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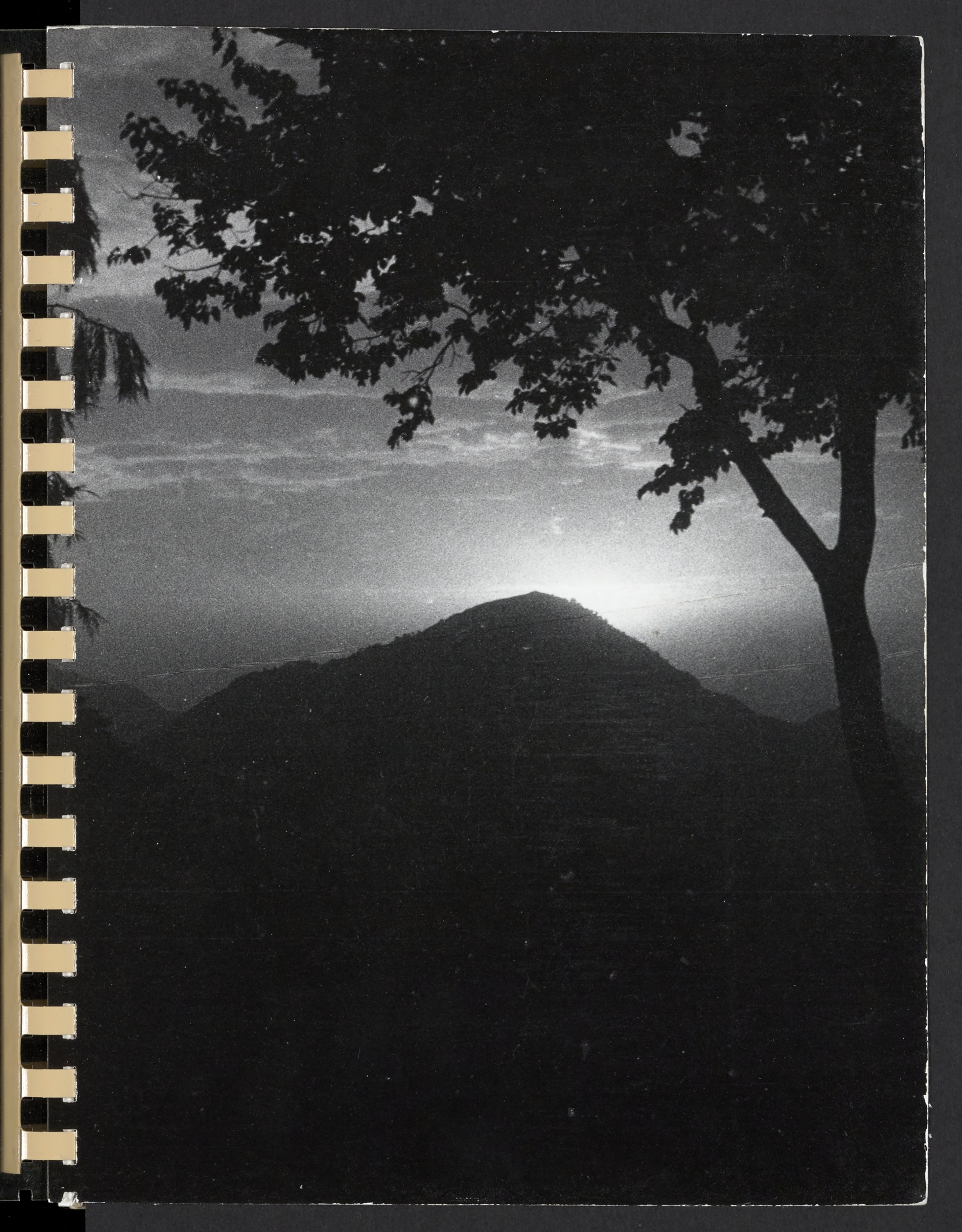
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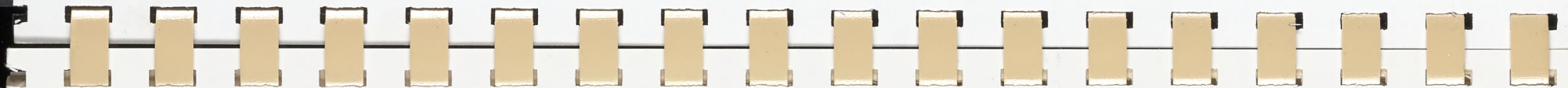
INDIAN TWILIGHT

Edwin Herbert Spang

1



E. M. STANDING
MONTESSORI STUDIES CENTER
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98122

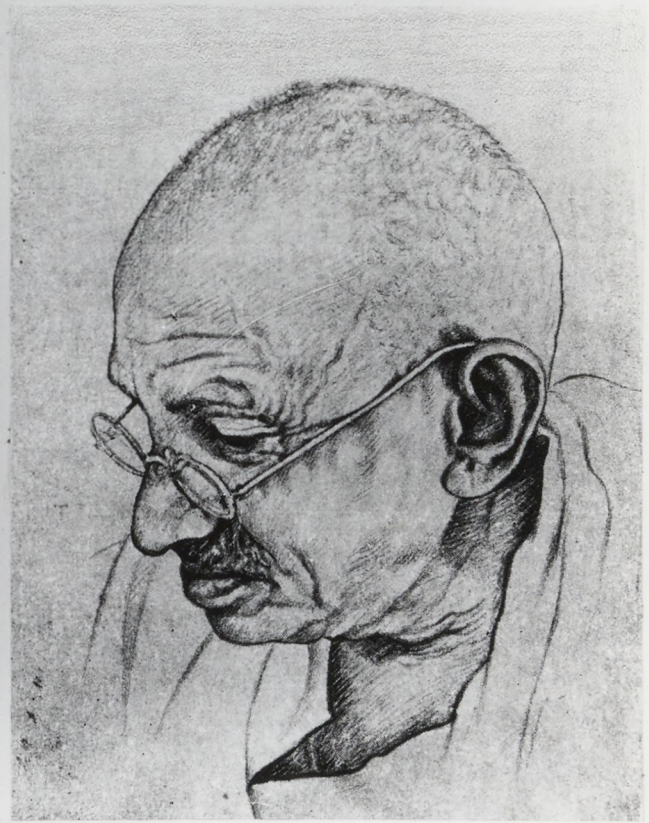




Imperial Sunset

before

Indian Dawn



AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In 1921, through the instrumentality of Dr. Maria Montessori, the famous Italian educationist, I was brought in touch with Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai of Ahmedabad. At that time Mrs. Sarabhai was looking for an English Montessori tutor for her family and I was eager to go to India to study Oriental Philosophy.

I met the Sarabhais in London, early in 1921, and after discussing the matter it was arranged that I should follow them back to India as soon as was convenient.

It was one of the happiest decisions of my life. After stopping in Barcelona to confer with Montessori, I arrived, early in 1921, in Ahmedabad and settled down at once to my work as a family tutor. I was one of some half dozen tutors - the rest being Indians and living in the city of Ahmedabad. In all India I do not think I could have found more pleasant and attractive children to work with; nor more sympathetic and understanding parents.

I had left many relations and friends behind in Europe and in order to keep in touch with them - since I could not write to each separately - I decided to send round circular letters at intervals.

I had completely forgotten about these letters but one day - thirty years afterward - when I was rummaging about in my sister's attic in London I came across a sheaf of faded papers bound together. Turning them over listlessly I suddenly discovered that they were the circular letters I had written so many years before, describing my experiences in India. My mother - good soul - had religiously kept them, and before her death had handed them over to my sister.

As I read them after that long interval it seemed as if I were reading them for the first time. And, as I read them, I also got the impression that perhaps they contained matter which might still be of interest to a wider audience.

In the first place they gave a first-hand glimpse into the seething world of the politics of that time - in particular, into the Swaraj, Home Rule or Non-Co-operation movement led by Gandhi (who himself comes into the picture). It was a critical epoch for India - the struggle between the imperialism of the British Raj and the new spirit of

independence which was trying to assert itself. It was, in fact, the Twilight of Imperial Sunset over against that of an Indian Dawn --- the birth pangs of a new India about to be born.

Secondly, I realized these letters to a certain degree reflected the coming together of two different "Weltanshagen" (philosophies of life) the Oriental and the Occidental; and this contrast is, by its very nature, one of perennial interest.

Thirdly - and most urgently - I was desirous of getting these letters printed in order to be able to leave behind a monument to the long friendship which has existed for nearly half a century between the Sarabhai family and myself. Anything I think has some value if it helps to make clear that - in spite of profound differences of heredity and tradition - there exists a deep common bond of humanity between the East and the West.

I am particularly grateful to Bharati Devi (who years ago, I prophesied would herself become a literary genius) for adding a corollary to this book bringing the members of the Sarabhai Family up to date; for no one likes to read a story and leave it as it were suspended in mid-air without properly coming to an end (in so far as it can have one). I am grateful to her, also, for editing this MS and making the arrangements for its going through the press.

I should like to take this opportunity also to express our gratitude to Padmashree Ravishanker Raval, who - from memory - after 40 years drew the illustrations for this book. One has only to look at them to realize that they are the work of a master hand. Mr. Raval is seen, as a young man, along with the other Indian tutors on page 25.

Since that time Mr. Raval has carved out for himself a distinguished career; and has become one of the best known artists in Gujarat - indeed in the whole of India. He has occupied many important positions in the world of Indian Art, such as the President of the Arts Society of India, Member of the Art Advisory Board for the Central Government, Vice-President of the Fine Arts Academy, Gujarat State, etc. - and has himself published a number of important works on Indian Art.

We should like to record our thanks to the late Dr. Maria Montessori. It was she who, in the first place, established the link between the Sarabhai family and myself. This for her,



Dr. Maria Montessori talking to some children from Leena's school, "Shreyas", Saraladevi, in the centre, talking to Ada, Mrs. Maria Montessori.

as well as for me, was the beginning of a long friendship between the Sarabhai family and herself. Years later Dr. Montessori gave one of her famous six months International Training Courses for teachers in the Shahibag compound under the auspices of Mrs. Saraladevi Sarabhai and as her guest.

How much I owe to Mrs. Sarabhai I should never be able to express; I can best attempt to do so by quoting Dr. Montessori's own words. In her dedication to the Indian edition of her "Secret of Childhood" she says:-

"To Saraladevi Sarabhai,

The Ideal Montessori Mother
Who has dedicated herself to
The cause of the child in India."

Ted Standing

E. Mortimer Standing
March 1966
4831 -- 35th Ave. S.W.
Seattle, Washington U.S.A.

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Letter I

"The Burrah Sahibs!"
or
The Empire Builders

"Empress of India",
P & O Liner,
Indian Ocean,

April 15th, 1921.

My dear All,

As I despair of ever being able to write to all my friends individually, I have decided - as the next best thing - to send round a circular letter.

So here I am on my way to India to take up a post as private tutor to an Indian family - Mr. & Mrs. Ambalal Sarabhai of Ahmedabad. I met Mrs. S. recently in London through a mutual acquaintance, Doctor Maria Montessori, the great Italian educationist. Mrs. Sarabhai is particularly keen on having her children brought up on Montessori lines; and I am particularly keen on going to live in the "mysterious East". As the Dottoressa knew I had made a study of her method she recommended me. So eccoci (here we are!)

I joined the ship at Marseilles: Mr. Sarabhai, who does everything handsomely, had booked me a first class passage.

My fellow passengers are a most interesting set. To myself I have christened them "The Empire Builders" - for so in fact they are. The greater part of them are "true-blue British Sahibs", Burrah Sahibs! with their wives and children, returning to their various jobs in India. They include military men; civil servants; big business men; with a sprinkling of lawyers and doctors amongst them; and a few who are travelling just for fun and adventure (like Colonel Bury at our table, who, I discovered, is going to climb Mount Everest). Collectively they form a distinct type; well-mannered, well-groomed, self-confident, well-disciplined, and most of all - unshakably secure in their belief in the dominance of the

White Race, especially of those who belong to the British Empire. This was epitomized to me, on the first evening on board, by the tone and manner in which a young British officer said to a Goanese servant, "Steward, shut this port-hole". No "please," mark you, but just the tacit assumption that "That's what you're in the world for - your whole mission in life just to minister to us". It sounds even worse when one hears the children imitate their parents saying - "Ayah, bring me a lemonade".

Not all the first-class passengers, however, belong to this ruling caste. There are also a number of "Natives". They are called that, though some of them are quite big guns in their own country. It is very noticeable how completely these colored folk are left to themselves. Not that the sahibs are deliberately rude to them, but rather that these orientals simply don't seem to exist for them - socially - as though they were creatures from a different planet. One gets the impression, too, that the Indians keep to themselves for fear of getting snubbed.

A striking incident happened a few evenings ago which threw a revealing light on this racial situation. A fancy-dress party had been arranged and everyone was invited to take part. One of the Indian ladies - a very pretty and intelligent girl, the daughter of a Native Official - came dressed in a most original costume. She wore a beautiful Indian saree: but it was plastered all over with "Not-Wanted-On-the Voyage" labels. It was a brilliant summing up of the situation. To me the oddest thing about it was that none of the British seemed to be the least embarrassed by the implied sarcasm. In fact, the judges awarded the girl "first prize for originality". A good example of British impartiality, "playing the game", and all that!

The fancy-dress party, by the way, was a most picturesque success. An Anglican Bishop went as "Caller Herring"; a Major, as Henry VIII, with all his wives! Our Emir (we have a real Emir on board) went as "himself", and looked magnificent (his eight wives were not in evidence). I went as Sir Walter Raleigh, on the strength of a false beard, a hat lent me by an obliging lady, and an Ostrich feather I bought in Aden. It was a strange sight to see this varied gathering all rubbing shoulders together, Eastern Potentates, Princesses, Sheiks, Fakirs, Ghosts, angels, fairies and what not, chattering, and dancing to the ship's orchestra under a special display of flags,

coloured lights and decorations. Above us the immense blue vault of night, and around us the balmy stillness of the Indian Ocean, in which the sitters-out could watch the transient gleam of the flying fishes as they "flew" with quivering fins over and into the moonlit waters. One of the flying fishes actually managed to "fly" up on to the ship, where it lay palpitating and flapping its wing-fins on deck in the moonlight.

Later April 21st.

We docked for several hours at Aden. There I witnessed the confused and picturesque medley of an Eastern crowd, - costumes of every kind, colours of an infinite variety, ditto sounds, ditto smells! all combining to give the unmistakable flavour of the Orient. And in the midst of all this confusion, this cosmopolitan mass of heterogeneous humanity, stood a group of British Tommies in khaki shorts and topees under the command of a spruce, young English officer. Wandering further along I came to a temporary jail in which, on looking through the bars, I could see dimly outlined in the darkness strange black forms with shining eyes and gleaming teeth. Long, skinny supplicating arms were stretched out through the bars, and raucous voices within kept up a chorus of "Baksheesh, Baksheesh". To complete the picture, a couple of Tommies with broad Cockney accents stood nonchalantly by. Still a few hundred yards further on I came upon a Courthouse where an agitated and vociferous Arab woman was declaiming some tragedy before a British magistrate.

One could not help wondering what would happen if these representatives of law and order were suddenly removed from that milling multitude. The British reminded me of a solid island in the midst of a turbulent sea. As I watched them going quietly and unconcernedly about their business they seemed to take on an almost mystical significance, becoming visible symbols of discipline, efficiency, power, justice - in a word, Empire.

In a similar way (I mused) must the Roman soldiers have stood out in contrast to the same, or similar, crowds nearly two thousand years ago, as representatives and agents of the might of Imperial Rome. As these thoughts passed through my mind I suddenly remembered a statement I had read

once in some Theosophical book, - viz. that the British race, by and large, are a collective reincarnation of the Romans! hence their inborn efficiency at Empire Building! An ingenious theory, you must admit; but - like Theosophy itself - based, it seems to me on insufficient evidence. Anyway I shall soon be in the land of reincarnation, so perhaps I shall get further light upon it there. (I might say, parenthetically, - and don't be shocked please! - that one of my reasons for coming out to India is to study this business of reincarnation, which has always exercised a strong fascination over me). Colonel Bury by the way, the Everest man, is a great authority on Indian religions. He has lived in Tibet; and he gave me a most astonishing account of how the Buddhist monks in that country elect their new Dalai Lhama - a procedure mixed up in a most incredible way with the belief in Reincarnation.

As I mentioned above we stopped for several hours at Port Said, and we were allowed to go on shore. There too, was the same medley of peoples as at Aden, shouting, gesticulating, and bartering; the same motley of colours, sounds and smells; and over everything (or so it seemed to me) the same unanalysable but unmistakable savour of wickedness. There too, as at Aden, in the midst of this garish rabble I saw something, or rather someone, who seemed to me a sort of mystical representative of something more than himself, taken as an individual. It was a Roman Catholic priest stolidly and imperturbably ambling through that surging throng. Like the Tommies mentioned above, he too represented a great but intangible power, almost staggering in its vitality and continuity - the spiritual power of Rome. For - Quaker as I am - I am bound to admit that, if any of us had happened to be walking along here, or in Alexandria, Antioch or Ephesus, in the year 200 A.D. we might easily have seen, cheek by jowl with the Roman soldiers on duty, a Roman Catholic priest, ambling along in just the same way. But not by any chance would we have seen an Anglican Bishop, nor a Methodist Parson, nor a Quaker Elder. (Lest you should read into this statement more than is meant, I hasten to add that this does not prove that the Roman priest is right and the Quaker wrong, but that the Roman Church, like the Mahommedan Religion, must be very well organized, and on very stable principles).

Finally, my dear friends, if you are not too tired already, I would like to mention one more incident which struck me also as being symbolically significant. It

took place just as we had left Port Said and were going through the first mile or so of the Canal. It was early morning and a group of passengers, of which I was one, were leaning against the rails enjoying our first glimpse of the desert as it stretched away into the horizon, - mysterious, limitless, unchanging - the Garden of Allah. Then our attention was caught by a group of fellaheen - or whatever they are called - who were working on the bank of the Canal. As we approached they stopped work and lined up to see us go by. As the ship was passing directly in front of them one of the blackguards deliberately uncovered himself. At this he and his companions burst into a chorus of vulgar guffaws, directed especially at the confusion and embarrassment of the ladies present. It would be hard to imagine anything more deliberately bestial. It made me think at once of Kipling's phrase "Ship me somewhere East of Suez where there ain't no Ten Commandments - "And then my mind went back to something which happened, or is supposed to have happened, centuries before the Ten Commandments were given out (not far from here, by the way) I mean the Fall of Man. Such gratuitously degrading behaviour makes one wonder whether perhaps there may not be something after all in this Doctrine of the Fall, and the effects of Original Sin, because such a disgusting action in a rational being would seem to require some explanation.

I hope you haven't been bored with these symbolic abstractions! I can assure you there won't be any in my next letter; which will deal with very concrete items; for in two days we shall be in Bombay, and the day after I shall arrive at Ahmedabad my destination. I am very eager to know what my young charges will be like; and my next letter will be all about them.

Letter II

THE CHILDREN

The Retreat,
Shahibag,
Ahmedabad,
India.

May 5th, 1921.

Dear Everybody,

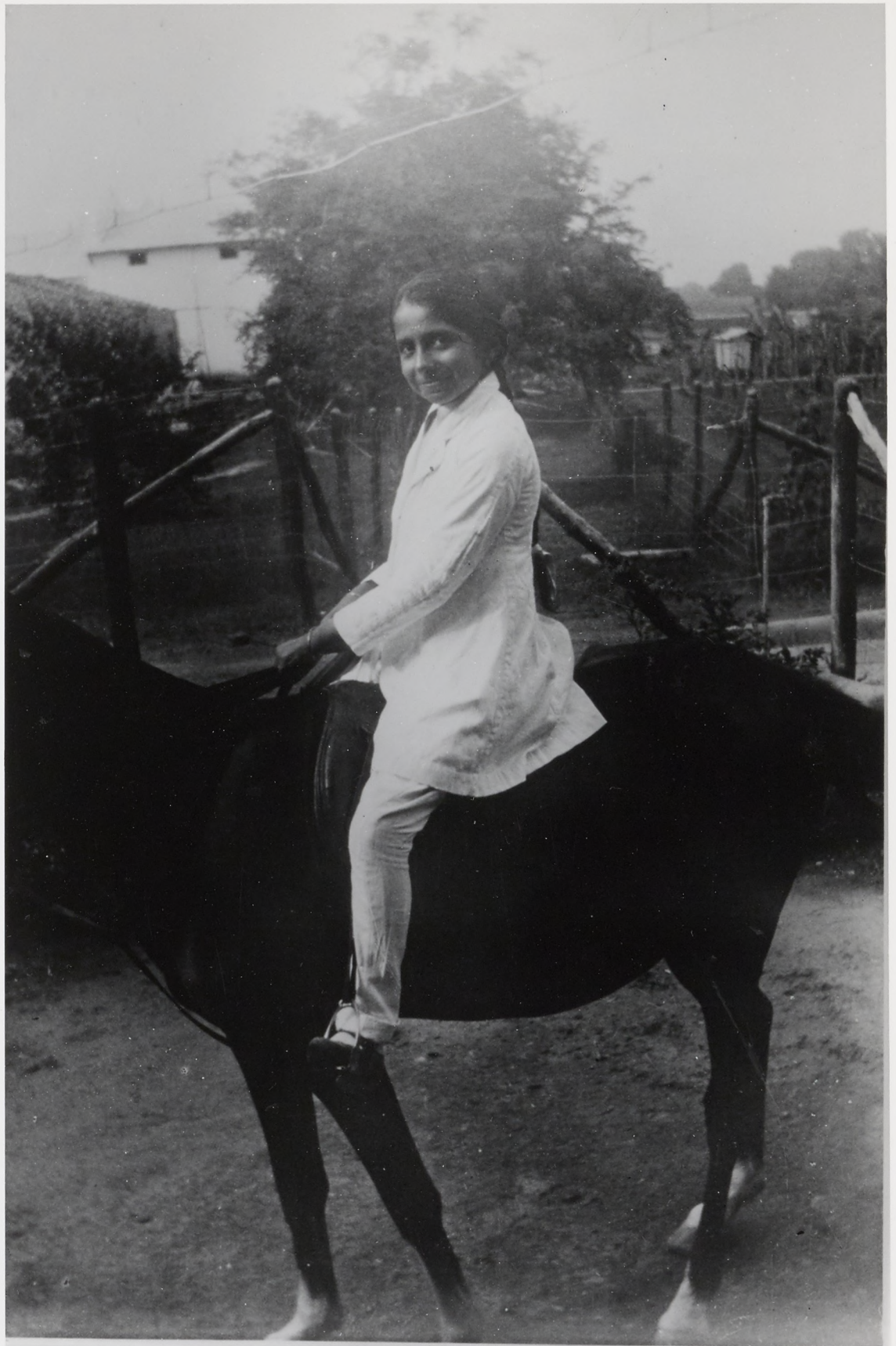
I have been here in Ahmedabad a fortnight now, and am still alive! - though the temperature is around 118 degrees, nearly 20 degrees above blood heat. Our departure to a hill station has been delayed because the house to which we are going - in Matheran - is having some alterations done to it. However, we expect to go next week, and I for one will not be sorry.

The children and I are already the best of friends. We hit it off from the start. The morning I arrived - almost the very minute - they came and stood in a little group in the hall outside the door of my room egging each other on in whispers. At my invitation they came in, silently at first and very tentatively, and solemnly regarded me with wide-open eyes. As soon as the ice was broken, I was shown round the house and compound in a very personally conducted tour! First, I was introduced to Tippie and her six small puppies; then to the rabbits and the tame deer. After that we went to the stables, and saw the horses and ponies, in charge of Salim Khan, the head sawar, a very handsome looking Mahomedan with a striking moustache and turban. Then to the building which they called "The School" and to another "School", which is in process of being constructed.

Finally we landed up again in my room. I wonder if you can guess what was the next item on our programme, - something which shows how children are the same all over the world. "Please will you tell us a story." So off we went to it "like French falconers, flying at anything we saw",¹ and the first thing that came into my mind was the story of Puss in Boots; so I told them that; and it went down like hot cakes.

I have already come to the conclusion that I am very lucky in my proteges, for these children are simply most charming and delightful. They are real children - just like English or German children. Colour and longitude do not seem to make a bit of difference. They are so appreciative, too,

1 "Hamlet"



of anything one does for them, and so well-behaved; it speaks well for the English governesses they have had before me.*

The Retreat itself is a wonderful place - quite like a palace, and the grounds are very beautiful too. And I could write reams about the strange way people live out here. But to-day I will tell you about the children; for they are, more than anything else, the centre of my existence here.

There are six in the family; and they all speak English except Vikram, the baby, who is not yet two: he doesn't speak English (for the same reason as the first Prince of Wales didn't!)

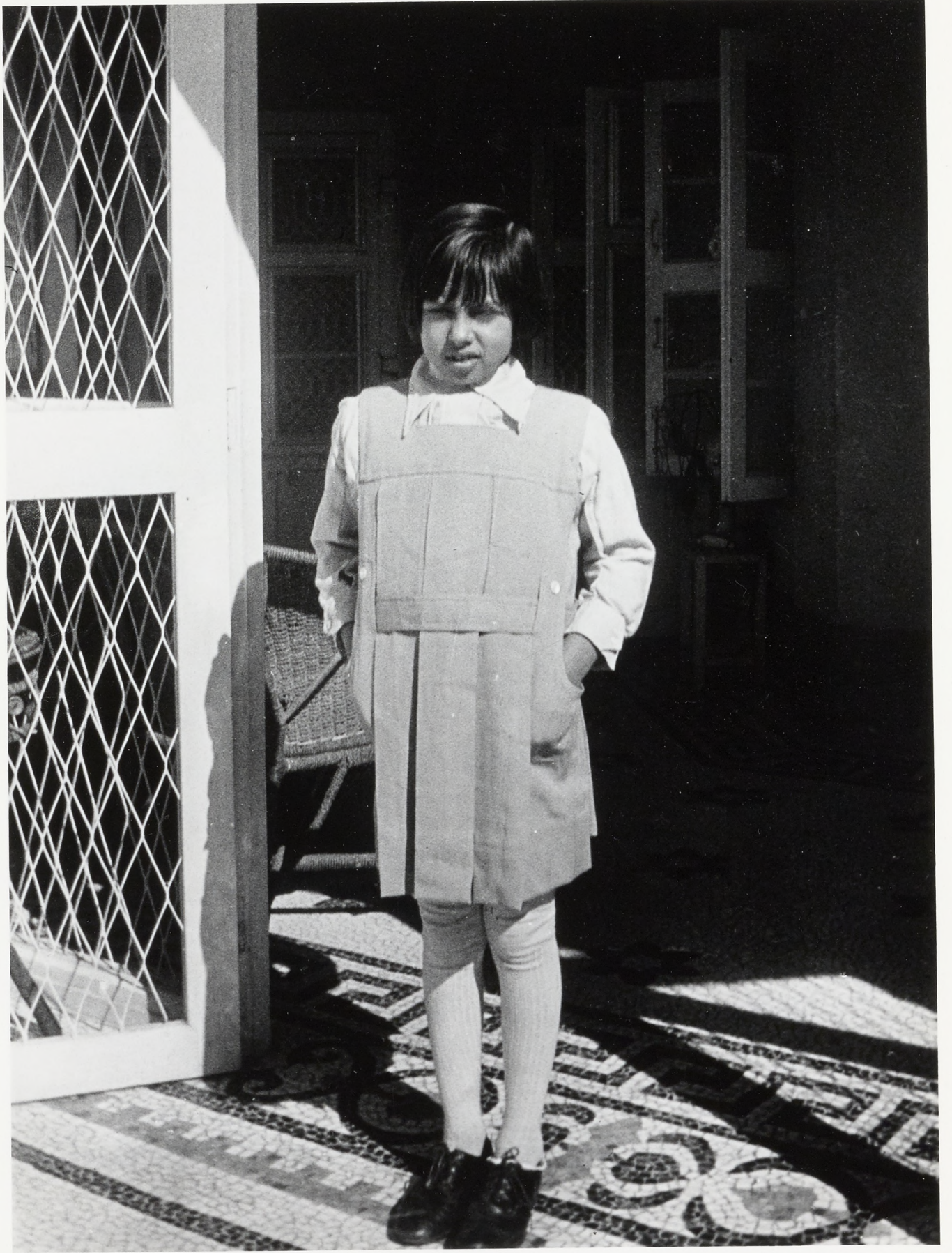
The oldest is Mrudula, a girl of about ten. She is a rather reserved child and has at times an almost grown-up manner. She is very domesticated in her tastes, and loves cooking and sewing and all sorts of handwork. A motherly creature who takes a great interest in the welfare of the younger members of the family, Vikram especially. She speaks English quite well but not so freely as her younger sister Bharati, nor does she write it so well either.

Mrudula - or "Mrudie" as they often call her - is a very serious and conscientious little person; almost, I would say, too much so for her age. I sometimes think it would do her good to grow younger, for a year or two, instead of getting older! She nearly always dresses Indian fashion, that is with a long skirt and a sari; whereas Bharati prefers to dress like an English school girl in a frock or tunic.

Next after Mrudie comes Bharatiben, the one I have just mentioned ('Ben', sister, by the way, added on to a name is a polite way of addressing or referring to all the girls, - and grown-up ladies too - just as they tag on the title 'Bhai', brother to members of the opposite sex). Bharati is an astonishingly gifted girl, and often staggers me with the things she does. She has a

*Actually the English "nannies" brought out from England at the time of Bharati's birth there, had been discontinued long since, when the eldest child was three years old, as they couldn't fit in the Indian household and didn't meet with the parents' idea of how their children were to be brought up.

*Editor's Note.







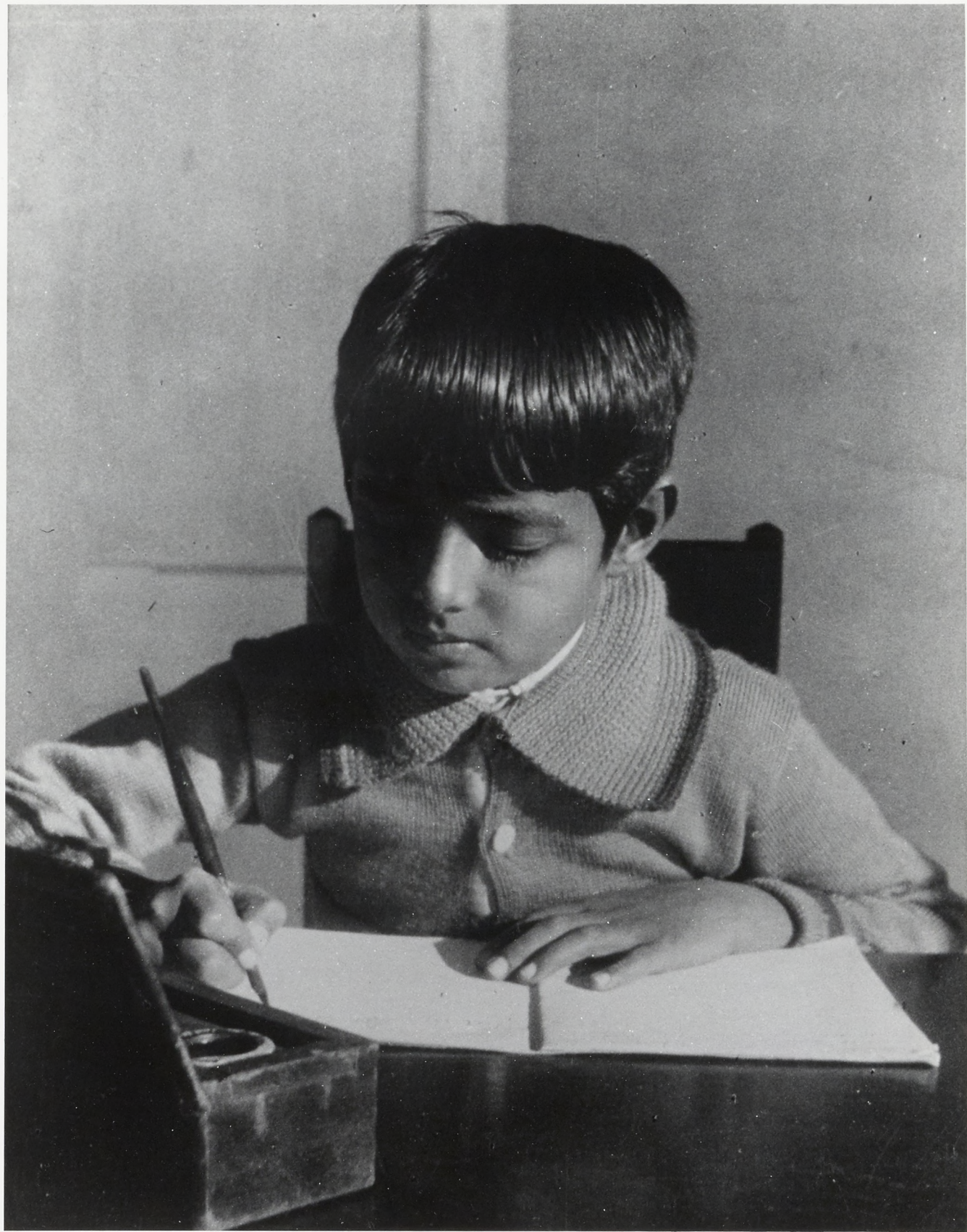
lighter complexion than the rest of the family and wears her hair bobbed in English fashion (Mrudula wears hers long and mostly hidden in the fold of her Sari). Bharati has an enthusiasm for things English, and is constantly plying me with questions about life in England. I think her highest ambition at the moment is to go to an English boarding school for girls. Mrudula, on the other hand, has no love for the English Raj or for anything English; in fact I have the feeling that she is friendly to me not because I am English, but in spite of it.

Though only $8\frac{1}{2}$ years old Bharati is already an omnivorous reader; and that, if you please, in three languages - English, Hindi, and Gujarati, which is the local dialect. You may often find her curled up in an armchair in the drawing-room or a corner of the library, lost to the world, buried deep in a book. Just at present she is reading a school story, - about an English girls' school. At $8\frac{1}{2}$ years she is already more advanced - even in English - than most English children two or three years beyond her age. She has a restless, eager mind, and you can almost see her quick intelligence looking out from her bright eyes. I really think Bharati has a touch of genius.

After Bharati comes Suhrid, the heir, - (pronounced Soorood). He is a real boy, dresses in shorts and a shirt, and professes a lofty contempt for dolls and sewing and such like activities, "fit only for girls." Like the elephant's child he is consumed with an "insatiable curiosity". He follows me round like a familiar spirit - or rather one of my familiar spirits, because Bharati is generally on the other side - and plies me interminably with questions, all day long, on every conceivable subject from football to the Deity. In fact they both do. Suhrid has a most charming manner and a most affectionate nature, - very "anhangend" as the Germans would say. He is a well-knit, compact little personality, always neat in his appearance with close cropped black hair and very dark shining eyes. He is a born philosopher and seems constantly pondering the "why and wherefore" of things.

Fourth in the list is Leena. How shall I ever describe her? To begin with she is an extraordinarily beautiful child, with lovely rounded contours on face and limbs, dark eyes and long dark eyelashes, for which some women would pay a fortune. Her complexion, too,









Suhrid, looking very serious, with one of the famous puppies.

has a peculiar lustre; and her big eyes are inexhaustible wells of mischief. For one so young - she is only five - she has an amazing amount of character. Her energy seems without limit, and she spends literally hours every day, buzzing around on a little tricycle. She has no use for encumbrances in the way of superfluous clothes; and though she comes out, at intervals, from the hands of her ayah beautifully dressed and spic and span, it is not long before she sheds her frock, and rushes round in her panties and vest, looking all the quainter because she wears an enormous topee on her head. In fact she looks more like a topee with a child than a child with a topee. Even in the hottest part of the day - when I am laid out completely - she remains irrepressibly active, and seems to be everywhere at once, like Ariel on the ship "flaming amazement".¹ In other ways she is more like Puck than Ariel for she is full of mischievous pranks.

For some reason I have not yet succeeded in fathoming why Leena always carries a key-ring round her neck, with half a dozen keys attached. I have never known her to open or shut anything with them, so conclude they must be the symbols of some office, like the keys of St. Peter! Whenever you meet her she is generally carrying around one of her many dolls. Poor creatures, they all seem to be somewhat the worse for wear; most of them are minus an arm or a leg lost, I suppose, in the effort to keep pace with the impetuous tempo of her life. Sometimes the doll's place is taken by Robin, one of Tippiess's famous puppies, now Leena's property as well as Tippiess's; or it may be a rabbit, or a kitten. She seems to carry them by any part of their anatomy that comes first to hand; yet, with that curious sort of understanding which seems to exist between animals and children, they all seem to endure these attentions with remarkable patience and long suffering. You can never tell what this young minx is going to do or say next. The other day, on my remonstrating with her for sliding precariously down the bannisters, she replied in a flash - "I prayed to God, and He helped me"! What, I ask you, is the answer to that one?

After Leena comes Gautam, a quiet, sharp featured young fellow with a serene smile, such as his namesake (Gautama Buddha) might have possessed. He is a very enterprising child for his age - he is just four - and is

¹ Shakespeare's "Tempest"









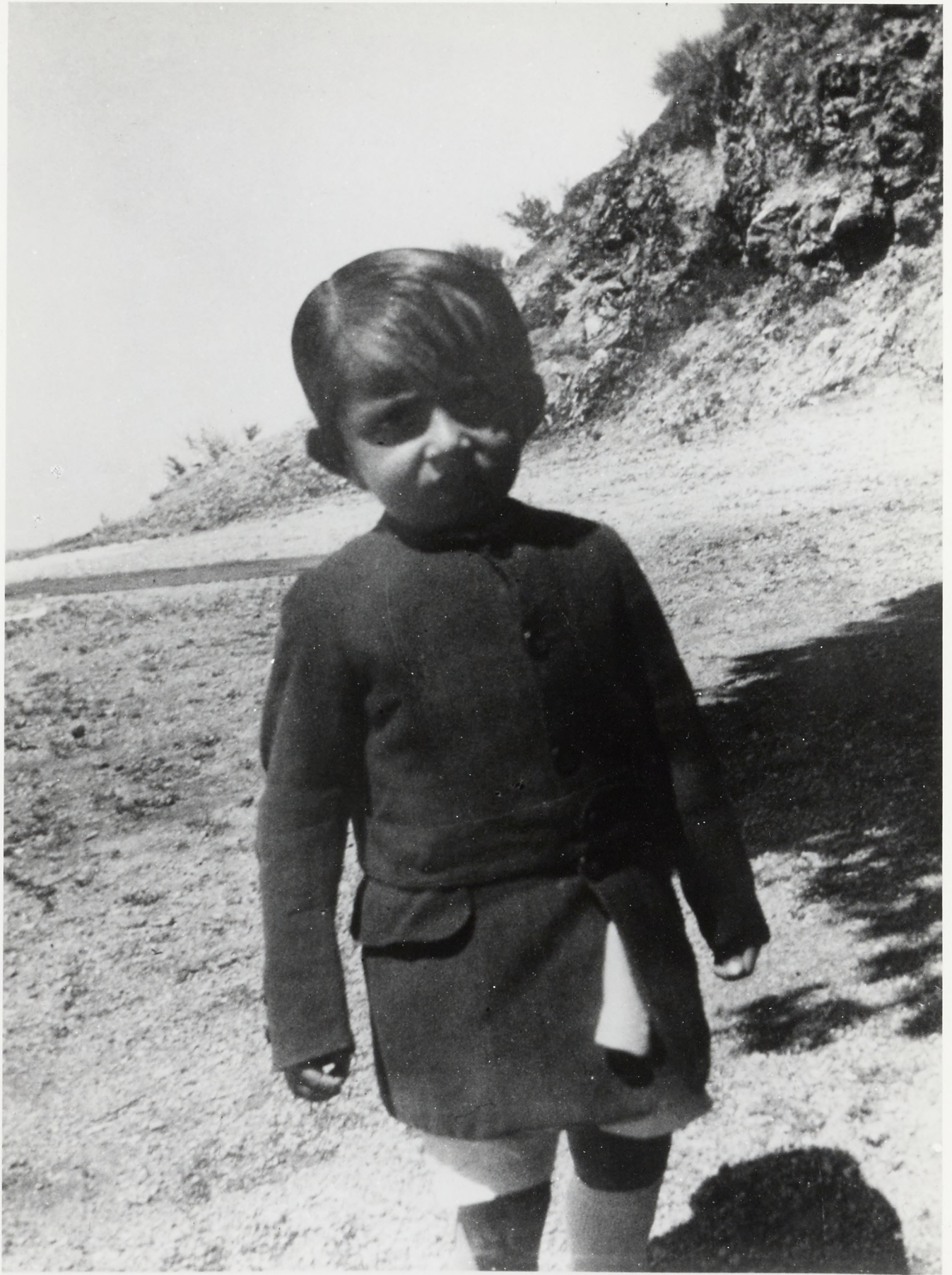


determined not to be left out of anything, and makes great efforts to join in all the games with the older ones.

The Baby is Vikram, which means "hero". He is a well favoured child with a large head and big beautiful brown eyes. (I wonder, by the way, why all babies have such prodigiously large heads! I suppose it is because they have to do such a lot of hard thinking in trying to figure out all the strange things they keep running into in this funny old world). Vikram has only just recently acquired the art of walking on two legs, and is determined to take full advantage of it. Filled with the spirit of adventure he is constantly going off on voyages of discovery, - followed wherever he goes by his faithful Ayah, a pretty and gracious creature of much dignity but very few words. She just follows him round like his shadow; and whenever he falls into any serious difficulty, she appears like a Goddess in a Greek Tragedy - "A Dea ex Machina" - and puts him on his feet again, - literally or metaphorically or both, as the case may be.

This enumeration of the members of the family would not be complete without a few words about Tippie. She is very much a family dog; first, because she is treated and behaves just as though she was a member of the family; and secondly, because she has a large family of her own. Tippie is a bull-terrier (or ought one to say cow-terrier?) and is a veritable saint amongst dogs. She has an imperturbable temperament and the most charitable of dispositions. She is a vegetarian like all the other members of the household - except carnivorous me! It may be that that is why she is so good-natured and intelligent, - (Look at Bernard Shaw! a keen vegetarian, and remember what Sir Andrew Ague-Cheek says: "I am a great eater of beef, and I sometimes think it does great harm to my wit").

The litter of six with which Tippie has recently enriched the population of the Retreat consists of the jolliest and most irresponsible young rascals that ever bit each other's ears or worried a bootlace. It is quite providential that Nature should have sent six puppies as there are just six children; so for once in the general economy of things the supply exactly meets the demand. The puppies have all been given English names. First there is Robin, Leena's pet; then comes Gipse, and after her Venise, and so on (I forget the others) until we come to a little black and white scamp with almost incredible barking powers called Charlie Chaplin.







Here I must stop, rather abruptly, as the boy will be going any moment now with the letters for the post.

My dear all,

The more I think of it the more sure I feel that some lucky star must have been in the ascendant when I got in touch with the Serabhai through Madame Malabar. Or perhaps it might be more orthodox to say that my guardian angel must have been putting in a lot of extra work. Anyway I truly and solemnly think that in all India, with all its three hundred million inhabitants, I could not have hit on a finer family to live with. For I do actually live with them, not as a member of the household and not just a visiting aide.

In one of my previous letters I said something about the children. Now I think, knowing you could have concluded that your own dear delightful children must have wise and devoted parents. And you would have been quite right.

Actually I see more of the children than I do of Mr. and Mrs. Serabhai. To begin with, Mr. Serabhai - for that is his first name - is away nearly all day in Mumbai at his business. Indeed sometimes he goes away for a week at a time to visit extensions of his firm in different cities, especially in Madras, where he also has a private house of his own.

I am sure that Mr. Serabhai must have a genius for business. It runs in the family. For his father also was a successful industrial magnate, and it is Mr. Serabhai who built up the most productive business house founded at least three generations earlier. I get the impression that he has the gift of seeing things as a whole, and being able to separate the essentials from the non-essentials, and then does not get bogged down with too many details; though latter he stands over to others. I have been present on one or two occasions when he was discussing business affairs with some of his staff; and I was struck with the way he seemed to put them at ease, and has the knack of getting the best out of them, picking their brains (as the saying is) but at the same time making them feel that their views were appreciated. But it is equally evident that the final decision rests with him; and he has the quiet assurance of a man who knows what

The exact date of this letter (and the next as well) is not known, but it is put here which seems to be a fitting place.

Letter III

FATHER

The Retreat,
Shahibag,
Ahmedabad.

1921*

My dear All,

The more I think of it the more sure I feel that some lucky star must have been in the ascendant when I got in touch with the Sarabhais through Madame Montessori. Or perhaps it might be more orthodox to say that my guardian angel must have been putting in a lot of extra work. Anyway I truly and soberly think that in all India, with all its three hundred million inhabitants, I could not have hit on a nicer family to live with. For I do actually live with them, and am a member of the household and not just a visiting tutor.

In one of my previous letters I said something about the children. From a proiori reasoning you could have concluded that such charming and delightful children must have wise and devoted parents. And you would have been quite right.

Actually I see more of the children than I do of Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai. To begin with, Mr. Ambalal - for that is his first name - is away nearly all day in Ahmedabad at his business. Indeed sometimes he goes away for a week at a time to visit extensions of his firm in different cities, especially in Bombay, where he also has a private house of his own.

I am sure that Mr. Sarabhai must have a genius for business. It runs in the family, for his father also was a successful industrial magnate, and it is Mr. Ambalal who built up the modern productive business house founded at least three generations earlier. I get the impression that he has the gift of seeing things as a whole, and being able to separate the essentials from the non-essentials, and thus does not get bogged down with too many details; these latter he hands over to others. I have been present on one or two occasions when he was discussing business affairs with some of his staff; and I was struck with the way he seemed to put them at ease, and has the knack of getting the best out of them, picking their brains (as the saying is) but at the same time making them feel that their views were appreciated. But it is equally evident that the final decision rests with him; and he has the quiet assurance of a man who knows what

*The exact date of this letter (and the next as well) is not known, but it is put here which seems to be a fitting place.



he wants to do, and how to set about doing it.

In a manner of speaking Mr. Sarabhai lives a sort of double life. When he drives off from the residential area of Shahibag (literally 'the imperial gardens') to the Calico Textile Mills, six or seven miles away, in the morning in his Daimler (or rather one of his chauffeurs drives him) he is dressed in European attire, with coat, and trousers, socks and shoes, and looks like any Indian gentleman that you might meet in Lombard Street or Oxford Circus. But when he returns at the end of the day he sloughs off his more formal attire and dresses in Eastern style, with dhotis, white shirt, bare feet and sandals. He seems able to shed his business preoccupations along with his business dress, and - thoroughly relaxed - becomes completely one of the family. Very often on his return, accompanied by the faithful Tippie, who greets him with a wag of her long tail, he will go for a stroll round the garden and compound with the children; or sit and chat with Mr. Gidwani, a Cambridge man, friend of the family and a very frequent visitor; who helps him in the business or read the newspapers and journals (including "Punch", the "Sphere" and the "London Illustrated News").

The Sarabhais are fond of entertaining and are practiced and accomplished hosts. There is never any lack of conversation on these occasions, for both Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai are very sociable persons, and enjoy exchanging ideas on all sorts of subjects. Very often politics form the most engrossing subject matter for discussion, since (as you probably have seen in the papers) India is going through great political upheavals and new developments under the guidance of the great Mahatma Gandhi - who, by the way, lives in Ahmedabad and is a friend of the family. But it is by no means always politics which form the subject of discussion, but sometimes philosophy or art; for Mr. Sarabhai is a man of wide general culture. Both he and his almost inseparable friend and business partner, Mr. Bakubhai, married to his cousin Nirmalaben, are blessed with a sense of humour, which keeps discussions from becoming acrimonious. In fact, Mr. Sarabhai is one of the most genial and affable persons you could wish to meet, and I sometimes think his engaging manner must be one of the reasons for his success in business.

Although, as I mentioned above, he usually keeps his business and his home life in two separate compartments, sometimes they intermix. In the middle of a meal he may suddenly think of some matter which is important and urgent.

On such an occasion he will suddenly clap his hands and tell the servant who answers it to go and fetch Mr. Mascherinhas, his secretary. The latter duly arrives with notebook and pencil; and then and there Mr. Sarabhai will dictate a letter, sometimes in Gujarati or it may be in the most excellent English. Having got this off his chest he turns his attention once more to the family and the meal.

In some ways Mr. Sarabhai is an extraordinary mixture, being at the same time a representative of two entirely different cultures, the East and the West. He speaks English easily and fluently - I believe he can even think in English so much is he at home in it. He drives off to business in his Daimler - the largest of his four or five cars - and his house is fitted with electricity, hot and cold running water, and other Western amenities. Not only that, but he has his own business house in London, in the City, to and from which cables are constantly coming and going (he spends as much as £ 2000 this way annually). Yet, at the same time, he is a genuine Asiatic; and the mystic East is his true spiritual home, as will be seen from the following incident. The other day in conversation, quite casually as though there was nothing extraordinary about it, he told me he was going to get a special pair of spectacles made, with misty lenses. "What ever for"? I replied in some surprise. Whereupon he went on to explain along these lines. "You see, Standing, I don't like to feel myself completely immersed in business all the day in my office. I would like to be able to get away from it all for a few minutes to meditate on something deeper and more permanent, yet at the same time I do not want to make myself conspicuous by doing this. So if I put on these glasses I won't be able to see through them clearly and will thus not be distracted by external things, and can go off into a meditation without anyone being aware of it." How typically Eastern! I thought. Can you imagine a London stockbroker, or any other business magnate hitting on the same idea?

Even before I came to India I read somewhere (I think it was in one of Kipling's short stories - the Miracle of Puran Bhagat)¹ that it can easily happen in India that a successful man of affairs, who has married and reared a family, may do something that no Westerner would ever think of doing. One day suddenly and unannounced, he will dress himself up as a Sannyasi - that is a wandering hermit - and

¹ Second Jungle Book (I think)

quietly disappear to be "swallowed up by the great grey formless India" (the phrase seems to stick in my mind). And he will spend the rest of his mortal existence, with no more luggage than his staff and begging bowl, as a wandering Sadhu, or holy man, "seeking enlightenment". I sincerely hope that Mr. Sarabhai won't suddenly take it into his mind to do this one day; for personally I should miss him very much, and so, of course, would his family and friends. I am told that at this very moment there are some six million such itinerant holy men wandering about the sub-continent of India. (Equal to the population of Ireland). They are revered and supported by the common people, and even the poorest will not refuse to put something in the outstretched begging bowl, which is their only means of existence. (In "practical" England they would be arrested by the police for "having no visible means of support").

Mr. Sarabhai's wide cultural interests are reflected in the thousands of books he has collected which adorn the shelves of the Retreat library. It is, in fact, such an extensive library that he employs a full-time librarian (see illustration) who is at present busy with the task of making a complete catalogue. Almost every time Mr. Sarabhai goes off on one of his longer business trips he comes back with some new and interesting classic to add to his library. One time it might be a translation of Dante's Divine Comedy, another time the Koran, or again it might be a work by Tolstoy - you never can tell what is coming next! Bharati, by the way, takes after him in this respect. She is already an omnivorous reader - and that in two or three languages. So, now, if at any time, I am trying to find her, round the house or garden, the first place I look is in the library. Often enough I find her there, curled up in an arm chair oblivious to the rest of the world - as I did only the other day buried in - you would never guess what!The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn!

I must stop now for it is time for the post to go out. I will tell you something about Mrs. Sarabhai next time.

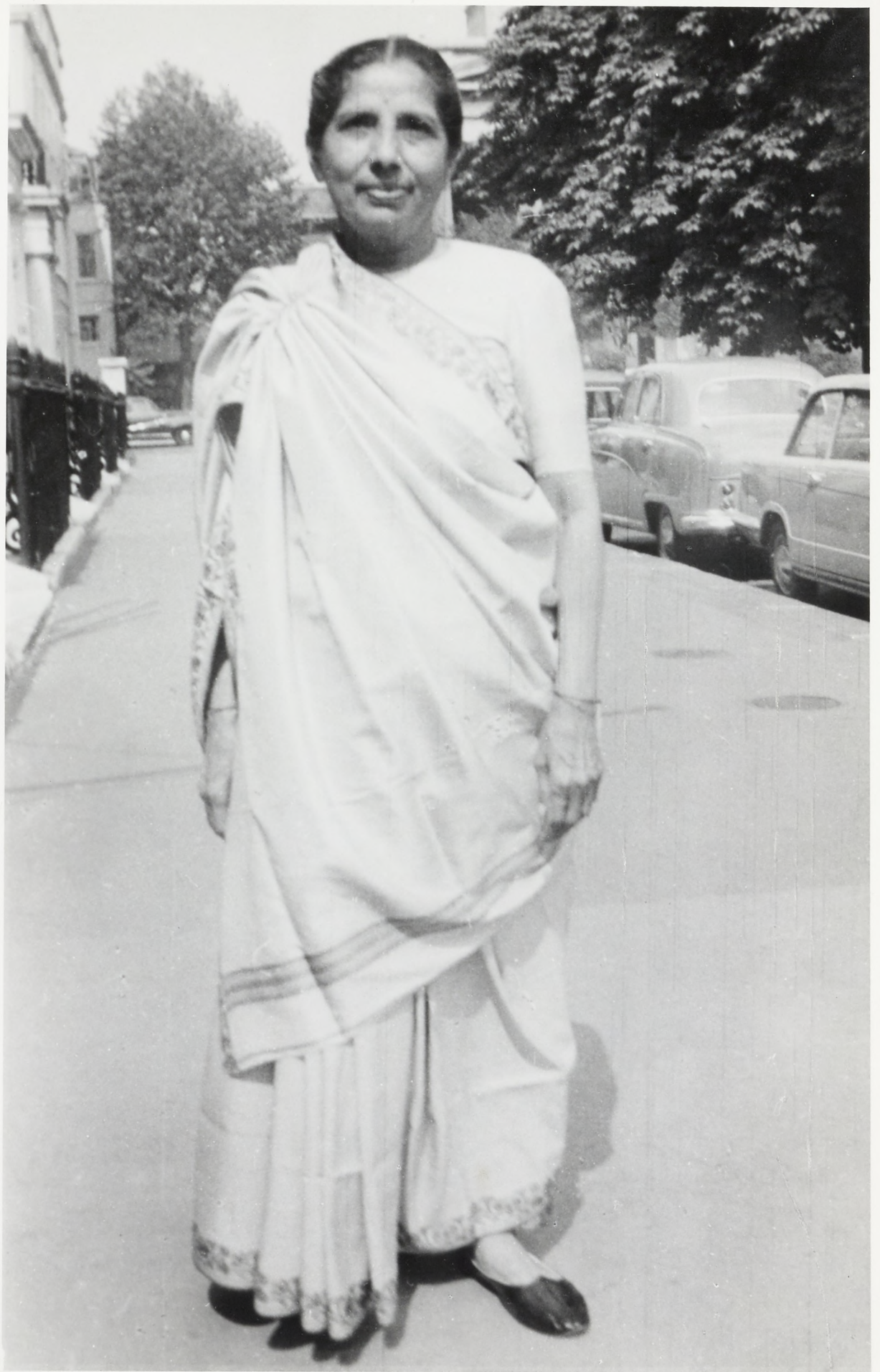
The Retreat,
Shahibag,
Ahmedabad.

MOTHER

My dear All,

My life has settled down into a sort of regular daily rhythm. First, there are the early morning sounds. The birds begin to sing in the garden. There is one I call the cola-cola bird; I have never seen it but it has a ddp fluty note. Then there are the paroquets - not so musical. Then there are the sparrows who not only chirp but are regular visitors, coming into my room; but I will tell you more about their antics another time. Then comes "the singing voice". Every morning at the same hour I hear the voice of a man lustily and cheerfully singing as he goes by on the other side of the wall of the compound. Who he is and where he is going I have never been able to find out. I have never actually set eyes on him; but he is as punctual as an alarm clock. At six o'clock the air is filled with the loud metallic voices of the sirens summoning the factory workers to get up and come to work. (Why they use the word "siren" I don't know, because the real sirens had such ravishing voices that Ulysses, if you remember, had himself roped to the mast, as his ship passed their island, lest he should succumb to their enchantment). Mr. Sarabhai, by the way, has a big cotton factory in Ahmedabad - which is one of the most industrialized cities in India. Then comes my Muljiboy with a cup of morning tea and by the time I have sipped it leisurely, dressed and shaved and had breakfast, a group of four of the masters - my colleagues - arrive down the drive in the Ford car that Mr. Sarabhai sends daily to the city to fetch them. I suggested to Mrs. Sarabhai that it would be a good thing to begin the day at school with prayers. To this she readily agreed, but it was not so easy to decide the form of prayers which would be acceptable to all the members of the staff. Finally the matter was settled - in good Quaker style - by deciding to have a few moments' silent meditation, followed by a song or hymn by the music master, accompanied by himself on a rather strange looking stringed instrument.

As I think I mentioned before we have a staff of half a dozen teachers - all men - one for mathematics, one for Sanskrit, two for art, one for music and one (that's me) for English. Mr. Choksi - one of those who live in the



city - is the headmaster; but actually the dominant influence in the school is Mrs. Sarabhai herself.

She is truly a wonderful mother: her whole life is wrapped up in her family. This of-course includes the responsibility of looking after the servants, and supervising the whole domestic menage, no light task in itself with some twenty or more servants to direct in their respective jobs. But the children come first; and form the main interest in her life.

Although she is really the directing influence in the school, she is wonderfully tactful in her relations with the staff, and never obtrudes herself or criticises while the school is going on. She seems to follow intuitively one of Montessori's principles - that one should "teach teaching, not correcting." If there are any matters that she thinks ought to be changed, or new things to be introduced, she never does it by way of criticising, but rather through positive suggestions at another time.

Every week we have a staff meeting, and the work of the school is discussed and the progress of each of the children examined. I have attended at plenty of staff meetings in my time at different schools, but none of them have been quite like this. To begin with we all sit on low stools or cushions Eastern fashion - all, that is, except me. This is because, not having been brought up to sitting any length of time, Buddha-wise, it gives me cramp when I do; so a servant kindly provides me with a chair. I don't understand everything that goes on at these meetings because some of the masters - the music master for instance - do not understand English. In which case the talks slip into Gujarati. Mrs. Sarabhai sits in the centre and the rest of us in a semicircle facing her.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai are broad-minded in their attitude to the teaching of religion. Though they both belong to the Jain sect of Hinduism, they have a general acquaintance with other religions. They know something of Biblical History, especially with regard to the life of Christ, and I have heard them on occasions quote from the teachings of Jesus, just as Mahatma Gandhi often does. In common with many cultured Indians of to-day they look upon Christ as a great religious teacher. After some discussion it was decided that one of the masters should teach the children the elements of Hindu religion, about their various Hindu deities and avatars (divine manifestations) such as Krishna and Buddha; and another teach them about Mahommed;

whilst I should tell them the Bible stories from the Old and New Testaments - just the plain historical facts, without any theological implications.

Mrs. Sarabhai is a deeply religious lady, one of those persons to whom religion is not a superficial and formal affair but something which reaches down to the very core of her being. She is most conscientious in doing what she believes to be right; and, with her, the moral education of the children comes first. She has no hesitation in acting as what Montessori would call "the control of error" and correcting the children when she sees they need it. There is nothing laissez-faire in her attitude in the sphere of what is right and wrong, or even in what is just good manners; and the children, far from resenting it, respect her all the more for it. Like Montessori she believes in giving her children a good deal of freedom, but it is always the "Montessori freedom" of being allowed to choose something that is good. The very first day I got here I was struck at once with the good behaviour of the children, not only towards adults but towards each other. Mrudula, for instance, takes a motherly interest in Vikram, the youngest, and helps him over if he runs into any trouble or difficulty; and squabbles between the children are far and few between.

As members of the Jain sect of Hinduism both Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai have a particular respect for all living things - animals even - down to the most humble. This is the reason why they are all strict vegetarians, as indeed are many people in Europe - and for the same reason. One day one of the children happened to mention that one of the servants has the daily duty of putting out some fresh milk for the ants. For to do this is a meritorious act and shows one's respect for life. Such a proceeding strikes a Westerner, at first, as rather strange - but after all, when one comes to think of it, life on any level is something mysterious and inexplicable. Anyone can destroy life, but once it has been taken away no one can restore it. And did not that pillar of wisdom, King Solomon, say, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, and study her ways and learn wisdom; for though she has no leader, no commander, or ruler, she procures food in summer and stores up her provisions in time of harvest." (Proverbs: Chapt. 6, verses 6-8). Furthermore, in Europe thousands of people put out food for the birds, especially in winter. Of course, to be absolutely logical the Jains ought not to kill plants, because they, too, possess the mysterious property of life (I must ask them one day what

is their answer to that).

It is really remarkable the way I have come to feel myself as a part of the family. I am sure this is largely due to the gracious way Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai have treated me; and also I must add due to the children themselves, who are so friendly and natural in accepting this "foreign body" in their midst. From the very first Mrs. Sarabhai has been insistent that I should let her know if there is anything I require for my creature comforts.

One reason why, in my opinion, this large household runs so smoothly and harmoniously is that each person in it has his or her allotted sphere of action. This applies also to Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai themselves. There is a perfect understanding between them as to their respective responsibilities; and whatever different points of view they may have at times on certain matters, they never discuss them in front of the children. Here again, by a sound instinct, they act according to the findings of the modern psychologists who say that nothing leads children more quickly to a sense of insecurity than listening to sharp disagreements between their parents.

I must stop now: I hear children's voices at the other end of the verandah, and I am sure the next thing will be: "Mr. Standing, will you tell us some more of the story about Gareth and Lynette"? And who could resist such an appeal from such an appreciative audience; an appeal which is at once a sign of their intelligence and a tribute to the genius of Tennyson!

Letter V

"THE RETREAT"

The Retreat,
Shahibag,
Ahmedabad.

May 12th, 1921.

Dear Everybody,

We are still down on the plains stewing in the heat. Goethe says somewhere that "Time is a real element" and here I feel the same thing about Heat. It seems like a tangible reality. Very early in the morning all the windows and doors are shut and the blinds drawn to try and keep it out; and if you leave the house at mid-day and walk out into the compound the heat seems to leap at you like a tiger. Yet it is all a matter of custom, for there are squads of women working all day in the compound even during the hottest hours; they carry great baskets of earth on their heads, and don't seem to mind a bit; indeed they have at times enough energy left over to sing in chorus.

We are lucky, too, in that we don't live in the city: the heat must be far worse there with all those thousands of houses and huts all huddled together. Shahibag, the residential area, is a good two miles out of Ahmedabad, and The Retreat forms a big estate in itself.* The compound (as it is called) occupies about 20 acres, and is surrounded by an immensely high wall, which cuts us off almost as completely from the outside world as the ramparts of a medieveal castle, except that we hear - what no knight heard in "Ye good olde dayes" - the whistle and roar of the trains as they go by near one of the entrance gates.

The main house is near the chief entrance gate, and is a most palatial affair, three stories high with a sort of turret above that. It is constructed in the most unusual architectural style. It is all made of a very bright and shining composition and has any number of balconies and verandahs at different levels. All the rooms are provided with electric punkahs and anti-heat shutters; and each bedroom has its own bathroom with hot and cold water laid on. Electric light is laid on everywhere - in rooms, verandahs and terraces; and several three-thousand-volt arc-lamps have been fitted up outside the house to light up that part of the lawn where we often have dinner served

*Shahibag, as the name indicates, was the "Imperial Gardens" of the Mogul Viceroy in Gujarat; flanked on the one side by the walled old portion of the town, and on the other by the cantonment area with its typical colonial set-up of officers' bungalows, gymkhana, golf course, the camp and military barracks.





The Retreat

My rooms were on the bottom verandah - at the end corner of the house

in the evenings. And a very picturesque meal it is, too, with the servants in their white clothes coming backwards and forwards as we sit round in a semi-circle on little flat stools about six inches from the ground, whilst above us is the immense blue vault of night where great bats, called "flying foxes" dart swiftly to and fro at a great height above our heads.

I was given the option, when I came, of living in a bungalow by myself outside the compound, or living in; and I chose the latter. I am no hermit, by nature (or grace!) and would be fed up with my own company in a week! I have a suite of two rooms with a sizeable space of verandah between them on the ground floor. (Not actually on the ground floor, to be precise, but about six feet above it). It is really like having three rooms; and I have most of my meals on the verandah part. The greater part of the verandah space on the ground floor is protected from outside by a wall of strong wire-netting to keep out undesirable nocturnal visitors such as snakes, monkeys and burglars etc.

On the ground floor there are also two dining rooms - one for eating European style, and the other for eating Indian-wise, which is very different. There is, besides, a large drawing-room complete with grand piano, armchairs, sofas etc. It is a curious thing but I have noticed it frequently, that when Indians sit on European furniture - armchairs and sofas etc. - they unconsciously draw up their feet and squat Buddha fashion, the way they are used to. A striking feature of this drawing-room are some enormous Victorian chandeliers which Mr. Sarabhai's grandfather had sent out from Paris. There is also a well-stocked library which contains very largely English books - history, science, literature - and a librarian permanently in charge, who is at present struggling with the task of making a catalogue. I have not been upstairs yet but I imagine it is chiefly made up of bedrooms, lounges and verandahs.

The other buildings in the compound include two schools, (one of which is being completed) the servants' quarters, a private post office, the stables and garages. There are six cars, from the old Ford which brings the Indian tutors every day from the city, to the majestic Daimler used for family visits.

Workmen, and workwomen, are busy making excavations in one part of the compound for a swimming bath. There is

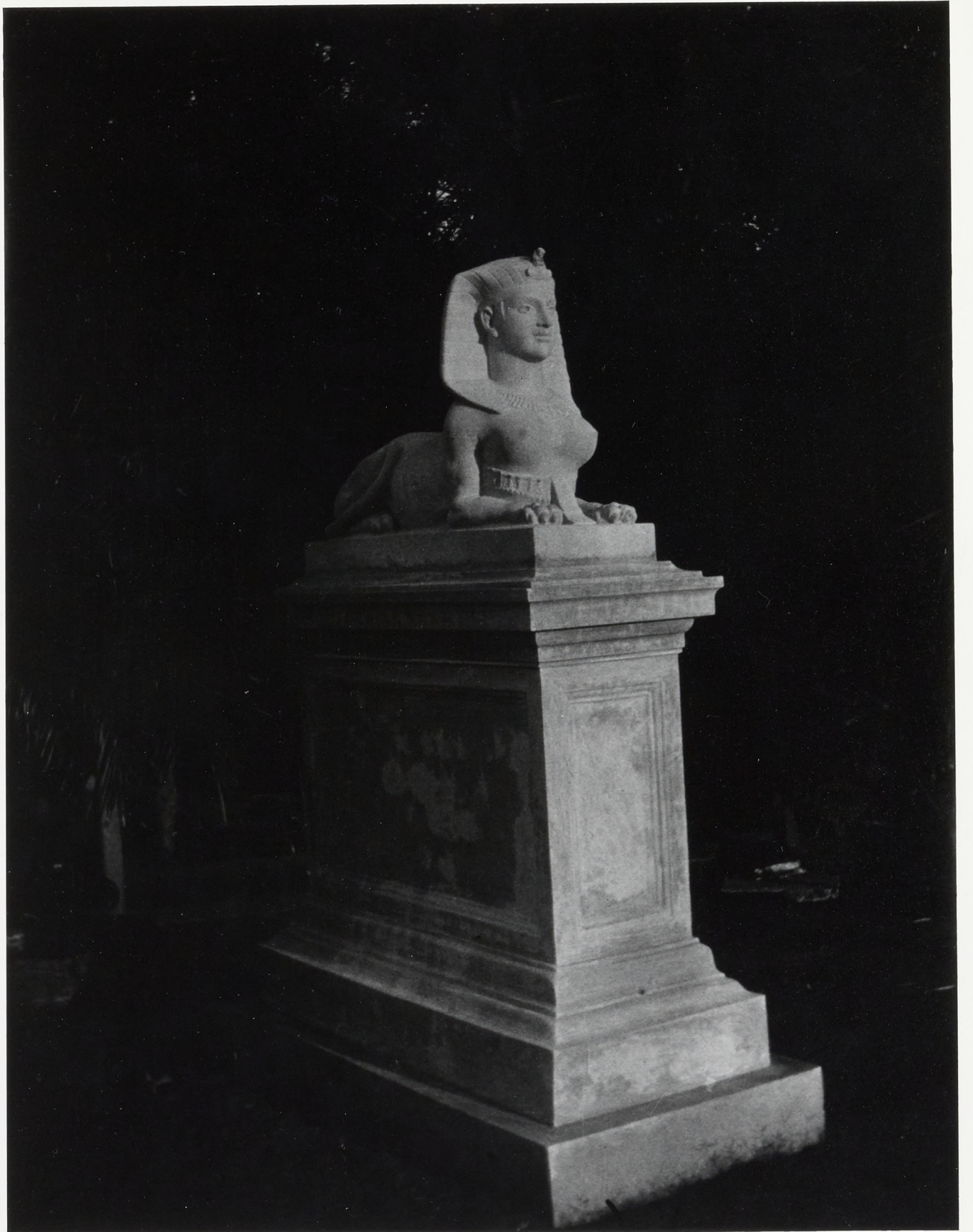




Vasubhen (one of the "Gazelles"), Gautam, Bharati and Suhrid.
(Notice the wire netting to keep unwelcome visitors to the verandah)



Three of the Masters in the Retreat Compound.



also some talk of building a temple: a pantheon of all faiths.

The Retreat grounds are beautifully laid out, with all manner of flower beds, paths, lakes, summer houses, fountains, ornamental bridges, trellised archways and so on. The paths are lit up with electric lights of different colours at night, which gives it all a fairy-like effect. There are statues, too, in different parts of the garden - also sent from Paris, mostly plaster copies of classical models. You will be walking down a path, and suddenly - going round a bend - will be confronted by the Venus of Milo; or by a Sphinx or perhaps Diana the Huntress. In fact the whole compound in some ways reminds me of the enclosure described in the Light of Asia where the young Prince Siddartha was immured in order to be shielded from everything which would suggest disease or death.

I often have qualms of conscience that I should be living in such luxurious surroundings when I think of the hundreds of thousands, only two miles away in the city of Ahmedabad, people who are living in a state of almost incredible squalor. Ahmedabad has actually the highest death rate of any town in India. You would not wonder at this melancholy distinction if you saw the seething mass of humanity and the awful hovels they live in. It is the factory system at its worst. Nor are my scruples lessened when I consider that some five thousand of these factory "hands" are working in Mr. Sarabhai's cotton mills to provide us with all the beautiful things we enjoy - none of which they share. Not, I hasten to say, that Mr. Sarabhai is any worse than the other mill owners. In point of fact he is much better than most, and has done more than them for his work people. He has provided several creches for the children, together with medical attendance and other benefits for his employees.

Nevertheless the contrast is uncomfortably glaring, and makes one see the point of Mahatma Gandhi's Non-Co-operation Movement, an essential part of which is that all the poor people in India - i.e. about 90% - should learn how to spin and weave their own cloth, and thus make themselves independent of factory-made articles, and so generally steer clear of the evils of the whole industrial system (and of the British Raj linked with it).

But to return to Shahibag. In the compound there are about twenty "malis", or gardeners, constantly employed. Two of these have a rather curious occupation. Their whole job is to prowl round, the live-long day, to be on the watch

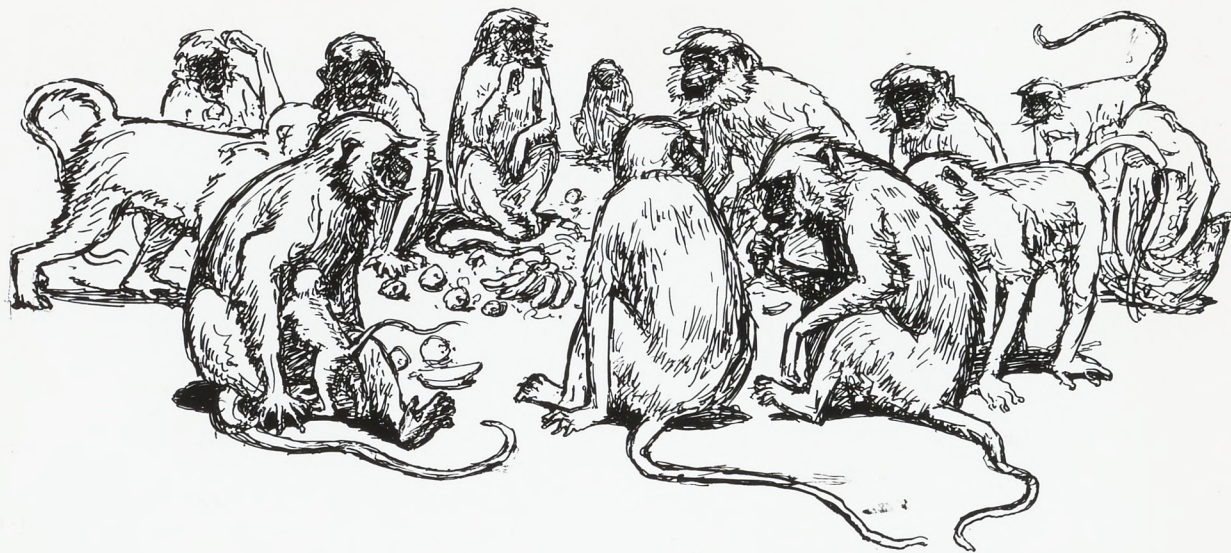
for the Bandar-Log or monkey people who visit the compound in hundreds, especially those parts of the compound where the fruit and vegetables are grown. These men do not kill, or in any way harm the monkeys, for the monkey is a sacred animal in India. In fact the members of the Jain religion (to which the Sarabhais belong) regard all forms of life as sacred. So the men just shout at the monkeys; and they also have slings with which they throw stones in their direction to frighten them away.

It often happens, while we are all working away quietly on the long verandah of the school building, that we hear a great shouting and hallooing and general commotion. A minute or two afterwards we see a great wave of monkeys, fathers and mothers, uncles and aunts, and cousins - the mothers with little babies clinging to them, in fact a regular mass migration. The whole tribe comes sweeping by us with much chattering and gesticulation and angry backward looks at the two Malis who bring up the rear. Finally the whole gang vanishes over the wall, often to take refuge under some of the big trees on the other side, where they hold an indignation meeting. Sometimes a group of them will ensconce themselves all along the narrow roof of the school verandah. All we see of them is their tails hanging down in a long row. The other day I could not resist the temptation to pull one of them. The owner immediately gave the alarm, all the other tails disappeared in a flash, and there was a great hullabaloo followed by a cascade of monkeys at the far end of the verandah.

One day last week I had just finished having my bath and was re-entering my room when I saw a large monkey, as big as a retriever, come out from under my bed and go sloping across the room. He looked in the dickens of a temper, and scowled at me just as though I were the intruder and he the aggrieved individual whose privacy had been violated. I pretended to be brave (though actually I was a bit scared) and walked towards him holding up my sponge in a threatening attitude. Thereupon he made for the bay window that opened on the lawn - and then

"He seemed to find his way without his eyes;
For out of doors he went without their help,
And to the last bended their light on me".¹

¹"Hamlet" - Shakespeare



"where they hold an indignation meeting"



Imagine this picture multiplied by twenty - with twenty tails hanging down
over the school verandah below.

He was, I am glad to say, only a casual visitor, and has never returned. None the less my room has a permanent fauna of its own. There is for instance Old Bill, the lizard. He always comes out when I am having a siesta in the afternoon and darts about all over the walls and windows doing great fly-catching stunts (He is not a vegetarian!). He has a friend who sometimes visits him, coming in through a hold where an electric light wire comes in. Together they have the most exciting game of tig, chasing each other like streaks of lightning. I also have an orchestra of large crickets who provide a promenade concert at intervals (they do the promenading as well as the music!)

Then there are the sparrows - the proud and persevering sparrows (as I call them) and the baby squirrel - but I must leave these until another time, for I really must tell you a little about our school for it is in some ways almost unique.

There is a permanent staff of seven masters and only five pupils (for Gautam hardly counts yet, although occasionally I have seen him drop in and have a go at the Montessori cylinders). Most of the masters are graduates of some Indian University and can speak English quite well. Mrs. Sarabhai is the real Directress of the school, though "Choksi Master" is the nominal head. He takes Sanskrit and Hindustani. One of the most attractive of them is Bhailalbai, who takes mathematics. He seems to combine the serenity of Buddha, the Enlightened One, with the practical patience of a Montessori Directress. The music master does not know a word of English, but we manage to communicate with each other in a series of smiles and grunts. He is a jolly stout fellow with an enormous moustache. He has the queerest looking instruments, most of them stringed. And the music? Golly! I never heard anything like it. It is the most amazing stuff, this Indian music. Personally, I can't make head or tail of it. Especially "tail of it", as I never have the faintest intimation that any song or piece is coming to an end. (In our music you can generally tell when you are coming to the last few bars; but with this music it just seems to wander on and on, then suddenly it stops - "snap!" - (just like that) without any apparent reason that I can discover). I suppose it's really my ignorance, for this music master is quite a virtuoso in his job.

I find the productions of the Art master much easier to appreciate. He strikes me as being really brilliant in





My colleagues

(back row, from left) Mr. Choksi Master, Principal; Mr. Bhatt, Librarian;
Mr. Bhailal, Mathematics.

(front row, from left) Mr. Raval, Artist; Mr. Apte, Music Master.

his way: he has a great mastery of line, and dashes off impromptu sketches of bullock-carts, workpeople, temples, - anything - with great ease and felicity. He is a very handsome young fellow too and very alert mentally.

As far as the school is concerned my chief subject is English-Grammar, Composition, and Literature: and for the most part I take the children one at a time. But, as a matter of fact, I see more of the children out of school than in, and teach them more then than in school. Not that this is in any way a burden to me, for I find the Sarabhai children such excellent company, that already I should feel quite lost without them. I have not the slightest wish, now, to go and live in a bungalow on my own, and have come to be regarded as one of the family, and much prefer it. Indeed Mr. and Mrs. Sarabhai could not really have done more than they have, to make me feel comfortable and at home.

To-morrow we shall all be leaving for Matheran, a hill station some thirty miles from Bombay. It will be a great trek to get us all there. Or rather it is a great trek, for the Exodus has already begun. First of all, the day before yesterday, the three buffaloes with their calves and attendants departed, along with the seven ponies, under the direction of Salim Khan and his underlings. Yesterday the greater part of the servants went off; and to-morrow we, the family, will follow. Not reckoning the remainder of the servants who will accompany us we shall be a party of about twenty, made up of the family, some half a dozen guests and the school staff.

Among the guests is Mrs. Sarabhai's father, who is a magistrate - on holiday - the youngest looking grandfather I have ever set eyes upon. Then there will be Mrs. Sarabhai's sister with her three small children; and two very charming young ladies whom I always call (to myself of course) "The Gazelles". They are cousins of the Sarabhais, called Vasuben and Induben, aged 19 and 18 respectively. I call them the Gazelles because they are both such very graceful and such very shy creatures. They also live in Ahmedabad and are constant visitors to the Retreat, and great friends of the children.

We shall go by night train to Bombay, have breakfast and lunch at Maldon House - the Sarabhai's Bombay house - and then go on in the afternoon to Matheran. To-night I shall have my dinner Indian fashion with the family, as my boy, the faithful Mulji, who cooks for me what are supposed

to be European dishes, has already gone on with the other servants to Matheran. Bharati and Suhrid have just arrived to tell me dinner is ready, so I will stop here.

E. M. STANDING
MONTESSORI STUDIES CENTER
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY -88-
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98122

to be European dishes, has already gone on with the other
servants to Mother's. Harriet and Sarah have just arrived
to tell me dinner is ready, so I will stop here.



