divine spark in the oppressor."

3. Brahmacharya

To the basic virtues of Non-violence and Truth, Gandhi added other virtues to be practised by the Satyagrahis. The virtue next in priority is Brahmacharya.

Literally it means "search of Brahma". In general terms it means "realization of God". This realization is impossible without a complete control of the senses, the control in thought, word and action of animal passion, especially of the carnal desire, the sex-urge. For one who realizes God, the sexual urge is not a botheration at all; both are complementary.

4. Control of the Palate

Brahmacharya will be easy to one who controls his palate. Eating is necessary only for sustaining the body and keeping it a fit instrument for service. So eating should never be practised for self-indulgence, or only for the sake of taste; it must be taken only as medicine.

5. Non-Stealiug

It is theft to take something from another, even with his permission, if we have no real need of it. We should not receive any single thing that we do not really need. It is theft for me to take even a fruit that I do not need or to take it more than necessary. The observance of non-stealing in the sense specified above will bring about a progressive reduction of our wants and much of the distressing poverty in this world will be removed.

6. Non-Possession

This is covered by non-stealing. We may neither take nor keep a superfluous thing. Taking a superfluous thing

is said to be stealing, while keeping a superfluous thing is what is termed as Non-possession.

The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, while millions are starved to death for want of sustenance. As such both are in discontent and distress.

7. Fearlessness

It is indispensable for the growth of other noble qualities. Especially, attainment of Truth and Non-violence are impossible without fearlessness. It connotes freedom from external fear, fear of disease, bodily injury, death or dispossession, losing one's nearest and dearest, losing reputation, or giving offence and so on.

It is unattainable without religious consciouness. "Let us fear God and we shall not fear man".

8. Bread-Labour

As against merely mental work which is for the soul and its own satisfaction, working with one's hands must be done by everyone in society. One who does not do bodily labour has no right to eat. It is necessary for health. A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will get soon tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long.

If everyone learns to work, many hardships connected with labourers will be easily redressed. Invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished. It is a veritable blessing to one who would observe Non-violence and it makes the observance of Bramacharya a natural act.

It is to be observed that to this list of virtues, mentioned above, Gandhi added three more virtues later, required by the Indian context. They are: Equality of Religions, Removal of Untouchability and Swadeshi.

Gandhi called them 'Vows' because they are "to be adhered to at all cost". "Life without vows is, Gandhi says "like a ship without anchor or like an edifice that is built on slippery sand instead of a solid rock". Vow means unflinching determination. Practice of the above virtues as vows, then, would guard a Satyagrahi from many pitfalls and temptations. The sun, the moon and other heavenly bodies move with unerring regularity so much so that we base our calendar on their movements, we regulate our time by their rising and setting. Now it is vow that imparts stability and firmness to our character. The world would tear to pieces if there was not this element of stability and regularity in our character. So, Gandhi insisted on the observance of the above Eleven Vows for his Ashramites.

Conclusion

The barrister having found himself a failure in profession, left the country as a relief, on a one-year contract with a merchant in South Africa. As he landed up there this ambitious and worldly young man was stiff-collared, frock-coated, determined to travel first class in the train. But the man who went there with a determination to earn well in order to live in a style becoming a barrister, returned from South Africa with a clear resolve to revert to home-spun clothes and the life of the Indian poor.

The man who went there as an escapist to face hard facts of life came back to India with a will-power to face any kind of situation, person, tempest of life.

The man who went there as a shy and reserved person, returned to India as a great public orator, spokesman of the teeming millions of the down-trodden. Now, he could face any audience with a calm composure of body and mind, and quietness of heart and soul.

The man who went there just for a change (on a year's contract), remained there for 21 years, fighting for a cause, fighting against the mightiest empire of colonialism. He had decisively become a leader of a community! He is no more a timid, shy, reserved, worldly and ambitious man! On the contrary, he has turned out to be courageous, bold, outgoing, noble and self-less, indeed!

How did this change take place and why? Gandhi himself traces it to a concrete experience he had on the occasion of the insult, he underwent in the first week of his South African stay. It was in and through the crisis in life that he "felt" the definite guidance of the Spirit and a clear light of inspiration by the Spirit. A person already committed to truth as he was, Gandhi could, with the help of the Spirit, delve into the profound truth and integrate it into his basic life option "The life bestowed by the Spirit is neither a magical or mysterious process, but instead, an event of freedom constituted by acceptance and response". And Gandhi is a perfect exemplar of such a life. How appropriately St. Augustine affirms: "If therefore you wish to live by the Holy Spirit, keep charity, love the truth, desire unity and you will attain eternity" (*Sermon*, 267, 4.4). How much more fittingly are these words of Augustine applicable to an indigenous leader, the Father of the Nation!

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