

over arms and armaments and the dark doctrines of violence.

We cannot doubt that even if he had known that the Hindu from Poona was waiting for him beside the garden path, near the prayer pagoda on the lawn of the Birla House, he would have walked cheerfully to his doom if he had thought that his death would save India, or one life in India. But all we surely know today was expressed by Prime Minister Nehru in the heartbroken broadcast in which he announced the Mahatma's death: "Now that the light has gone out——." The rest remains for history's inexorable hand to write down.

A LIGHT GOES OUT

A hush goes round the world today as the frail body of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi is carried in mournful procession from the Birla House in New Delhi to the banks of the sacred river Jumna, there to be turned to ashes. Out of the ashes we do not know what flowers will spring. After a generation of the Mahatma's teaching and example India still struggles between the light and the powers of darkness. Evil deeds in Bombay yesterday followed the evil deed of the slayer at New Delhi. But this we do know: that a saintly man who preached non-violence is dead by violence. Those who saw him cut down believe that with a last gesture of forgiveness he forgave this last enemy. His undying spirit speaks now to all India and all the world.

He had his human side. In youth he had given way to what later seemed to him excesses. He knew the value of publicity, both personal and for a cause. He had a sense of humor, which made him say, after twelve years spent at various periods in prison, "I always get the best bargains from behind prison bars." There was pride in his very humility and simplicity. His heart was sometimes more potent than his mind. His opposition to mass industry was out of step with the modern world, as we Westerners see it. It was men dying in the Burmese jungles, and not the doctrine of non-violent resistance, that kept the Japanese out of India during the war. The practical problems of the great partition baffled him.

But it was Gandhi the saint who will be remembered, not only on the plains and in the hills of India but all over the world. He strove for perfection as other men strive for power and possessions. He pitied those to whom wrong was done: the East Indian laborers in South Africa, the untouchable "Children of God" of the lowest caste in India, but he schooled himself not to hate the wrongdoer. The successful Johannesburg barrister gave up his practice to crusade for justice. The Indian patriot learned from the New Testament, from Ruskin, from Tolstoy, from Thoreau. He took literally the injunction to resist not evil. Nothing could have been more baffling to India's British rulers, who were often just men thinking in terms of statute law. They could repress violence, but they could not repress non-violence. In time they came to respect the Mahatma, imprisoning him with regret, freeing him with sighs of relief, discussing philosophy with him between crises. Among the world's tributes to him yesterday were those of the former Viceroy of India, who long ago discovered the great soul in their most formidable opponent.

Gandhi's critics may say that the spirit he stirred up, arousing in the Indian people a new sense of dignity, aroused in them also the instinct of combat. Certainly he shook the old caste society of Hindu India to its foundations when he introduced the liberating force of Western ethics. It was a Hindu who killed him, a Hindu who threw a bomb near Birla House ten days ago. But good-will and compassion flowed from him like a fountain. The power of his benignity grew stronger as his political influence ebbed. He tried, in the mood of the New Testament, to love his enemies and do good to those who spitefully used him.

Now he belongs to the ages. Now it seems, as Dr. John Haynes Holmes once wrote, that he was one of "that unbroken line of saints and seers, running like the stitches of a golden thread through the tangled pattern of human affairs, who have insisted that man, like God, is spirit, and can achieve his ends, and thus fulfill his life." He has left as his heritage a spiritual force that must in God's good time prevail