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10 THE SALT MARCH (1930)

TOWARD DANDI

• by H. S. L. Polak

In the years following 1922 the nationalist movement was at a low ebb. In 1924, after his convalescence and release from prison, Gandhi conducted a dramatic twenty-one-day fast to promote Hindu-Moslem unity, but he did not consider the time ripe for a revival of civil disobedience. In 1927 the British government appointed the Simon Commission to make recommendations for further political reform in India, but as the Commission contained no Indian members it was boycotted by Indian nationalists. In 1928, in the Bardoli district near Bombay, a satyagraha campaign against a tax increase won support throughout the country and achieved its aim by non-violent means. Many in the Congress were pressing for action on a wider scale; some even advocated armed rebellion. Gandhi, however, was cautious. At his suggestion, late in 1928 the Congress resolved that unless within one year the British agreed to give India a constitution and Dominion status, a third nation-wide civil disobedience movement would be launched. When the British failed to meet its terms the Congress, in December 1929, at last announced that its goal was full inde-

• Reprinted with permission from H. S. L. Polak, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Man and His Mission* (Madras: Natesan, 8th ed., 1931[?]), pp. 106-16.

pendence. It fixed January twenty-sixth as National Independence Day, and in effect authorized Gandhi to decide the time and method of a new campaign of civil disobedience.

The manufacture of salt was a government monopoly. Accordingly Gandhi decided to inaugurate the campaign by leading a march to the sea in order to take salt illegally from its waters—an action which symbolized the Indians' refusal to recognize the authority of the government. On March 2, 1930 Gandhi warned the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, of his intentions, saying, "If my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the eleventh day of this month I shall proceed with such co-workers of the Ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the Salt Laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the Independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil." The Viceroy's secretary replied: "His Excellency . . . regrets to learn that you contemplate a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace." Accordingly the famous march was begun.

TRUE TO HIS DECLARATION, just a little before daybreak on the morning of the 12th, Mahatma Gandhi with his 79 volunteers, all students of the Vidyapith,¹ left the Ashram on a campaign of civil disobedience. Their destination was the village of Dandi on the sea coast near Jalalpur² where Gandhi was to break the law regarding the manufacture of salt. Streams of Khaddar-clad men and women had flowed to the Ashram all night through to have a darshan³ of Mahatmaji and witness the great march. Among those were journalists and cameramen from far and near and correspondents of some British papers as well.

"The scenes that preceded, accompanied and followed this great national event," wrote the *Bombay Chronicle*, "were so enthusiastic, magnificent and soul-stirring that indeed they beggar description. Never was the wave of patriotism so powerful in the hearts of mankind, as it was on this great occasion which is bound

The Salt March

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Mahatmaji with a gentle smile betokening his undying faith in the justice of the cause he was pursuing and in the success of the great campaign he had embarked upon, began at the head of the procession to march with quick steps and unfaltering. The pace was a trifle too fast for his health and age, wrote the correspondent:

"He was carrying a long stick in his hand obviously for support. The whole army was marching in a perfectly disciplined manner. The agile general in the front was indeed a source of inspiration to all. The army passed all along the distance of ten miles up to Aslali between the densely packed rows of people who were standing in their places for hours together, eager for the 'darshan' of India's great General. Ahmedabad had had on the occasion one of its hugest processions during living memory. With the possible exception of children and decrepits, every resident of the city must have watched the great procession which was at least two miles in length. Those who could not find a standing place in the streets through which the army marched had made use of house-tops and galleries, open walls and trees and every conceivable place they could get hold of. The whole city seemed to be enfete on this historic occasion. The cries of 'Gandhi-ki-Jai' were rending the skies all along the march. . . ."

As the procession marched through village after village, Mahatmaji spoke at all the halting stations, urging the people to take to Khaddar, to stop drinking, to give up cooperation with Government and join the ranks of the Satyagrahis. At Aslali he told his followers that he would either die on the way or else keep away from the Ashram until Swaraj had been won. This was an expression of despair, said his critics; while his own followers were moved to their depths. "I have no intention of returning to the Ashram until I succeed in getting the salt tax repealed," said Mr. Gandhi. He exhorted villagers to take to the spinning wheel, to look to the sanitation of the village and to treat the untouchables with brotherly love. He urged them to join his movement to break the salt monopoly of Government, as this would be a step forward

on the way to Swaraj. Volunteers were enrolling themselves in the hundreds in the cause of civil disobedience and the headmen of several villages were resigning their jobs and joining the campaign. The arrest of Mr. Gandhi was supposed to be imminent and Mahatmaji, as might be expected, was well prepared for it and he gave instruction that his place should be taken up by Abbas Tyabjee,⁴ the aged friend, who had stood by Gandhi through all the years of Non-cooperation. The fight threatened to be well nigh grim; and as Sir P. C. Ray said, "Mahatma Gandhi's historic march was like the exodus of Israelites under Moses. Until the Seer seized the promised land, he won't turn his back." . . .

Gandhi and his party reached Dandi on the morning of the 5th April. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu had also gone there to see the Mahatma. Interviewed by the Associated Press immediately after his arrival at Dandi, Gandhiji said: "God be thanked for what may be termed the happy ending of the first stage in this, for me at least, the final struggle for freedom. I cannot withhold my compliments from the Government for the policy of complete non-interference adopted by them throughout the march. After the graceless and childish performance in the matter of Mr. Vallabhai's arrest and imprisonment and equally unprovoked arrest and imprisonment of Mr. Sen Gupta,⁵ I was wholly unprepared for this exemplary non-interference. I am not so foolish as to imagine that the Government has suddenly lost their proved capacity for provoking popular resentment and then punishing with frightfulness. I wish I could believe this non-interference was due to any real change of heart or policy. The wanton disregard shown by them to popular feeling in the Legislative Assembly and their high-handed action leave no room for doubt that the policy of heartless exploitation of India is to be persisted in at any cost, and so the only interpretation I can put upon this non-interference is that the British Government, powerful though it is, is sensitive to world opinion which will not tolerate repression of extreme political agitation which civil disobedience undoubtedly is, so long as disobedience remains civil and therefore necessarily non-violent.

The Salt March

"It remains to be seen whether they have tolerated by countless people in response to the Indian National Congress cancellation of the taxes and organizations in the land are free, if Civil Disobedience is expected with my country. Disobedience at its best to us since its commencement and purification through fasting. I hope that the commencement of the first stage has been received. I am positive about the cause and the glorious end for which consciously are suffering.

Gandhi's prayer is usually solemn. I was arrested, the same if he, too, was a tribute to both to obey them. Citizens not to offend. He considered it and he evidently had motives other than the movement.

Soon after the Salt March in Gujarat Vidyapati succeeded exactly in crowd accompanying in grave solemnities of "Mahatma's

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"It remains to be seen whether the Government will tolerate as they have tolerated the march, the actual breach of the salt laws by countless people from tomorrow. I expect extensive popular response to the resolution of the Working Committee (of the Indian National Congress). I have seen nothing to warrant the cancellation of the notice I have already issued that all Committees and organizations throughout the length and breadth of the land are free, if they are prepared to commence from tomorrow Civil Disobedience in respect of the salt laws. God willing, I expect with my companions (volunteers) to commence actual Civil Disobedience at 6:30 tomorrow morning. Sixth April has been to us since its culmination in Jallianwala massacre a day for penance and purification. We therefore commence it with prayer and fasting. I hope the whole of India will observe the National Week commencing from tomorrow in the spirit in which it was conceived. I am positive that the greater the dedication to the country's cause and the greater the purification, the speedier will be the glorious end for which the millions of India consciously or unconsciously are striving."

Gandhi's prayer on the morning of the 6th was more than usually solemn. In the course of his speech he observed that if he was arrested, they should take orders from Mr. Abbas Tyabjee and if he, too, was removed, from Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. He paid a tribute to both these leaders and asked the volunteers implicitly to obey them. Gandhiji concluded his address by asking the visitors not to offer Satyagraha that day, but to do so the next day. He considered his offer of Civil Disobedience as a great Yagna⁶ and he evidently did not want demonstrations, proceeding out of motives other than spiritual, to be associated with this great movement.

Soon after prayers, Mr. Gandhi with his 84 volunteers of the Gujerat Vidyapith⁷ and Saheth Punjabhai⁸ of Ahmedabad, proceeded exactly at 6 in the morning for a bath in the sea. A large crowd accompanied the party. Gandhi was walking at a slow pace in grave solemnity and entered the water of the sea amidst loud cries of "Mahatma Gandhi-ki-jai."

Gandhi was leaning on Miss Abbas Tyabji's shoulder, and was accompanied by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. Then Gandhi and his volunteers proceeded to break the salt law by picking up the salt lying on the seashore. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu hailed the Mahatma by calling him "law-breaker." No policemen appeared on the scene when Gandhi and his volunteers broke the salt law.

Immediately after breaking the salt law, Mr. Gandhi issued the following press statement: "Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the salt law has been committed, it is now open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution under the salt law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that workers should everywhere manufacture salt, and where they know how to prepare clean salt, make use of it and instruct the villagers likewise, telling the villager at the same time that he runs the risk of being prosecuted. In other words, the villagers should be fully instructed as to the incidence of the salt tax, and the manner of breaking the laws and regulations connected with it so as to have the salt tax repealed.

"It should be made absolutely clear to the villagers that the breach is open, and in no way stealthy. This condition being known, they may manufacture salt or help themselves to the salt manufactured by Nature in creeks and pits near the seashore, use it for themselves and their cattle, and sell it to those who will buy it, it being well understood that all such people are committing a breach of the salt law and running the risk of a prosecution, or even without a prosecution, are to be subjected by so-called salt officers to harassment.

"This war against the salt tax should be continued during the National Week, that is, up to the 13th April. Those who are not engaged in this sacred work should themselves do vigorous propaganda for the boycott of foreign cloth and the use of Khaddar. They should also endeavor to manufacture as much Khaddar as possible. As to this and the prohibition of liquor, I am preparing a message for the women of India who, I am becoming more and more convinced, can make a larger contribution than men towards the attainment of Independence, I feel that they will be worthier

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Being asked what he would do during the national week, Mr. Gandhi said, "I have a lot of work to do." He however laughingly added, "I shall encourage illicit manufacture of salt."

A PINCH OF SALT

by Louis Fischer

HAD GANDHI gone by train or automobile to make salt, the effect would have been considerable. But to walk for twenty-four days and rivet the attention of all India, to trek across a countryside saying, "Watch, I am about to give a signal to the nation," and then to pick up a pinch of salt in publicized defiance of the mighty government and thus become a criminal, that required imagination, dignity, and the sense of showmanship of a great artist. It appealed to the illiterate peasant and it appealed to a sophisticated critic and sometime fierce opponent of Gandhi's like Subhas Chandra Bose⁹ who compared the Salt March to "Napoleon's march to Paris on his return from Elba."

The act performed, Gandhi withdrew from the scene. India had its cue. Gandhi had communicated with it by lifting up some grains of salt.

The next act was an insurrection without arms. Every villager on India's long seacoast went to the beach or waded into the sea with a pan to make salt. The police began mass arrests. Ramdas, third son of Gandhi, with a large group of ashramites, was ar-

⁹ Reprinted with permission from Louis Fischer, *The Life of Mahatma Gandhi* (New York: Harper, 1950), pp. 268-69.

rested. Pandit Malaviya and other moderate cooperators resigned from the Legislative Assembly. The police began to use violence. Civil resisters never resisted arrest; but they resisted the confiscation of the salt they had made, and Mahadev Desai reported cases where such Indians were beaten and bitten in the fingers by constables. Congress Volunteers openly sold contraband salt in cities. Many were arrested and sentenced to short prison terms. In Delhi, a meeting of fifteen thousand persons heard Pandit Malaviya appeal to the audience to boycott foreign cloth; he himself bought some illegal salt after his speech. The police raided the Congress party headquarters in Bombay where salt was being made in pans on the roof. A crowd of sixty thousand assembled. Hundreds were handcuffed or their arms fastened with ropes and led off to jail. In Ahmedabad, ten thousand people obtained illegal salt from Congress in the first week after the act at Dandi. They paid what they could; if they had no money they got it free. The salt lifted by Gandhi from the beach was sold to a Dr. Kanuga, the highest bidder, for 1,600 rupees. Jawaharlal Nehru, the president of the Congress, was arrested in Allahabad under the Salt Acts and sentenced to six months' imprisonment. The agitation and disobedience spread to the turbulent regions of the Maharashtra and Bengal. In Calcutta, the Mayor, J. M. Sengupta, read seditious literature aloud at a public meeting and urged non-wearing of foreign textiles. He was put in prison for six months. Picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloth shops commenced throughout India. Girls and ladies from aristocratic families and from families where purdah¹⁰ had been observed came out into the streets to demonstrate. . . .

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A SPRING HAD BEEN RELEASED

• by Jawaharlal Nehru

THE SIXTH of April was the first day of the National Week, which is celebrated annually in memory of the happenings in 1919, from Satyagraha Day to Jallianwala Bagh. On that day Gandhiji began the breach of the salt laws at Dandi beach, and three or four days later permission was given to all Congress organizations to do likewise and begin civil disobedience in their own areas.

It seemed as though a spring had been suddenly released; all over the country, in town and village, salt manufacture was the topic of the day, and many curious expedients were adopted to produce salt. We knew precious little about it, and so we read it up where we could and issued leaflets giving directions; we collected pots and pans and ultimately succeeded in producing some unwholesome stuff, which we waved about in triumph and often auctioned for fancy prices. It was really immaterial whether the stuff was good or bad; the main thing was to commit a breach of the obnoxious salt law, and we were successful in that, even though the quality of our salt was poor. As we saw the abounding enthusiasm of the people and the way salt-making was spreading like a prairie fire, we felt a little abashed and ashamed for having questioned the efficacy of this method when it was first proposed by Gandhiji. And we marveled at the amazing knack of the man to impress the multitude and make it act in an organized way.

• Reprinted with permission from Jawaharlal Nehru, *Toward Freedom* (New York: John Day, 1941), pp. 159-60.

ARREST AT MIDNIGHT

by Haridas T. Muzumdar

While mass civil disobedience was being carried out throughout India, Gandhi carefully avoided participating further in the activity. He set up a temporary ashram at Camp Karadi, a mango grove midway between Dandi and the sea, from which he kept in close contact with developments throughout the country. Meanwhile he and the male members of his ashram were trying to educate nearby villagers to stop preparing an alcoholic toddy. Then, early in the morning on May 5, Gandhi was arrested.

NEAR THE COTTAGE of reeds is a plain cot out in the open, under the blue canopy of the Indian sky. Not far from the cot on one side there is a young man sleeping on the ground; on the other side of the cot is a young Indian lady (stopping over for the day) sleeping on the ground. Farther away both to the right and to the left are mango trees under which are sleeping groups of young men. Still farther away in the background is a modest school building in front of which about forty men, young and old, are sleeping. It is 12:45 A.M.

Of a sudden a tramping of feet is heard, disturbing the quiet repose of Karadi Camp. Two English officers—(1) the District Magistrate of Surat and (2) the District Superintendent of Police—and an Indian police officer, all three armed with pistols, along with thirty odd Indian policemen armed with rifles, enter the Camp through the gates in front of the school building. They make straight for the cottage of reeds and surround the cot.

• Reprinted with permission from Haridas T. Muzumdar, *Gandhi Versus the Empire* (New York: Universal Publishing Co., 1932), pp. 33-37.

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Two flashlights are directed upon the face of the occupant of the cot.

The Mahatma, half-clad, weary of limb, having had less than two hours' rest, sleepily turns from one side to the other in order to dodge the dazzling light. Suddenly the words "Please wake up!" strike his ears. He is up in his bed. Gazing at the police party surrounding him, he takes in the situation all at once. He decides to break his silence.

Mahatma Gandhi: "Have you come to arrest me?"

The District Magistrate: "Yes. Your name is Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi?"

Mahatma Gandhi (getting off the bed): "Do you mind waiting until I brush my teeth and wash my face?"

The District Superintendent of Police (stiffly looking at his time-piece): "You may brush your teeth."

While the Mahatma is getting washed, a bell is rung at the school building. All the inmates of the Camp are immediately up and seen surrounding the police party. They make efforts to get inside the police cordon and after a while succeed in going near the Mahatma. They are steadfastly gazing at their beloved leader.

Mahatma Gandhi (still brushing his teeth): "Mr. District Magistrate, may I know the charge on which I am arrested? Is it Section 124-A of the Indian Penal Code?"

District Magistrate: "No, not under Section 124. I have a written order."

Mahatma Gandhi (his ablutions now finished): "Would you mind reading it to me?"

District Magistrate (with the stiff formality of which only an Englishman is capable): "Whereas the Governor-in-Council views with alarm the activities of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, he directs that the said Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi should be placed under restraint under Regulation XXV of 1827, and suffer imprisonment during the pleasure of the government: and that he be immediately removed to the Yeravda Central Jail."

Mahatma Gandhi (disappointed that it was not Section 124-A): "Thank you! (Turning to his grandson): Please make up my

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bedding. (Turning to Mr. V. G. Desai, Acting Commandant of the Non-Violent Battalion): Please take charge of the important papers from my satchels. (Turning to one of his other awestruck followers): Please get me two taklis (hand-spindles) and some slivers."

District Magistrate and District Superintendent of Police (in unison, their eyes fixed upon their time-pieces): "Please hurry up, please hurry up!"

It is now one o'clock. The darkness thickens.

Mahatma Gandhi (surrounded by his loyal band of Satyagrahists, i.e., Civil Resisters): "Punditji, please recite the hymn describing the qualities of a Vaishnava. [The famous hymn with which the Great March was commenced on the 12th of March, 1930, with which the violation of the Salt Act was undertaken on the 6th of April, 1930.]"

The Mahatma stands up, his eyes closed, his head bent in mute reverence, while Pundit Khare recites the hymn. At the end of the hymn Punditji leads the congregational worship in which all, including the thirty odd Indian policemen, participate. The two English officers are standing stiffly, watch in hand, during the singing of the Vaishnava hymn.

Pundit Khare (seated on the ground, mono-string musical instrument in hand): "Oh Ramal Lord of the Dynasty of Raghus! Thou, an ideal king, an ideal husband of the ideal wife Sita, Thou art verily the Redeemer of the fallen and the sinful!"

The congregation repeats this verse each time after Punditji sings it. The joyous chanting purifies the countryside—white clouds are seen hovering overhead.

District Magistrate and District Superintendent of Police (in unison, their eyes fixed upon their time-pieces, a bit nervously): "Please hurry up, please hurry up!"

One by one the Civil Resisters bow down before the Mahatma, touching his feet most reverently, and bid him farewell most tenderly and affectionately.

The young lady (touching the Mahatma's feet): "Have you any message for Kasturba?"

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Mahatma Gandhi (gently patting the young lady's back): "No, I have no message for her. Tell her she is a brave girl."

The Mahatma surrenders himself into police custody. His two satchels and the small bundle of bedding are taken in charge by a police constable. The police party makes for the motor lorry. Tranquillity-incarnate, the Mahatma walks with steady steps in the direction of the gates. He is accompanied on the one side by the District Magistrate and on the other by the District Superintendent of Police—the eyes of both these officers are glued to their time-pieces. It is ten minutes past one. The policemen occupy the three police lorries. The Mahatma steps into the special lorry, casting a wistful glance at his Camp and his followers. The District Magistrate, watch in hand, gets into the same lorry. The District Superintendent of Police, watch in hand, also gets into the same lorry. And lo! the lorries are whisked away. A pall of darkness falls over the whole world.

Watches in hand, I take it, these English officers conducted the Mahatma to the railway train and helped him get into the special carriage reserved for the Gandhi party. The Gujarat Mail bound for Bombay was detained at 6:40 A.M. but for a moment at Borivli (a suburb of Bombay) where the Mahatma was made to alight. The passengers on the train paid their homage to the imprisoned Soul of India by loud shouts of "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai" (Victory to Mahatma Gandhi). The Mahatma was escorted to a high-powered grey car with bright pink blinds which were pulled down. The automobile with its precious cargo of barely a hundred pounds of flesh and bones arrived at its destination, the Yeravda Central Jail, Poona, at 10:30 A.M.

DHARASANA SALT RAID

by Webb Miller

Just before Gandhi's arrest on May 5, 1930, at Karadi, near Dandi, he announced his intention of raiding the Dharasana Salt Works about 150 miles north of Bombay. With Gandhi in jail, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu—close associate of Gandhi and Indian poetess—assumed the leadership and went to the site with 2,500 volunteers. Webb Miller, well-known foreign correspondent for the United Press, heard about this projected salt raid on May 21, and wrote the following eye-witness account.

AFTER WITNESSING two serious riots at the Wadala salt pans in the suburbs of Bombay, I received on the evening of May 20, 1930, an important tip from a friendly Gandhi sympathizer. He told me they were planning the biggest demonstration yet at Dharasana, about a hundred and fifty miles north of Bombay.

"Sarojini Naidu, the famous Indian poetess, is leading a non-violent demonstration against the big salt pans near Dharasana. The nearest railway station is Dungri. It is an isolated spot and you will have to take your own food and water. You'd better telegraph Mme. Naidu to provide transportation from Dungri, otherwise you will have to walk many miles. Be sure to take an adequate supply of bottled water, because the water from native sources is unhealthy for white men."

. . . Dungri consisted of a little huddle of native huts on the dusty plain. There were no means of transportation because Mme. Naidu had not received my telegram. I could find nobody who

✓ } • Reprinted with permission from Webb Miller, *I Found No Peace* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1936), pp. 190, 192-96.

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spoke English. By repeatedly pronouncing the word "Dharasana" and pointing questioningly around the horizon, I got directions and set off across country on foot through cactus hedges, millet fields, and inch-deep dust, inquiring my way by signs.

After plodding about six miles across country lugging a pack of sandwiches and two quart bottles of water under a sun which was already blazing hot, inquiring from every native I met, I reached the assembling place of the Gandhi followers. Several long, open, thatched sheds were surrounded by high cactus thickets. The sheds were literally swarming and buzzed like a beehive with some 2,500 Congress or Gandhi men dressed in the regulation uniform of rough homespun cotton dhotis and triangular Gandhi caps, somewhat like American overseas soldiers' hats. They chattered excitedly and when I arrived hundreds surrounded me, with evidences of hostility at first. After they learned my identity, I was warmly welcomed by young college-educated, English-speaking men and escorted to Mme. Naidu. The famous Indian poetess, stocky, swarthy, strong-featured, barelegged, dressed in rough, dark homespun robe and sandals, welcomed me. She explained that she was busy martialing her forces for the demonstration against the salt pans and would talk with me more at length later. She was educated in England and spoke English fluently.

Mme. Naidu called for prayer before the march started and the entire assemblage knelt. She exhorted them: "Gandhi's body is in jail but his soul is with you. India's prestige is in your hands. You must not use any violence under any circumstances. You will be beaten but you must not resist; you must not even raise a hand to ward off blows." Wild, shrill cheers terminated her speech.

Slowly and in silence the throng commenced the half-mile march to the salt deposits. A few carried ropes for lassoing the barbed-wire stockade around the salt pans. About a score who were assigned to act as stretcher-bearers wore crude, hand-painted red crosses pinned to their breasts; their stretchers consisted of blankets. Manilal Gandhi, second son of Gandhi, walked among the foremost of the marchers. As the throng drew near the salt

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pans they commenced chanting the revolutionary slogan, "In-
quīlah zindabad,"¹¹ intoning the two words over and over.

The salt deposits were surrounded by ditches filled with water and guarded by four hundred native Surat police in khaki shorts and brown turbans. Half a dozen British officials commanded them. The police carried *lathis*—five-foot clubs tipped with steel. Inside the stockade twenty-five native riflemen were drawn up.

In complete silence the Gandhi men drew up and halted a hundred yards from the stockade. A picked column advanced from the crowd, waded the ditches, and approached the barbed-wire stockade, which the Surat police surrounded, holding their clubs at the ready. Police officials ordered the marchers to disperse under a recently imposed regulation which prohibited gatherings of more than five persons in any one place. The column silently ignored the warning and slowly walked forward. I stayed with the main body about a hundred yards from the stockade.

Suddenly, at a word of command, scores of native police rushed upon the advancing marchers and rained blows on their heads with their steel-shod *lathis*. Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. They went down like tenpins. From where I stood I heard the sickening whacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls. The waiting crowd of watchers groaned and sucked in their breaths in sympathetic pain at every blow.

Those struck down fell sprawling, unconscious or writhing in pain with fractured skulls or broken shoulders. In two or three minutes the ground was quilted with bodies. Great patches of blood widened on their white clothes. The survivors without breaking ranks silently and doggedly marched on until struck down. When every one of the first column had been knocked down stretcher-bearers rushed up unmolested by the police and carried off the injured to a thatched hut which had been arranged as a temporary hospital.

Then another column formed while the leaders pleaded with them to retain their self-control. They marched slowly toward the police. Although every one knew that within a few minutes he would be beaten down, perhaps killed, I could detect no signs of

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wavering or fear. They marched steadily with heads up, without the encouragement of music or cheering or any possibility that they might escape serious injury or death. The police rushed out and methodically and mechanically beat down the second column. There was no fight, no struggle; the marchers simply walked forward until struck down. There were no outcries, only groans after they fell. There were not enough stretcher-bearers to carry off the wounded; I saw eighteen injured being carried off simultaneously, while forty-two still lay bleeding on the ground awaiting stretcher-bearers. The blankets used as stretchers were sodden with blood.

At times the spectacle of unresisting men being methodically bashed into a bloody pulp sickened me so much that I had to turn away. The western mind finds it difficult to grasp the idea of nonresistance. I felt an indefinable sense of helpless rage and loathing, almost as much against the men who were submitting unresistingly to being beaten as against the police wielding the clubs, and this despite the fact that when I came to India I sympathized with the Gandhi cause.

Several times the leaders nearly lost control of the waiting crowd. They rushed up and down, frantically pleading with and exhorting the intensely excited men to remember Gandhi's instructions. It seemed that the unarmed throng was on the verge of launching a mass attack upon the police. The British official in charge, Superintendent Robinson of Surat, sensed the imminence of an outbreak and posted his twenty-five riflemen on a little knoll ready to fire. He came to me, inquired my identity, and said: "You'd better move aside out of the line of shooting. We may be forced to open fire into the crowd." While we were talking one of the Gandhites, a young university student, ran up to Robinson, his face contorted by rage, tore open his cotton smock, exposing his bare breast, and shrieked: "Shoot me, shoot me! Kill me, it's for my country!" The leaders managed to calm the crowd.

The Gandhi men altered their tactics, marched up in groups of twenty-five and sat on the ground near the salt pans, making no

effort to draw nearer. Led by a coffee-colored Parsi sergeant of police named Antia, a hulking, ugly-looking fellow, detachments of police approached one seated group and called upon them to disperse under the non-assemblage ordinance. The Gandhi followers ignored them and refused even to glance up at the *lathis* brandished threateningly above their heads. Upon a word from Antia the beating recommenced coldly, without anger. Bodies toppled over in threes and fours, bleeding from great gashes on their scalps. Group after group walked forward, sat down, and submitted to being beaten into insensibility without raising an arm to fend off the blows.

Finally the police became enraged by the nonresistance, sharing, I suppose, the helpless rage I had already felt at the demonstrators for not fighting back. They commenced savagely kicking the seated men in the abdomen and testicles. The injured men writhed and squealed in agony, which seemed to inflame the fury of the police, and the crowd again almost broke away from their leaders. The police then began dragging the sitting men by the arms or feet, sometimes for a hundred yards, and throwing them into ditches. One was dragged to the ditch where I stood; the splash of his body doused me with muddy water. Another policeman dragged a Gandhi man to the ditch, threw him in, then belabored him over the head with his *lathi*. Hour after hour stretcher-bearers carried back a stream of inert, bleeding bodies.

I went to see Mme. Naidu, who was directing the subleaders in keeping the crowds from charging the police. While we were talking one of the British officials approached her, touched her on the arm, and said: "Sarojini Naidu, you are under arrest." She haughtily shook off his hand and said: "I'll come, but don't touch me." The crowd cheered frantically as she strode with the British officer across the open space to the barbed-wire stockade, where she was interned. Later she was sentenced to prison. Manilal Gandhi was also arrested.

In the middle of the morning V. J. Patel arrived. He had been leading the Swaraj movement since Gandhi's arrest, and had just resigned as President of the Indian Legislative Assembly in pro-

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test against the British his feet. He was a white flowing beard; coarse homespun sm tree, Patel said: "All Empire is lost forever people into custody a but I cannot unders civilized could deal a resisting men as the

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test against the British. Scores surrounded him, knelt, and kissed his feet. He was a venerable gentleman of about sixty with white flowing beard and mustache, dressed in the usual undyed, coarse homespun smock. Sitting on the ground under a mango tree, Patel said: "All hope of reconciling India with the British Empire is lost forever. I can understand any government's taking people into custody and punishing them for breaches of the law, but I cannot understand how any government that calls itself civilized could deal as savagely and brutally with nonviolent, unresisting men as the British have this morning."

By eleven the heat reached 116 in the shade and activities of the Gandhi volunteers subsided. I went back to the temporary hospital to examine the wounded. They lay in rows on the bare ground in the shade of an open, palm-thatched shed. I counted 320 injured, many still insensible with fractured skulls, others writhing in agony from kicks in the testicles and stomach. The Gandhi men had been able to gather only a few native doctors, who were doing the best they could with the inadequate facilities. Scores of the injured had received no treatment for hours and two had died. The demonstration was finished for the day on account of the heat. . . .