Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born at Porbandar (Sudamapuri), Kathiawad on October 2, 1869, the family belonging to the Bania (merchant) class. His father was Karam Chand (alias Kaba) Gandhi and Mohandas was the youngest among a daughter and three sons born to Karamchand Gandhi's fourth wife. Mohandas's forebears had long been connected with the administration of Kathiawad State and for some generations the Gandhis had been Prime Ministers in one or other of those States.

His family pride was proverbial. The story is told that on one occasion state intrigues had obliged his grandfather, who was Prime Minister of Porbandar, to seek refuge in a neighbouring state. There he saluted the ruler with his left hand. Asked to explain this seeming discourtesy he replied that his right hand had been pledged to Porbandar; his loyalty to the latter state had been unshaken.

Karamchand Gandhi was of too independent a spirit to make the best, in the worldly sense, of his opportunities, yet he rose to distinction in the administrative world, being ultimately Diwan of Rajkot and Wankaner. He had little academic education but gathered much practical knowledge and wisdom and was highly respected for his intelligence.
Mohandas studied for five years in a primary school at Porbandar and when Karamchand Gandhi took up service as a Judge at Rajkot, he joined Kathiawad High School from where he matriculated in 1887. According to himself he was only a mediocre student. He was studious by temperament, but disliked intensely the games and physical exercises which were enforced on all students. In later utterances he had accepted the view that the cultivation of health and strength was a valuable element in all education, even for those who were to make their careers by their brains.

He learned with difficulty a little Sanskrit, and afterwards he was always glad of the effort made, as it enabled him to study some of the Hindu Scriptures in High School.

Mahatma Gandhi was married to Kasturba, the daughter of a merchant in 1883 when both were only thirteen. He wrote later: "I can see no moral argument in support of such a preposterously early marriage." ¹

While in his fourth standard, Mohandas was led astray by one of his associates whom he tried to reform in spite of warnings from his mother and elders. Through the influence of that friends and without the knowledge of his parents,
he began to eat meat and became fond of smoking but he abjured them a little later.

When 15 he stole a piece of gold but confessed to his father in writing with a request for adequate punishment and pledging never to steal again. When his father read the letter, tears trickled down his cheeks. Mohandas also shed tears on seeing his father's agony. "Those pearl drops of love cleansed my heart and washed my sin away ... This was for me an object lesson in ahimsa".  

Mohandas's father died at the age of 16 years. In his sickbed his father used to discuss with Parsi and Muslim friends about their faiths. Mohandas, nursing him, listened to these discussions and developed toleration for all faiths.

He was also greatly influenced by his mother, a deeply religious woman and very strict in the performance of religious duties. Intelligent and well informed, she possessed a strong personality and her simple piety, deep devotion and frequent fasts made an abiding impression on her son's mind.

He was afraid of ghosts and his nurse told him to chant Ramayana to drive them away; later he used to hear Ramayana being read out by learned nun to select gatherings
and thereby acquired a deep faith in Rama* as a young boy.

He had never told a lie at his school. A street play of Harischandra*, a king who would rather lose a kingdom, his queen and prince than tell a lie, influenced him much and he then instinctively assured himself that it was not a story but something which had actually happened. Always to speak truth, therefore, became a living faith with him.

He joined Samaldas College, Bhavnagar, Kathiawad at the age of 18 years. Finding studies difficult, he returned home in a few months. The future looked gloomy, even with the family's reputation for good public service at his back. So friends persuaded his mother to send the boy to England to read for the Bar as Legal Career promised a bright future. His mother after extracting from Mohandas a promise that he would not touch wine, women, and meat, agreed to his going. The community, however, outcast him for daring to go against orthodox conventions, but undaunted Mohandas sailed to England in 1888, leaving at home his wife and a son few months old.

* Rama - the famous hero of Ramayana by Valmiki.
* Harischandra - A king, a mythological character.
His legal studies in England were exacting, but he found time for social interests of a quiet sort, learned Latin and French, tried to learn dancing and the violin, bought a dress, suit and did numerous other things in his endeavour to feel at home in English life. But soon he realised the uselessness of the striving and began to bring a complete change in his life.

He kept account of every farthing he spent, the habit which helped him later to handle huge public funds correctly. He read many books on how to live simply and practised them; he began to live on a meagre income a day, cooking his own food and saving bus fare by walking long distances.

He attempted his first public speech at a gathering of vegetarians in London in 1890 but miserably failed. He could not even read the text of the speech he had memorised. Later, however, he gradually picked up courage to speak. In a few years he had become one of the most arresting speakers of the world.

He met leading theosophists including Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. AnnieBesant, through whom he developed an interest in Indian ancient literature. He also turned his attention to Christianity. He was much moved by the sermon on the
mount, with its insistences on returning good for evil. He read the Gita in Sanskrit and was greatly impressed by its teaching. Later it became a daily routine of being sung at his prayers.

Reading of the Gita gave him also the true meaning of the words Nonpossession and Equality, and increasing introspection resulted in his giving over all he possessed to the national cause. He also took a view that henceforth all his savings would be utilised for the benefit of the community.

He was called to the Bar "after nine months of intensive reading" on 10th June, 1891 and two days later sailed for India, conscious of his ignorance at law and dubious about his ability to find work. While he was in England he received the sad news of his mother's death. Back in India he set up practice at Bombay and Rajkot, the latter with some success but its intriguing atmosphere choked him. Then came an invitation from a Porbandar firm of merchants, which had a branch in South Africa, to go out to that country to help in an important law suit, covering many thousands of pounds in which the firm was engaged. He took the chance and sailed in April, 1893.
This was the turning point in his career. He had planned to remain in South Africa for one year but actually stayed there for twenty years with an occasional short visit to his own land. Almost immediately on his arrival in Natal political consciousness was awakened in him by a series of humiliating shocks. On the day after his arrival there, he attended the Magistrate's Court at Durban and was ordered to remove his head dress. Rather than doing so he left the Court room. A few days later he was travelling by a train to Pretoria and although he had a first class ticket, he was ejected by force from the compartment and on that part of the journey which in those days was completed by coach, he was forced to sit out right with the driver.

The case on which he had come to work dragged on at Pretoria for months. Mohandas Gandhi's clients were Muslims and it was at this time that he first took a serious interest in the Muslim faith. He read the Koran in translation and the saying of Zarathustra. At the same time the followers of several Christian sects in Pretoria attempted to convert him to Christianity.

At length, largely through the personal efforts of Mohandas Gandhi, the protracted law suit was settled out of court by arbitration.
He returned to Durban intending to sail for home. While in Pretoria he had made a study of the wrongs done to the Indian Community in South Africa and addressed meetings on the subject. At a farewell party given for him in Durban, some one pushed into his hand a Natal newspaper, where he read a report that the Natal Government was about to take Indian franchise. At the urgent instance of his friends, he agreed to stay on temporarily in South Africa to fight the measure. That same night he drew up a petition which was soon presented to the Natal Legislative Assembly. This was the first parliamentary petition ever presented by Indians in South Africa. It aroused great enthusiasm and support among the Indian Community. A memorandum with 10,000 signatures was sent to Lord Ripon, then Colonial Secretary.

Now he wished to return home, but his compatriots begged him to stay and lead them. He consented but refused the salary they offered him. It was arranged that he should take the legal work of big Indian firms in the country and thus support himself. He became involved in the political affairs of South Africa. As he afterwards said: "God laid the foundation of my life in South Africa and sowed the seed of the fight for national self respect".
After taking the decision to stay on, he started without delay the work of organisation. On May 22nd 1894, he founded the Natal Indian Congress. He also initiated a drive to raise the standards of cleanliness, sanitation, housing and education among the Indians of Natal. As a barrister he practised at the Supreme Court at Natal and professionally and in public life he fought the cause of his people.

In 1896, he went on a six months' holiday to India and while there delivered a number of speeches at public meetings on Indian conditions in Natal and also wrote a pamphlet which had a wide circulation. He then met Congress and other Indian leaders.

News of these activities roused the anger of Natal European nationals and those of Durban decided to prevent Mohandas Gandhi and his family, and the so other Indian passengers on his boat and another steamer from setting foot on Natal soil. The government held the steamers in quarantine for 23 days and efforts were made to induce the steamship company to send them back to India. This having failed, the passengers had to be allowed to disembark. Mohandas Gandhi was nabbed and the same day a crowed stormed the house where he was staying but he was removed
to safety by a ruse of the police. Though the Colonial Secretary offered to prosecute the assailants, he refused saying that if they came to know the truth they would be ashamed of their conduct.

Mohandas Gandhi studied literature on how to nurse the mother and attend on delivery cases, and served in 1898 as a midwife to his wife at the birth of the last baby. It was at this time that he took the vow of Brahma-charya and began to strive for self control.

He became the acknowledged and trusted leader of the Indian settlers in his South African years. He influenced them in more ways than political. They followed him as ambulance bearers in the Boer War and the Zulu campaign of 1906. They followed him when he established the Phoenix Settlement near Durban, an ashram where they were to live in piety and ascetic simplicity. He also found them with him when he advocated passive resistance, an untrodden path of resistance then, against the finger print regulation. The struggle that followed lasted for years, provoked riots and racial bitterness and did great damage. The Indians suffered, but they won, for their determined opposition had support of the public in Britain, and authority in South Africa had to give way.
Mohandas Gandhi returned to India after the Boer War and set up practice in Bombay. He attended the All India Congress in Calcutta, where he moved a resolution on the situation in South Africa. But the stay was only to be for a few months. The South African Indians implored him to return to take up their battle once more. He agreed and returning to South Africa staved a paper in Natal to voice Indian grievances, calling it "Indian Opinion". He himself resided in Johannesburg, the focal point of the Transvaal Indians.

He was as has been said, the prime author of the agitation against the finger print law which proposing to control the movements of Indians into the Transvaal, made compulsory the registration of the finger-prints of every Indian adult. In September, 1906, a momentous mass meeting of Indians was held in Johannesburg, when 9,000 Indians took an oath to resist the "Black Act"*, as it was dubbed, to the last, but by non-violent means. The Indian passive resistance weapon was then forged. He had no name for this new movement and offered a prize in "Indian Opinion" for a suitable name. The word "Sadagraha"

* Indian Opinion - New paper
* Black Act - Law
was chosen and he altered it to "Satyagraha" the force born of truth and love.

The struggle against the "Black Act" went on. He led a deputation to England to interview the Secretary of State for Indian and the Secretary of State for the Colonies. The Act was passed. Very few Indians came forward to register. A number of arrests were made, including himself. Eventually the latter reached a compromise with General Smuts, by which, if the majority of Indians registered voluntarily, the Act would be repealed. Understanding compromise, but not on essentials was always his strong point but this compromise bitterly disappointed many of his followers. A section felt that he had betrayed them, and there was, therefore, strong resentment. General Smuts not carrying out his side of the agreement, the struggle was resumed. A new Act was passed prohibiting "Asiatics"* from entering the Transvaal, and at the same time another blow fell on the Indian Community. A judgement in the South African Supreme Court ruled that only Christian marriages registered by the Registrar were legally valid in South Africa. A fresh wave of indignation swept the Indian Community. Under his leadership, Indians in the Transvaal courted imprisonment as a protest.

* Asiatics- New Act
Then the indentured labourers in the coal mines at Natal came out on strike against the £3 tax which they were forced to pay at the end of their terms of indenture. He led the strikers in a great march into the Transvaal and he and his helpers were arrested. He was taken to prison in Bloemfontein. The treatment accorded the strikers so outraged feelings in India that the then Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, strongly condemned the action of the South African Government.

It was then that General Smuts was obliged to act. A commission was appointed to inquire into the whole matter, and he and the other leaders were unconditionally released. At length the famous Gandhi Smuts Agreement was reached, and took form in the Indian Relief Act, which abolished the principal grievances. This was the victorious culmination of Mohandas Gandhi's first period of public work, in which he had shown the world the immense possibilities of the new weapon - Satyagraha.

It was at his ashram (community living) in Johannesburg in 1913 that he went on his first fast, a penitential fast for one week, for the moral lapse of two inmates of the settlement. Again in 1914 he underwent a second fast for a fortnight for a similar reason. During 1910 he became acquainted with Tolstoy through correspondence and since then they became ardent admirers of each other.
He returned to India in 1914, believing that his work in Africa had been done, that others could carry it on with success, and the personal development he had sought all through life was to be best obtained in his own country with whose age-old ideals his spirit was naturally in sympathy. It was soon to be seen that his 20 years of exile had not made him less an Indian. His return was made by way of England. World War-I was declared on August 4, he reached London on August 6. He already had the South African medal, and against the advice of some of his Indian friends he decided at once that "Britain's need should not be turned into our opportunity", and that it was "more becoming and fan righted not to press own demands while the war lasts". He called for volunteers for ambulance work, and meeting with a good response offered the services of 80 volunteers to the Government who accepted and enrolled them together as corps. The commanding office and he had very different ideas of military discipline, and satyagraha made its appearance in the corps. He was soon incapacitated by pleurisy, and after the treatment in Natby Hospital was repatriated to India on medical advice. In the New Year he was conferred Kaizer-I-Hind gold medal by the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge.

He approached India, he had said in the ardent hope of merging himself in Gokhale's fold, and thereby feeling free. But fate willed it otherwise. His first task was to
renew acquaintance with men and conditions in India, while thinking out the course his life should take in pursuing the mission that was clearly forming in his mind. In South Africa he had laboured and suffered for his people against one set of evils. But in India he saw the enemy as a civilisation - that kind of civilisation that would enslave and dominate India's mind and make India untrue to itself and its function in the world were it not resisted. How he would have worked with Gokhale we may only surmise, for a few weeks after his return to India Gokhale died.

He extensively toured in India mixing with all classes of people for several months. He travelled always as a third class passenger, trying to understand and sharing the hardships of the poor.

The war years were spent in what may be called an apprenticeship in the work to come. Many Indians recognised his importance, but few Europeans knew anything of what he was doing in India. They were aware of what he had done in South Africa, and thought (if they thought at all about it) that he was still there. It was at this time that poet Rabindra Nath Tagore began to call him the Mahatma. On May 25, 1919 he established the Satyagraha
Ashram at Ahmedabad, known as Sabarmati Ashram, whose inmates took the vows of truth, non-violence, celibacy, control of the palate, non-thieving, non-possession, use of Indian goods and khaddar, fearlessness, removal of untouchability, and education through local language. All lived as one family, having a common kitchen.

He attended along with Mr. Jinnah the congress session at Lucknow in 1916. He led an agitation for the abolition of emigration of indentured Indian labour to other parts of the empire. The Government agreed in principle but did nothing. He toured the country stirring up an all-India agitation. The agitation was successful; the indenture system was abolished.

He then went to Champaran to help the peasants oppressed under the system of indigo growing. He had to face bitter hostility from the landlords but he conducted the struggle to a victorious conclusion by means of peaceful satyagraha. "Hence it was", in his own words, "that this age long abuse come to an end in a few months".  

This struggle brought him face to face with India's greatest problem - the poverty and backwardness of the villages and from that time onwards his mind became increasingly occupied with the regeneration of the peasant.
He passed to Khaira to aid the peasants there in their revolt against the government assessment of their crops after a bad harvest. The struggle ended in an unsatisfactory compromise. He was now a force in India. The Viceroy invited him to attend the War Conference at Delhi in order to gain his support for recommitment of Indian volunteers for service overseas. Mahatma offered his support and went himself to conduct the recruiting campaign in Khaira. He met with very indifferent success, and then fell seriously ill with dysentry and seemed to be near death. During convalescence he learned to spin a charka.

He had taken a vow not to drink milk, owing to the cruelties practised on cows in dairies in the South Africa. During this illness his wife and the doctor persuaded him to take instead goat's milk which he continued to take after his recovery.

On March 12, 1918, he underwent his first fast in India for the misdeeds of some textile mill strikers at Ahmedabad.

The first post-war years were dominated in India by two events - the introduction of the Montaguechelmsford
political reforms and Mahatma Gandhi's influence over the Indian National Congress with its consequent insistence on Swaraj (complete independence). In 1919 a decisive step was taken. Hindus and Muslims under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the Ali brothers were brought to a unified front by a common battle cry - the treatment of Turkey by the Allied Powers. It was proclaimed that the position of Islam was menaced by the Allies and that the Khilafat must be protected against them. This looked like religious agitation, but was mainly a well thought our political move uniting Hindu as well as Muslims, and even curiously enough, Shias as well as Sunnis. The fusion of interests thus created was for some years the key stone of Indian politics. The Rowlatt Act, the triple boycotts and 'hartals' (closure of business houses and shops and suspension of all trade), the Punjab troubles then followed:

The first great civil disobedience campaign was against the Rowlatt Act. It started with an all-India hartal of unprecedented success when the police resorted to large scale arrests, firing and lathi charge in Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar. The temper of the people grew out of control in some places and in contradiction to Satyagraha principles, out-breaks of violence occurred culminating in the Jallian
Walla Bagh tragedy in Amritsar. Martial Law was declared in the Punjab where he had been refused admittance. He condemned the high handedness and repression of the Government in no uncertain terms, he criticised the people for resorting to violence in their fight against Government. He undertook a fast at Sabarmati as a sequel to disturbances at Nadiad of the April 1919 years. The Congress and the Muslim league conferences were held in Amritsar in 1919 and he was dominant in the former, influential in the latter. Non co-operation followed, endorsed by the Congress session at Calcutta in September, 1920.

The Hunter Committee report on charges of repression during the Punjab Marshal Law regime during 1919 was published in May, 1920 and it caused bitter disappointment in the entire country. He was profoundly shocked and that was the turning point in his career in India, changing him from a staunch co-operator to a non co-operator.

Peace conditions imposed on defeated Turkey were also announced at the same time, they were considered by the public as disgraceful. An all India agitation was planned. He announced that the non co-operative campaign would be proceeded by fasting and prayers on July 31, 1920. This day his "greatest bulwark" Tilak died. He surren-
dered to the Viceroy his Kaiser-I-Hind gold medal and the Boer War medal on the 1st day of August, Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore also relinquished his Knighthood. In the special Congress session in Calcutta at September he included the Swaraj demand in the main resolution. He and the Congress became a synonymous terms from the time onwards. He gave the Congress its flag with its three colours, saffron, white and green with the sign of the charka in the middle. He asked for a crore of rupees as Tilak Swaraj Fund to conduct the campaign. It was soon over-subscribed.

Feeling against all forms of the routine of the bureaucratic administration was growing. He attacked the organised system of education under the universities and turned his attention to national education, to the cult of the spinning wheel and the use of khaddar: Spinning became the Sine qua non of members of the Congress. He also started a campaign against the liquor trade, the removal of untouchability and the boycott of foreign goods. He had been taking up the editorship of the Young India an English weekly at the October 1919 and used its columns to propagate his ideas.
The boycott of foreign cloth was an important feature of the campaign which led, then and later, to many public clashes with the police. The great bonfire of foreign cloth which he had organised as a counter demonstration on the arrival of the Prince of Wales in Bombay proved the occasion of an outbreak of violence, and resulted in the fasting again for five days (November 1923, 1921). Gradually the Government began arresting important leaders. The Bombay riots were followed by murder and arson at Chauri Chaura near Gorakhpur. He had been preparing for a "peaceful revolution" by mass disobedience had meant violence and blood shed and he revoked his own instructions. Swaraj would come naturally if the people were ripe for it; in his opinion they were not ripe, and failure was imminent. This apparent change of front in the leader checked the movement, and during the resulting contusions and hesitation the Government stepped in and arrested him, who had retired to his ashram at Bardoli to do penance by fasting (February, 1922). This was the first occasion that he was arrested in India. He forbade hartal and
and demonstration on his arrest and appealed to the people to carry out the constructive programme and stiffen the Civil Disobedience Movement.

He made a great speech defending the satyagraha movement and his own principles at the trial at Ahmedabad. He was sentenced to six years imprisonment on a charge of sedition. He served the sentence in Yeravda Jail, Poona until January 1924, when he fell ill. He was removed to Poona Hospital and operated upon for appendicitis and thereafter unconditionally released. He had barely recovered when he undertook another fast at Delhi for 21 years (September 18, 1924), as protest against the increasing conflict between the Muslim and Hindu communities. During his period in jail he dictated his autobiography, "My experiments with truth" in Gujarati.*

He devoted himself to three tasks that he saw to be prerequisite to any attempt to assert India's freedom. These were the establishment of friendly relations and

* My experiment with truth - Book written by Gandhi
complete understanding between Hindus and Muslims; cure of the poverty of the masses by reviving cottage industries, which implied a right against the excessive use of manufactured and especially foreign commodities; and the abolition of untouchability, a cause that had been dear to his heart almost from boyhood. Subsidiary interest were his opposition to alcohol and drugs as degrading to men and the emancipation of women.

He undertook another fast at Sabarmati Ashram for the errors of some of the inmates at November 24, 1925 years. He presided over the Congress at Belgaum in December 1924. He was the shortest presidential address on record. He insisted on Khaddar.

Lord Irwin invited Mahatma Gandhi in November 1927 and other political leaders to see him. At the interview the Viceroy placed in his hands the proposed announcement of the Simon Commission whose contents disappointed him greatly. The commission was to inquire into the fitness of the people for an increased share in the Government. The Congress passed at its annual session its goal as complete National Independence at December. The commission arrived in India and there was nation wide hartal and black flag demonstration in February, 1928, The government
met these with force and arrested many leaders. He was invited to Europe, but he declined on the ground that he could be away from India when his people wanted his leadership badly in 1929 years.

Mahatma Gandhi's instance the annual Congress session passed resolution in Lahore in December 1929 that his offer to accept Dominion Status had lapsed and thereafter "Swaraj in the Congress creed shall mean complete independence".

The Conservative Government was replaced by a Labour Government in British in May, 1929. Lord Irwin reiterated in October the goal of British policy in India as one of progressive realization of responsible Government within the British Empire. He also announced H.M.G's intention to hold a Round Table Conference in London shortly.

The Congress working committee meeting at Sabarmati decided on civil disobedience for the purpose of achieving complete independence in February 1930. He informed the members of his plans for breaking the Salt Law after the decision was taken by him. He argued that natural salt like air and water was public property and hence should
not be taxed as even the poorest was affected. Immediately before beginning the campaign he wrote to Lord Irwin pleading to "find a way out", but the Viceroy regretted his inability. On March 12 with a band of followers he set out on the historic march to Dandi to break the law.

Many village officers resigned to take part in the movement. All along the 200 mile route the people gave the party enthusiastic reception and recruits joined it in large numbers. He broke the law by picking salt on the seashore on the 6th April. The entire country responded and the law was broken in hundreds of places. The march attracted attention of the entire world. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and many other leaders were arrested. In Peshwar and Madras the military opened fire, causing many deaths. He was arrested.

His arrest led to country wide demonstrations and hartal. Picketing of liquor shops was done with vigour. Firing was resorted to in many places and scores of Government servants resigned as a protest against the repressive measures, of the Government. The year was out the Viceroy had to resort to the issue of twelve ordinances. The total figure of convictions exceeded a hundred thousands out of whom 12,000 were Muslims.
The Round Table Conference made in London without Congress representative in November, 1930. It ended its deliberation in January, 1931 with the British Premier's declaration defining the H.M.G's policy of grant of self-Government in stages. At the same time he and other leaders were released from jail. He interviewed the Viceroy a fortnight later. The Congress Working Committee invested him with full authority. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed whereby the movement of 'boycott of foreign goods' was to cease at early March, though propaganda for indigenous goods was allowed. Peaceful picketing of shops selling liquor and foreign merchandise was recognised as legal; all organised defiance of laws were to cease and all ordinances were to be withdrawn. There was to be as usual amnesty and the right of picking up and manufacturing salt for their use was conceded to people living on the sea coast.

He was appointed by the working committee as its sole representative in the Round Table Conference. Lord Irwin left and he was succeeded as Viceroy by Lord Willingdon in April 1931. He met Lord Willingdon and complained to him about non-observance of the truce terms, for which the Viceroy gave assurances. But soon instances of violations grew. As a protest he cancelled his passage to London
to attend the second R.T.C. The Viceroy invited him to Simla for talks when again assurances were given to him. He left with his party for London a fortnight later. At Aden, Cairo and Marseilles the local public gave him enthusiastic receptions.

He stayed at Kingsley Hall in the East End with Miss Muriel Lester at London. Hundreds of men, women and particularly children used to flock there to have his 'darshan' (view). At the R.T.C. he declared: "I would love to go away with the conviction that there is to be an honourable and equal partnership between British and Indian". During a session of the Minorities' Committee he warned that he would resist with his life, separate elections for the Depressed classes. The conference ended on December 1 and Mahatma Gandhi proposed the vote of thanks.

He was met by representative of many classes of creeds and he visited workers' establishments in England. He particularly visited Manchester, centre of the textile trade and spoke to the workers.
The king and queen received him at Buckingham Palace. He met Bernard Shaw, Lloyd George, Arthur Henderson, Harold Lashi, the Archbishop of Canterbury and many other prominent men. He had pressing invitations from America, France, Czechoslovakia, Germany, Italy, Palestine, Egypt, Hungary, Denmark and Ireland but could not accept them. On his way back he was in Paris for a day, stayed with Romain Rolland in Switzerland for a few days and visited Rome.

He landed in Bombay on December 28. A few days earlier, the U.P. Congress had declared a no-rent campaign. Ordinance rule had been instituted in the Frontier, the U.P. and Bengal. Pandit Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and many other leaders had been arrested. During ten months in 1930-31 nearly a hundred thousands persons had been imprisoned.

He sought an interview with the Viceroy which was refused on December 29. The Congress Working Committee authorised him to renew Satyagraha at midnight on December 31. The Government's offensive started on January 4. All Congress organisations were banned. He was again arrested and detained in Yeravada Central Jail, Poona. His ashram properties were confiscated. Most of the leading Congress men were by now in jail. There was intensive boycott and
picketing and hartal. The Government answered with punitive and collective fines, lathi charges and in some places firing.

British Prime Minister Ramsay Macdonald's Communal award in August, giving separate electorates for the depressed classes was announced. He pleaded in vain for withdrawal of the award and finding no response started on September 20 a "perpetual fast into death from food of any kind and taking only water with or without salt and soda". In the course of the next few days leaders of all communities met and on September 24 signed a pact in jail, the depressed classes forgoing the right of separate electorates subject to important safe-guards to be conceded by caste Hindu.

He continued the fast but he entered the danger zone in the next few days. Appeals were issued by Hindu and depressed class bodies all over India to the British Prime Minister to intervene so that he could end the fast.

The fact was in a few days accepted by the British Government enabling him to break the fast and gave great relief to the country. The cause of the Depressed Classes had always been clear to his heart. He had started the
Harijan (son of God) Sevak Sangh earlier in 1929 to uplift them and "Harijan" weekly was started in English and Gujarati to serve the cause of the Depressed Classes and to give them a forum to ventilate their grievances.

The Poona Pact was not without repercussions in other fields, what the Hindus and Depressed Classes could do, it was though, could also be achieved by Hindu and Muslims and Unity Conference in which many Hindu and Muslim leaders joined, took place at Allahabad in November, 1929 but without much result. That same month the Government announced its decision to extend the facilities already enjoyed by Mahatma Gandhi for carrying on, while in jail, propaganda against untouchability.

There had been open hardening of orthodox opinion against further concessions to Harijans and he found it necessary to threaten to fast to death if Caste Hindus hesitated over giving effect to the Poona Pact. He warned; "There can be no rest for me or those who by word of mouth or show of hands silently endorsed the 'Poona Pact' resolution until untouchability become a thing of the past".
The third Round Table Conference was followed by the publication of the white paper and slackening of the Civil Disobedience Movement. On May 8, 1933, he announced that "for reasons wholly unconnected with Government and solely connected with the Harijan Movement and disobedience to a peremptory call from within", he had started on a three week fast.

A week later the Government released him. On hearing set at liberty he issued a statement suggesting that the acting Congress President should suspend civil disobedience for six weeks, although he reaffirmed his faith in it; he also appealed to the Government to release political prisoners.

The suspension of civil disobedience was extended for another six weeks. The question of what was to happen with the campaign afterwards was, however, urgent. In July, he attended a conference of Contress leaders who authorised him to seek an interview with the Viceroy for the purpose of "exploring the possibilities of peace", as civil disobedience had not been called off, the request for an interview was refused. Mass civil disobedience was
suspended and individual civil disobedience was allowed. All Congress organisations ceased to exist for the time being.

He dissolved the Sabarmati Ashram near Ahmedabad and announced a march to some villages with the purpose of urging people to start individual civil disobedience. The upshot was his arrest and sentence to a year’s imprisonment.

He started another fast on August 16 in prison complaining against lack of facilities for carrying on anti-untouchability work. On the 23rd he was released when his health was considered to be precarious. He said he would not consider himself a tree to embark on civil disobedience till termination of the period of the sentence. He devoted the period to further once of Harijan cause. At the end of the year he under work an anti-untouchability tour thorough most of the provinces. He collected over a million rupees for the Harijan fund.

He had now made his head quarters in the village of Sevagram, near Wardha, and the peace, almost unknown to the rest of India, was how to income one of the best
known places in the country. He established his ashram at this village. At Wardha on several occasions the Congress Working Committee assembled so that it might be near of him when his advice was needed.

Now Congress men were increasingly swinging round to the view that the Congress must cease to boycott the Legislative Assembly, the general election for which was soon to be held and at a meeting at Delhi amended by a under of Congress leaders, it was decided to revive the All India Swaraj Party and to contest the election "to reject the White Paper". Two days later he advised suspension of civil disobedience for Swaraj as distinguished from specific grievances. He said in his statement:

"After much searching of heart I have arrived at the conclusion that in the present circumstances only one and that myself and no other, should for the time being bear the responsibility of civil resistance if it is to succeed as a means of achieving Purna Swaraj. I feel that the masses have not received the full message of Satyagraha owing
to its adulteration of the process of transmission. It has become clear to me that spiritual instruments suffer in their potency when their use is taught through non-spiritual media."

He went on to claim for Satyagraha that it was the greatest weapon of the disposal of mankind, a complete substitute for violence or war. It covered much more than civil resistance.

"It means a relentless search for truth and the power that such a search gives to the searcher".

The election resulted in a large Congress and a smaller Congress Nationalist Party appearing as the official opposition in the Legislative Assembly. The sponsors of the Delhi meeting had hoped for his benevolent neutrality and their wish to contest the elections had encountered no opposition from him.

In January 1934, a violent earthquake in North Bihar followed by flood caused enormous havoc to life and property. He immediately rushed there and touring village after village by foot rendered enormous help to the sufferers. He later resumed his Harijan Work.
In Poona on June 25 an unknown and yet untraced person attempted to throw a bomb at him during a public function where the Poona Municipality presented him as address©^ The unsuccessful assassin mistook some other car for him which arrived later. Many persons were injured in the bomb incident. A fortnight later an irate reformer attacked with a lathi a determined opponent of the Harijan Movement. He fasted for seven days as penance for this show of intolerance between opponents.

Under his inspiration and guidance, the All India Village Industries Association was formed in October 1934 to help revive and give a help to cottage industries.

Always an experimenter in simple and natural food in early 1935, he wrote some articles in "Harijan" on "Green leaves and their good value", "All about rice", "Cow's milk versus buffalo's", etc. He said "the addition of green leaves to their meals will enable the villagers to avoid many diseases from which they are now suffering", and revealed that for five months he had been living entirely on uncooked foods and found improvement in his health.

He was busy with his work for Harijans and village
industries in the year 1935. He seemed to his medical advisors to be over-working himself, and decreased his health gave cause for alarm but his strong constitution served him well. He acted as arbitrator in the dispute between the Ahmedabad mill workers and their workers during the year.

In September 1936 he laid down to "Harijan" the implication and condition of the success of non-violence in the following terms:

1. Non-violence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force.

2. In the last resort it does not avail in those who do not possess faith in the God of Love.

3. Non-violence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour but not always to possession of land or movable property through its habitual practice does armed men to defend them. Non-violence in the very nature of things is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts.
4. Individuals or nations what would practice non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice (nations to the last men) their all except honour. It is, therefore, in consistence with the possession of their people's countries, that is, modern imperialism, which is frankly based on force for its defence.

5. Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all children, young men and women or grown-up people, provided they have a living faith in the God of Love and have, therefore, equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not be applied to isolated acts.

6. It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the law is good enough for individuals it is not for masses of mankind.

Miss Margaret Sanjer, exponent of the birth control movement, visited him at Wardha in January 1936. He told her: "If one can drive home to women's minds the truth that they are free, we will have no birth control problem in India". He always advocated self control and abstinence and was against the use of contraceptives. He held that
the husband and wife should share the bed only when they were sure they wanted a child and condemned living together simply for deriving carnal pleasure.

The Gandhi Seva Sangh whose aim was to serve the masses in all possible ways was stoned he said, "There is no such thing as Gandhism; and I do not want to leave any sect after me".

The Mahatma's interest in education was also great. Presiding over the All India Literary Conference in Nagpur in April 1936 he said: "If I had the power I should taboo all literature calculated to promote communalism, fanaticism and hatred between individual and classes or races". At another place he said, "I want art and literature that can speak to the millions; our literature now is a miserable affair".

An enthusiastic supporter of Hindustani as the "lingua franca" of the country, he once said : "It is the language of our peasants and our labourers and which can be easily understood that can become the "lingua franca". That will be tru民主 in the domain of language". He was the prime mover in the Campaign for starting the basic education through the medium of handicrafts.
In February 1937, he wrote to his former South African colleague, H.S.L. Polak, that if Dominion Status with the right to secede from the British Empire was offered, he for once would not object.

February elections to the provincial legislatures under the new 1935 Act resulted in overwhelming victory for the Congress. It obtained a majority in six provinces and in three others its party was the largest. Hence control over eight provinces came to Congress men. The Mahatma then wrote: "I can see a vast opportunity is at the disposal of the Ministers in terms of the Congress objective of complete independence, if they are only honest, selfless, industrious, vigilant and solicitous for the true welfare of the starving millions". He suggested as urgent reforms prohibition relief to peasants, basic education and turning of jails into reformatories.

The articles in Harijan and public statements, he criticised the Congress Ministers whenever they went wrong. He condemned the use of force by them in labour disputes and communal riots and he was against their resort to ordinance rule. He was dissatisfied with the progress of the prohibition programme of the Congress Ministers.
"Prohibition in the Congress provinces is not going in the spirit in which it was conceived. Our freedom will be the freedom of slaves if we cannot be victims of the drink and drug habit."

Towards the end of the summer of 1937 he had a meeting at New Delhi with the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, who had succeeded Lord Willingdon in April 1936. The Viceroy had written to the Mahatma saying that he was anxious to make his personal acquaintance and the latter had replied that the interview would be doubly welcome. When the meeting took place at the Viceroy's house they discussed the question of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, of his visiting the North-West Frontier Province and improvement of the rural population's condition.

The last week of October found Mahatma Gandhi in Calcutta, where the All-India Congress Committee was meeting. There he was taken ill, his blood pressure rising suddenly, and his departure to Wardha had to be postponed. Despite his weakness he was actively interesting himself in the future of Bengal's deracinated who constituted a problem that had been agitating the province for years. He met the Ministers, and early in November he was driven in a car out to Barrackpore where in a pavilion by the river
side, he had a talk lasting two hours, with the then Governor of Bengal, Sri John Anderson, and later a Minister in H.M.G's Cabinet. The talk was continued to relief for political prisoners and detenus. Further meetings with the Bengal Ministers were held, and in the third week of November, the Government announced that it was to release immediately 1,100 detenus, subject only to their communicating any charge of address. A Comminque recalled that it was Government's policy to make progressive release as the situation improved. He assured the Government that he would do his best to improve the political situation in Bengal by preaching his cult of non-violence and creating public opinion in favour of it. He had offered to meet detenus with the object of persuading them not to resort to or assist terrorism or other subversive activities. He had also agreed to interview individual detenus among the remaining of them and the Government hoped to grant an immediate release to those in respect of whom he could give assurances.

In November he wrote "My sympathies are all with the Jews. If I were a Jew and were born in Germany and earned my livelihood there, I would claim Germany as my home even as the tallest Gentle German may, and challenge
him to shoot me or cast me in the dungeon. I would refuse to be expelled or to submit to discriminating treatment".

A member of the Japanese Parliament visited him towards the end of the year he told him "I do not subscribe to the doctrine of Asia for the Asiatics, if it is meant as an anti-European combination it has to be learn the message of the Buddha and deliver it to the world. I have no message to give you except this ancient heritage".

He undertook yet another 'fast unto death' in Rajkot State to induce the ruler to fulfil his solemn undertaking to his people that he would grant political reforms in March, 1939. He broke the fast a few days later at the intervention of the Viceroy who suggested arbitration by the Chief Justice of India, Sir M. P. Ghose, whose award was in favour of him. Later, however, he expressed regret for his conduct in Rajkot which he felt was coercive, apologised to the Viceroy, the ruler and the people concerned and released the ruler from the application of the award.

The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and anticipating the coming conflagration said, 'In this world crisis the sympathies of the Working Committee are entirely with the people who stand for democracy and freedom and the Congress has repeatedly condemned fascist aggression
in Europe, Africa and the Far East. The Congress has further enunciated its policy in the event of war and declared its determination to oppose all attempts to impose a War in India.

The Britain's declaration of war soon after against Germany he was invited by Lord Linlithgow to Simla. He said: "I have returned from the Viceroyal Lodge empty-handed and without any understanding. If there is to be any understanding, it would be between the Congress and Government... I told His Excellency that my own sympathies were with England."

The Working Committee met at Wardha again between September 8 and 15, to which Mr. Jinnah was invited, but he declined. The Committee said: "The Congress has further laid down that the issue of War and peace for India must be decided by the Indian People". The Mahatma Gandhiji's comment was: "I am sorry to find myself alone in thinking that whatever support was to be given to the British should be given unconditionally. All that is now required is a mental revolution on the part of British Statement".
The attitude of the Congress was bitterly attacked in a debate in Home of Lords and his on reading a report of the proceedings said: "As a friend of the British I appeal to English Statement to forget the old language of imperialists and open a new chapter".

The Viceroy announced H.M.G's policy that till the end of war Constitutional change could not be considered, commented: "The viceregal declaration is profoundly disappointing. The Congress will have to go into wilderness again before it becomes strong and is sure to reach its objectives. The Congress asked for read and it has got a stone". The Congress Ministers in eight provinces resigned in November.

He interviewed the Viceroy again in February, 1940, but came out saying - "I see no prospect of a peaceful settlement".

The Working Committee offered to join a provisional natural Government and join the war effort and defend India's shores against external aggression and keep internal order. Provided British acknowledged India's right for independence. It also absolved him for responsibility for the programme and activity which the Congress had to
pursue inward to meeting external aggression and maintaining internal order.

He met the Viceroy in Simla in July after which he issued his famous appeal "to every Briton", to accept the method of non-violence to defeat the enemy. At the instance of C. Rajagopalachari, now Governor General of India, the Working Committee meeting in Delhi a little later repudiated the Weapon of Non-violence against foreign aggression. He commented: "The resolution represents the considered policy of the Congress who were eager to be free of my religions bias and to adopt a purely political attitude should welcome the resolution and support it wholeheartedly". He did not attend for sometime thereafter meetings of the Working Committee and the All Congress Committee.

Mahatma Gandhi said, "I do not want England to be humiliated. They who are themselves in peril can not save others - but the virtue of restraint can not be carried to the extent of self-extinction...extinction of the national spirit, whenever it may reside, whether among Congress men, or non-Congressmen. Freedom of Speech and Corresponding action is the breath of democratic life. Freedom of propagating non-violance as a substitute for war is most relevant when indecent savagery is being perpetrated by the Warring nations."
After meeting the Viceroy in September he declared: "The immediate issue is the right to exist, which, broadly put, means free speech. If the Congress has to die it should do so in the act of proclaiming its faith".

With the approval of the Congress he launched a campaign of individual Satyagraha to win freedom of speech. The movement soon took momentum and spread throughout the country. Many leaders including Pandit Nehru were arrested. He suspended the Satyagraha during the period December 25 to January 4, 1941, as a gesture of good will during Christmas.

In December, the Government released all the imprisoned leaders, but he said "As far as I am concerned, the action cannot evoke a single responsive or appreciative chord in me", since no other positive action was forthcoming.

Towards the close of the year, after Pearl Harbour, the Congress relieved him at his own request, of leadership of the Congress owing to fundamental difference over interpretation of the term "non-violence" but again in January 1942 invited him to lead the Organisation on his own. It was at this time he named Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as his political successor.
Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of H.M.G's Government, came to India in March, 1942 with an offer to India which did not enthuse him or the Congress since Sir Stafford had said: "The defence of India will not be in India's hands even if all parties want it". The Cabinet which Sri Stafford Cripps suggested was rejected by the Congress as only a glorified edition of the existing Executive Council.

In July the Working Committee drafted the famous "Quit India" resolution and appealed to Mahatma Gandhi to lead and guide the country in case of a struggle. It was how made clear that while he had previously demanded immediate withdrawal of all Allied troops from India, he had now changed his mind on the question and allowed the forces to remain in the country, though at the same time he insisted on immediate abdication of British rule. On August 2, 1942, the Mahatma Gandhi quoted with approval Congress President Moulana Azad's statement that he had no objection to Britain handing over power to the Muslim League or any other party provided it was real independence.

On August 8, at Bombay the All-India Congress Committee endorsed the "Quite India" resolution.

He said that he would send a letter to the Viceroy before taking concrete action in the shape of a struggle.
On the news of the arrest of the Mahatma Gandhi and Congress leaders there were spontaneous demonstration and closure of business establishments all over India, which the Government met with force.

On February, 10, 1943, he began another fast "according to capacity" at the Aga Khan's palace, Poona, a protest against the Government refusal to repudiate their changes against him relating to responsibility for the 1942 disturbances.

In a letter to the Home Secretary, he wrote "In spite of all that has been said to the contrary, I claim that the Congress policy remains unequivocally non-violent.

In May 1944, non-party leaders demanded that the Government should set up an impartial Tribunal to try him and the other leaders for the responsibility for the violent disturbances in August, 1942 to release them. The Government rejected the demand.

Tragedy entered his life on 22nd February, 1944, when the death occurred of his wife, Kasturba, a devoted mother and loyal helpmate. She took an active part in the South Africa Satyagraha and suffered imprisonment, as also in the non-co-operation and Civil disobedience movement of 1930-32, when she was again imprisoned.
She was the head of the Women's Section of the Satyagraha Ashram. Earlier in August, 1942, he had lost during detention his devoted Comrade and Secretary Mahadev Desai.

He had a severe attack of malaria and in May, 1944 he was the first Congress leader to be released. There had been a long exchange of correspondence, subsequently published in June, 1944, between him and the Viceroy wherein respective viewpoints were explained.

During detention he was greatly perturbed by the great famine in Bengal and appealed to the Viceroy to accept the help of the country leaders to handle the situation and give relief to the affected. Immediately after release he toured the province and rendered help to the sufferers.

When his health was restored he invited Mr. Jinnah to meet him in Bombay in September to end the communal deadlock. Mr. Rajagopalachari's formula of self-determination for Muslims in areas where they were in a majority formed the basis of the talks, which, however, broke down. He went into retirement, advising Congressmen, outside jail to concentrate on constructive work. In the summer of 1945, all members of the Congress Working Committee were set free to enable the Congress to consider a new proposal,
known as the Wavell Plan, by the Viceroy. A conference to consider the scheme ended in failure.

The Labour Party had come into power in Britain and the new government lifted the ban on the Congress in the various Indian provinces, ordered general election in India and summoned Lord Wavell to London for consultation. On his return the Viceroy made a declaration reiterating British determination to confer full self-government on India. The Congress and the Muslim League had overwhelming victories at the polls.

In March 1946, Mr. Attlee, announcing that a Cabinet Mission was to visit India, said that India would be free to shape her own destiny.

The Mission consisting of Lord pethick-Lawrance, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. A.V. Alexander, arrived in India in March, bringing to British offer of independence in India.

He played an important role throughout the talks and negotiations as adviser to the Cabinet Mission and the Congress leaders.
On May 16, 1946, the Mission announced their Plan for the future Constitution of India.

The Great Calcutta calamity took place after 16th August followed by disturbances in Noakhali (East Bengal). He greatly, affected, set out on a long walking tour of a Noakhali district in January, 1947 to bring about a change of heart among the local population. Subsequently in March, 1947, he visited Bihar where a communal outbreak had also occurred and forced the government to give relief to the affected localities.

On February 20, 1947, the historic announcement was made in London that India was to be free by June, 1948. On June 3, came the equality momentus announcement that the Government had changed their plans and the division of the Country and the transfer of power was to take place on August 15, 1947.

He visited Kashmir in July, 1947 and returned to Calcutta in August. Communal tension had remained tense throughout, when the British Partition plan was announced. There were severe communal riots in the Punjab, tens of thousands dying on either side, millions worth of property plundered and looted. He who did not wish to participate
in the celebration of the birth of independence (August 15) at Delhi, was in Calcutta on his way to Noakhali where he said his peace mission remained incomplete. But when the disturbances in Calcutta could not be put down be resorted on September 1 to another fast unto death which lasted for three days. It had a remarkable effect on the warring elements, for the trouble ceased almost overnight.

He returned to Delhi in September, 1947, where also had been serious trouble and which was stopped soon after his arrival. The invasion of Kashmir at the end of October, 1947 brought fresh communal bitterness, and on January 13, 1948 he undertook his seventeenth and last fast to bring about a change of heart among Muslims and Hindus.

He broke his fast on January 18, on an assurance given by the Delhi Peace Committee that all his conditions for breaking the fast would be fulfilled. On January 20, a youth threw a bomb at his prayer meeting but no one was injured. He apostle of non-violence, fell on the evening of 30th January, 1948 from an assassin's bullet when he was on his way to conduct his usual prayer with the public. With folded hands (Hindu form of salutation) and with God's name on his lips, his great life came to a sudden end.
His life was devoted to the service of the Indian nation, service to humanity, service to all are oppressed, weak and poor. The story of his life has become a part of the history of the country of his birth. In tributes paid to him by world leaders and the World Press he was acknowledge as the greatest man. Since Jesus Christ and Lord Buddha. Few men have been held in such tender esteem, in such national affection by their people in the long history of humanity.

"A leader of his people, unsupported by any outward authority, a politician whose success rests not upon craft nor mastery of technical devices, and a great journalist, but simply on the convincing power of his personality, a victorious fighter who has always scorned the use of force; a man of wisdom and humility, armed with resolve and inflexible, consistency, who has devoted all his strength to the uplifting of his people and the betterment of their lot; a man who had confronted the brutality of European being, and thus at all times risen superior. Generation$ to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth".
This tribute paid by Albert Einstein while Mahatma Gandhi was alive assesses the personality of the great soul who during his lifetime and after stirred the hearts of hundreds of millions as few have done in the annals of the history of the world.
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