

The Gandhi Way



Photos in Lithuania by Martynas Ambrazas

Newsletter of the Gandhi Foundation
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Tour of the Swaminarayan Temple London

on Sat 21 November 2015 at 11am

If you would like to join this visit to Britain's largest Hindu temple
please contact William Rhind on 07910215651 or
william@gandhifoundation.org

GF Multi-faith Celebration 2016

Saturday 30 January 2016, 2pm - 4pm

in Kingsley Hall, Powis Road, Bromley-by-Bow, London E3 3HJ

Faith Perspectives on Animal Welfare

Further details from William Rhind 07910215651

The Gandhi Foundation Summer Gathering 2016

This will be held during the week starting Saturday 23 July
but may not be a whole week. The precise dates and the venue
will be fixed shortly and will be available on the website
and sent to those whose email address we know.

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Gandhi and Kallenbach Reunited

On 2 October 2015 a statue of Gandhi with Hermann Kallenbach was unveiled in the small town of Rusne in Lithuania where Kallenbach was born in 1871. (Is this the first sculpture of Gandhi with another person, I wonder ?)

Kallenbach, who was an architect, met Gandhi in Johannesburg where both were working in 1903 and they were to become close colleagues in the struggle for human rights until Gandhi returned to India in 1915. Kallenbach set out to go to India with Gandhi and his wife but they first sailed for London where Kallenbach was interned as an Enemy Alien due to his German passport. When released in 1917 he went to the continent to visit family and eventually decided to return to South Africa. But the two friends remained in touch until Kallenbach's death in 1945.

The unveiling of this new statue by the Prime Minister of Lithuania, Algirdas Butkevicius, was attended by representatives of the Indian Government, Tushar Gandhi representing the Gandhi family and Eli Sarid, grand nephew of Kallenbach. The fine statue is by Lithuanian sculptor, Romualdus Kvintus, although it might have been appropriate to have depicted the two friends as they looked in their years in South Africa. The financing of the sculpture was largely by an Indian Muslim, Dr Jusuf Hameid who was born in Vilnius in 1936 and later founded the pharmaceutical company Cipla in India; his mother was Jewish thus giving another link with Kallenbach.

Kallenbach gave much financial support to Gandhi's causes and bought the farm near Johannesburg, which he called Tolstoy Farm, that was used by satyagrahis in the intense period of campaigning for Indian rights in 1910-14. Much later Kallenbach visited Gandhi in India and by this time, 1937, he had become a Zionist. The Nazis were also in power in Germany and Gandhi was soon to be advocating nonviolent resistance to the German Jews, advice that was regarded as foolish by many Jews. Kallenbach went to see Gandhi at the request of Zionist leaders to win Gandhi over to the cause of Jewish settlement in Palestine. Both were delighted to see each other after so many years but Gandhi did not shift his position of supporting Jewish settlement only if the Palestinians welcomed the Jews in.

The following year Kallenbach sent his niece Hanna Lazar to Gandhi's Sevagram Ashram and he made a return visit in 1939 but became ill. His health deteriorated and he died in Johannesburg in 1945. In 1952 his ashes were buried in Israel at Kibbutz Degania which was founded by Aaron David Gordon, a Zionist who was a Russian influenced by Tolstoy. Kallenbach, who had never married, left most of his wealth to the Zionist cause.

On the day before the statue unveiling Shimon Lev, author of *Soulmates*, came from Israel to deliver a lecture on The Cross Culture Encounter of Kallenbach and Gandhi.

Usury, Casino Capitalism, International Corporate Power and the Global Undermining of Democracy

Iain Brown

Although religions may have very diverse beliefs, most share much the same commitments to the values of Justice and Truth. I put it to you that our commitment to Truth means that we have a duty to try as hard as we can to understand what is going on in the world so that we can act effectively for the Justice we cherish. Without Truth there is no reliable Justice.

Religious teachers have always pronounced on the ethics of money lending. The Torah of the ancient Jewish Bible is often concerned with it and so Christians too have been in the past.

Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury.

Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury. (Deuteronomy 23, 19-20)

Indeed in Ezekiel Chapter 18 the Jewish prophet reached such a pitch of condemnation that he ranked the taking of usury alongside robbery and adultery. I quote, “*being a robber and a shedder of blood, an oppressor of the poor and a defiler of his neighbour’s wife*” and Ezekiel concludes, “*He shall surely die and his blood be upon him.*” These Hebrew teachers and prophets were only following the centuries long, almost universal, prohibition of usury, of the charging interest, to be found in the ancient lawmakers before them.

The medieval Catholic Church also condemned usury. Wikipedia notes, and I quote very loosely, that the Medieval Christian theology of interest payment began with the First Council of Nicaea in 325, which forbade clergy from engaging in usury. Later ecumenical councils extended this regulation to the laity. Still later people who accepted interest on loans could receive neither the sacraments nor Christian burial. Pope Sixtus V condemned the practice of charging interest as “detestable to God and man, damned by the sacred canons and contrary to Christian charity.” Fire and Brimstone indeed !

So what happened between then and now ? By the sixteenth century, the merchants of Northern Italy, particularly of Venice, had been fitting out ships with goods for trade with the Levant and in that same sixteenth century further west both the Scots and the English were sending out ships to trade into the Baltic and across the Atlantic. A group of the rich would club together to fit out a ship, employ a captain and crew and take a chance on it finding good trading conditions. When, and if, the ship came in and the

traded goods were sold off with profit, the shareholders were paid off in proportion to their original potential losses.

The first stock exchanges where these shares in the profits of trading through individual ships could be bought and sold were certainly operating informally in Northern Italy by the fourteenth century and the bankers of Lombardy, notably the Jewish Rothschild family, were already lending out and charging interest. Jewish ethics on money-lending were different from Christian. Although they condemned the charging of interest rates between Jew and Jew, they were quite free about lending and charging anyone else, including Christians. Much as the churchmen might declaim against it, the whole capitalist system was developing fast and sweeping away the old prohibitions against usury. Even as late as 1836 Pope Gregory XVI was still declaiming against 'Dishonest Profit'. But the Roman Catholic Church had long since lost the battle to retain control and it had retreated from actively enforcing its social teachings in the financial sphere as the practice of charging interest on loans became very widely accepted in the Western world. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution and industrial capitalism that facilitated the European great leap forward, the world had long passed the church by.

But the Common Law still punished debtors. Even as late as in Charles Dickens' time it used to be common practice to throw debtors into prison until they paid up – and many lingered there for years before they died. Creditors often never saw their money again. Gradually the law seems to have wakened up to the fact that although punishment may have had some deterrent effect on getting into debt, there was some loss to the state and little to be gained by keeping debtors from making money and so ever finally paying off their debts.

The essence of capitalism just means using accumulated surpluses (capital) in an easily transferrable form, like money, to command resources in labour and materials for new enterprises. Humankind has benefited enormously from that capitalist system.

Thus it was and is, that, with the development of a stock exchange, many moderately wealthy individuals together can use accumulated money to equip trade expeditions or develop mines and factories and the profits, if any, can be recycled for fresh enterprises. This became really important when science, engineering and technology could be harnessed to make huge strides in material well-being – as has happened, led by Western Europe and latterly America over the last four hundred years. Crucially a stock market facilitates the direction and redirection of available real resources in manpower and materials to be commanded and employed by the enterprises and entrepreneurs that most investors agree are going to produce the best value. Without a stock market, we would have few railways, poor roads, subsistence agriculture, rampant ill health and so on. Allowing people to buy shares in an enterprise and recoup some profit from it when it succeeds is here to stay.

But, slowly what had been a boon in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries began to turn into a nightmare. By the late nineteenth century, sections of the stock market had become almost completely divorced from the useful realities of steering available resources to best communal aims and outcomes. Traders on the stock exchange began speculating (gambling in other words) on the rising prices of certain stocks and huge sums could be made just by that speculation. As the profits of speculation rose, the notorious cycles of boom and bust emerged. Worse, as smart practices developed further into the twentieth century, shares, bonds and mortgages became like chips in a casino. The medieval alchemists had once dreamed of making gold from base metals. Twenty first century traders **do** make money out of nothing more than money, often out of other people's money. How envious the alchemists would be !

By selling short, by developing leverages, by trading derivatives and by many other smart tricks most of us know little of, certain people, especially bankers, have learned to *make money out of nothing else but money* by doing nothing more than manipulating the market or by acting on information so quickly that other people cannot catch up with them. Now, in fully developed casino capitalism, traders trade away other people's jobs, other people's properties and other people's life-chances. They are traded away without any connection with, or even thought of, real flesh and blood. Just as chips in a casino help gamblers forget they are playing with real money, perhaps losing their next month's rent, perhaps winning an island in the Bahamas, so these figures on a screen you see on TV are manipulated by the traders on the floor to produce a profit for their bank and earn a bigger bonus for the player. I repeat; the old alchemist's dream is now reality for an elite in merchant banking.

Simultaneously with the power of the international markets for capital came the growth of huge international companies like Ford, Lever Brothers and, today Starbucks and Amazon. Many of these single companies have an annual turnover greater than that of several small countries put together, occasionally greater than the whole continent of Africa. These companies now move around the world as they please. Notoriously if **one** government taxes one of these companies more than another government promises to tax it, then that company simply moves its headquarters to the country that taxes it less in a kind of Dutch Auction. Similarly, if even powerful states like the USA and the EU tax and regulate those stock markets in ways they do not like, then the huge empires like Goldman Sachs merely move to a more lawless less regulated state somewhere else in the world like, say, the Cayman Islands. As a part of recent trade agreements such as is threatened by TTIP these huge international corporations are even threatening to acquire the rights to sue governments for passing laws that dent their profits. The global problem with which this casino capitalism confronts the governments of the world today is very similar to the problems posed by these huge international corporations.

This kind of problem of **rogue organisations that grow stronger than democratic governments and take away power from the people** bears a lot of similarity to the problem of piracy at sea that has blighted trade in various parts of the world from time to time. If a strong medieval government threatened to wipe out the pirates of the Barbary Coast, they merely based themselves elsewhere. We have seen recently how it is requiring international co-operation by several national navies together to reduce the depredations of the Somali pirates today. We have the same problem with the huge cartels of suppliers of illegal drugs and, in the same way, today casino capitalism is seriously difficult to bring back under any but light regulation. We have the same problem with fighting global warming. Any attempt by a single government to take sensible steps to improve the ongoing situation provokes squeals of fear and anger, often from people in positions of power and responsibility who are using the loosely regulated stock exchanges, the hedge funds, the tax free international corporations and other institutions to make fortunes and do not want to see their lucrative game spoiled.

The traders on the floors of the exchanges must know, like most gamblers, that in their feverish operation of casino capitalism, they are generating little or no real wealth in the real economy, merely redistributing the profits of others towards themselves. Ordinary people caught in a fever of gambling activity playing with unreal chips in the casino, are often carried away in a hypnotic trance and rarely stop to think what they may be doing. They are merely playing within the rules. But, in casino capitalism, it is the rules and the system which are wrong. And without total international co-operation better rules are unenforceable.

Right wing politicians used to enjoy calling the leaders of trade unions ‘the trade union barons’ referring by analogy to a medieval society in which the king was the protector of the little people against the over-mighty barons who threatened both him, as the state, and them, as the common people. Nowadays within democratic countries we have a different kind of baron – in private corporations who fund political parties, lobby parliaments and expect their will to be done by the targeted politicians; in global corporations who escape certain aspects of regulation by any state. These are not easily identifiable individuals like the over powerful great nobility of Europe or the TU ‘barons’. They are gangs which sometimes bring great improvements to our lives but are too often out of any state control.

I put it to you that it is our collective responsibility in the name of our values of Justice and Freedom to ensure that we elect politicians who are not too friendly with drug lords, not too friendly with international corporations or too friendly with those who have their snouts in the trough of casino capitalism. Politicians who believe in the free market to the point of madness are not wanted in this global crisis. But, as with drug lords and pirates at sea, ultimately it will require a really fierce enforcement of internationally

accepted regulations to bring these pirate-like problems under control. This is best done through a universal global alliance of governments. At present the governments of the world do manage some alliances, however loose or feeble, against infectious diseases through, for example, the World Health Organisation. Other alliances between democratic states are badly needed while the growth of extra-democratic organisations with their roots firmly in the very democracies that begat them creep up on the hopes of the poor of the world for freedom from oppression.

Economics and politics, even at global levels, *has to be* the concern of everyone. Let us stay informed, alert and therefore more effective.

Iain Brown is a retired Senior Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Glasgow and a specialist in addictions. He is also a Unitarian Lay Preacher.

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## **‘What can I do?’ Peace Hub Provides an Answer**

‘That’s terrible, but what can I do ?’ It’s a question that many of us have asked ourselves at some point, and struggled to find an answer in the face of what seems like a violent and unjust world.

Having felt like this throughout my teens, one day a flyer fell into my lap from a human rights organisation. It sparked something in my mind which made me realise I needed to just get up and do *something*. The first step was to take small actions alongside likeminded people, which cumulatively could make a difference.

There’s a whole range of people out there caught in the ‘what can I do?’ trap. That’s where Peace Hub comes in.

Based in a small shop-style space in Birmingham city centre, the public can drop-into the Hub during weekday lunchtimes. Staff and volunteers make a face-to-face connection with members of the public and engage in dialogue about complex but important issues. Within this friendly and welcoming environment, we use a rolling programme of themes linked to peace, simplicity, equality and truth to:

- Inform and stimulate dialogue on peace and justice,
- Encourage people to affirm the humanity of others,
- Provide opportunities for people to take action.

Actions that the public can take part in range from signing petitions and writing to MPs, to supporting efforts of peace-makers and justice-builders, and sending messages of solidarity; but all have at their heart the affirmation of people’s humanity.





Since being opened by Central England Quakers in November 2014, Peace Hub has made links with a wide range of like-minded organisations, bringing people committed to peace and justice under one roof. As our first guest, we were pleased to welcome the Gandhian activist Rajagopal, of nonviolent land rights organisation Ekta Parishad (Unity Forum). Together with members of local organisations, he discussed the current challenges facing activists, and reflected on how we could support one another in empowering our communities to take action.

Through bringing together activists, faith groups and the public, Peace Hub aims to build a community that cares within Birmingham. It's the start of a long journey, but an exciting and challenging one. So if you're in Birmingham between 11.00 and 14.30, why not pop in, have a chat and take part ! We're at 41 Bull Street, B4 6AF, or join in online: visit [www.peacehub.org.uk](http://www.peacehub.org.uk) to find out about our latest activities.

### **Judge Monier-Williams 1920-2015**

Evelyn Monier-Williams was from a legal family and himself studied for the bar at the Inner Temple where Gandhi had earlier qualified. He went to Oxford to read history at the age of 16 and developed an interest in theosophy while there. Becoming an army officer in the Second World War he saw service in north Africa, Sicily, and Germany where he met his wife-to-be, a German opera singer. After the war he built up a practice which included much work for trade unionists and *pro bono* cases for the National Council for Civil Liberties. As a judge he was also noted for his leniency in criminal cases as he did not believe in the usefulness of prison sentences. In 1988 he became treasurer of the Inner Temple and here he was able to achieve a long-held ambition to persuade fellow members to reinstate Gandhi who had been expelled in 1922 after being convicted of sedition.

# Gandhi and the Founders of the African National Congress

*Anil Nauriya*

A critic had once remarked of an artist that a painting is not Indian or European simply on count of whether it is painted in India or in Europe. Similarly, one may say that scholarship is not scholarly simply because it is done by academics. Although academic writing ought to advance our knowledge rather than limit our understanding, some academic writing in the last few years appears clearly to be marked by a pursuit of sectarian politics by other means. A recent trend in writing on M K Gandhi (1869-1948) and his struggles is a case in point as reading some of these works on Gandhi in South Africa or even on Indian nationalism in India one would hardly imagine that the Indian leader could have had any empathetic interaction with Africans in South Africa or that he might have undergone any intellectual evolution while in that country, let alone later played a momentous political role in the conceptualizing and emergence of a socially composite Indian nationhood.

It is instructive in this context to explore Gandhi's intellectual and political interface with the African leadership of his time in South Africa, a theme to which the present article is confined. The year 2012 marked the centenary of the African National Congress which was founded in Bloemfontein, South Africa on 8 January 1912. Gandhi was still in South Africa then. Gandhi's paper, *Indian Opinion*, welcomed the establishment of the African National Congress (then named the South African Native National Congress) as an "awakening". [*Indian Opinion*, 10 February 1912] In fact, six months before the ANC was formed, Gandhi's paper carried a report about the likely formation of such an organisation. [*Indian Opinion*, 29 July 1911] The report cited Pixley Seme (1881-1951), who would reputedly be the main driving force behind the establishment of the organisation, and would later become its *fifth* President-General. In 1911 the speculation was, as mentioned in the report, that Dr Walter Rubusana (1858-1936), the eminent African leader from the Eastern Cape, would head the organisation.

In his South Africa years, Gandhi became increasingly aware of the reasons for the seething African discontent. His journal reproduced, for example, a lengthy report on the attempt by Sir Gordon Sprigg, a four-time Premier of the Cape Colony, to address African electors in East London. Sir Gordon's discomfiture at the meeting, which became a kind of cross-examination by Dr Walter Rubusana and Mr (presumably A K) Soga (b.1861), an African editor from the Eastern Cape and also one of the future founders of the ANC, was reported in detail and even commented upon by Gandhi. [*Indian Opinion*, 18 February 1904]. Dr Rubusana was the author of a *History of South Africa, from the Native Standpoint*. The meeting at the

Wesleyan School in the African Location in East London ended with a motion of no-confidence in Sir Gordon being moved by Dr Rubusana and seconded by Mr Soga, which, “on being put to the meeting was carried unanimously”. Given the condemnatory references Gandhi had been making only recently prior to this to a revival of slavery [*Indian Opinion*, 4 February 1904] and to crimes against humanity [*Indian Opinion*, 14 January 1904], this act of defiance by Dr Rubusana and his companions could not but have evoked Gandhi’s enthusiastic admiration. At the confrontation with Sir Gordon, Dr Rubusana had said, with reference to the Cape Colony, that he “believed there was no other town in the Colony except Sir Gordon Sprigg’s constituency, which compelled natives to carry passes, and none other had bye-laws compelling natives to walk in the roads. Therefore, he wanted to know whether Sir Gordon Sprigg’s Government had consented to the regulations with regard to passes, the footpaths, and the increase of rents in the locations”.

Commenting on Sir Gordon’s meeting and specifically on Dr Rubusana’s questions to the former, Gandhi wrote: “One of the speakers at the meeting rightly reminded him (Sir Gordon: A.N.) that he had done nothing for the natives, and that East London is the only place in the Cape Colony where the natives have not the right to walk on the foot-paths. The speaker rightly blamed Sir Gordon for having sanctioned the municipal regulations referred to, and the only lame reply that he (Sir Gordon) could make was that it was a municipal matter, and that he did not wish to judge the Council’s action”. [*Indian Opinion*, 18 February 1904, *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, (CWMG) Vol 4, pp. 131-132]. This appears to have been Gandhi’s first available published endorsement of Dr Walter Rubusana.

In the event, however, not Dr Rubusana, but John Dube (1871-1946), the African leader from Natal and Gandhi’s neighbour in Inanda, near Durban, was chosen to be the first President-General of the African National Congress when it was formed in January 1912; Dr Rubusana became Vice-President. Gandhi’s paper welcomed the choice of John Dube, “our friend and neighbour” and published in detail the ‘manifesto’ issued by Dube. [*Indian Opinion*, 10 February 1912].

At least 7 years earlier, in 1905, Gandhi had met John Dube and heard him speak. He then praised John Dube and wrote in favour of African land rights. [*Indian Opinion*, 2 September 1905, CWMG, Vol 5, p. 55] In the following year in 1906 Gandhi’s paper praised a ‘manifesto’ issued by John Dube against colonial policies that worked unfairness towards Africans. [*Indian Opinion*, 24 November 1906]

Both John Dube and Gandhi had been impressed with the work of Booker T Washington, the African-American educationist, in the field of African-American education.

In South Africa, Gandhi had supported initiatives on African education and endorsed the efforts of John Tengo Jabavu (1859-1921), the pioneering African editor-educationist, for an inter-state African College at Lovedale

(which later developed into Fort Hare University where Nelson Mandela would study). [*Indian Opinion*, 30 December 1905, 17 March 1906; CWMG, Vol 5, 172 and pp. 234-235] Clearly, Gandhi appreciated the importance of education and industrial training for Africans.

There was enough familiarity between Gandhi's Phoenix institution and John Dube's Ohlange for developments at the Ohlange institution to be reported in Gandhi's paper every now and then. For example, the addition of a building at Ohlange was reported. [*Indian Opinion*, 2 February 1907] So also a musical competition and performance held there in which young Africans from far and wide had participated. [*Indian Opinion*, 19 June 1909] The Indian statesman, Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915) visited South Africa in October-November 1912 at the invitation of Gandhi. In November 1912, Gandhi along with Gokhale called on John Dube. (See the report in John Dube's paper, *Ilanga lase Natal*, 15 November 1912.) The historical significance of this meeting can be imagined. Gokhale had been President of the Indian National Congress in India in 1905. Gandhi would become President of that organisation in 1924, a decade after his return to India. Thus it was a past and a future President of the Indian National Congress who were, in November 1912, calling on the founding and current President of the African National Congress.

In an editorial in its issue of 15 November 1912, John Dube's paper *Ilanga lase Natal* affirmed the calibre of leaders like Gandhi and Gokhale. Gandhi's paper severely condemned the Natives Land Act, 1913 as an "Act of confiscation" and supported John Dube's criticism of the Act. [*Indian Opinion*, 30 August 1913]

As early as in 1905, Gandhi had supported Africans' rights in land. He and his journal welcomed the Transvaal Supreme Court judgement in the case of Edward Tsewu (b.1866), another future founder of the African National Congress, upholding the Africans' right to hold land. [*Indian Opinion*, 15 April 1905; 12 August 1905; see also CWMG, Vol 5, p. 40 ]

From Gandhi's speech at the YMCA in Johannesburg on 18 May 1908, we know that he had moved beyond expressing his concern merely over Indian issues; in his speech he made a forthright rejection of the policy of segregation and envisioned a South Africa in which the various races "commingle". [*Indian Opinion*, 6, 13, June 1908; CWMG, Vol 8, pp.242-246] The Gandhi-led passive resistance, or 'satyagraha' in South Africa was appreciated and commended in Dube's *Ilanga lase Natal* and by the editors of *The Basutoland Star* in 1908 (editorial and article reproduced respectively in *Indian Opinion*, 18 January 1908 and 1 February 1908). Of the editors of *The Basutoland Star* [*Naledi Ea Lesotho*], we know that Monyakwane was himself among the founders of the ANC [*The Bloemfontein Post*, 10 January 1912].

In 1909 when the draft South African Constitution was being debated in the British Parliament in London, delegations representing Africans, Coloured people and Indians went from South Africa to England to present

their points of view. Pixley Seme and Alfred Mangena (1879-1924), another leading African activist who would be among the founders of the ANC, were asked in 1909 by the Transvaal Native Congress to co-ordinate with W P Schreiner, John Tengo Jabavu, Gandhi and others in connection with the African delegations going from South Africa. [See Peter Walshe, *The Rise of African Nationalism in South Africa, 1912-1952*, p. 22 and Andre Odendaal, *Vukani Bantu! : The Beginnings of Black Protest Politics in South Africa to 1912*, p. 205 and 347n ]

Apparently, Pixley Seme and Alfred Mangena were already based in London at the time.

In July 1909, at least one future founder of the ANC, Dr Walter Rubusana, had been present together with John Tengo Jabavu, Gandhi and Dr A Abdurahman in the gallery of the House of Lords in London where the draft South African constitutional legislation was being debated.

At least from 1909 onwards, we find Gandhi commending the method of passive resistance to Coloured and African activists and peoples. [*Indian Opinion*, 12 June 1909, CWMG, Vol 9, pp. 243-244 and *Indian Opinion*, 1 January 1910, CWMG, Vol 10, p. 113]. In 1910 Gandhi criticised the new constitutional set-up in South Africa under which a leader like Dr Rubusana was not considered entitled to contest for Parliament although he could be a member of the Provincial legislature in the Cape. [*Indian Opinion*, 24 September 1910; CWMG, Vol 10, p. 325] Gandhi specifically referred to Dr Rubusana in this context. As we have seen above, years earlier, in 1904, Gandhi had endorsed Dr Rubusana's interrogation of Sir Gordon Sprigg in East London and Dr Rubusana's criticism of discriminatory pavement regulations in that Eastern Cape city. [*Indian Opinion*, 18 February 1904]

The personal achievements and activities of some of those who went on, in the future, to found the ANC were reported in Gandhi's paper. Alfred Mangena's attendance at a meeting in London to discuss South African affairs, and his being called to the Bar in England were reported in the paper as was the calling to the Bar of George Montsioa (b.1885), who would be another future founding member of the ANC. [*Indian Opinion*, 26 May 1906, 5 September 1908, 18 June 1910]

Gandhi's paper covered in detail the proceedings before the Magistrate in the case concerning the ejection of Sefako Makgatho (1861-1951), President of the Transvaal Native Organisation on 3 January 1912 from a first class railway carriage on the Delagoa line near Pretoria. [*Indian Opinion*, 23 March 1912] The incident had occurred five days before the founding of the ANC, and nearly 20 years after Gandhi's own ejection from a train in Pietermaritzburg in 1893. Sefako Makgatho, a founder of the ANC, would succeed John Dube as its President General in 1917.

About Gandhi's links with Dr Pixley Seme, the active force behind the formation of the ANC, we know from multiple sources. Pauline Podlashuk was a future medical doctor active in the suffragette movement in South Africa as secretary of the Women's Enfranchisement League. She had

translated Tolstoy's Russian language letter which the famous writer and thinker had written to Gandhi in 1910. In her memoirs Dr Podlashuk refers to a meeting, to which she was witness, between Gandhi and Pixley Seme at the Tolstoy Farm, near Johannesburg in 1911. Dr Podlashuk, who was there along with Ms Stewart Sanderson, Joint Secretary of the League, recalls that Pixley Seme and Gandhi discussed the latter's passive resistance movement. Gandhi's friend and associate, Hermann Kallenbach was also present. [Pauline Podlashuk, *Adventure of Life : Reminiscences of Pauline Podlashuk*, (eds. Judy Nasatyr and Effie Schultz), London, family published: [ehbeitz@yahoo.com](mailto:ehbeitz@yahoo.com), 2010, pp. 69-75.]

Several years later, in 1939, Gandhi would reminisce that he had often advised African people. It is clear that he had multiple contacts with some of the founders of the ANC, that Gandhi respected them and that they respected him. He backed nonviolent African struggles against restrictive laws. For instance, in 1913 Gandhi's paper hailed the African Women's anti-pass struggle in the Orange Free State as a "brave stand". [*Indian Opinion*, 2 August 1913] Earlier, Gandhi's paper had cited the outrages on the coloured and African women in the Orange Free State and had noted that the women in the OFS had resolved on passive resistance "as the only means of fighting against the immorality of the white unwashed of the Free State". [*Indian Opinion*, 5 July 1913] The same year witnessed the largest movement led by Gandhi in South Africa. This time Indian indentured labour, miners and plantation workers and Indian women as a bloc courted arrest and went to prison. Gandhi's wife, Kasturba was imprisoned in Pietermaritzburg and Gandhi himself was sent to prison in Bloemfontein.

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# Book Reviews

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**The Mahatma and the Doctor: The Untold Story of Dr Pranivan Mehta, Greatest Friend and Benefactor 1864-1932** S R Mehrotra  
Feffer & Simons 2014 pp xi + 660

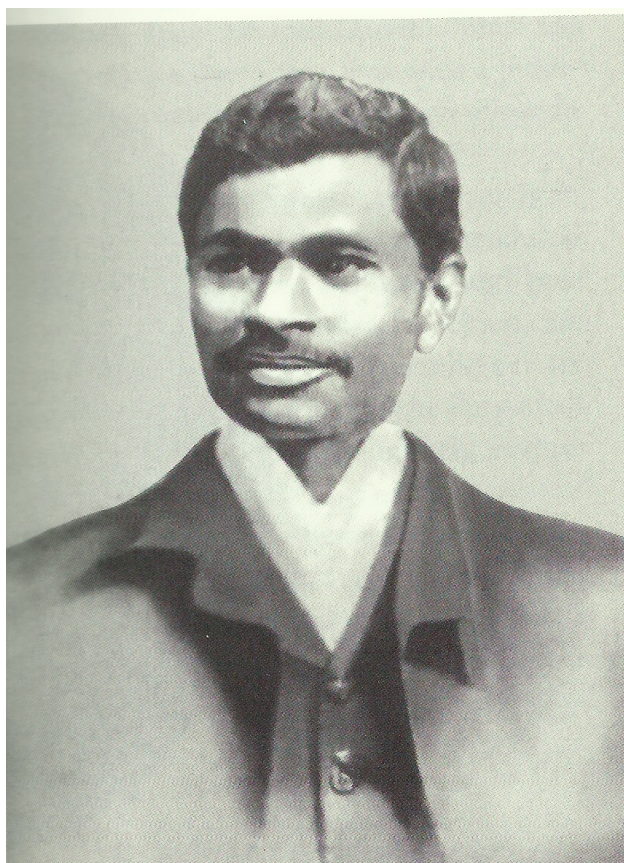
It is fascinating the way a previously obscure figure in the Gandhi story belatedly takes centre stage. Previous biographies usually pick up on a Dr Mehta greeting Gandhi at the Victoria Hotel in London 29 September 1888. Gandhi still in summer flannels and in his admiration for Dr Mehta's top hat fluffing it up the wrong way. Dr Mehta was but a bit player, the highly Anglicised Indian instructing the gauche Gandhi how to assimilate to Victorian London. It took Ramchandra Guha in his recent biography to show that, to the contrary, Dr Mehta became Gandhi's closest Indian friend and indispensable as a patron, indeed he draws a parallel with Friedrich Engels as patron and disciple of Karl Marx. Now comes Professor Mehrotra's labour of love, a compendium volume of a brief biography and a compilation of Dr Mehta's leading publications. And Dr Mehta's great-grand-nephew, Arun Mehta, is its publisher. Possibly all along Mehta's central presence should have been obvious in the light of his being one of the three represented as the Reader in dialogue with Gandhi as the Editor in Gandhi's seminal text, *Hind Swaraj*. Anthony Parel adds Shamji Krishnavarma and V D Savarkar as the other two. The text is added to this volume. Here is a case study of the way in which the guru-disciple roles become reversed, Dr Mehta's instruction in British mores giving way to Gandhi's in Hindu values, and of course one of Gandhi's central ambitions was to win over the Anglicised Indian to an alternative Indian vision.

Born in 1864, Kathiawadi and Jain, educated in Rajkot, trained as a doctor in the Grant Medical School, Bombay and then at the Free University in Brussels, with a doctorate in surgery, at the same time qualifying as a lawyer in the Middle Temple, (so in London to greet Gandhi), a highly successful professional career seems to have been his for the asking and he was indeed appointed Chief Medical Officer to Idar state in 1895, but he gave all this up to emigrate to Rangoon in 1899. Not enough is said here of a common admiration with Gandhi for the Jain jeweller and guru figure Raychandbhai but this seems to have been the reason why Gandhi and Mehta became close friends in Bombay in 1891. He had opened a jewellery shop in 14 Mogul Street, Rangoon in 1895. Was this in his blood as a Jain? I suspect a determining influence was his visiting Gandhi in Durban in 1898 and experiencing racism first hand: "I was not in Cape Town for more than two hours before they made me feel that I was in a place where the colour of the skin counted for everything and man for nothing". (quoted p.375) When Mehta died 3 August 1932 after prolonged ill health, Gandhi wrote: "I had no



greater friend than Doctor in the whole world and for me he is still alive". (quoted p.194)

It is now clear that Gandhi's whole satyagraha project would have been impossible without Mehta's financial support. Gandhi kept in touch with Mehta, visiting him in Rangoon December 1901. Mehta was active in the Congress cause and became President of the Burma provincial Congress Committee 1910. He raised funds for Gandhi's struggle in South Africa. Mehta became his leading financier. Between 1910 and 1914 he transferred 32,000 rupees to Gandhi. This saved the Phoenix Farm from poverty. Mehta observed: "it is a notorious fact that Gandhi has not laid by anything against a rainy day". (quoted p.324) Once again Gandhi visited Rangoon March 1915. Mehta conjured up a plan for a banking system offering cheap credit to Congress ventures. He made



substantial contributions to the setting up of the Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad and built his own house there though only occasionally was he to visit. In the end he offered Gandhi unlimited credit. How else could Gandhi have been able to give up his income as a lawyer and embark on the non-cooperation campaign? Yet we do not learn how Mehta made his wealth as a diamond merchant. It is often held against Gandhi that after Mehta's death he fell back on the Indian industrialists, G D Birla and Jamnalal Bajaj, to subsidise his constructive programme. Yet for all his financial support Gandhi did not take Mehta into his political confidence, Mehta only learnt about the launching of non-cooperation in 1920 from the press and though he was an early protagonist of non-payment of the salt tax, he likewise heard of the Salt March to Dandi in 1930 indirectly.

But there were other ways in which the paths of Gandhi and Mehta crossed and that was in highly personal family affairs. Mehta had sent his daughter, Jeki, to join the Phoenix ashram. He also sent his prospective son-in-law, Manilal Doctor, to the ashram, to prove a reluctant contributor to its bread labour, though the marriage went ahead in May 1912. But then Manilal Doctor took off for Fiji with a French mistress and events fell apart. Earlier, Dr Mehta had described Manilal Gandhi, Gandhi's second oldest son, as "a chip of the same old block" and "(he) is going to be a perfect brahmachari" but how wrong he was. Manilal fell for Jeki and had an affair. It is here that



the personal and the political Gandhi become so hard to connect. Gandhi was to go on to two fasts, seriously impairing his health. His attitude to Jeki is ambiguous, seeing his claim to her as an adopted daughter as stronger than Dr Mehta's as her father. The first fast was in despair at the liaison and Manilal was to find himself refused any right to marriage without his father's consent, in fact withheld till 1927. It seems a spate of lying by Jeki prompted a second fast. She was now sent to Fiji to join her husband though later she reappears in the Sabarmati ashram, her husband by then living in Aden. But Mehrotra reveals even darker aspects of Gandhi at the time, a horrific row breaking out with Kasturba, all to do with Jeki's behaviour. Gandhi is quoted as writing in a letter to Kallenbach: "she is the most vicious woman I have ever met". He continues: "she teaches me emptiness of the world. Yes, man who wishes to work with detachment must not marry ... You cannot attach yourself to a particular woman and yet live for humanity". If Mehrotra pronounces such notions as unGandhian, they reflect the intense strain of this marital breakdown. But, of course, at the same time Gandhi was leading the most extensive satyagraha struggle to date against indentured labour. During his visit to Mehta in Rangoon in 1915 Robert Payne tells us Gandhi's eldest son, Harilal, was their equally fraught subject of conversation.

Although Mehta wholly endorsed Gandhi's political methods in South Africa and India this did not rob him of an independent political voice. He was the first, in a letter to Gokhale 8 November 1909, ahead of Rabindranath Tagore, to name Gandhi a Mahatma. In his long essay *M K Gandhi and the South African Problem* he pleaded with Gandhi to leave South Africa and to take up the leadership of the nationalist struggle in India straightaway but Gandhi put off his return till 1915. Already by 1910 the authorities in Rangoon branded him "an ardent advocate of Swadeshi: needs watching". He was, to quote Mehrotra, 'seen as easily the most prominent person in the public and social life of Burma'. (p.16) He took up such causes as the intolerable conditions of deck passengers between Calcutta and Rangoon, on the gratuitous vaccination of labourers on arrival from India. If Sir Harcourt Butler as Governor had tolerated such protest his reactionary successor Sir Reginald Craddock did not and, blaming Mehta for unrest in 1918, subjected him to an Externment order. Mehta, and it seems the public, protested and the order was shelved: "this was probably the first instance in British Indian history when the design of a provincial government to banish an alleged political activist from its territory was frustrated by the force of public opinion". (p.128) Part of the Congress delegation in London in 1919 he opposed the Montford reforms. It would have been interesting to be told how Mehta in fact connected with the Burmese opposition, divided in its response to these reforms, and fatally so for it opened the way by the 1930s to a far more aggressive tribal Burmese nationalism. Ill-health prevented Mehta from any active participation in the politics of the 1920s.

Yet the most revealing question has to be the extent to which this highly Anglicised Indian came into line with Gandhi's critique of 'modern'

civilisation, a term he preferred to 'western'. He was opposed to the mere accumulation of wealth and to capitalism and one has to assume he fell back on Gandhi's ideal of trusteeship to justify his own personal wealth. He drew on the ideas of Kropotkin to defend the simple life, the primacy of agriculture and the value of artisan manufacture. In his 1911 address *Hindu Social Ideals* to the Hindu Social Club, which he had himself set up in 1901, he seemingly endorses all of Gandhi's rhetoric for the traditional Hindu way of life in *Hind Swaraj*, caste included. He was to become even more radical than Gandhi in promoting the use of Indian vernacular languages at all levels of education: 'language is in very truth man himself'. (quoted p.89) One has to wonder, for a writer of such accomplished English prose, how difficult this be. He invariably quoted European and British authors in his defence of tradition such as Max Mueller and Colonel Tod. But could this European trained doctor come wholly into line with Gandhi's attack on western medicine ?

For Gandhi converting the Anglicised Indian to his values was crucial. It was just as exciting a challenge of course to win over Europeans and in this regard there is a strong parallel between Gandhi's relationship to Kallenbach and to Mehta. If Gandhi had a case against British trained Indian lawyers he was on shakier ground when it came to Indian doctors trained in western medicine. Could Mehta agree with Gandhi's indictment: "medical science is the concentrated essence of Black Magic. Quackery is infinitely preferable to what passes for high medical skill". (quoted p.382) It is true that Mehta early on opposed Pasteurising techniques and vaccination against smallpox. From his experience as Chief Medical Officer in Idar, however, he came up with sensible pragmatic measures of better hygiene and public sanitation to counter cholera and the plague. One suspects his true animus, expressed in his diatribe to a meeting of India medical men in London 10 October 1919, was against the way Indian doctors were marginalised in British India: "no civilised people on the face of the earth are excluded therefrom as we are excluded".(quoted p.170) It seems probable that Mehta had some reservations on Gandhi's beliefs. Certainly he travelled to London in the 1920s to seek medical health.

We have to thank Ramachandra Guha and S R Mehrotra for finally doing justice to the life and career of Dr Pranjivan Mehta.

***Antony Copley***

This review appeared in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society July 2015.

Antony Copley is Academic Adviser to the Gandhi Foundation and Hon Professor of Modern European and Indian History at the University of Kent. His most recent book is *Music and the Spiritual: Composers and Politics in the 20th Century*, Ziggurat Books International, distributed by Central Books.

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Gaia's Will: the Dying Declaration of Mother Earth

by Manu Kothari and Lopa Mehta pp.213

Hundreds, if not thousands of books have been written on environmental issues – how pollution caused by humankind's activities constitute a danger to earth and to all lives including human. But the book under review is exceptionally original and is different from other books. I would rate this as easily the best. The very title is striking: **Gaia's (Earth's) will: the dying declaration of Mother Earth. Yes, mother earth is dying. She has made a dying declaration.** This is a fantastic piece of imagination – very original – by a person deeply committed to the cause of the environment.

There are 15 chapters with appropriate titles. The first Chapter is titled 'I am dying' – for only a dying person can make a will or declaration. The second Chapter is titled 'My will, the Preamble', Chapter 5 is about 'Reverence for Life', Chapter 7 deals with 'Needs Versus Wants' recalling Mahatma Gandhi. Other chapters are on Education, Science and Technology, Energy, Economics, Urbanization, etc. The 14th Chapter titled 'The Greatest Ecological Elegy' reproduces the famous letter of the Red Indian Chief Seattle to the US President written in the year 1854, perhaps the most original and historically the oldest document on Ecology.

Now I would like to present excerpts from this book. Readers should note that the word 'I' refers to the Earth and 'ME' to Mother Earth. In the preface the author sets forth the theme of his book very clearly:

"Thanks possibly to a sensitized medical conscience, we have heard the pathos and the agony of Mother Earth, understood her compulsion to spell out her Dying Declaration. In the midst of her sufferings, may be despite it, her heart bleeds for her most cherished, and alas the most mischievous child, the human being. This is Mother Earth's last-ditch, desperate attempt to awaken the higher self of humans to their betterment and to achieve her own salvation".

"Man has ravaged Mother Earth to the point of threatening his own survival. Man once again, is positioned to be Earth's savior through the distinct, inescapable possibility of shifting his gears from being Earth-destructive to being Earth-friendly".

Chapter 1 is titled **I am dying**. The author says:

"The circulatory system responsible for moving my life fluid has been concretely compromised by dams. The volume of circulating water has been depleted through a thoroughly anthropocentric overuse that has left behind dry wells, shallow aquifers and parched riverbeds. Your pollutants have converted the pristine Ganges into a huge gutter – a fate that has spared no river".

"On the other hand, the oxygen-manufacturers, the trees, are lost at a phenomenal rate".

"Basically my cyclic, rhythmic working has never necessitated my having an excretory system, for the words waste and excreta do not exist in the Gaian vocabulary. That is why my waters in their pristine state are crystal clear despite an enormous fecal output from so much life that thrives in water. My densest jungles are no Augean stables despite rich wild life. Waste, garbage, toxins, nuclear leftovers all of your making, have spawned (NIMBY) Not in My Back Yard, a globally necessary repellent".

“The Red Indian Chief Seattle’s prophecy that the White man will drown in his own excreta has come true for all men – White, Brown, Black or Yellow. That is ‘Progress’!”

In the second chapter titled **My will my preamble**, the author ridicules experts and the IQ concept:

“The target population I am addressing and to whom I bequeath my WILL is the common, not-much-learned, everyman. My avoidance of the experts, the elite and the scientist arises from their limited number and their expertismic befuddledness. Scientists, especially when they leave the particular field in which they have specialized, are just as ordinary, ignorant and unreasonable as anybody else, and their unusually high intelligence only makes their prejudices all the more dangerous.

The overrated IQ concept has spawned far more clever and cunning rather than wise and good people. IQ often stands for Idiocy Quotient”.

In chapter 4 the author has given a new meaning to the term ‘**Wealth**’.

“The term wealth (weal + th) is a well-conceived, almost sacred term. Weal derived from Old English/Old Saxonian/Old High German/West German root, connotes the public good, the general good, the welfare of a country or community, in the sense of Latin *bonum publicum*, or French *le bien publique*. The suffix-th indicates the quality or condition. Wealth is pregnant with the emphasis on commonweal, commonwealth, community, wherein common implies “belonging equally to two or more. It means distinction-free fraternity, equality and emanating therefrom, liberty. How many countries deserve the appellation wealthy? We have lexicons after lexicons, first glowing bright over weal and then descending to the pits by rendering obsolete the pristine meaning of wealth and making it synonymous with affluence, possession, riches, material objects, property, or anything that has money value”.

“The coal-miner gives the coal and the farmer provides the food, which comprise the usable WEAL. All the terrestrial or marine food-pyramids are integrated, interflowing WEAL units. Life, at all levels, is just configured WEAL, from earthworm to Erasmus, baleen whale to Buddha, virus to Voltaire or mycoplasma to Mahatma Gandhi”.

Excessive waste of paper and ink for Journals:

“I am trying to get things clear: Is it litter that you are seeking or literacy? You have convinced yourself that if you just have more to read – journals, books and now tapes – you will be a better man. In this mad equation where information passes as knowledge, it is degrees for you, and death by degrees for ME. Thousands upon thousands of trees must vanish as a routine to metamorphose into your trivia-laden dailies and periodicals, also entailing the use of many tons of toxic ink and colours to educate, nay, entertain you. As a compensation, they try to tell you how I am being ravaged. *Do not forget that the countries with the largest number of universities, libraries, books, papers and periodicals, also are countries fond of colonizing war-mongering, and polluting*”.

Chapter 7 is titled **Your Needs Versus your wants**. The author says:

“The neon-signed, power-hungry city dwellers who use electricity for whatever they do, the industrialists busy making things which everybody could do well without, and the planners of “progress,” dam India’s venerated life-giving rivers, thus inundating on one side and parching up the other. The results are loss of WEAL

production that gives food and meaning to the rural poor, forcing them to migrate to cities, plenitude of food compromised for ever with resultant increase in prices, colossal loss of trees, tragic loss of land-regeneration because of siltation, and so on. *Whenever a multi-storyed building in Mumbai gets centrally air-conditioned, the ambient air enveloping the surrounding poor shoots up its temperature by a few degrees*".

Chapter 8 is titled **Your Education Your Hallowed Hubris**. There is an interesting quote on Gandhi:

"He was the only one among all leaders who practiced, what he preached. All other have been squandrels of the first order." So you see how "a private citizen without wealth, property, official title, official post, academic distinction, scientific achievement, or artistic gift", "the little brown man in a loincloth" as Louis Fischer described him, continues to live in the hearts of men. Gandhi, Christ, Buddha educated by leading men from darkness to light, from confusion to clarity, from hatred to love, in short, from mere humanness to manifest humaneness all by personal example, even at the cost of their own lives".

In Chapter 11: the author discusses **O u r u n d e r s t a n d i n g (o r misunderstanding) of economics**.

"The three terms, *ecology, economy, and ecumenic* are rooted in Greek *Oikos* = house, and respectively emphasize earth and environment, money and commodities, and human beings and Christian churches. The lexicons also synonymize economy with thrift, frugality verging on parsimony, efficiency, cautiousness, non-redundancy. And yet, economy seen as production, distribution and consumption of goods, commodities and monies is at loggerheads with ecology, the desperate bid to save ME and the environment. In the bargain, mankind itself doesn't seem to matter; the churches have been so bothered about their religious propriety that ME has not found a place in their ethos".

"Economy/economics has rationalized "maximizing behavior" whereby the consumers maximize their sense of satisfaction and utility, and entrepreneurs their drive for profit and expansion. If towards that the most uneconomical use of power, raw material advertisements, air, water and even food-giving land requires to be made, so be it. And all this for a sole species, man – an unrepachable ecumenical approach. Through this lop-sided tug of war, in which ecology pulls on one side and ecumenics and economics on the other, a compelling perspective is rendered clear: Ecology comprises the earth and environmental forces that manufacture needs for all life, including man. Man hubristically channelizes these forces to deny the needs, and therefore the right to exist, of all other non-human species and in return creates goodies and so-called wealth, that are inherently incapable of providing innate satisfaction".

"The multinationals that are busy clearing the Amazonian forests so that beef can be raised for the ravenous haves, must have been guided by the decisions arrived at, in 5-star hotels or offices. The ecological violations in India are basically forged in the 'idyllic' offices of the ministers at the Centre or the State, all of course for a consideration provided by the mighty industrialists".

Chapter 13 is titled **Beyond you and yet not beyond you:**

"In Vedic parlance, you ARE, Sat, Chit, Anand. This reality is beyond you in two ways – it's unhelpably, unavoidably, you, and you are largely ignorant about this in-built greatness of yours. I want to awaken your sense of self-reverence in the hope,

and with the conviction that from thereafter you will learn to revere life in general, and ME in particular”.

Chapter 15 is titled **The greatest ecological elegy:**

As we have referred in the introduction, this is the letter of the Red Indian Chief of Seattle to the U.S. President. Some excerpts:

“Whatever befalls the Earth befalls the Sons of the Earth. How can you buy or sell the sky, the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pin needle, every sandy shore, and every mist in the darkwoods, every clearing and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which course through the trees carries the memories of the Red man”.

“This we know. The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood, which unites one family. All things are connected.

Whatever befalls the earth befalls sons of earth. Man did not weave the web of life: he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself”.

In the Epilogue:

“You may be the pinnacle of Darwinian design, the most evolved animal the seeming master of whatever you survey. However you have proved too clever for your own good. Aren’t you responsible for my having to make a dying declaration?”

“The prophesy that the meek shall inherit the Earth is more a plea than a pronouncement. It is a gentle reminder to the mighty human species the ME and my elements can tolerate you only to a point. You are my most recent offspring. You need to exercise caution so that firstly ME, and through that you survive to look forward to a future that you seem to be denying to yourself, and more so to your children, and all other forms of life”.

This book is of the Must Read category. I would urge the readers to look for the book read and enjoy.

M R Rajagopalan mrراجاگوبالان1935@gmail.com

Mahatma Gandhi’s appendix

My father’s first cousin, Dr Cecil Maddock was a doctor in the Indian Army Medical Corps in the days before World War II and the partition of the Indian Subcontinent. He was responsible for the medical care of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru when they were in prison under the British Raj. He and Gandhi got on very well, and Dr Maddock admired him greatly, which was not the case with Nehru. He felt that Gandhi trusted him and they had long conversations.

Gandhi developed appendicitis, and while the operation was in progress, there was a power failure and all the lights went out. Dr Maddock ordered a car to be driven up outside the theatre with the headlights on the windows, so he could complete the operation successfully. Dr Maddock may have been instrumental in Gandhi’s early release from prison.

Cecil Maddock retired from the IAMC before World War II and worked at the Ministry of Health on wartime public health problems. At the time (1940), I was a medical student across Westminster Bridge at St Thomas's Hospital. He always made me welcome for lunch in the Ministry canteen, known as 'the Senior Salmonella Club', and regaled me with anecdotes. I remember him as a very kind and capable man, and a credit to his profession. He was married but had no children.

Dr Peter Pritchard BEM, MA, FRCGP

This is interesting in view of Gandhi's sometimes expressed negative opinion of modern medicine. See for example the review of the book on Dr Mehta above. Editor



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