

WHAT MORE GANDHI EXPECTED FROM THE SANATANISTS ?

“Dr. B. R. Ambedkar decided to sound Gandhi on the question of the panel and primary elections of the Depressed Class candidates in the light of the coming constitution of India. He was in a hurry to make preparations for his departure to London. Yet he had to attend meetings, to attend courts or dispose of the cases, to make arrangements for domestic affairs, and to select books. Accompanied by Mr. More, Shinde, Gaikwad and Chavan, he saw Gandhi on April 23, 1933 in Yeravda Jail. Gandhi and Ambedkar sat in chairs under the mango tree and Mahadev Desai sat nearby with a note book and pencil.

At first Dr. Ambedkar said that the method of panel would be expensive and told Gandhi that candidates from the Depressed Classes, who would contest the general election, should have secured at least 25 per cent of the votes of the Depressed Classes in the primary election. Gandhi replied that he would give consideration to the matter and would inform him about his reaction to his London address. Gandhi, then, gave a bunch of flowers to Dr. Ambedkar and diverted the conversation to the question of removal of Untouchability and said that the *Sanatanists* were decrying him (Gandhi) as a devil, Daitya. Dr. Ambedkar asked Gandhi what more he expected from the *Sanatanists* ! Gandhi caught the thread and said that the leader of the Depressed Classes himself was not pleased with his work. In the end Gandhi asked Ambedkar about the date of his return from London. Dr. Ambedkar replied that it would be about August 1933. Gandhi wished Dr. Ambedkar *bon voyage* and the interview ended.”¹

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¹. Keer, P. 238.