Mr. Shridharani, “should be the end in process and the ideal in the making.”

If this is so, and I for one am convinced that it is, then how can “an equivalent of war” used as a means lead other than to an end in which coercive strife of necessity must be a predominating factor?

The obvious and unquestioned sincerity of Gandhi and of his Satyagraha, including Mr. Shridharani, makes it difficult for a conscientious critic to belittle the appeal of a cause genuinely devoted to the defense of human dignity. And yet truth must not be denied on the ground of sentiments which cannot be sustained on practical grounds.

As far as I am able to discover Gandhi has no fundamental program for economic reform. He has evolved a method of agitation which, to date, has succeeded in gaining world-wide and deserved sympathy for the plight of the Indian victims of British imperialism (which is not to be confused with the traditional domestic ideals of British democracy). He has secured, through this means, a modicum of respect for his people; and he has brought to the Indians themselves a sense of self-respect and a ray of hope—a sizable accomplishment in itself.

Be this as it may, the fact remains that Satyagraha is a form of coercive mass action. As such it inevitably involves a debasement of rationality. It calls for a suspension of the thinking processes while men and women merge their individualities into a horde and press forward with impassioned impatience toward the achievement of a single objective. It is, despite its high purposes and its genesis in injustices that cry out for redress, a form of rabble-rousing. And not even Gandhi can make of rabble-rousing an instrument for the solution of social problems.

I found War Without Violence fascinating reading, despite my inability to reconcile the Gandhi method with the basic task before social reformers. Indeed, Mr. Shridharani’s book is a “work” in the real sense of authorship. Its 500-odd pages present a well-rounded, carefully written account of a social movement in which the author places great faith and in which he is participating as an active leader. It bears, then, the stamp of personal experience, of observation, of research, of conviction. Its style is simple yet finished, pleasing yet fair-minded. As I read on from page to page, I could not resist the recurring thought that such intelligence, energy and determination if directed to educating the Indians in fundamental economics might really have brought about a new state of affairs in the British Empire.