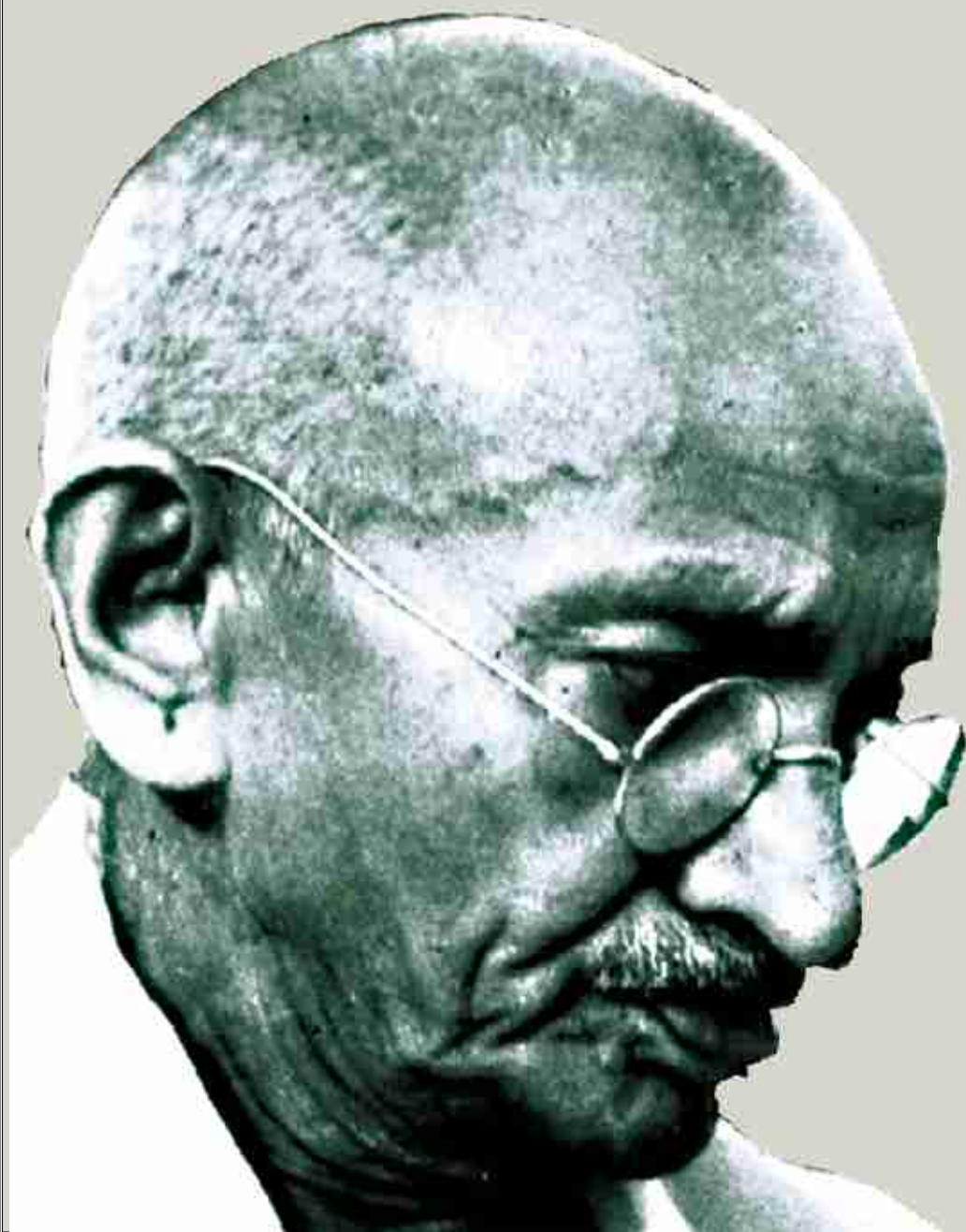


The Collected Works of  
**MAHATMA  
GANDHI**



The Collected Works of  
**MAHATMA  
GANDHI**



PUBLICATIONS DIVISION

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**HOMAGE**

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## *HOMAGE*

Mahatma Gandhi did not set out to evolve a philosophy of life or formulate a system of beliefs or ideals. He had probably neither the inclination nor the time to do so. He had, however, firm faith in truth and ahimsa, and the practical application of these to problems which confronted him may be said to constitute his teachings and philosophy.

There was hardly any political, social, religious, agrarian, labour, industrial or other problem which did not come under his purview and with which he did not deal in his own way within the framework of the principles which he held to be basic and fundamental. There was hardly any aspect of life in India which he did not influence and fashion according to his own pattern, beginning with the small details of individual life regarding food, dress, daily occupation, right up to big social problems which had for centuries become a part of life—not only unbreakable but also sacrosanct—like the caste system and untouchability.

His views appeared to be startlingly fresh, unhampered by tradition or prevalent custom. So also, his methods of dealing with problems, big and small, were no less novel and apparently unconvincing, but ultimately successful. Evidently, by his very nature he could never be dogmatic. He could never shut himself out from new light born of experience resulting from new experiments. For the same reason, again, he was no stickler for superficial consistency. In fact, his opponents, and sometimes even his followers, saw apparent contradiction in some of Gandhiji's actions. He was so open to conviction and had such an extraordinary amount of moral courage that once he was convinced that any particular action of which he was the author was defective, he never hesitated to correct himself and declare publicly that he was in the5 wrong. We often find him subjecting his own decisions and actions to an objective and impartial criticism. Little wonder, therefore, that many of his actions sometimes appeared to mystify his admirers and to confound his critics.

For a proper appreciation of such a man it is essential to take a comprehensive and collective view of his teachings and the events of his life. Any sketchy or piecemeal study of his life's story might prove misleading, doing as little justice to this great man as to the reader. This is the primary reason why a compilation of Gandhiji's writings on such a vast scale had to be undertaken. This series, which, I

am told, will consist of over fifty volumes, has its *raison d'être* in this very trait of Mahatma Gandhi.

By undertaking to bring out this series, the Information and Broadcasting Ministry of the Government of India had provided the most essential basis for a study of Mahatma Gandhi, his teachings, his beliefs and his philosophy of life. It will be for students and thinkers to do what Mahatma Gandhi never attempted. With all the material thus made available, they will be able to formulate, as it were, in the form of a thesis his philosophy of life, his teachings, his ideas and programmes, and his views on the innumerable problems which arise in life, in a logical and philosophical manner and classified under different heads and categories. In his scheme of things, there was room for matters big and small, for problems of world-wide importance and of limited personal import. Though nearly all his life he had to grapple with large political issues, a very substantial part of his writings relates to social, religious, educational, economic and linguistic problems.

He was a very regular correspondent. There was hardly a letter calling for a considered reply which he did not answer himself. Letters from individuals, dealing with their personal and private problems, constituted a considerable portion of his correspondence and his replies are valuable as guidance to others with similar problems. For a great period of his life, he did not take the assistance of any stenographer or typist, and used to write whatever he required in his own hand, and even when such assistance became unavoidable, he continued writing a great deal in his own hand. There were occasions when he became physically unable to write with the fingers of his right hand and, at a late stage in his life, he learnt the art of writing with his left hand. He did the same thing with spinning. Private correspondence, which absorbed much of his writing in this way, constituted an important and significant part of his teachings, as applied to particular problems of the ordinary man in his everyday life.

If ever there was a man who took a total view of life and who devoted himself to the service of mankind, it was certainly Gandhiji. If his pattern of thinking was sustained by faith and the lofty ideals of service, his actions and actual teachings were always influenced by considerations at once moral and eminently practical. Throughout his career as a public leader extending over nearly sixty long years, he never allowed exigencies to shape his views. In other words, he never allowed himself to use wrong means to attain the right ends. His

punctiliousness in the choice of means was so great, that even the achievement of the end was subordinated to the nature of the means used, because he believed that the right end could not be achieved by wrong means and what could be achieved by the use of wrong means would be only a distortion of the right end.

The undoubted and abiding worth of this collection of his writings and speeches is apparent. Here are the words of the Master covering some six decades of a superbly human and intensely active public life – words that shaped and nurtured a unique movement and led it to success; words that inspired countless individuals and showed them the light; words that explored and showed a new way of life; words that emphasized cultural values which are spiritual and eternal, transcending time and space and belonging to all humanity and all ages. It is well, therefore, that it is sought to preserve them.

His method constituted a soul-stirring assertion of man's abiding trust in man, of the belief that the sense of morality is inherent in the spiritual equipment of human beings. The freedom of his concept cannot be attained through mere legislation and decrees, nor can it be had through mere scientific and technological advance. A society, to be really free, has to be organized for freedom and that organization has to be started with the individual himself. To the extent that the Indian national life remains inspired by and patterned after his ideas, it will continue to be a source of inspiration. To the extent free India works his ideas and attains progressively higher integration, she will succeed in extending the frontiers of culture and blazing a new trail.

Many of his ideas, however, have yet to be fully imbibed. While it is agreed that the liberating role of any social order must be judged by the degree of actual freedom it allows to its members, there is not adequate appreciation of the fact that a centralized organization, industrial, social or political, implies a corresponding curtailment of freedom of the individual. The golden mean remains to be discovered and adopted. His economics is often confounded with austerity, if not scarcity. His discipline is confused with rigid morality, destitute of colour and beauty. With his few and limited needs, he lived a full and rich life, and in his own living, he demonstrated the truth of his beliefs, which in the background of eroded faith appeared too noble to be true. It is in this light that we have to understand the vows and observances of the inmates of his ashram, which used to be repeated morning and evening at prayer time, and comprised non-violence,

truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* or chastity, non-possession, bread-labour, control of the palate, fearlessness, tolerance, i.e., equal respect for all religions, removal of untouchability and swadeshi in the performance of one's duties.

Let me close this with the assurance that no one who takes a dip into Gandhiji's stream of life as represented in this series will emerge disappointed, for there lies in it buried a hidden treasure out of which everyone can carry as much as he likes, according to his own capacity and faith.

RASHTRAPATI BHAVAN,  
NEW DELHI,  
January 16, 1958

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Rajendra Prasad". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

# FOREWORD

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## *FOREWORD*

In another month's time ten years will have passed since Gandhiji's life came to an end. He was of a ripe age, but he was still full of vitality and his capacity for work was prodigious. The end came suddenly by the hand of an assassin. India was shocked and the world grieved, and to those of us who were more intimately connected with him the shock and sorrow were hard to bear. And yet, perhaps, it was a fitting close to a magnificent career and in his death, as in his life, he served the cause to which he had devoted himself. None of us would have liked to see him gradually fade in body and mind with increasing years. And so he died, as he had lived, a bright star of hope and achievement, the Father of the Nation which had been shaped and trained by him for half a century.

To those who had the high privilege of being associated with him in some of his innumerable activities, he will ever remain the embodiment of youthful energy. We shall not think of him as an old man, but rather as one who represented with the vitality of Spring the birth of a new India. To a younger generation who did not come in personal contact with him, he is a tradition, and numerous stories are woven round his name and activities. He was great in his life, he is greater since he passed away.

I am glad that the Government of India are bringing out a complete edition of his writings and speeches. It is most necessary that a full and authentic record of what he has written and said should be prepared. Because of his innumerable activities and voluminous writings, the preparation of this record is itself a colossal undertaking and may take many years to complete. But this is a duty we owe to ourselves and to future generations.

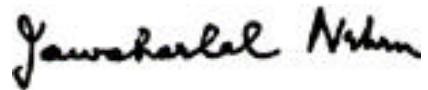
In a collection like this there is bound to be a mixture of what might be called the important and the unimportant or the casual. Yet, sometimes it is the casual word that throws more light on a person's thinking than a more studied writing or utterance. In any event, who are we to pick and choose? Let him speak for himself. To him life was an integrated whole, a closely-woven garment of many colours. A word to a child, a touch of healing to a sufferer, was as important as a resolution of challenge to the British Empire.

In all reverence of spirit, let us undertake this task, so that succeeding generations may have some glimpses of this beloved

leader of ours who illumined our generation with his light and not only brought national freedom to us but also gave us an insight into the deeper qualities which have ennobled man. In ages to come, people will wonder that such a man once trod on our Indian soil and poured out his love and service to our people, and indeed to humanity.

I write this in Darjeeling with the mighty Kanchenjunga looking down upon us. This morning I had a glimpse of Everest. It seemed to me that there was about Gandhiji something of the calm strength and the timelessness of Everest and Kanchenjunga.

DARJEELING,  
*December 27, 1957*

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jawaharlal Nehru". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a prominent initial 'J'.

# PUBLISHER'S NOTE

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## *PUBLISHER'S NOTE*

Publications Division brings to the user an electronic book based on Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi running into 100 volumes with about 50,000 pages. This e-book has Gandhiji's writings, speeches and letters covering the period 1884-1948 almost sixty years of his very active public life.

The arrangement of the material in the series is in chronological order. The writings are placed as per date of publication, except where the date of writing is there or is ascertainable. Where an item had no date in the source, the inferred date has been indicated in square brackets with reasons.

There is a comprehensive interactive search facility based on personalities, contemporary events, Gandhian concepts, places and other key words used by Gandhiji in his writings. Appendices refer to background material relevant to the text. All sources and help rendered has been gratefully acknowledged.

In the earlier series Gandhiji's works were divided in 90 volumes, while volumes 91-97, known as supplementary volumes, carried the matter received later. Volumes 98-100 were indices.

The objective of the series is to reproduce Gandhiji's actual words as far as possible; reports of his speeches, interviews, conversations which did not seem to be authentic have been avoided, as also reports of his statements in indirect form. In the case of speeches, however, reports in indirect narration of proven authenticity have been included as they give additional information not otherwise available.

Every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to original. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original. Words in square brackets in the text are explanatory in nature. Quoted passages are in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews have been set up in small type and slight changes have also been made where absolutely necessary.

Though the best efforts have been made to include all that Gandhiji wrote and spoke in these volumes, however, there may be some material that might have been left out. As and when new matter

comes to the notice of Publications Division, it will be included in subsequent reprints.

Publications Division took up the project of Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi at the instance of the then Prime Minister, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, so that all available Gandhiji's writings and speeches are at one place for use of posterity.

Gandhiji was a prolific writer and had regular correspondence with people belonging to every walk of life. His writings and speeches were not only in a few books he wrote but also in Government records and in newspapers and journals. Gandhiji's utterances were not confined to one language. He wrote and spoke in English, Hindi and Gujarati. Care has been taken to ensure accurate translation from Gujarati and Hindi into English. His works were scattered in various parts of the world more so in India, England and South Africa. Efforts were made to collect all the matter and present in Collected Works.

There is no doubt that these hundred volumes echo the Mahatma's thoughts clearly revealing Gandhiji's abiding faith in the spirit of man and through it the eternal values of human existence. And what better manner in which to honour his memory than to let the rich legacy of his words enrich our lives and of generations to come.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We are also grateful to the publishers of the books:

*A Bunch Of Old Letters, A Discipline For Non-Violence, A History Of Indians In Mauritius, A Pilgrimage For Peace, Prayers, Praises And Psalms, A Righteous Struggle, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, A Thought For The Day; Acharya Kripalanina Lekho; Akhil Bharatiya Hindi Sahitya Sammelan: Karya Vivaran All About The Khilafat, Amaran Ba, Amaranatha Jha: A Memorial Volume, An Atheist With Gandhi; An Autobiography Or The Story Of My Experiments With Truth; Ane Satya, Antyaj Stotra, Ashiyana Ki Awaz (1963 Edn.), Ashram Bhajnavali; Ashram Bhajnono Swadhyaya, Ashram Observances In Action, At The Feet Of Mahatma Gandhi, Atmarachana Athava Ashrami Kelavani; Autobiography Of A Yogi, Ba-Bapuni Shili Chhayaman; Badonke Prerana Dayak Kuchh Patra; Balpothi, Bapuna Patro 4: Manibehn Patelne, Banaras Hindu Vishwavidyalaya Rajat Jayanti Samaroh Bapu: Conversations And Correspondence With Mahatma Gandhi, Bapuni Shital Chhayaman, Bapu Aur Harijan, Bapu Smaran; Bapu's Letters To Mira, Gleanings, Bapu-Maine Kya Dekha Kya Samjha, Bapu-Na Ba-Ne Patro, Bapu: Conversations And Correspondence With Mahatma Gandhi, Bapu: A Unique Association, Vol. II, Bapu: Conversations And Correspondence; Bapujini Sheetal Chhayaman, Bapuke Ashirvad, Bapuki Chhayamen, Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, 1932-48; Bapuki Prem Prasadi, Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, Bapuna Bane Patro, Bapuna Patro 1: Ashramni Behnone, Bapuna Patro 2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, Bapuna Patro 3: Kusumbehn Desaine, Bapuna Patro 4: Manibehn Patelne, Bapuna Patro 5: Kumari Premabehn Kantakne, Bapuna Patro 6: G. S. Gangabehnne, Bapuna Patro 7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, Bapuke Patra 8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam, Bapuna Patro 9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Pt. Ii, Bapuna Patro 10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne, Bapuni Ashrami Kelavani Bapuni Prasadi, Bhil Seva Mandal Seva Samiti; Biharni Komi Agman, Birthday-Book; Bombay Gazette, Borough Of Poplar And Stepney, Buddhi Prakash, Builders Of Modern India, Builders Of Modern India: S. Srinivasa Iyengar, Calcuttano Chamatkar; Capitalism, Socialism Or Villagism?, Chandrashankar Antani, Charkha Sanghka Navasanskan, Charles Freer Andrews, Congress Bulletin, No. 5 (July 1937), Constitution Of The Harijan Sevak Sangh; Constructive Programme: Its Meaning And Place, Contemporary Indian Philosophy, Correspondence Between Mahatma Gandhi And P. C. Joshi, Correspondence With Mr. Gandhi, August*

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