



DREAM TO REALITY

BIOGRAPHY OF
MOHINDER SINGH BHOGAL



Vishwakarma Foundation's other Publications
in Panjabi :

1. 'Kala Darpan' by Dr. Atam Hamrahi.
2. 'Farangi Dian Jaihlan wich Desh-Bhagat'
by S. Amar Singh Tegh.
3. 'Rang Laati Hai Hinna'
by Dr. Gurdial Singh Phul.

Our Builders—I

DREAM TO REALITY

(A Biography of S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal)

Dr. Gurdial Singh Phul

Bhogal Sons (Regd.)

732, Industrial Area-B,

Ludhiana-141 003.

(iii)

DREAM TO REALITY

Biography of Sardar Mohinder Singh Bhogal,
Bhogal Sons (Regd.), Ludhiana.

An English Version of the original Panjabi work,
'Rang Laati Hai Hinna'

By Dr. Gurdial Singh Phul.

English Version by : Prof. N. K. Kalia.

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Editor Co-Ordinator :

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Ph.D., P.E.S.

Antehkarn, Dhuri Rly. Line,

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DEDICATED

to the sacred memory of my sister, late
Sardarni Kartar Kaur Bhogal, who was the
real inspiration for all her kins.

'G. S. PHUL'

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THE ENTRANCE

'DREAM TO REALITY' is the third publication of the Vishwakarma Foundation (International), Ludhiana. Before this, on the 29th May, 1982, the foundation-day of the organisation, while honouring three great Punjabi artists ; Sardar Kirpal Singh, the great Painter of the turbulent period of the Sikh history, Sardar Banta Singh, the Sculptor and Sardar Channan Singh, the miniaturist, we released a book entitled 'KALA DARPAN' by Dr. Atam Hamrahi. This was the first attempt to acquaint the industrial world with the devoted workers in the field of art, literature and service to the nation. On this day, an exhibition of master-pieces of the three great artists was held. It was highly enjoyed and appreciated by the entire industrial brotherhood of Ludhiana. The meaningfulness of the Foundation endorsed by the industrial world on the day encouraged us to get it registered as a trust. The family of the seventy odd industrial concerns enrolled as its members is being further enlarged.

The aim of the Foundation is 'To recognise the Creative Genius of Man'. Its objectives and targets were fixed an eye on this aim, 'Patriots

in British Jails', a book in Punjabi by Sardar Amar Singh Tegh, the famous patriotic writer was published in 1983. This book was released by Giani Zail Singh, the President of India in a colourful ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhawan on the 2nd of November, 1983.

To make this function a memorable event, an illustrated release-brochure in two languages was brought out. At this very function, 'Dr. Gurdial Singh Phul Commemorative Volume' was presented to Gianiji by Dr. Gurdial Singh Phul Commemorative Committee. In two separate functions organised by Punjabi Sahit Sabhiachar Kendar, Ludhiana, with the financial assistance of the Foundation as a whole and its members individually, six great Punjabi litterateurs ; Dr. S. S. Kohli, Dr. Harbhajan Singh, Dr. Vishwanath Tewari, Principal Sant Singh Sekhon, Dr. Roshan Lal Ahuja and Padamshri Dr. Attar Singh, were honoured. Two souvenirs were published. A book supporting the common interests of Punjabis, "Hubbul-Punjabiya", edited by Dr. Atam Hamrahi was released by Giani Zail Singh on the 1st of October, 1984. Dr. Hamrahi was sponsored by the Foundation as a delegate to the Third World Punjabi Conference held at Bangkok

in July, 1983. Dr. Hamrahi presented a research paper on the contribution of the Namdhari Samaj to social reconstruction at a vast gathering presided by the head of the Namdhari Sect, Satguru Jagjit Singh Ji. The Foundation has drawn up an ambitious plan to acquaint the Punjabis with the inspiring, arduous and relentless struggles of the self-made industrialists of the State through their biographies. The Punjab has produced dozens of dilligent and talented industrialists who have brought prosperity not only to the Punjab but also to the whole of India by making the industrial revolution a reality. 'DREAM TO REALITY' written by G.S. Phul, the multifaceted scholar and writer of Punjabi on the life of S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal, our worthy chairman, marks the beginning of a series entitled 'Our Builders'. This biography presents the life of a dynamic, talented and enlightened enterpreneur who started his family business at the age of thirteen by making cycle parts and is now famous throughout the Bicycle Industry of the world as the manufacturers of Bhogal Cycle Parts.

It is not the story of an individual or a family, it symbolises the collective struggle of the

artisan community of the Punjab after independence which every craftsman of the Punjab has lived and undergone. It is a story of perseverance and resolution. The Foundation feels proud in presenting the Punjabi as well as the English versions of this story. The Foundation has allowed the Publication of the English version of our book in Punjabi 'Rang Laati Hai Hinna' by Bhogal Sons (Regd.)

We are indebted to Professor N. K. Kalia, Head of the Post-Graduate Department of English, S.C.D. Govt. College, Ludhiana, for his successful attempt to capture the tone and spirit of the book. We thank S. Hardev Singh Jawandha too far vetting the English version.

Vishwakarma Foundation
(International) Ludhiana.

Ajit Singh Kular
Secretary General

WHY THESE GEMS ?

On 31st of Oct; 1983 I got a telegraphic message to reach the Rashtrapati Bhawan, for my book on Mahatma Gandhi 'Tur Gaya Mehik Lutaye' which had been written at the instance of late Dr. Taran Singh, the Head of the Shri Guru Granth Vibhag, Panjabi University, Patiala, in 1969 and had been published after his demise, was to be released.

There Dr. S. S. Johal, Vice Chancellor, Panjabi University, Patiala, was also present. Gianiji said to us, "If you want to make the member of the new generation into healthy citizens, you must write and make others write biographies of these gentlemen of the Twentieth Century who were born into poor families and yet by making some remarkable and useful contributions in some field brought glory to their country and nation through their indefatigable efforts".

I immensely liked this valuable suggestion of Gianiji's, for according to my own short wit too is an incontrovertible fact that old myths, tales, stories and biographies neither satisfy nor amuse, not elevate, nor inspire the child with

the zeal to achieve something on account of the wide gulf between ancient times and the modern age and on account of the development of the national faculty. A child can be nurtured properly only if he is told the stories of the life struggle of ordinary men who are either living or have lived in the recent past and whose achievements in various fields have the power to inspire the children in a simple and delectable manner.

Getting this inspiration from there I have ventured to write the lives of the grapplers of the modern age. Therefore it is that I am taking the pleasure of writing the first biography in the series 'Our Builders' by presenting the life of Sardar Mohinder Singh Bhogal in 'DREAM TO REALITY'. I have written this biography in the context of Punjabi cultural atmosphere, for in the life struggle of a man, his environments, cultural phenomenon, ever changing religious, political and economic waves have a long share. Therefore this biography will unconsciously provide a glimpse of entire life and the development of bicycle industry in the Punjab from 1927 to 1988. I will consider my

efforts successful if even one child of the entire generation, by recognizing his latent powers and by being crushed like hinna, that is by making increasing efforts is able to prepare himself for excelling in any field of life. I will await your suggestions like a young woman awaiting for her brother's message while sitting in her in-laws home. 'Come brother to my house built by my husband and bring happy news about my dear father and mother.'

'GURDIAL SINGH PHUL'

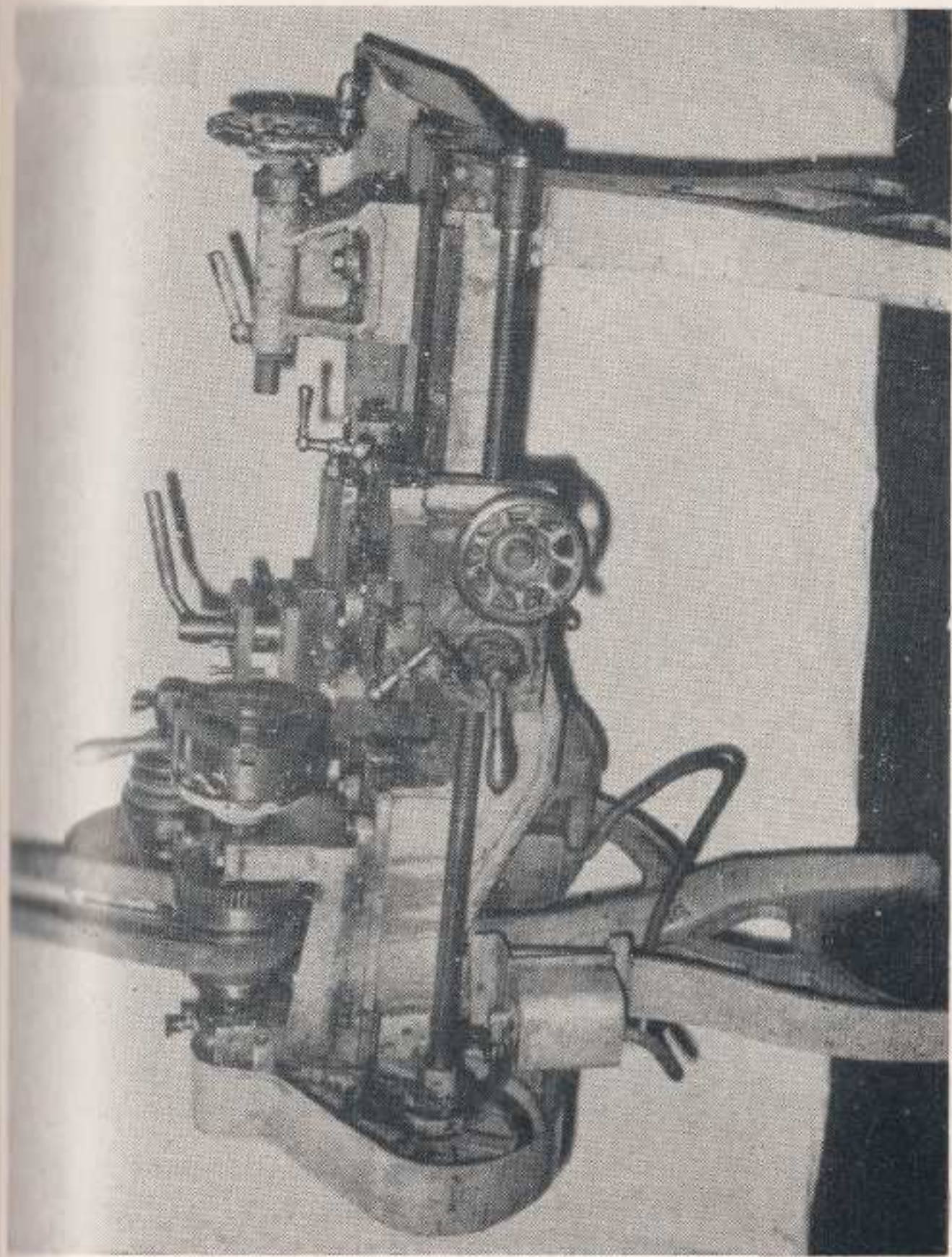
Anand Avenue, Maqbool Road,
Amritsar.



11. Mohinder Singh Bhogal, the man who translated his dream into a reality.



S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal as a child going up the steps of a bright future.



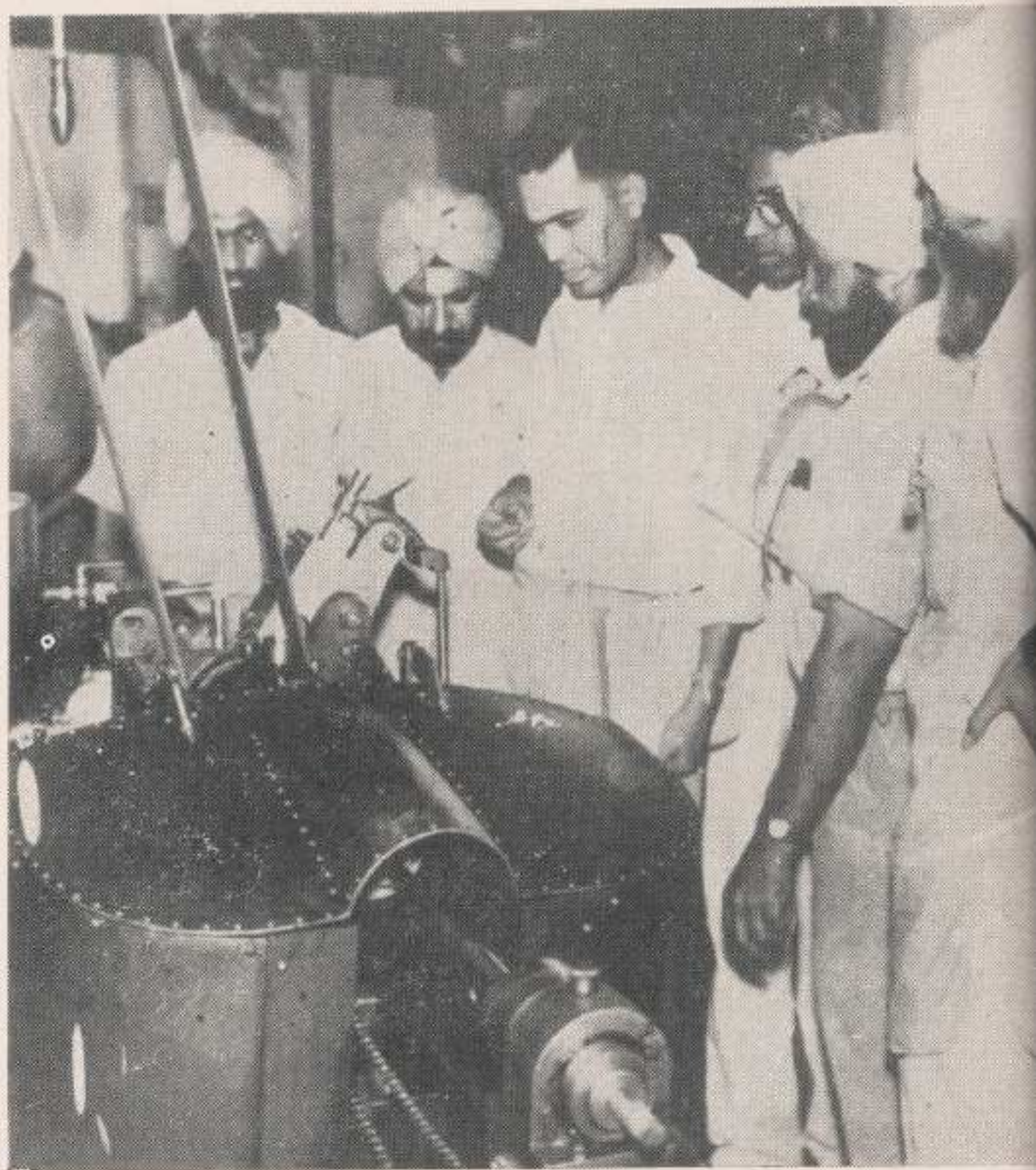
His first self-manufactured lathe.



S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal working on the Company's first self-designed and manufactured Capstan Turret Lathe.



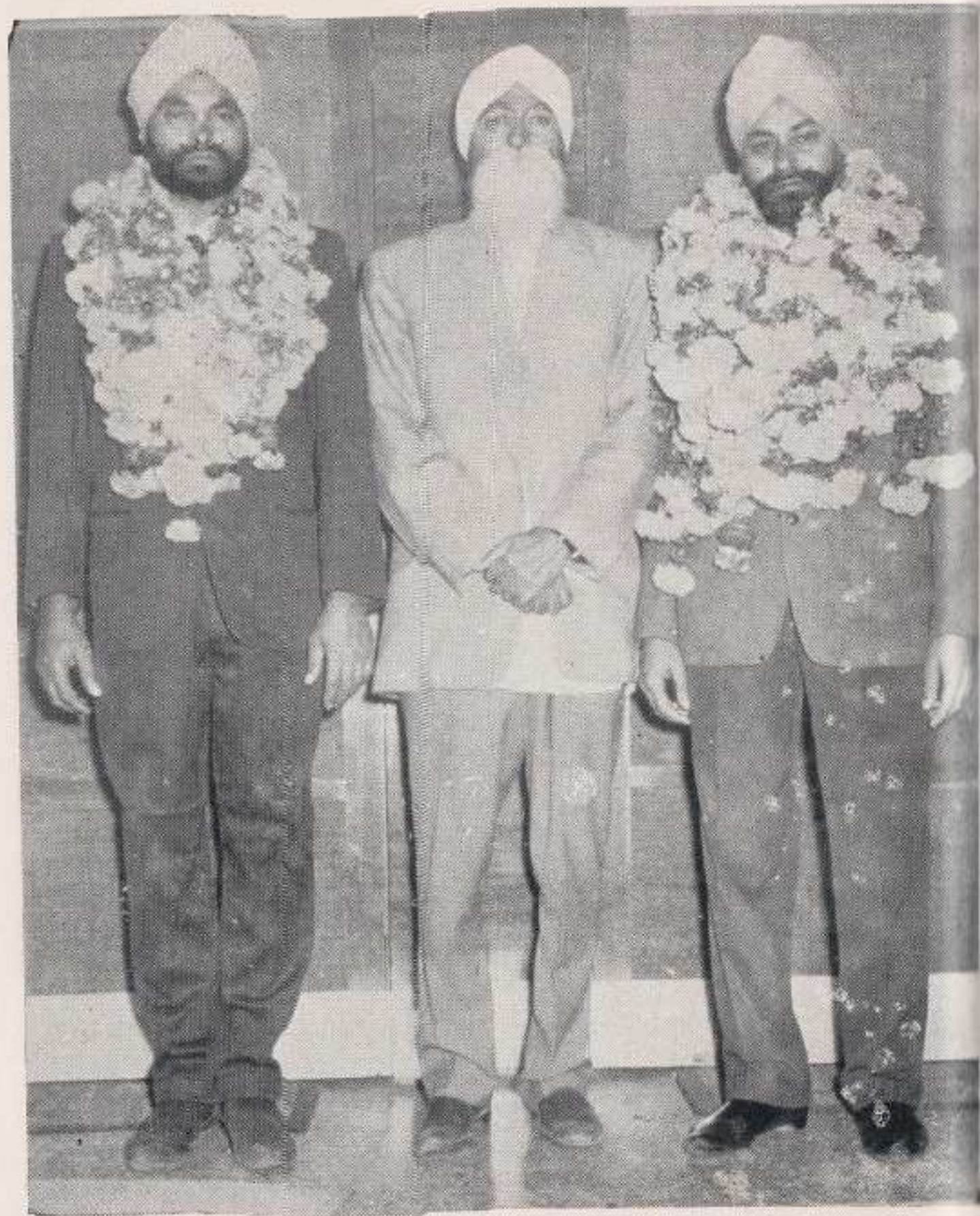
The first premises of Bhogal Sons in Lachhman Nagar,
Miller Ganj, Ludhiana.



Sh. H. V. R. Iynger, I. C. S., Secretary Industries to the Government of India, inspecting the Bhogal's first automatic cycle hub cone manufacturing lathe.



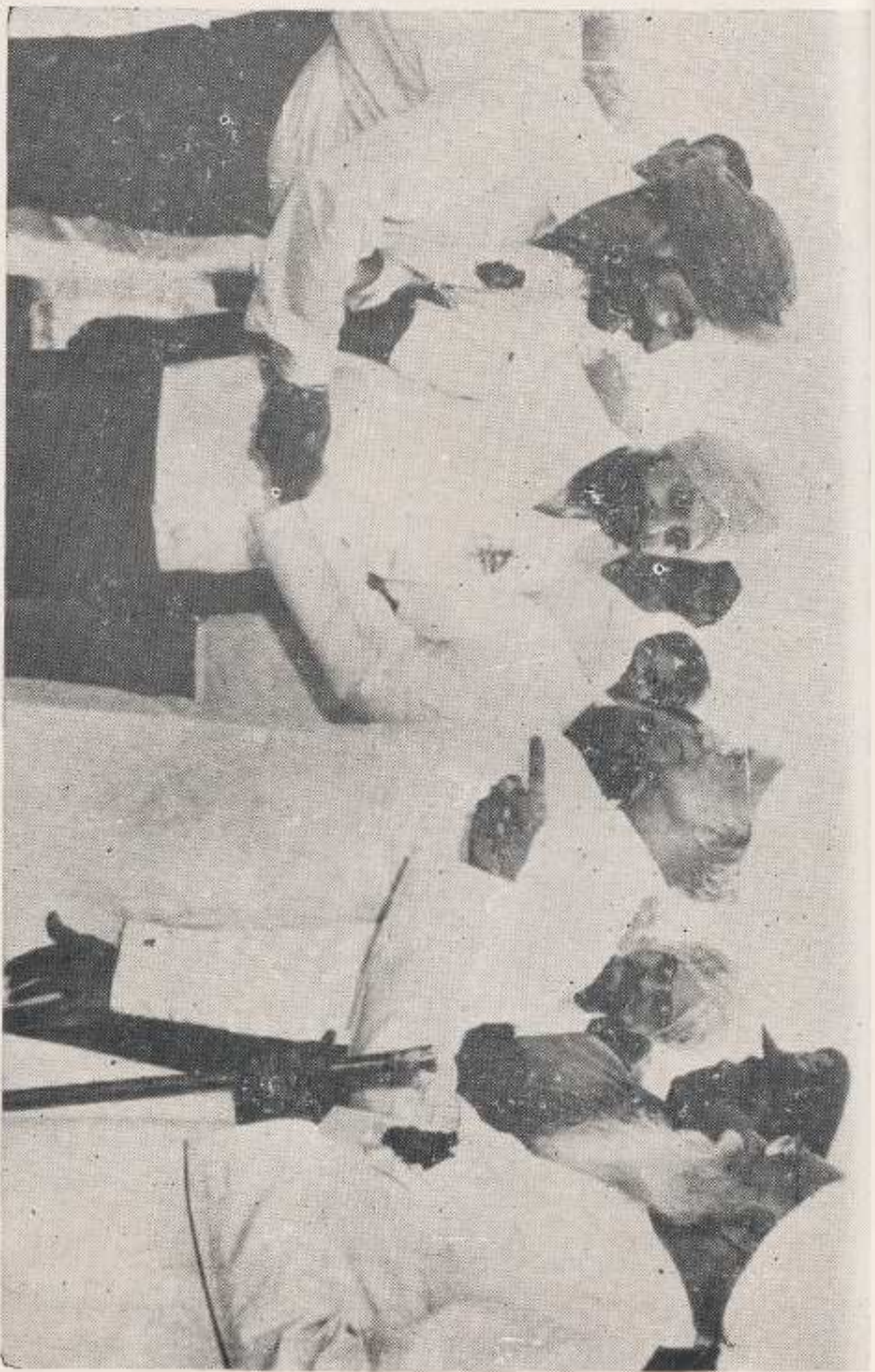
During his first foreign tour, S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal with the Directors of UMA WERKE of West Germany.



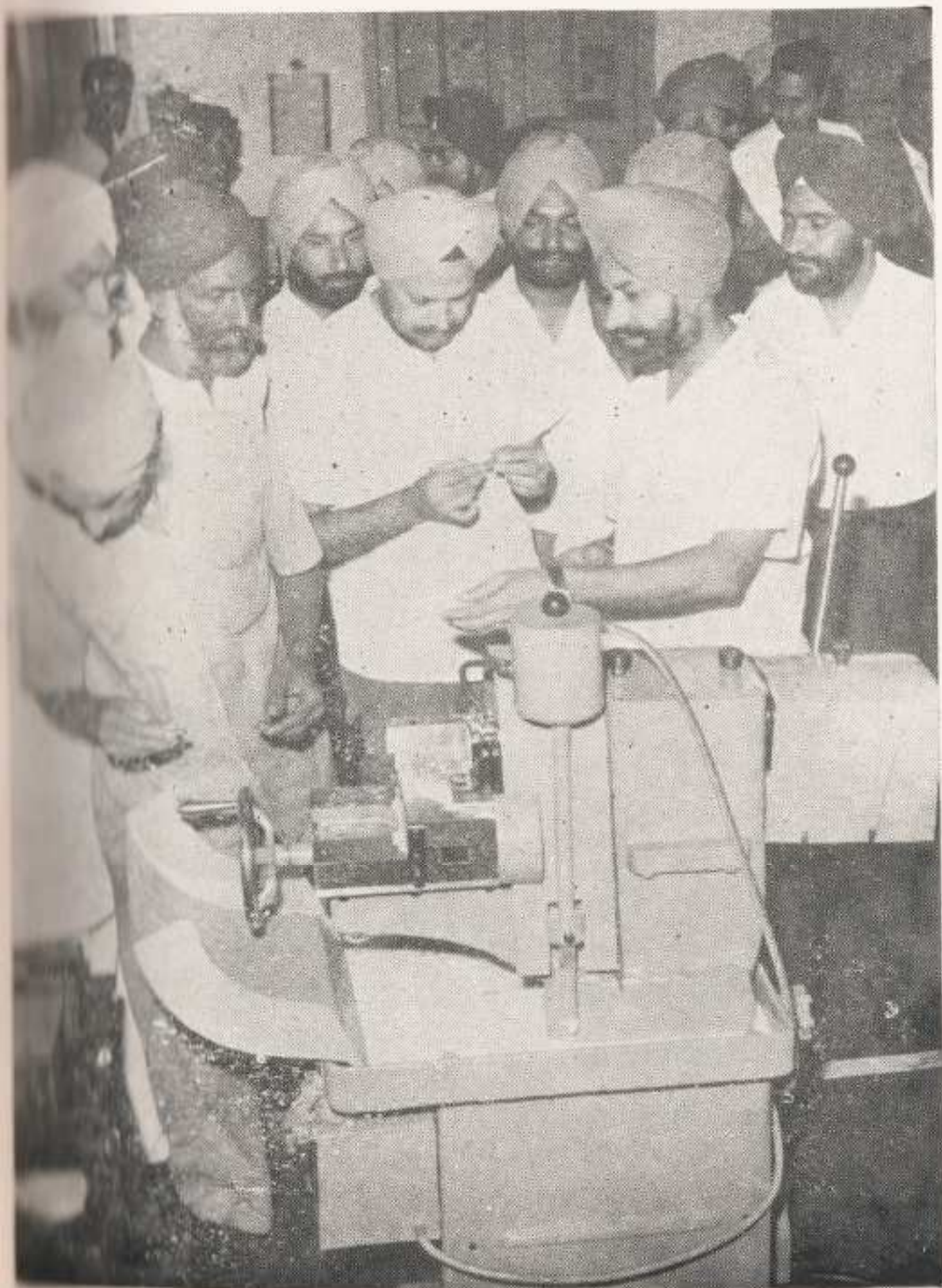
S. Karam Singh Bhogal, the father of Bicycle Industry in Punjab, at the farewell to his enterprising sons, S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal and S. Sochinder Singh Bhogal on the eve of their visit to Japan.



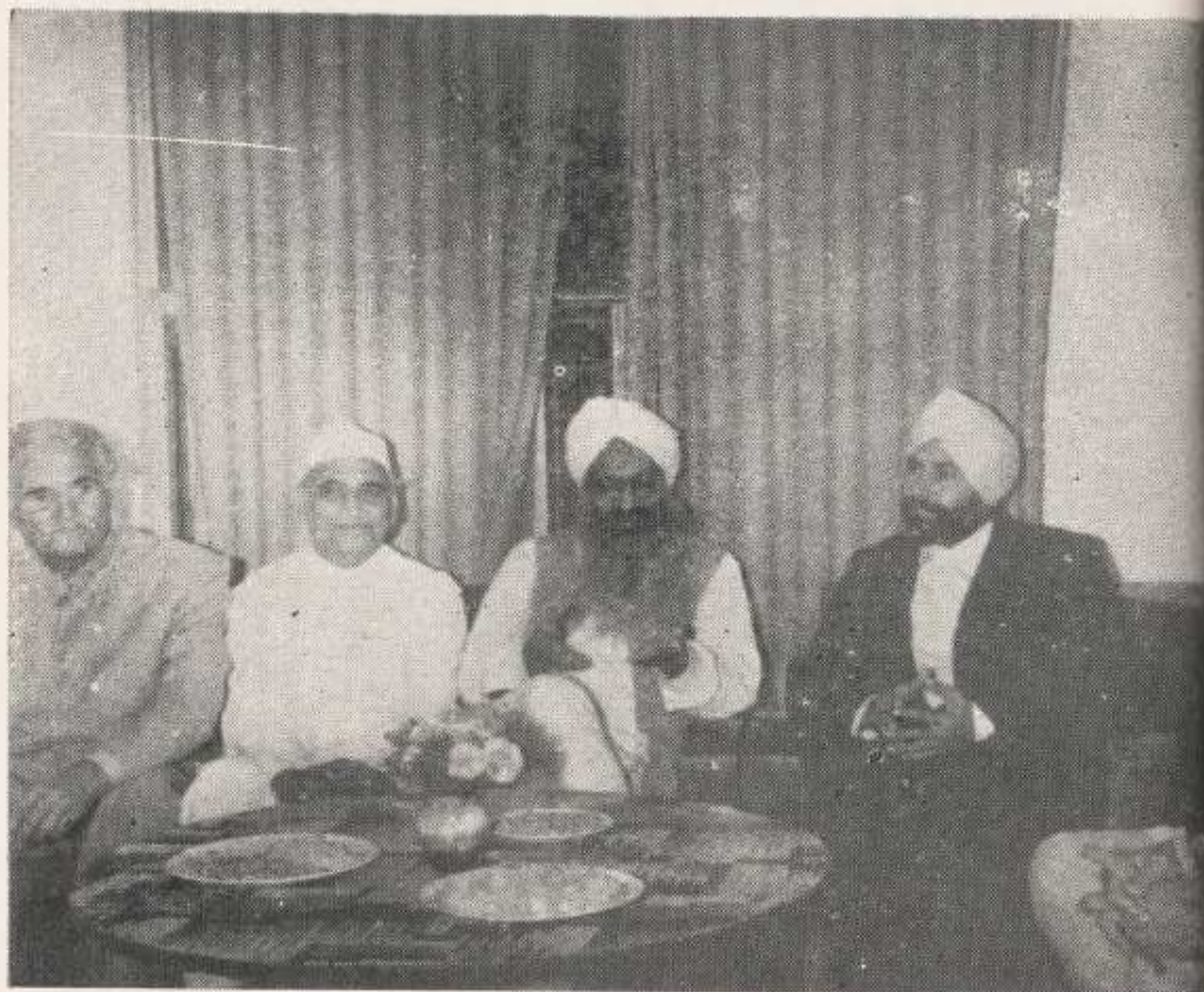
6. Karam Singh Bhogal according a welcome to Sh. Dharam Vir, I. C. S., Governor Punjab. Sh. Brij Mohan Munjal, M. D. Hero Group of Industries is facing the Camera.



Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh introducing Dr. Parminder Singh with Dr. Radha Krishnan, the President of the Indian Republic. S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal is seen standing between them.



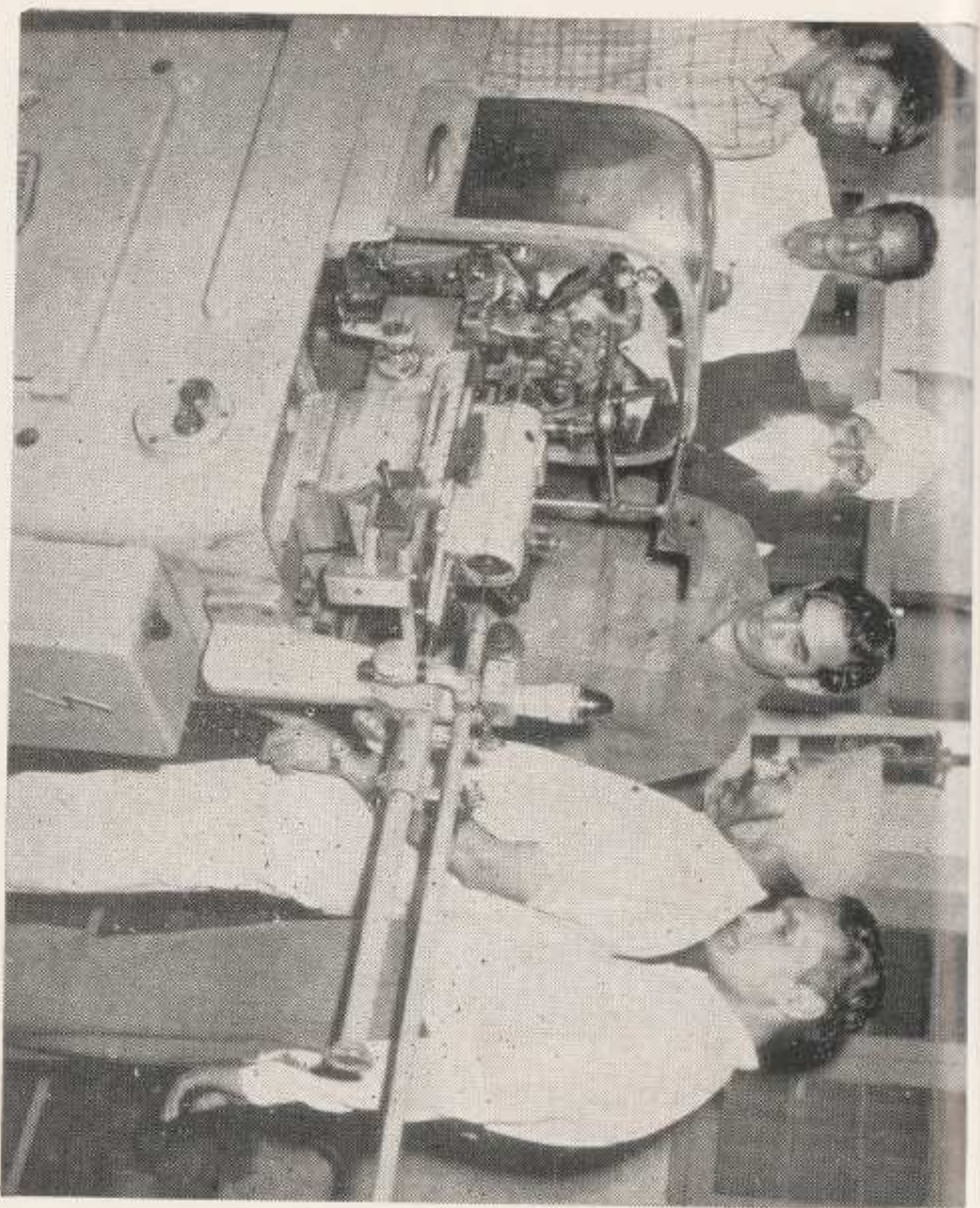
9. Mohinder Singh Bhogal showing a new automatic machine to B. Paramjit Singh, I. A. S., Director of Industries, Punjab.



**S. Partap Singh Kairon, Chief Minister Punjab with
S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal in his factory.**



The Creator beside his proud creation. S. Karam Singh Bhogal standing beside the row of the Turn-O-Mat sliding head-automatic lathes.



The father and the son showing their self-designed sliding-head automatic lathe to a high-powered Central Team.



S. Dhanwant Singh Bhogal, the third bead of the Bhogal rosary going on his European tour,



S. Dhanwant Singh Bhogal welcoming Sh. Lal Bahadur Shastri, Union Mainister for Industries, Government of India, to Bhogal Sons' Factory.



S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal receiving the Export Award at Jalandhar from the Advisor of Industries to the Governor, Punjab.



S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal receiving a Certificate for meritorious industrial performance from Sh. M. Hidayatullah, Vice-President of the Indian Republic.



S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal with Giani Zail Singh, the President of the Indian Republic.



**S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal receiving 'The A.R. Bhatt Award' from Sh. R. Venkataraman,
the Vice-President of the Indian Republic.**



Receiving Productivity Award from S. Basant Singh Khalsa,
Cabinet Minister, Government of Punjab with
S. Amarjit Singh, I. A. S., Director of
Industries, Punjab.



Receiving District Award for Industries from S. Basant Singh Khalsa with Sh. K. R. Lakhanpal, I. A. S., Deputy Commissioner, Ludhiana, standing by them.



The Industrial Merit Award awarded to Bhogal Sons (Regd.)
for being the best Industrial Unit in Punjab.



The Export Award conferred on Bhogal Sons (Regd.) for the year 1980-81.



उद्योग पत्र
स्वनिर्भर उद्योगनिर्माताओं के निमित्त
इन्स्टीट्यूट ऑफ ट्रेड एण्ड इन्डस्ट्रियल डेवलपमेंट
की धार से

श्री एस. एस. भोगल

की यह उद्योगपत्र उनके उस उपक्रम, कर्मनिष्ठता और आत्मनिर्भरता की स्वीकृति स्वरूप, जो उनके सफल उद्योग की स्थापना के आधार है, इस इन्स्टीट्यूट के तत्वावधान में आयोजित 7वें आर्थिक विकास सम्मेलन के उद्घाटन समारोह पर उप-राष्ट्रपति श्री एस० हिदायतुल्ला ने अनुग्रहपूर्वक प्रदान किया।

राज्यप्रमुख

निरेशक

नई दिल्ली

10 दिसम्बर 1983



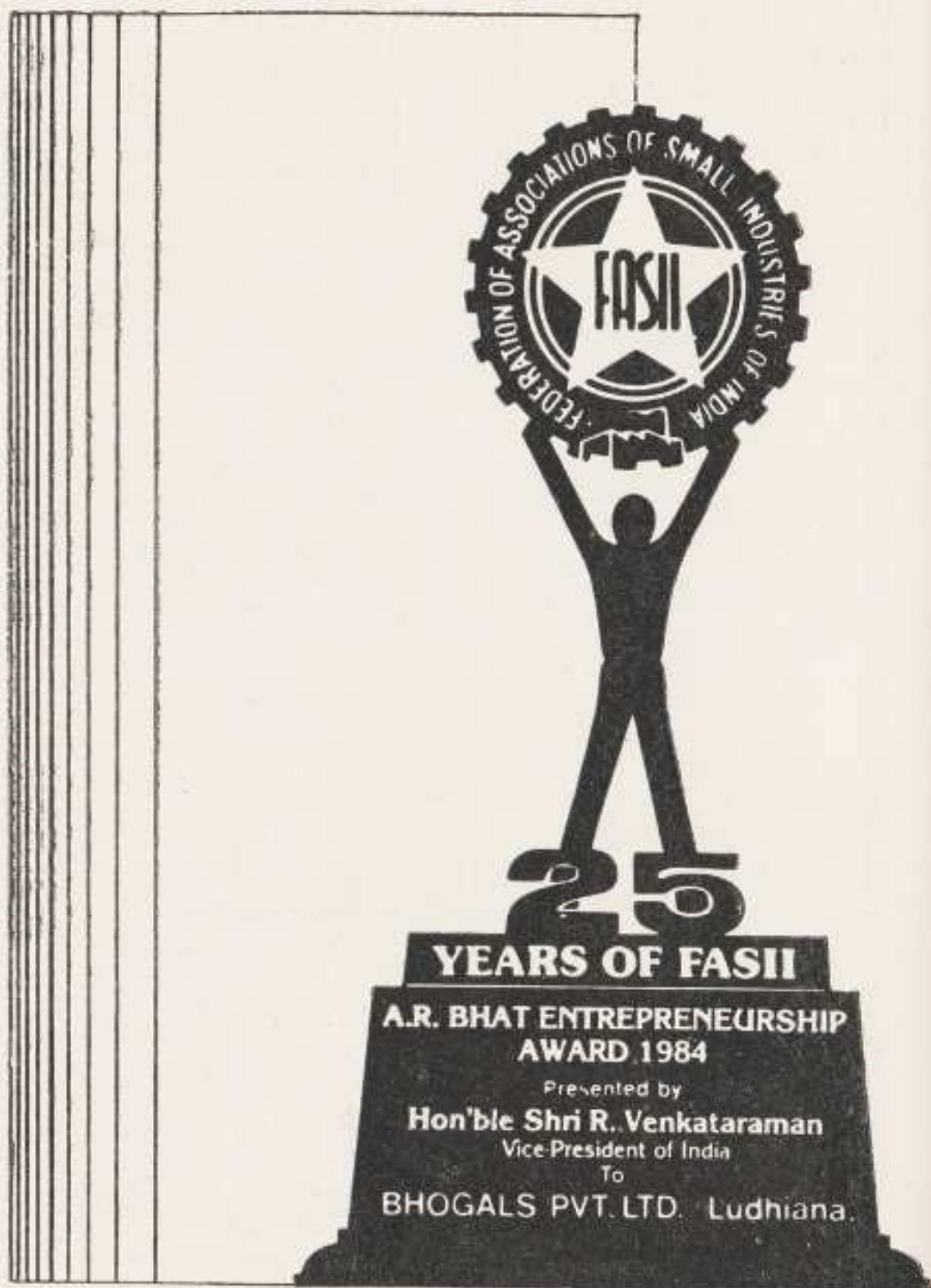
राज्यप्रमुख

श्री० राजाराम शास्त्री

पृ. 9 सत्य नगर

दिल्ली

The Certificate issued to S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal by the Institute of Trade and Industrial Development, New Delhi, in recognition of his being a self-made entrepreneur from Sh. M. Hidayatullah, the Vice-President of the Indian Republic.



A. R. Bhatt Award for the year 1984 given to Bhogals Private Limited at its Silver Jubilee Celebration by Federation of Associations of Small Industries of India (FASII) through Sh. R. Venkataraman, the Vice-President of India.



DISTRICT
PRODUCTIVITY AWARD
1985

**DEPARTMENT OF
INDUSTRIES PUNJAB**

The District Productivity Award given to Bhogal Sons
(Regd.) for the year 1985.



The Family Photograph

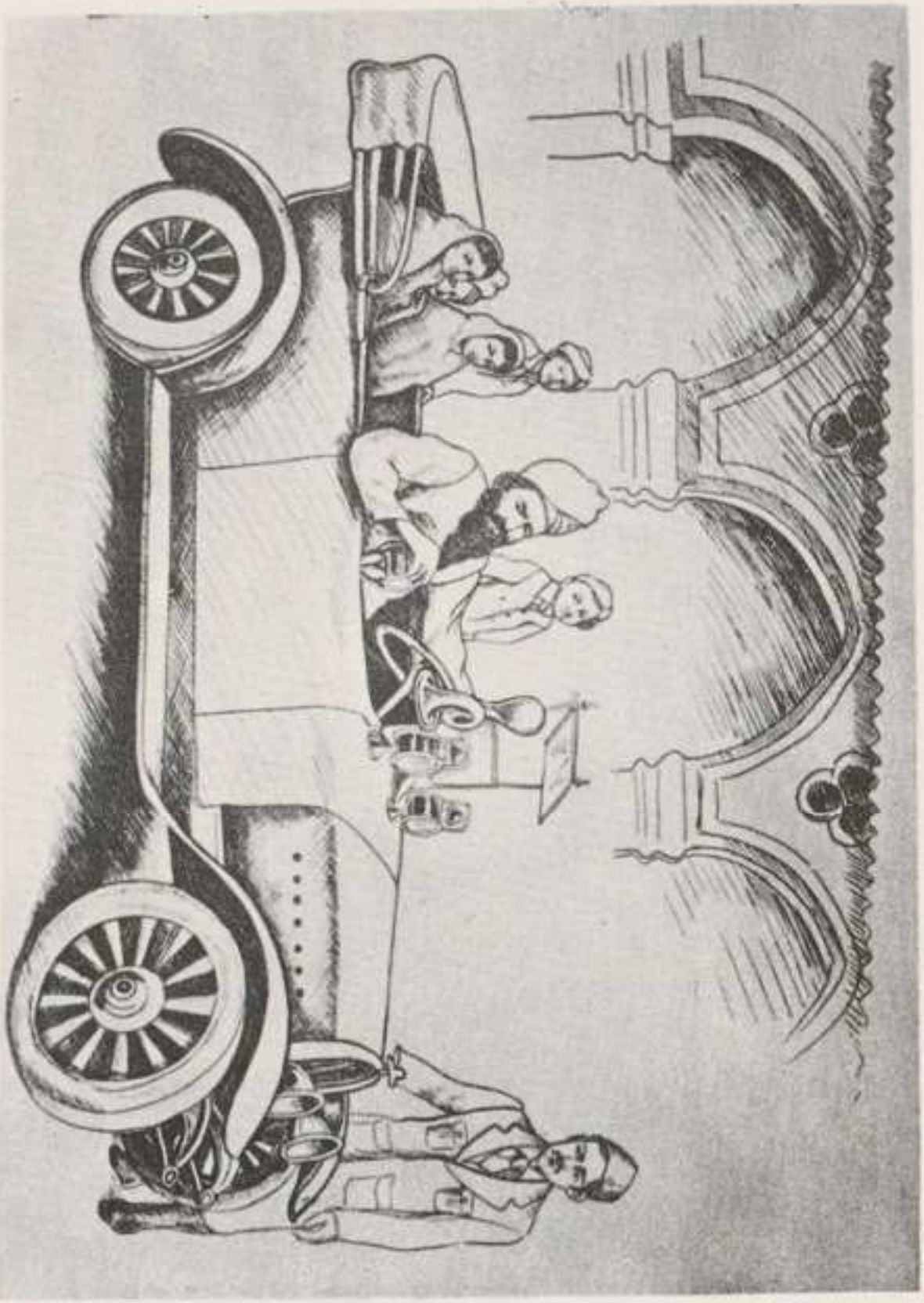
From L to R, 1st Row, Children— Manjit, Jaskirat, Tripat,

Sitting— S. Mohinder Singh Bhogal, Sardarni Mohinder Kaur,

Standing— Avtar Kaur, Kaka Gagandeep, Avtar Singh Bhogal,

Gursharn Singh Sangatpuri, Tejinder Kaur,

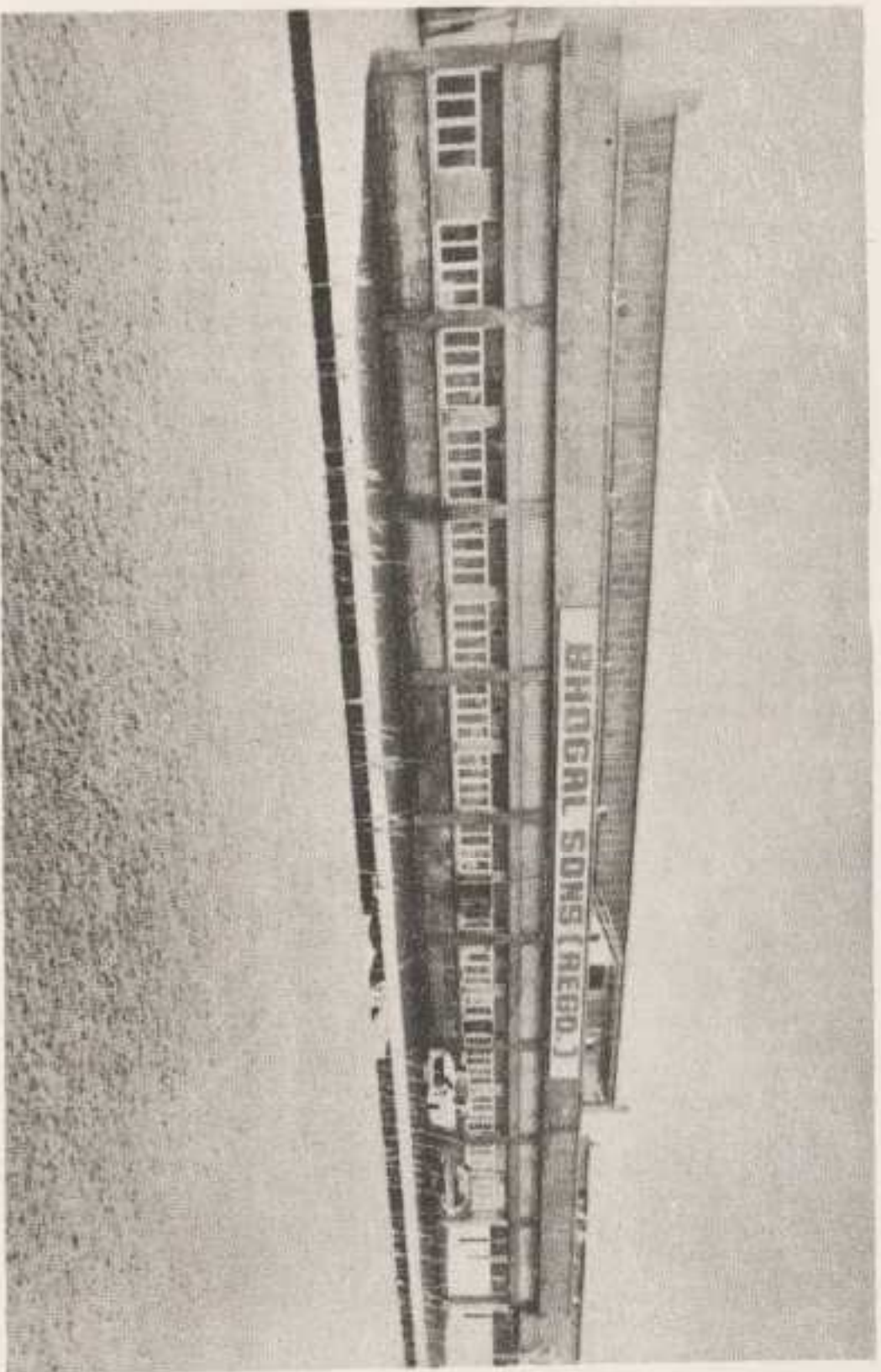
Harinder Pal Bhogal, Harbans Kaur.



S. Mohinder Singh sitting with his mother's sisters in Ford car along with his maternal grand father, S. Hari Singh, in front of his birth place, at Jabbalpur.



S. Karam Singh Bhogal and Sardarni Kartar Kaur Bhogal



DREAMS NO LONGER DREAMS BUT A REALITY :

This is what BHO GAL SONS looks like today. One of the many plants,

the group operates.



THE MARK OF THE MAN : True Grit and sheer determination have changed everything. M. S. Bhogal, the Chairman of the Bhogal Group in the driver's seat, from where he guides the destiny of his family and the thousands of workers.

CHAPTER I

ANCESTORS

Man is the vital product of his heritage, his entire family and his age. Consequently, an individual's development depends not only upon his God-given talents and inclinations but also upon his heritage, background, environment and those responsible for his upbringing. Sometimes people even say that the development of a child is the miracle wrought by the hands that rock its cradle, feed it, lovingly placing it in the lap, pat it to sleep, seek its welfare and pray to the Lord for its health and well-being. That is why we seek to know a man's family from the maternal as well as the paternal side with a view to forming an idea of his temperament, beliefs and mode of thinking. Comprehensive information is gathered about these families. At the time of seeking a suitable match thorough enquiries are made into the maternal as well as the paternal families of the boy and the girl.

The influence of the mother's family on the first-born child is all the more profound and last-

ing, for in conformity with an age-old tradition in Punjab, an expectant woman comes to stay with her parents before the birth of the first child, and it is their home that she gives birth to it. Like many other things this tradition is dying out now and a woman is not sent to her parents' home for the first delivery, for customs go on changing.

Guru Arjan Dev's entire personality were moulded under the influence of his maternal grandfather, Guru Amar Das. It was to him that he owed his creative genius which is truly reflected in Gurbani as well as the courage to make the supreme sacrifice for his faith, for the great Guru was born and brought up at his mother's parental home.

Mohinder Singh is the first child of Bibi Kartar Kaur and Karam Singh Bhogal. So, it is imperative to have a close look at the family background of his mother and father.

Karam Singh Bhogal was the first child of Sardar Pala Singh and Sardarni Bhagwan Kaur. Pala Singh was born and brought up at Bheelowal, District Hoshiarpur. He was a Gur-Sikh. At the same time, he was an efficient workman and

a fine carpenter. He worked as a contractor at Shimla. It was his nature to finish his work within the stipulated period and do it with perfect sincerity and craftsmanship. He won five gold medals as reward for his meticulous work. These medals on his coat looked like the medals adorning the chest of the commander of a victorious regiment. He was perfectly self-disciplined. He bought a plot of land in his native village and raised an orchard of oranges and fruit-bearing trees of many varieties. He had brought the saplings for his orchard from Nagpur so as to get the maximum price for his produce. Unfortunately he was bed-ridden for a long period of nine years. He died in the year 1924, when the orchard bore fruit for the first time. Thus he did not get the chance to taste the fruit of his orchard. He enjoyed respect and recognition not only in government circles at Shimla but in his native parts also. The supervision work of the Vice regal Lodge had been entrusted to him.

His mother, Mrs. Bhagwan Kaur, was a devout Sikh and a true daughter of the Punjab. Churning curds, milking cows and buffaloes, plying the spinning wheel, in short, doing all sorts of

house-hold chores, she would recite verses from the Holy Granth. In the words of Mohinder Singh, "Whenever we happened to get up during the night, we found our grand-mother in meditation or engaged in the recital of holy verses. We wondered when she slept." She considered service of guests and men of God as a part of her daily round of prayers. Every year a saffron-clad hermit would stay at Bheelowal for two months during the mango season. The residents of the village would address him as 'Rabb Ji'. Though he resided in the mansion of a land-lord, he took his meals cooked by Sardarni Bhawan Kaur once a day and took his bath at the well in the orchard. Mataji was a sweet-natured lady. She had bitter words for none, prayed for the well-being of the whole humanity and helped the needy. Her kinsfolk were many times guilty of inequities in dealing with her. Sardar Pala Singh had transferred two plots, out of the land purchased by him, to his kinsfolk, without charging a penny so that the property held by them might brighten their prospects of marriage. After his demise, they broke her arm twice in the course of a dispute arising from their demand of a passage.

However, she never complained against them, for being a good natured lady, she wished ill to none.

Maternals :

Kartar Kaur was the eldest daughter of Sardar Hari Singh and Bhagwan Dei. Kartar Kaur had a younger sister who died when she was about a year old. Sardar Hari Singh belonged to Pandori Nijran in District Jalandhar. Bhagwan Dei was my father's sister. She was the daughter of Sardar Natha Singh and Mai Jas Kaur of Nangal Shama, District Jalandhar. Her elder brother was my father, S. Bhagwan Singh Phull, while her younger brother was named Deva Singh. My father was only nine when my grand-father passed away. Bhagwan Dei was brought up by my father. My aunt's matrimonial alliance was effected through the efforts of my father's uncle. The husband and of S. Natha Singh's sister Taabi Sardar Sunder Singh of Naajka village which is situated at a distance of about 2 k.m. to the west of Pandori. The marriage of my aunt was arranged by my father. At first, my father worked as an engraver in wood at Quetta. Later on, he shifted to Jabbalpur to be with Sardar Hari Singh.

After the day's work, my father would take Sardar Hari Singh to a tutor for coaching. Thus my father took pains to make Sardar Hari Singh a shrewd and competent contractor.

Miracles, it has rightly been observed, will never cease to happen. Fortune blesses a man apparently without any effort on his part. Sometimes some body's company transforms a man's life. S. Hari Singh's father worked with a Marwari businessman, Seth Harijiwan Haroon. The good old man having a strong feeling of affinity between him and young Hari Singh, adopted him as his godson. He had two sons of his own. The Seth divided his property into three equal parts and gave one part to S. Hari Singh. If a father does a similar thing today, his sons would at once murder him and his godson. To-day this thing strikes us as an incredible tale from the 'Arabian Knights'. In the beginning, S. Hari Singh took small contracts in partnership with Haroon Brothers. Later, he began to work independently, and within a short time grew to be a big contractor. His family occupied a splendidd bungalow in Ganjipur.

S. Hari Singh took his first contract during World War I. I was at Jabbalpur during the war days. Our family (my father, S. Bhagwan Singh Phull; my mother Dhan Dei; my brother, Amar Singh; my sister, Karam Kaur, and I) occupied the first floor of the bungalow, while S. Hari Singh resided on the ground floor with his family : my aunt Bhagwan Dei and her children : Kartar Kaur, Bhago and Sampuran Singh. Sardar Hari Singh made so huge a profit in the first contract that his iron chest measuring 6'x3'x2.5' was literally filled with gold and silver coins. Almost all the official bungalows and other Government buildings at Jabbalpur Cantonment were built by S. Hari Singh.

S. Hari Singh was a master builder. The works executed by him bore the mark of high excellence, and it goes to his credit that they were all completed within the stipulated period. This claim is substantiated by the reports of various high officers of B & R, P.W.D. and M.E.S. departments like A. Davison (20.5.1920), T. Macenzi, G.E.(1.12.1919) Hunse Kumar (1.11.1919) D. Thomson (1.11.1919), A.H. Bingley, Maj. Gen., Secretary to the Govt. of India (30.9.1919), A.

Brown (1.9.1919), W. Stenson (30.9.1919) T.S. Bursby (11.2.1919) etc. This information has been taken from "Copies of testimonials granted by the officers of Military, Public Works, Local Board and Railway Departments to S. Hari Singh, General Contractor, Jabbalpur." (Anjuman Islami Press, Jabbalpur).

S. Hari Singh had a very pleasing personality. Tall, well-built and fair, he had an ever-smiling face. His eyes had a rare radiance about them. He was very diligent. The will to accomplish every task undertaken by him on time was the major reason for his success. That is why all his life the contracts he got and the ventures he undertook were not only flawlessly executed but also completed on schedule. He loved children intensely and was extremely fond of rural ditties. Whenever he met my mother, he wanted her to sing Punjabi folk-songs. He treated his subordinates with great affection.

Sardar Hari Singh was a perfect Gur-Sikh. He had immense faith in the great Gurus. It was he who constructed the first ever Gurdwara at Jabbalpur in 'Marha Talab' and started the tradi-

tion of celebrating the Gur Purbs. He was the moving spirit behind the first religious procession taken out on the birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev in the year 1918. The Holi Scripture of Sri Guru Granth Sahib was placed on a decorated elephant. I proudly recall that I had the honour of sitting by the side of the Granthi.

The credit for starting classes in Punjabi on the premises of the 'Marah Talab' Gurdwara at Jabbalpur also goes to him. I vividly remember that I was also given one of the primers in Punjabi ordered from Amritsar. S. Hari Singh was also a great philanthropist. He not only distributed silk turbans amongst his workers and domestic servants at Diwali but also helped the poor and the needy with money.

Bhagwan Dei was a very charming lady. She was a very good sister, an aunt full of tender care, a virtuous wife and a self-sacrificing mother. She was considered to be not only lucky but a harbinger of good luck for all concerned. My grand-mother often told a little story to substantiate this. Once she was plying the spinning wheel in the company of her friends, when all the friends decided to

paste their foreheads with henna. Elderly women of those days believed that foreheads did not catch the colour of henna and also that if a belle's forehead caught it she was sure to be very lucky and destined to be a prince's consort. All the girls applied henna-paste to their forehead but it was only Bhagwan Kaur whose foregead caught the auspicious colour.

She was deeply attached to and keenly solicitous of the prosperity of the house of her father and brother. I can still recollect the scene on my brother's wedding-day when she, decked with her heavy jewellery, danced with gusto and great abandon. She was in a state of ecstatic delight to find her father's and brother's house full of joy and happiness. The first verse she sang to the accompaniment of dance went thus :

“The moon has risen over my father's courtyard,

My brother is blessed with a son”

The second verse that she sang with appropriate gestures and movements was :

“Get aside, O, get aside, let me see your bride !”

“Rest assured, O, aunt,

A belle full slim is she !”

“How many chapattis does she eat
And how many bowls of lintels
Needs to eat them, with ?”

“Only a quarter of a chapatti,
And a mere ladle full of lintels.”

She gave a truly wonderful display of histrionic talent while rendering the answers put into the mouth of the nephew. As she sang the finale of the verse :

“Then is she a houri, a fairy child indeed.”

She was truly lit up with joy. She was a very tender-hearted and docile Punjabi woman. Munificence came natural to her. She looked upon her brother’s wife, that is, my mother, as a member of her family.

At Jabbalpur, she would move out in a right royal manner. When she went down to the Narbada for a holy dip on the first day of an Indian Calendar month, Sankrant, she would move in a convoy of thirteen tongas, each of which was draped and curtained. She would occupy the one in the middle with six tongas before and six

after her. The other tongas would carry the children of the family and the families of local officers, for S. Hari Singh, being a Municipal Commissioner of Jabbalpur, had close links with the local officers. It may be mentioned in passing that he continued to be a city father all his life.

We have seen that the grand-mother and maternal grand-mother of S. Mohinder Singh bore the same name. Bhagwani or Bhagwan Dei and Bhagwan Kaur. Both were characterized by the virtue of charity. Both had unswerving faith in the great Gurus. Both wished and prayed for the welfare of humanity as a whole.

Mohinder Singh's grand-father as well as maternal grand father enjoyed the respect of all around them. Both made notable achievements and won many honours. Sardar Pala Singh made his mark at Shimla, and S. Hari Singh won distinction at Jabbalpur.

So these were the sources from which came their peculiar virtues to S. Mohinder Singh's parents.

The first child of my aunt was a daughter.

She passed away when she was only one year old. In 1909, my aunt was blessed with another daughter, a truly beautiful baby. She was named Kartar Kaur. She resembled her father in looks and bore a deep impression of his pleasing personality.

I lived at Jabbalpur from 1916 to 1919. Kartar Kaur and I, being of the same age, were deeply attached to each other. We not only played together but learnt embroidery, tailoring, knitting and painting from an English woman. Kartar Kaur was highly creative. Imbued with the spirit of originality, she was extremely fond of creating new things. We would make paper-flowers out of cuttings from the colourful posters printed by Parsi Theatrical Groups. Using scissors on these posters, we would make shirts, pyjamas and salvars and thus learn the art of cutting. She loved Gurbani, but was equally fond of domestic chores of all kinds.

Those days boys and girls were married quite early, but the girls went to live with their in-laws only when they had grown up. Kartar Kaur's marriage was solemnized at the age of eleven at

Pandori in February, 1920.

S. Karam Singh Bhogal was deeply influenced by his mother, Sardarni Bhagwan Kaur. Like his mother, he recited Gurbani as well as went into meditation. He was also deeply devoted to religious-minded men and saints. He was an expert driver, and was equally proficient in non-stop recital of Gurbani. His recital of Gurbani was flawless indeed. He was capable of giving excellent religious discourses. Till his very last day he would sing devotional songs along with his entire family.

He had a saintly nature, and found greater pleasure in working for others than in pursuing personal ends. He was gifted with a keen mechanical sense and an extraordinary power of observation. He would in no time locate the defect in a machine and set it right. He was extraordinarily skillful in the electrical line. He was a pioneer in the manufacture of bicycle parts in Punjab at Ludhiana in 1939, the project having been planned in 1938. He is, therefore, known as 'The father of Bicycle Industry in Punjab'. I propose to describe his role in full in a biography

of his.

S. Karam Singh had his primary education at Shimla and then got admission in the fifth standard at Khalsa High School, Mahilpur, in the district of Hoshiarpur. Later, while in that very class he joined Doaba Khalsa High School, Jalandhar, along with me in, December, 1923. At this time, he lived with us, the maternal grand-parents of his wife, Sardarni Kartar Kaur. We would go together to Doaba Khalsa High School, Jalandhar from Nangal Shama.

At that time, the Babbar Khalsa movement was in full swing in the Doaba region in general and in the villages of Nangal Shama, Vinanga, Patara, Paragpur and Kothi Ghurial in particular. On March 9, 1923, the Babbars killed Buta Singh, the Lambardar of our village, along with his grand-son, Surjan Singh, who was my class-mate. In 1924, started the Jaitu Morcha. At Patara, the native village of Master Mota Singh, a public meeting was held in which the young were urged to join the Jatha leaving for Jaitu. When a fifteen-year-old boy sang a stirring song set to the tune of a popular amorous ditty, the blood of many in

the audience began to see the with anger. The burden of the amorous ditty was :

“Let thy spinning wheel in the lane, O my love,
When I call you, come on, my love.”

In sharp contrast to this, the martial song was a clarion call to the youth to face bullets and fall in the great cause. Thus it implied :

“Let us go to face whizzing bullets,
When I call you, say not ‘no’, my friend.”

Karam Singh, gifted with a keen sense of humour and an almost inexhaustible capacity for sly digs, was also imbued with patriotic sentiments. The anguish behind the song stirred the inmost chords of his being. He quietly slipped away from the village and reaching Amritsar, enlisted as a member of the twelfth jatha for the Jaitu Morcha. He kept us completely in the dark. This jatha, after offering prayers at Harimandir Sahib, left for Jaitu on the 17th of August, 1924. Its leader was Jathedar Sucha Singh Moga and S. Koir Singh of village Sahib Chand was the next in command. This Jatha, making its way through Sohal Patti, Pohuvind, Boparai, Dasuwal

Rattoke, Khare, Sahari, Khuddian, Chauke, Ferozepur, Jhok Sham Singh, Guru Har Sahai etc., at last reached Malout on the 7th of September. Here a toady mixed some poison in the food and 'Parshad' of the jatha, many members of the jatha were taken ill. However, quite a few were saved by the Jathedars, who sensing the cause of the trouble, dissuaded them from eating. Karam Singh was among the afflicted. Prompt medical aid saved his life and the Jatha courted arrest at Jaitu on the 14th of September. Even a thorough probe failed to identify the culprit. (Malwa Itihas, Part III, Page 665).

The boys from 11 to 16 were detained in a camp called 'Boys' House'. S. Mehar Singh, who subsequently rose to be the proprietor of the Daily 'Ranjit', Patiala and S. Amar Singh 'Tegh', who wrote documented books about patriots and their plight in the jail at Nabha known as 'kar khas' were his co-prisoners. The Sikhs emerged victorious from the struggle. Consequently all the prisoners were set free. When S. Hari Singh came to know of this episode, he came to Punjab to seek his release, But before he could make a move, Karam Singh had already been released.

S. Hari Singh took Karam Singh to Jabbalpur along with him.

Reaching Jabbalpur, Karam Singh began to assist his father-in-law in the execution of his contracts. He learnt the ins and outs of the trade in no time. When his Jealous kinsfolk at Bheelowal came to know that Karam Singh was working with his father-in-law at Jabbalpur, and leading fairly comfortable life, they were consumed by jealousy and stooped to use mean tricks.

I can recollect that my wedding was to take place on the 13th of February, 1925. My aunt, along with her entire family, had been with us at Nangal Shama since the 2nd of the month. Karam Singh had accompanied the family from Jabbalpur, but had gone straight to his village. S. Hari Singh and Karam Singh were scheduled to reach our village on the 12th.

It was the seventh of February. The 'Batna ceremony' was to commence that day. (In those days, the rubbing of the bodies of the would-be bride as well as would-be bridegroom with fragrant herbal paste commenced in their respective homes seven or at least five days before the wedding, and

the ritual continued to be held daily right up to the wedding day itself). When I was made to rise from the ceremonial stool with traditional prayers and good wishes, the postman threw a letter into our court-yard. The letter was written in Urdu and was addressed to my brother, Amar Singh. It was he who read the letter. The sender had either not written his name or perhaps it was not legible, but the name of his village, Bheelowal was perfectly legible. The letter was written in an immature hand. It read thus : 'We regret to inform you that Karam Singh passed away on the fourth of February'.

It was a bolt from the blue. At once, the house was rent with loud wails. Kartar Kaur cast off her jewellery and wept bitterly. Everybody was consoling her, but she would not stop weeping. My aunt, too, removed all ornaments. Nobody touched a morsel of food all the day.

Nobody really believed the news to be true. No body seemed to have the courage to prove it as false and malicious either. Everybody was looking time and again at the sender's address and the Post-Office Stamp. I too, read the letter carefully

and felt like denouncing it as a malicious hoax, but could not. However, I repeatedly said, "This letter ought to have been addressed to S. Hari Singh or Bhagwan Dei. Why has it been sent in Amar Singh's name ? "

To confirm the truth or falsehood of the letter, my uncle, Sardar Sewa Singh, cycled to Bheelowal through 'kacha' village roads. In those days Buses had not yet started plying and a train or two from Jalandhar Cantonment to Hoshiarpur would be of little use, for Bheelowal is eleven miles from Hoshiarpur on the road to Garh-Shankar. My uncle returned from Bheelowal, late in the evening, tired and totally exhausted. He broke the happy news that Karam Singh was very much alive. The letter had obviously been written by some jealous kinsman. With uncle's return, the preparations for my marriage were resumed joyfully. It will be recounted at a later stage how these mean relatives continued to pester and persecute Karam Singh's family, his mother in particular.

After my marriage, S. Hari Singh decided to keep Karam Singh permanently with him. His personality made a great impact and impression on

both Karam Singh and Kartar Kaur. It was there that Kartar Kaur acquired from him the gift of resigning oneself to the will of God.

Bhagwan Dei had many servants. She owned a large fleet of buggies, tongas and cars. The family may justly be described as living in princely splendour. Before the birth of Mohinder Singh, Karam Singh and Kartar Kaur lived in a peaceful, charming and pleasant atmosphere. This atmosphere had a profound influence on the life of Mohinder Singh. Composure, soberity, deep devotion for the Gurus, lofty thoughts, the zeal for altruism, the desire to aspire and achieve and other virtues have been unconsciously assimilated by him from his maternal grand-parents like the fragrance acquired by a tree standing near a sandalwood tree. This atmosphere moulded his personality in the way the hands of a potter the clay on the mould wheel into a lovely shape.

Sardar Mohinder Singh's engineering skill is permeated with the artistic genius of Kartar Kaur.

CHAPTER 2

THE HEALTHY FRUIT

The month of Magh (January-February) is considered to be very auspicious. During this month, blood is warmed up, for the sun enters Makar Rashi with the result that the sun issues forth such rays as generate zest and bless man with a new mode of thought. This month is also known as the month of religious ceremonies. According to Punjabi religious culture, going to religious places for a holy dip in tanks there on three different days and giving of alms during this month deeds of great virtues. Astrologers believe that a child born in this month has rare self-confidence, extra-ordinary concentration, firmness and remarkable faith. It also has tolerance and the desire to make its mark in the world, for the weather being very pleasant, the expecting mother can take solid nutritive diet.

It was the month of March, I was to appear in the Matriculation examination. The examination was to begin on the 10th of March. The examination fast approaching, I was all the time engrossed in studies.

My grand-mother would keep enquiring of me whether a letter had been received from Jabbalpur. Many a time she would grow very sad. My mother was also worried. The reason for her worry was not very clear to me then. The only fact known to me was that my aunt had five daughters. The sixth had died in infancy and she had only one son. I would often hear my grand-mother pray to God that no woman should be burdened with so many daughters. She would pray frequently to God to bless her daughter with another son so that she might have two sons.

Then I came to know of the reality of the situation. Kartar Kaur was in a family way. My mother and grand-mother were busy praying so that their grand-daughter's first-born might not be a daughter. Those days, if a daughter-in-law had a daughter as her first-born, her life was made miserable by her in-laws. Intead of giving her good food during the days of confinement, her mother-in-law would make her work hard, and pester her like anything. So the mothers, aunts and grand-mothers of married girls kept praying for the first-born to be a boy. A male baby would save the dauther-in-law form

hard chores, for it would enhance the prestige and status of the mother. There is a folk song to this effect.

“My mother-in-law is very cruel and done
hearted
She wants me to grind a lot of corn.
When I sit down to grind,
The baby boy begins to cry,
Shall I grind or look after the baby boy,
The baby’s father is wise and loving,
He goes to the mill to have the corn ground.

Thus, if a young woman had a boy as her first-born, the boy’s father would not let the mother undertake any task involving hard labour. As a result of this a view held by the male-dominated society, my mother and grand-mother were gripped with anxiety and fear.

It was the 24th, January, 1927, I was sitting outside my room on the first floor, busy with my books. A voice called out to me, “Gurdial Sihan, come down at once. There is a letter, read it for us.’ Leaving my books, I went down. I examined the envelope. The letter had been posted at Jabbalpur and was from S. Hari Singh. It was addressed

to my grand-mother, Jas Dei. When I told them that the letter was from my uncle, S. Hari Singh, they got all the more excited and asked me to read out the letter at once. The letter was in Urdu. It said that on Tuesday, the 18th of January, 1927, God had blessed Kartar Kaur with a son in the small hours of the morning deemed auspicious for the recital of verses from The Holy Granth.

On hearing this, my grand-mother, offered her thanks to God and, then, went into a trance-like state with folded hands she continued to thank the Almighty. My mother was also overwhelmed with joy. She too thanked God a number of times. The eyes of my widowed grand-mother and mother were lit up with a strange radiance. The letter also said, "The boy is very sweet. The mother and the new-born are both on good health. I am sending money. Let sweets be distributed in the whole village."

Grand-mother was for the distribution of jaggery. So my mother went around the lane distributing it. Grand-mother offered Karah-Parshad at the shrine of ancestors as well as the

local Gurudwara. It was my aunt, that is, Mohinder Singh's grand-mother, Bhagwan Dei, who gave him his name. Mohinder Singh is the loving son of Kartar Kaur.

CHILDHOOD

After passing the Matriculation Examination, I joined Randhir College, Kapurthala, in 1927. In the summer vacation of 1928, on the 10th of July to be exact, I went once again to Jabbalpur. My father had expired in May, 1923. My mother and I lived in the village. My only brother, Amar Singh, lived along with his wife at Jabbalpur, where we had also lived from 1916 to 1919. At first my brother worked as an overseer with S. Hari Singh. Then, S. Hari Singh got him a job in P.W.D.

I saw Mohinder Singh for the first time in July, 1929. He was about one and half year old then. He was a very sweet child indeed. He seldom cried, and, unlike ordinary children, was never obstinate.

Bhagwan Dei was all the time busy with Mohinder Singh. Whenever S. Hari Singh came

home from his work, the first thing he would do was to hold Mohinder Singh in his arms and shower affection on him. Mohinder Singh had a variety of attractive toys. Unlike ordinary children, instead of breaking these toys, he would take them apart to see how they worked. Right from his childhood, he was very intelligent. Sampuran Singh, Mohinder Singh's uncle, and I would many times take Mohinder Singh to the factory. He was extremely happy when he saw carpenters making the various articles of furniture. The rooms of the bungalow in which Mohinder Singh was born were very spacious. The courtyard was also very big and open. The wise have rightly said that at first man builds the house according to his resources and then the house and the rooms mould the owner of the house and his family. The spacious rooms and the open court-yard where Mohinder Singh passed his early years of life widened his thoughts and broadened his outlook.

One day Mohinder Singh sat on the platform in front of the bungalow. The platform was about three feet high. He began to look downward, just then I came out and the thought that he might fall down, frightened me I shouted, "My

boy, you may fall. Get back a little from the edge.” Hearing me, Mohinder Singh smiled and then got down the steps with princely elegance. When he saw that there was a heavy traffic on the road, he ascended the steps in the manner of a monarch ascending his throne. This manner impressed me deeply. I was sure that this child would walk carefully and warily on the paths of life. He would find his ways by himself and would touch new horizons.

One day Sardar Hari Singh brought a very lovely toy for Mohinder Singh. This toy had most probably been brought by the English woman from whom Kartar Kaur and I used to learn knitting. Just at that time, there came a maid-servant’s child, who happened to be of the same age as Mohinder Singh. That child began to watch the new toy with greedy eyes, in spite of his mother’s best efforts to divert his attention. Mohinder Singh sensed the feelings of the boy and went to him to give him the new toy. The boy’s mother, snatching the toy from his hands, tried to return it to Mohinder Singh, but he refused to take it back, and went inside.

It was raining heavily. The road had changed

into a torrent. Mohinder Singh's aunts were floating paper boats in order to enjoy this spectacle. One of his aunts made a paper boat for Mohinder Singh. Mohinder Singh tore that paper-boat into pieces. She gave him another, which met the same fate. Then he himself made wonderful that the boats of all others capsized, but Mohinder Singh's boat went on floating till it disappeared from sight. This boat not only bore testimony to Mohinder Singh's remarkable intelligence but also hinted at the shape of things to come. Once, all of us went down to the Narbada for a dip. There toys of brittle marble were on sale. Mohinder Singh was exhilarated at the sight of these white toys. Kartar Kaur bought him many of these. Mohinder Singh stratched his hands for white pieces of marble along with toys. He was given those pieces as well. We had thought that Mohinder Singh would throw away those pieces, but he, on the other hand, began to grind these pieces. He had seen eggs made out of marble pieces at the river site, and he was trying to make one out of his piece of marble. This act bore witness to his power of observation even as a child. There was a theatre, called Harbilas Theatre in Marah Talab. Here the Parsi Theatri-

cal Companies presented their plays. The stage accessories in the hall for these plays were manufactured in S. Hari Singh's factory. Later on, S. Hari Singh bought this theatre. In 1927, the rounds of this theatrical company grew much less frequent and silent movies began to be exhibited.

In the cinema hall, the best seats were reserved for us. When a play was performed, we had seats in the first row, and when a film show was on, we had seats in the upper balcony. We would often go to see plays and movies and take Mohinder Singh alongwith us. There, Mohinder Singh would not bother us as ordinary children tend to do. He would view every scene very intently. Once we went to see a movie entitled, "Bilva Mangal". When Bilva Mangal, taking a snake for a rope, went up the balcony of the prostitute's house, Mohinder Singh was not scared nor did he feel frightened when Bilva Mangal pierced his eyes with sharp irons. At Jabbalpur, there was a very mighty fountain at a big crossing. It attracted large crowds in the summer. Many booths selling 'Gole Gappas' were located there. Florists would sell garlands made out of Motia and Champak buds. The fountain was very high, therefore

it was very cool around it. People would buy garlands from there and then enjoy 'Gole Gappas'. We would go there in our car. The car was parked by the roadside. Once we bought Mohinder Singh a garland of buds. He was very glad to have this garland, but very soon he removed it from his neck and gave it to another child. Thus, Mohinder Singh's genius began to show itself even in his childhood. As already stated, Mohinder Singh was profoundly influenced by S. Hari Singh's personality. There was a remarkable physical resemblance between the two. Today when Mohinder Singh untied his beard, it is difficult to distinguish between him and S. Hari Singh. Like S. Hari Singh, he has the virtue of right thinking and the courage to speak the truth. He has the same self-confidence. He has like his illustrious maternal 'grand-father, an inherent passion for touching new heights.

STORMY YEARS

Times change all of a sudden. When a storm blows, it is difficult to say which tree will be shorn of, its flowers, fruit and leaves. No one can predict which tree will be up-rooted and which house will collapse. Bhagwan Dei, yearning for a brace of sons, left the world after delivering a still-born child. She was dreaming of getting her Sampuran Singh, married, but the twine of her own life was snapped. Bhagwan Dei had solemnised the marriage of her two daughters, Kartar Kaur and Bhagwant Kaur. The other three daughters and the only son were yet to be married. One daughter was betrothed to Karam Singh's younger brother, Harnam Singh. The demise of Bhagwan Singh and Bhagwan Dei rendered S. Hari Singh utterly lonely. He was left with no one to advise him. He had little faith in my uncle (father's brother). His motherless small children and the expanse of his business provided an opportunity to his kinsfolk to come near him. These kinsfolk were unhappy to see him prosperous and they had an eye on his wealth. One of them said to S. Hari Singh, "Look here, Hari Sihan,

the inevitable has happened. Nobody can go against the will of God. Now you should think of your home and family. Your children are very small. On the other hand, by God's grace your business has expanded. If you give excessive attention to your children, your work as a contractor will suffer. The splendour in which you live will then be a thing of the past. If you devote yourself completely to your business, your children will remain neglected. Which of the two do you want to save—Your home or your business? Do you want to ruin both for want of sense or do you want to find out a way to save both?"

The kinsfolk from Pandori were at first unhappy at the thought that S. Hari Singh had his brothers-in-law (wife's brothers) as his advisors'. Then his son-in-law, s assistance in his work had caused them heart-burning. In reality, they wanted to throw out the people from Nangal Shama and S. Hari Singh's sons-in-law in order to get a strong hold on the home and the business. While Bhagwan Dei was alive they were helpless. Now they got a golden opportunity.

S. Hari Singh asked his kinsman, "How can I save both my family and business ?" The kinsman, adopting the tone of wise men said, "I agree that your eldest daughter is very wise and quite capable of looking after her brothers and sisters, but you know that a girl is more concerned about her own home than the home of her father. She uses all possible means to enrich her home at the cost of her father and ultimately impoverish him. Therefore, wisdom demands that you should not rely too much upon your daughter. You must go in for a second marriage." On hearing the word 'marriage', S. Hari Singh was filled with rage. "Are you in your senses ? Shall I, the father of six children and a grand-father as well, marry again ? I do not know how to look after these children. How will I be able to bring up the children of the other wife ?"

"Hari Sihan, you have lost temper for nothing. Are we fools ? Are we your enemies that we shall add to your responsibilities ? Dear brother, we shall search out for you a life companion, not a woman to bear children. You might plead that you can engage a maid-servant to rear children. In the first place, no good maid-servant

will be available. If at all, you are able to search one, and she will manage to ingratiate herself into your favour, get hold over you and force you to marry her. Thus, she will manouvre to be the mistress of your entire property," said the foxy relative with a view to staking S. Hari Singh. "Am I so foolish as to be dominated by a maid-servant ?". S. Hari Singh said in an irritated voice.

"This is nothing to be irritated about. You are not foolish, but you are by no means old. She is to bring you under her control for your wealth. If you are not taken in by her tricks, she will try to scare you into submission through false allegations. She will force you to marry her. Therefore, you should move very cautiously. Those who have an eye on a man's wealth and property, resort to many a trick and make use of many chance-happenings to further their ends," the kinsman said, dwelling at great length on the point. When S. Hari Singh agreed to follow the advice of his kinsfolk, he put forth this argument. "If your son had been of a marriageable age, we would have advised you to get him married and bring a daughter-in-law. Then, we would

be sure that the daughter-in-law would manage the family, though we cannot ignore the unpleasant fact that the daughters-in-law of today are reluctant to look after the children of their father-in-law. Moreover, the need for a life-companion is much keener in old age than in youth. In old age, a man's daughters are engrossed in the affairs of their own homes, and the sons in their wives. The man is thus, left completely alone. He cannot share his joys and sorrows with any one because sons and the daughters-in-law as well as the daughters and sons-in-law have their own lives to live. They have neither the leisure nor the desire to share the joys and sorrows of their parents."

S. Sunder Singh of Naajka, being far away, could not come to S. Hari Singh's rescue and dissuade him from taking this disastrous step. Had my mother not been widowed, this unfortunate happening would have been avoided.

The kinsfolk instigated S. Hari Singh to marry a Jatt widow, named Dharam Kaur, from the district of Amritsar. It is said that she had lived with many men as their wife, but had not been able to bear a child. Her village was situated

in the neighbourhood of Rayya, a small town in the district of Amritsar. With her coming into the household of S. Hari Singh, she gained complete control over it. The first thing she did was to win the favour of Bhago and her husband, Pritam Singh. As a consequence of this, the influence of Kartar Kaur and Karam Singh began to wane. This Jatt woman forced S. Hari Singh to sever all connections with his relatives from Nangal Shama. Earlier, whenever S. Hari Singh happened to visit Punjab, he made it a point to go to Nangal Shama. Now, he stopped going there.

The relatives of Dharam Kaur were frequent visitors to Jabbalpur. S. Hari Singh was rendered helpless. He knew what they were up to, but felt too weak to do anything. Her relatives began to nurture ill-will against Karam Singh. They would often threaten to do away with him.

The fact of the matter was that Karam Singh wanted to serve S. Hari Singh's house, whereas the relatives of Dharam Kaur had evil designs on it. They were of the view that they would not be able to have their way, while Karam Singh was

there. So, they hatched a conspiracy to have Karam Singh thrown out of the house. Pritam Singh and Bhago also joined the conspiracy to oust Karam Singh and Kartar Kaur, though cowardly.

One day S. Hari Singh went to Sagar to supervise his work there. The relatives of Dharam Kaur made a plan to murder Karam Singh and abduct Kartar Kaur. When S. Hari Singh did not return in the evening, they were convinced that instead of coming back to Jabbalpur, he would spend the night at Sagar.

It was 11.00 p.m. Someone called out, "Karam Sihan, come here for a while. Something important is to be discussed."

Karam Singh, being very simple-hearted, could not see through their trick. He went into their room. As soon as he entered, they bolted all the doors from inside.

"Karam Sihan, hand over to us whatever you have robbed from this house. Also hand over all the ornaments that your wife has and leave this house, otherwise we will put you to death," one of them said, brandishing a

pistol. "Let Babu Ji come. I shall talk to him and leave in the morning. I have looted nothing from here. Don't be impatient." "Who is Hari Singh to decide to keep you here? We are the guards of this house, for it happens to be our sister's. You cannot be allowed to loot this house. Get out, or we will shoot you," saying this, he was about to press the trigger when Karam Singh hid under a bed to save himself. At this, two men dragged him out. Karam Singh began to struggle for his life.

When Karam Singh failed to return to his room, Kartar Kaur suspected foul play. She rushed towards the room where the enemies had surrounded Karam Singh. They thought that they had bolted all the doors, but in their hurry they had left one door unbolted. Kartar Kaur entered the room through that door. The scene that met her eyes put her to fright. One of the miscreants tried to push out Kartar Kaur, but she raised a hue and cry. Unfortunately, there was no one to respond to her call of distress. The step-mother was herself responsible for all this. She had been tutored by the kinsfolk of Hari Singh, who had been instrumental in installing

her to this exalted position in the house. Kartar Kaur was saying in a tear-choked voice, "I will bring all my jewellery, but you must spare my husband's life."

The Lord is really great. He came to Kartar Kaur's rescue as He had once come to Daropati's succour. Just at that moment, S. Hari Singh reached the spot, to the utter surprise of the assailants. The dreadful sight filled him with fear. However, the guards of the Jatt woman left the room with down cast eyes.

Kartar Kaur led Karam Singh to her room. S. Hari Singh accompanied them. Kartar Kaur clung to her father and kept crying for a long time. Then she said, "Babuji, now here there is none whom I may call my own. I am surrounded by enemies. My husband's life is in danger. I request you to send us along with children to Bheelowal." "Don't act in a huff, my child. At least let me probe the matter," said Hari Singh in a consoling voice.

Kartar Kaur replied, "Father, a probe will serve no purpose. It will only embitter them against you. Do not invite trouble for my sake.

Now, it is not advisable for us to stay here any longer.”

Hari Singh gave no clear-cut reply to Kartar Kaur. He just said, “We shall take a decision in the morning,” and left the room.

S. Hari Singh had a disturbed night. Whenever he went to sleep, he was tormented by nightmares. On the other side, Kartar Kaur was tortured by anxiety throughout the night. She kept imploring Karam Singh to leave Jabbalpur at once. Mohinder Singh was a very small child then and was ignorant of the horrible episode.

S. Hari Singh wanted to say something to Dharam Kaur, but being afraid of her relatives, he thought it proper to send away his daughter and son-in-law. So, he said to his daughter Kartar Kaur, “My child, you are right. If you stay on here, the situation will deteriorate. You should leave for Punjab tomorrow. I shall not accompany you, but rest assured that I shall come there before long and make all arrangements to provide means of livelihood to Karam Singh. Have no worry whatsoever, my child.” On the appointed day in the year 1930, arrangements were

made to send Kartar Kaur to Punjab. Dharam Kaur and Kartar Kaur's younger sister were inwardly happy, but in order to keep up appearances behaved as if they had been miserable.

All their luggage was sent to the railway station. S. Hari Singh himself came to bid them farewell. When all of them got down the car, Mohinder Singh was surprised. He was looking at the car as if it had belonged to him and had now been snatched. When he was led away by his father, he cast a lingering look at the car. At last, S. Hari Singh took Mohinder Singh in his arms and said, "Come my boy, let me carry you into the train." Even these words raised many a storm of wistful longing in his little heart.

All the members of the family boarded the train. The guard waved the green flag. S. Hari Singh gave Mohinder Singh into Kartar Kaur's hands. The train began to move. S. Hari Singh was waving his hand. Kartar Kaur, her eyes brimming with tears, was waving Mohinder Singh's hand. Every pore of her being was saying, "Father dear, I was not to live for ever in the sacred precincts of your mansion." Mohinder

Singh's unconscious mind was saying that the man who takes pride in the glory of his in-laws or maternals is nothing but a fool. I am not a fool, so I bid farewell to the splendour and glory of my maternal grand-father's house. Only splendour that one achieves with one's own efforts is really one's and a source of real joy. Mohinder Singh kept looking at S. Hari Singh for a long time as the latter stood on the platform.

CHAPTER 4

A NEW STRUGGLE

In 1930, Mohinder Singh left Jabbalpur in the company of his parents and came back to his native village, Bheelowal. The period of princely splendour came to an end and the period of rustic and hard life began.

Every man has to face difficulties. Many ups and downs come in one's life. If a man's path is not beset with difficulties, he can neither grow into a real man nor bring out his latent virtues. Trials and tribulations bring out the best in a man. His dormant qualities get an opportunity to manifest themselves.

Some people, in order to be oblivious of the troubles in their life, resort to drinking and thus, close their eyes to painful realities. Many are driven by difficulties to commit suicide. It is only rarely that we see a man of courage and mettle, who grapples with difficulties, surmounts them and achieves perfection.

It is not difficult for a man born into a poor family to face hardships entailed by poverty, but if the man who leads a rich and luxurious life

has to face poverty and hardship, has indeed a hard time ahead, for he is not used to this sort of life. Only a man of self-culture and faith in God remains firm in such a situation.

At Jabbalpur, there was a large team of servants to do various chores. There were buggies, tongas and motor-cars to move about. There were delicacies to eat and fine clothes to wear. There were well-furnished rooms to live in. All these facilities were lost when the family shifted to its native village. To make things still worse, there were no means of livelihood.

On coming to the village, Kartar Kaur neither cursed her fate nor reproached those who had manoeuvred her ouster. With a smiling face, she accepted all that had happened as the will of God.

That very year, Sardar Hari Singh came down from Jabbalpur. He met his daughter at Bheelowal. He opened a bicycle shop at Hoshiarpur for Karam Singh. After making all the necessary purchases for a well-stocked shop, he went back.

Business demands a particular type of temperament. It requires the capacity to sit patiently for long hours, for nobody knows when the customer might turn up. There is a saying in Punjabi "Like death, a customer keeps no calendar."

Salesmanship, skill in accountancy and a keen sense of business are the necessary virtues for a businessman. He must know which of his customers is credit-worthy. At the same time, he must possess the ability to recover, the credit advanced. Karam Singh had none of these qualities. He would give things on credit to everybody in good faith. But he did not have the persistence required to collect payments from the customers. He would start talking to his customers about religion and idealism. Owing to this weakness of his, the customers would either take the things as free or on credit or at reduced rates. Thus, he suffered a heavy loss. The question of earning or saving did not arise. He could not earn even the rent for the shop. Hoshiarpur was a very small and under-developed town, then. The expenses were naturally very high. The house that Karam Singh had rented was very big

His business could not flourish to the required level, and he continued to suffer losses. S. Hari Singh came to know of this situation through a letter from Kartat Kaur. He again came to the Punjab. Selling all the stock in the shop, he paid off the creditors' debt and set up for him a bicycle-*cum*-electrical goods shop at Jalandhar. Sardar Hari Singh thought that selling bicycles was rather difficult for Karam Singh, but he would certainly be able to sell electrical goods.

Now Karam Singh began to sell electrical goods at Jalandhar. The shop was a failure even here, for Karam Singh knew neither how to buy nor how to sell. His own sister's husband swindled him and proved to be the cause of the failure of the business at Jalandhar. Kartar Kaur never scolded Karam Singh for his lack of practical sense. She resigned herself to the failure of business as the manifestation of God's will. Karam Singh, being very sensitive, felt very bad about the fiasco. After winding up his business at Jalandhar, he came to know that a firm was building a bridge near Jhansi. This firm appointed Karam Singh as a supervisor and he went to the project site.

There was no message from Karam Singh for a long time. Kartar Kaur and Bhagwan Kaur were naturally full of anxiety. One day Karam Singh came home, sighing and groaning. On seeing his condition, Kartar Kaur was overwhelmed with fear, and Bhagwan Kaur said to him, "My son, what has happened?" You never cared to inform us." Karam Singh had a long story of illness and suffering. "Mother, it was raining very heavily. The river was in spate. The swirling water posed a threat to the bridge. We installed a pumping set to pump out the water, but it did not work properly. The river continued to rise. Many divers were sent down into the water to see why the pump was not sucking water. The divers could not locate the defect in the pump. The water level went on rising. Everything was going to be ruined. At last I dived in the water and examined the mouth of the pump. It was blocked by the leg of a tortoise. I took out its leg and the pump began to work. The bridge was saved, but I grew numb. My knee joints grew immobile. I also sustained many injuries. I had requested the officers to inform you telegraphically, but they did not do so. While I lay bed-ridden with immobile joints, Kundan Singh came to my rescue. He

removed me to his home. The good man, God bless his soul, arranged all possible medical aid for me. At least, he managed to procure snake liver oil. Massaging the joints, it put me on my feet again." Hearing the story told by Karam Singh, Kartar Kaur and Bhagwan Kaur thanked God time and again for having brought Karam Singh out of the jaws of death.

Kartar Kaur had no money. She sold her ornaments in addition to doing odd jobs for people to look after her husband. It was as a result of her devoted and tender care that Karam Singh got fit to resume work.

The incident left an adverse effect on Mohinder Singh. Anyhow, Karam Singh fully recovered.

In those days, the Chief Electrical and Industries Inspector for Punjab was an English-man, Mr Harris, who had known Karam Singh as a contractor from his Jabbalpur days. In those days, a power plant was being set up by a private concern at Mandi Baha-ud-din, now in Pakistan. Mr Harris recommended Karam Singh as a skilled electrician to the proprietor of the concern. Karam Singh went to Mandi Baha-ud-din, while the

family began to reside at Bheelowal. Mohinder Singh had been admitted to school at Jalandhar, but on coming to the village he joined the school there. So far there had been no improvement in the financial condition of the family.

At her father's house, Kartar Kaur had never moved out of doors without a car. She had never cooked food, nor had she ever washed her clothes herself. She had never spread her bed, verify or swept rooms in the house. Here she performed all the household duties with a smiling face. All the washing was done by her. The cleanliness of the house was her responsibility. She would plaster the walls and roofs of the house with mud. She also looked after the cattle, and make dung cakes with her own hands. The tailoring and knitting which she had learnt along with me stood her in good stead at this juncture. One day, a neighbouring woman brought a piece of cloth for getting her suit tailored. Kartar Kaur took her measurement like a skillful tailor. She was amazed and said, "Kartar Kaur, you outshine even professional tailors." "Mother, I learnt all this at my parents' house. Now it is proving useful for me," replied Kartar Kaur.

Kartar Kaur never let anybody know about her hardships. She would herself wash and press the clothes of the children, with the result they seemed to belong to a well-to-do family. One day, Kartar Kaur's sister-in-law, Harnam Kaur, came from Jandoli. Kartar Kaur was mopping the floor with the door shut. Harnam Kaur knocked at the door. As Kartar Kaur opened the door, Harnam Kaur shuddered at the sight of her," "My goodness, my sister-in-law, brought up in luxury, is mopping the floor. Leave it, I will do it for you " "Dear sister, how does it matter I am doing my own work. How can it demean me? Wait while, I will be through in no time. I will send Mohinder Singh to inform mother of your arrival". Kartar Kaur finished the work quickly. Then, taking some milk from the earthen pot, offered it to her. Then they began to talk thus. Harnam Kaur said, "Dear Sister, I wonder what sins you are paying for". "Sister, it hardly matters. It often happens thus in life," Kartar Kaur replied politely.

"I often wonder if some one has resorted to the use of black magic against us. The family fell on bad days in a very short time. To add

to this, my dear brother cannot stick to any job. From princely splendour, you have been forced to work for others," saying this, tears welled-up in Harnam Kaur's eyes. "Dear sister, don't feel sad. Everthing will turn out well. I am doing all the struggle to better my future. As for work, I am very fond of it. Mohinder Singh is a very promising boy. I have little doubt that he will change the complexion of things. Difficulties beset only men of courage. I am very sure that ultimately success will kiss our feet," Kartar Kaur tried to console her sister-in-law.

Harnam Kaur's husband was a contractor working outside the state. Therefore, she stayed for most of the time with her parents at Jandoli. She was a woman of deeply religious sentiments full of piety and devotion. Harnam Kaur was Karam Singh's cousin, being the daughter of his mother's sister. Her in-laws lived in Hariana, a small town in the district of Hoshiarpur. She was issueless. She often thought of adopting Mohinder Singh. Mohinder Singh, being fond of her, would often go, during vacation, to see this aunt of his.

Once Mohinder Singh was visiting his aunt at Jandoli. A very wise Palmist used to live there.

Harnam Kaur requested him to study Mohinder Singh's palm. She said to him, "Sir, this boy's family was very well off. It enjoyed princely luxury. Not only this, it catered to the needs of many. Its members wielded great influence in their respective areas. God knows what maleficent stars have risen that the whole family has sunk into the mire of sorrows. Please study his palm to see whether their luck will ever smile or their old glory will ever be regained."

The palmist studied Mohinder Singh's palm intently for a long time and then said, "This child should not have been born into this family. He should have taken birth in a princely family. His palm is revealing extraordinary things. It is only rarely that one gets an opportunity to study such a palm." Saying this, he was once again lost in the lines of Mohinder Singh's palm. Finding the palmist silent, Harnam Kaur was frightened and said, "Pandit Ji, what is the matter ? Why have you grown silent ?" The palmist said, "You need not have any fear. I am wondering at this boy's luck. He is very lucky indeed. He will take this family to heights greater than before by dint of his courage, resource fulness and diligence. When

he enters his eleventh year, their luck will begin to turn. Many troubles and hindrances will no doubt arise, but he, overcoming them all, will find the way to his chosen goal. His hand shows that he has enjoyed drives in motor vehicles in his early childhood. He has lead a life of luxury and aristocracy. A stroke of ill-luck has led him into troubles. At the age of 31, he will once again move about in his own cars." Harnam Kaur was overjoyed on hearing the prophecy of the palmist. She now believed in all that Kartar Kaur had told her about their rosy past. She was so pleased that she gave a one-rupee note—a big sum in those days—to the palmist.

Both Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh were admitted to the school at Bassi Kalan. Both went to the school in neat and tidy clothes. All the children in their school thought them to be very rich. They would carry their mid-day meals in their beautiful tuck-boxes.

Untouchability was widely practised in those days. If a child was touched by a low-caste child, he was thought to have been polluted and had to be purified once again with the water of the Ganges

or at least with the water freshly drawn from a well. The low-caste children were not permitted to drink water from the iron outlet of the Persian well. They had to quench their thirst from the water channel. Although the Bubber Akali movement was trying to dispel untouchability, it was still prevalent in villages. Even Mohammadens were considered low by Brahmins and Khattris. They would not eat the food touched by them.

Many boys from low castes were Mohinder Singh's school-fellows. They would deliberately touch their tuck-boxes and then shout loudly, "Mohinder Singh's food has been polluted. Now, how will he eat it? He cannot think of eating this polluted food."

Mohinder Singh, thinking his food to have been polluted, would give it to them. In this way, the food of both these brothers was eaten by the low-caste boys, and they had to remain hungry. For a few days, Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh did not report this to their mother. Then they apprised her of the situation. Kartar Kaur told them, "My sons, the food is not polluted unless it is directly touched with the hands." Mohinder Singh was convinced. Next day, when the mis-

chievous boys from the low-caste again touched their tuck-boxes and shouted, "The food has been polluted, the food has been polluted" Mohinder Singh made no answer. During the recess, both the brothers took out the food from their boxes and began to eat it. The mischief makers began to shout, "These boys have eaten polluted food; Lo, these boys have eaten polluted food." Mohinder Singh said, "Our food has not been polluted." One of them said at the top of his voice, "We have touched your tuck-boxes, and we belong to a low caste."

Mohinder Singh said in a grown-up manner "My friends, food is polluted if it is touched with hands. You have not touched the food. Since you have touched only the lunch-boxes, the food is still clean."

Sardar Hari Singh passed away. The Jatt woman broke off the engagement between Karam Singh's brother, Harnam Singh, and Kartar Kaur's sister. Both these events affected Mohinder Singh very deeply.

We have already narrated how a saffron clad saint would often visit Bheelowal. He was known

as 'Rabb ji'. Mohinder Singh began to study Gurmukhi at his feet. He used to take food from his home for the holy man. While teaching him Gurmukhi, Rabbji looked instantly at his eyes and forehead. Mohinder Singh came back after serving food to the saintly man and getting his lesson, but 'Rabb ji' kept thinking long after he had gone. Next day, he said to Bhagwan Kaur, "This boy is very promising. He will bring about a sea-change in your family." Bhagwan Kaur said nothing. All that she did was to fold her hands in reverence. This saint had made Mohinder Singh commit the following text to memory :

"One who gives up oneself to the Lord's will can never suffer hardship. If the name of the Almighty stands guard around a man, he can never be sorrow-ridden."

It seems that this text has been shielding Mohinder Singh in every difficulty.

S. Karam Singh would send a money order every now and then. When they brought the money from the post office, many beggars and poor boys from the village would come to beg at their door, thinking to be rich. So, after a while, they started

getting their money orders from the post office in the nearby town, Bassi Kalan.

Mohinder Singh would spend very little time in playing with his companions. He always thought, "Looking at our clean clothes, tuck-boxes and the money orders we get, people think us to be rich, but in fact we are very poor. My mother has to work very hard. God knows where my father is toiling."

Sometimes when his grand-mother told the stories of S. Pala Singh's great glory, Mohinder Singh would grow very sad. One day, he happened to see that photograph of his grand-father in which his coat was decorated with a large number of gold medals. Mohinder Singh was lost in thoughts where has that glory of ours gone ! Who had snatched it from us." He would ask himself these questions, but could get no answer to them at that stage. Unconsciously, he was coming to the conclusion that fate helped only the industrious and hard working people. He determined to work hard and felt sure that fortune would one-day smile on him.

Coming back from the school with the other

boys, Mohinder Singh could be recognised from a distance. His very gait would distinguish him from Mohinder Singh was extremely fond of work. So, he would often render a helping hand to his mother. All the villagers considered Mohinder Singh to be a very impressive and talented boy.

Their kinsfolk were already jealous of them. When S. Karam Singh was packed off along with his family from Jabbalpur, they were overjoyed. They had virtually danced with joy when the shops at Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar had to be closed down. Now, Mohinder Singh's ways made them think that this boy would bring back its former glory to this ruined family.

One day, one of these kinsmen saw Mohinder Singh at a bicycle shop in Hoshiarpur. Mohinder Singh was gazing intently at a bicycle. Many times, picking up a hub or a cone he looked at it carefully. Sometime he would study the threadings on the axle. The kinsman was consumed by jealousy to see this. That day, he planned to strike this boy a blow.

One day, Kartar Kaur cooked food, placing the stove near the door of the inner court-yard.

Kartar Kaur, Kuldip Kaur, Dhanwant Singh and Mohinder Singh had their meals together. Except Mohinder Singh, all of them fell, unconscious. Mohinder Singh went running to the village 'hakeem'. Every one thought that the charcoal burnt in the stove had produced carbon mono-oxide inside the house. The 'hakeem' came. He got the stove removed out of doors and advised that nobody was to go in till the evening. His medicine cured them all.

A few months later, Mohinder Singh's uncle, Harnam Singh, went to a witch doctor at Jagraon. He told him of the calamity, wherein all the members of the family had fallen unconscious. The wise man asked Harnam Singh to prepare a plan of the entire house. Harnam Singh did so. The wise man, Gurbaksh Singh by name, made certain marks on the plan after offering prayers and incanting some holy verses, and, then, said, "Go and dig near the door of the outer gallery or the inner courtyard." Coming to the village, Harnam Singh hired some hands. At first, they dug the floor near the door of the gallery, but nothing found there. The same process was again gone through near the door of the inner courtyard. An

earthen pot was found there. It contained rotten flesh. It was nearly one-half of a skull besmeared with vermilion. When these things were thrown out, many birds died as soon as they had touched them. Mohinder Singh had another escape.

One day, Mohinder Singh was coming from the site of the family orchard. On the way, two boys were quarrelling. They were quite senior to him in age. Mohinder Singh very courageously stood between them and said, "Why are you quarrelling ? It is not proper to quarrel." Mohinder Singh's words were polite, but firm with the result that the children stopped fighting. An elderly man was witnessing all this from a little distance. He was highly pleased. He called out to Mohinder Singh. Going near him, Mohinder Singh said, "What do you say, Sir ?" The elderly man applauded and blessed Mohinder Singh. Mohinder Singh was naturally pleased. Quite unconsciously, he was convinced that one who does a good deed, is loved and respected by the world.

CHAPTER 5

AT LUDHIANA

Demolition of the old is a pre-requisite for the construction of the new. If a young woman does not leave her parental home, she cannot enjoy the love of her husband. So, she has to forsake old relationships, describing them as belonging to her girlhood. Only the river which forsakes mountains of its origin, with a smiling face reaches and joins the endless waters of the ocean. In this way, unhappy events chalk out a new path and create a congenial atmosphere for a man of talent. One who is scared by misfortune is undone for ever, while one who is able to keep the destination in view even in times of misfortune, not only achieves success for himself but also brings relief to others. The man of talent hears this voice from every pore of his being : "Who bothers about crows and jackals ? Only the falcon and the tiger are encaged. It is only the fruit-laden 'ber' tree that bears a volley of brickbats." In other words, numerous troubles and misfortune test a man of talent in order to mark out a new path for him. So, he who loses heart, loses everything.

We know that if Bhagwan Dei had not died and the jealous kinsfolk had not brought the Jatt woman in her place, Mohinder Singh would have remained lost at Jabbalpur and never come to the Punjab. The relatives of the Jatt woman had been sent by God for the good of Mohinder Singh. "Get away from here. This tower is about to collapse. Its soul has departed with Bhagwan Dei and its strength has gone with Bhagwan Singh. Think aright, otherwise you will be a part of the debris of this collapsing palace," some mysterious voice seemed to say. That is why Kartar Kaur renounced the splendour of her father's house and embraced the poverty of her in-laws.

The sister, who had been instrumental in ousting Kartar Kaur from Jabbalpur and her husband, had at last, to fall at her feet.

Karam Singh had taken Harnam Singh along with him to Mandi Baha-ud-din and got him a job in the Power House there. Karam Singh had stopped at Jabbalpur on his way to Bombay, when Harnam Singh was electrocuted in the Power House. The man at the Power House conveyed the news of the death telegraphically both at Jabbalpur and Bheelowal. When Karam Singh returned

to the village, his mother said, "My son, now you must not go out of the state. Find some work in Punjab itself." The death of his uncle, Harnam Singh, was pushing Mohinder Singh forward toward his destination.

Karam Singh came to Ludhiana in search of livelihood. When fate wants to help a man, everyone goes well for him. When fate wills otherwise, every thing slips out of one's hands. He forgets everything. Instead of enjoying the fragrance of flowers, his hands are pierced by thorns. unforeseen calamities befall him.

Karam Singh's brother-in-law (his sister's husband), Kundan Singh, after putting up shutters at Jalandhar, had come to Ludhiana and set up a shop under the old name M/s Singh & Company for undertaking contracts in electrical fittings and repair work. After the death of his younger brother, Harnam Singh, Karam Singh came to Ludhiana to see Kundan Singh and look for some work. Zenith Electrical Company was a premier shop for electrical goods at Ludhiana. This company had the sole contract of electrical fittings in the new Police Lines at Ludhiana. The wiring

of this work had been done by Kundan Singh, but on account of some complicated fault electric current would not flow inspite of many efforts, and the company had received a warning from the Police Department for the confiscation of the earnest money. The proprietor of the company was deeply worried at the prospect of this financial loss. Kundan Singh was hesitant in seeking technical help from Karam Singh on account of the harm done to him at Jalandhar. So, using a ruse, he took Karam Singh to the proprietor of the Zenith Company and commending the skill of Karam Singh, hinted to him to get the fault located and removed by him.

The proprietor cast a searching glance at Karam Singh and wanted to put him many questions, but impressed by the intelligence in his eyes, could say only this : "Will you be able to repair the fault ?" Karam Singh replied with great confidence, "I have full faith that I will be able to set it right."

The proprietor took Karam Singh along with Kundan Singh to the Police Lines, which in those days was at a distance of two miles from the city.

First of all, Karam Singh examined, all the switches. Then removing all the fuse wires, he tested them with his instrument. He examined all the wires to see whether there was any short-circuiting. He kept checking the fittings for a long time, but the fault could not be located. Then he asked everyone to go out. Keeping one assistant with him, he sat down in a secluded corner to concentrate. While thinking over the problem, an idea occurred to him. Gathering his tools, he went near the switch-board. This time he was successful in pin-pointing the fault. It was removed and the electric current started flowing. The Officer-in-charge of the Police Lines, an Englishman, was surprised to find the electric current flowing. When Karam Singh assured him that within a matter of two days, the electric supply would be permanently available, he was very pleased. The proprietors were assured of their payment, and the whole city was astir with the mechanical skill of Karam Singh.

This news gradually travelled to Shiv Ram Batta. Shiv Ram had recently started Batta Theatre. These days it is known as Minerva Cinema, but the required sanction was not being

granted to his cinema hall for want of the proper functioning of the electric system. Many well-known electricians had tried their level best, but the theatre could not be started. Shiv Ram Batta has informed that Karam Singh could get the machinery going and thus procure sanction. Shiv Ram sent for Karam Singh.

Karam Singh went to Shiv Ram. When Shiv Ram enquired about his family, he replied that he was the son of S. Pala Singh, who was at one-time a contractor at Shimla. As luck would have it, Shiv Ram had known Pala Singh very well. He was very happy to meet his friend's son. He offered him tea, and, then, said, "My theatre is not functioning. Many electricians have tried to get it going, but have not succeeded. Will you be able to do so ? Can you see to it that the electric current flows and the sanction is granted ?" Karam Singh replied with great self-assurance that he would get both things done.

Shiv Ram took Karam Singh inside the theatre. Karam Singh checked the electric wires and tested all the switches and fuses. Then he had a thorough look at the projector. Having checked

everything, Karam Singh came to the conclusion that the fault was deliberate. Karam Singh was able to locate this defect, but he did not remove it.

Karam Singh asked Shiv Ram to call the sanctioning authority saying he would get him the, sanction. The sanctioning authority was an Englishman, Mr Harris, who was already known to Karam Singh and at whose recommendation, Karam Singh was able to get a job in the Power House at Mandi Baha-ud-din.

Shiv Ram got the date for the inspection of the theatre fixed telegraphically. On his arrival, Mr Harris asked who had got the theatre going? At this, Shiv Ram told Mr Harris that a highly-skilled mechanic known as Singh Ji was the person. Mr Harris was already very well acquainted with Karam Singh. He sent for him. Mr Harris, said, "Mr Singh, have you removed the fault and put the theatre on rails" Karam Singh replied, "I have located the fault, but not removed it so far. Please issue a licence." "How can I issue a licence before the theatre is really fit to work?", the officer enquired. "Sir, the fault has been deliberately created. If I remove it, mischief-maker will again introduce it. In reality, it is no

fault.” “Who is responsible for the fault?” The officer asked. “I can divulge this, if Lala Shiv Ram permits me to do so,” Karam Singh said. While locating the fault and talking to the men at the theatre, Karam Singh had come to know of the secret. He was quite an expert at arriving at the truth through a casual conversation. Shiv Ram said, “Who has engineered the fault ? Tell me his name.” “Sir, the fault has been engineered by your wife’s brother and the theatre cannot be started unless he is turned out.”

Mr Harris was fully satisfied that everything was in order and the theatre could be started at will. Therefore, he issued a licence without actually seeing it working.

Shiv Ram was very happy at the turn of events and appointed Karam Singh as the Project Operator in his theatre.

Thus, Karam Singh was able to get a job at Ludhiana. Before this, all the theatres of Ludhiana had two shows a day. Karam Singh first started three shows and then four show a day, while on the days of fairs and festivals, he managed to give five shows. He would project the film very skil-

fully. He would not let the pictures on the screen get too bright or too dim. Consequently, the theatre touched the peak of popularity within days.

Karam Singh began to reside at Ludhiana. Many a time, Mohinder Singh would come to Ludhiana during holidays. In the beginning, sitting by the side of Karam Singh, Mohinder Singh would watch him running the projector. Then he too learnt to handle it. Thus, at a very young age, Mohinder Singh learnt not only how to use a projector, but also developed the ability to understand the working of its various parts.

Sometimes Mohinder Singh would manage the night-show single-handed and then return home. Sometimes it seemed as if Mohinder Singh had acquired greater skill as a Projector Operator than even Karam Singh, because Mohinder Singh had been gifted right from his birth with rare composure and concentration. At a very small age, he had acquired the capacity to concentrate and balance his mind. He had the miraculous power to put his heart and soul into the work in hand. This reminds me of an incident.

I was then a student of Randhir College,

Kapurthala. I was congenitally sick and weak. My companions would always laugh at me and ask me to go and solve mathematical problems. One day right in the morning, these boys were trying to lift a brick-laden iron chair with one hand. Many boys tried to lift the chair, but it could not be lifted on account of weight of the bricks. The seat of the chair would not remain even and balanced, as a result of which bricks would fall down. By chance, I arrived at the scene, and began to watch my companion's efforts. My companions began to make fun of me as usual saying, "This game and pastime is not meant for you. Go and cram your textbooks." I was cut to the quick by these sarcastic remarks. I replied with great self-confidence, "Get aside, I will lift the chair. Tell me whether I should lift the chair with my right or left hand, and remember that I am not a left-hander."

"Get scarce. Look at the hero. The braggart! He will indeed lift the chair with one hand only." the boys said. I moved forward. Though they tried to stop me, I lifted the brick-laden chair with my left hand. By chance, the Principal also arrived at the scene. Seeing me lift

the chair, he came near me and said, "Bravo ! this is wonderful indeed. You have surpassed top class athletes."

I said humbly, "Sir, there is nothing very extraordinary about it. It is a question of concentration. These boys have at least ten times more energy than I, but they have not been able to concentrate even 1/20th of it. I applied all the energy I have."

Right in front of the theatre, were the shops of Sardar Channan Singh, a silver-cutter and Mistri Hardit Ram. Karam Singh grew fairly intimate with them. Karam Singh's kinsfolk had a furniture shop at Shimla. They were many brothers, and through their diligence they had improved their financial condition considerably. During the winter they would come down to their village for four months and using a chisel did engraving work on the wood out of which furniture was to be made. This furniture was sold at Shimla during the season. Mohinder Singh urged his father to let him do some such work during his leisure hours in the village itself, but Karam Singh did not agree. In reality, Mohinder Singh's grand-

mother did not want the family to compete with their inimical kinsfolk. Whenever Mohinder Singh went to Ludhiana to be with his father, he would go to Channan Singh's workshop and watch the things manufactured there. The whole family kept thinking of plans to take up some venture with a view to improving the lot of the family. Chanaan Singh and Hardit Ram advised Karam Singh to discontinue the studies of his two elder sons and impart them some technical training. Thus, they would be self-dependent. Mohinder Singh had stayed with his father during the summer vacation of 1938 and had learnt how to operate a film projector.

In this way, at a very young age Mohinder Singh, by projecting all the reels of a movie on the screen, had learnt how to focus all his attention on one point. He had also learnt the point that without this power no workman could acquire skill and efficiency.

Mohinder Singh began to study the books on lathe, drill and electricity lying in his house. He began to have a thorough understanding of the fine points of these trades. Now, Karam

Singh brought his family to Ludhiana. It was in this way that Mohinder Singh as a result of mishaps, coincidences and sociability, reached the place where he could see his talents flourishing. In other words, Mohinder Singh, who was born at Jabbalpur, spent his childhood at Bheelowal and ultimately became part and parcel of Ludhiana.

CHAPTER 6

NEW HORIZONS

Karam Singh decided to discontinue the studies of his elder sons, Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh and get them training in lathe work. In those days, mechanics as well as their apprentices were totally illiterate. A mechanic accepted a boy as an apprentice, when the latter, had formally declared him to be his master in the presence of a gathering of workmen at the end of a formal ceremony in which a turban, some cash and sweets were offered to him. After accepting him as an apprentice, the mechanic would make him do odd jobs for nearly five years. Then it was that his real training started. Apprentices were treated as domestic servants. They would wash the clothes of their master. The master and the members of his family would tell the apprentice, "My boy the more you serve your teacher, the better will be the training imparted to you. You have to ingratiate yourself into the favour of the master, that is your teacher, and win him over through selfless service."

Mohinder Singh was, however, allergic and hostile to the exploitation involved in this master-

apprentice relationship. According to him, the master would not give due regard to the apprentices ability to learn their willingness to serve him and their offering were the only considerations. What they taught in five years, Mohinder Singh wanted to learn in months at the most. Mohinder Singh was getting the feeling that the so-called teachers were not perfect teachers and were ruining the dynamic talents of young apprentices.

The shop of Channan Singh, the silver cutter, was situated in front of the cinema hall. It was known as 'Indian Engineers'. Karam Singh sent both his sons to Channan Singh's workshop to get their training there. Here, Mohinder Singh learnt the art of threading, on his own, in just a month's time. He had learnt how to handle and use the various tools from books. He was an indefatigable worker and never spared himself so far as practice was concerned. He began to thread iron rods. With continuous application, he was able to make eleven threads in an inch of iron. In those days, this was considered to be a very difficult task and only a well-trained turner could do this. Just then, the Mohammedan turner happened to come there. He looked at the threaded rod and examined

the threads very carefully. Then looking at the face of Mohinder Singh, he asked, "Have you made these threads yourself?" Mohinder Singh said, "Yes, sir." Surprised at this answer, the mechanic said, "Do you have some other teacher from whom you learn at his house." "No sir, I have no teacher. Nobody has taught me how to thread," was Mohinder Singh's reply. "How have you managed to make these threads, so neat and faultless, without the guidance of a teacher. You cannot possibly have done this without any training. Tell me frankly the name of your other teacher." "Sir, I am telling the truth, I have no teacher. I am my own teacher. Please tell me whether these threads are all right." "Undoubtedly, the work is very fine. If you have done it yourself, you don't need a teacher. You are capable of doing first-rate work," saying this the mechanic went away. But he was inwardly perturbed. He was telling himself, "If these youngsters learn to work without any guidance, what will be the fate of master craftsman? These youngmen will cast us aside and dominate the arena." This news gradually reached all the turners. In comparison with him, the apprentices who had been learning the trade for over 6 years, stood

nowhere. They began to feel small.

In 1939, Kartar Kaur came along with her children to Ludhiana, and the family began to reside in the locality known as Singh Pura. The elder boys were already getting their training in Channan Singh's workshop. When Karam Singh came to know of Mohinder Singh's skilfulness, he was convinced that his sons could set up their own workshop after getting the training. Channan Singh and Karam Singh were of the view that on account of the outbreak of war, the demand for indigenous bicycle parts had gone up. It would not be a bad idea if they started manufacturing bicycle parts in partnership. Channan Singh asked Karam Singh to join him as a partner, but Karam Singh said, "How can I think of being your partner ? I have no capital to invest." "You need not invest anything. The investment will be entirely mine. You and your sons will work. I will give you half of the profit earned. Our work will look up and your sons will get the training they need," Channan Singh reasoned with him.

Karam Singh accepted Channan Singh's advice. The factory was named after Channan Singh and

Karam Singh. It was called 'Chakkar & Company.' Though no deed had been executed, Karam Singh began to look upon himself as the joint proprietor of the company. Karam Singh apprised his family of the development. Mohinder Singh was pleased at the thought that he had got a chance to work independently. He decided to work hard and achieve something in this industry. The family would also prosper. So, Karam Singh, Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh began to work in Chakkar & Company, which was housed on the premises of Indian Engineers itself. Sometime later, a board bearing the name of the company was also displayed. This happened in April, 1939.

Many other workers were also employed there. All of them had adopted Channan Singh as their mentor, but Mohinder Singh refused to accept anybody as his mentor. In fact, he did not feel the need for it. Ball-bearing, axles, hubs and cones were manufactured there. They began to manufacture complete hubs by peeling iron rods. A turner, Man Singh by name, was an expert in making hubs. Mohinder Singh wanted to compete with Man Singh in making hubs and said to

him, "I want to compete with you in making hubs" Man Singh said humorously, "Grow up a little more before you think of competing with me." "I am capable. Dont' consider me immature. I will make hubs in competition with you," Mohinder Singh said very seriously. "All right, if you must let there be a competition." Man Singh said sarcastically. They began to vie with each other in making hubs. The first day, Man Singh made six hubs. Mohinder Singh achieved the same target.

The next day, Man Singh raised his out-put to 8 hubs, Mohinder Singh did not lag behind. His score was exactly the same. The third day, Man Singh made 10 hubs; so did Mohinder Singh. On the fourth day, Man Singh going all out, made eleven hubs and said proudly to Mohinder Singh, "You cannot possibly turn eleven." Mohinder Singh kept quiet, and applying himself whole-heartedly to the job, levelled Man Singh score. Man Singh could never imagine that this novice could compete with him. His prestige received a jolt. Next day, exerting himself to the maximum, Man Singh made 12 hubs and said, "Well, today you cannot come up to my level" Mohinder Singh kept

quiet. Man Singh did not know that Mohinder Singh had entered into a competition with him with a firm resolution to win.

Just as a long distance runner, reaching close to his destination draws upon his reservoir of energy and running fast overtakes many competitors, this time Mohinder Singh made a final spurt and was able to make thirteen hubs.

Next day, Man Singh did his best, but he could not surpass his previous performance. Like a true workman, Man Singh took Mohinder Singh in his arms and applauded him. He candidly remarked, "My boy, I cannot compete with you. Your hands work like a machine, and it is really remarkable that they never miss the mark. Your hands have the accuracy of a machine, more-over, you are gifted with an iron will. You are sure to be a great man one of these days. You will devise new ways of manufacturing bicycle parts. Your application, agility and understanding are of a very high order. Bravo ! My son." Thus, Man Singh invoked God's blessings on Mohinder Singh and made a prophecy as well. From now onward, they decided to discard rivalry and make ten hubs each every day.

The duty of writing commercial letters, procuring orders and consignment of goods was taken up by Karam Singh. Channan Singh kept accounts. On account of his skill, Mohinder Singh was made responsible for the overall supervision of the workshop. Mohinder Singh would go to Channan Singh's house in the morning to collect keys of the workshop. After this he would proceed to open the workshop and clean all the machines. Then, he kept working all the day along with his brother. At night, he would close the workshop, post all the letters written by Karam Singh at the railway station and handing over the keys to Channan Singh on his way back, reached home at 10 in the night. Both the brothers, thinking themselves to be equal partners in the workshop, worked beyond their capacity, but neither of the brothers ever asked Karam Singh what he got from Channan Singh as his share of the profit. They went on labouring with the feeling that the workshop belonged to them. They were obsessed with the desire to dispel the poverty of the family. However, the condition of the family was deteriorating. Still, everybody kept quiet. Nobody was willing to discuss this topic. All con-

tinued to work.

This is what happened in 1940. Kartar Kaur as away to Jabbalpur. Mohinder Singh had just come out of the railway station after posting the letters. Just near the railway station, a documentary film was being screened. Mohinder Singh came to know that the film was to show Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru making a speech. He was eager to see the film. People were watching the film with great enthusiasm and curiosity. All the surrounding roofs were crowded with spectators. Mohinder Singh, finding a little space under a tin-covered verandah, stood there. Many people were sitting on the roof of the varandah as well. Pandit Nehru's speech had bewitched them all. The spectators had totally forgotten where they were standing. All of a sudden, the tin roof of the varandah collapsed. Along with others, Mohinder Singh was also buried under the roof, and, on account of injuries sustained by him, grew unconscious. Somebody removed the debris and kicked his unconscious body. Then remarking that he was dead, he went his way. When these words reached Mohinder Singh's ears, he tried his best to speak out loudly, but could not do so, and

he grew unconscious once again. A little later, a transporter passed that way. He too kicked Mohinder Singh. In a state of semi-consciousness, Mohinder Singh touched the man's foot with his hand. The man turned back to look at Mohinder Singh. He recognised the boy because he was a neighbour of Karam Singh. Here, once again God itself came to the rescue of Mohinder Singh.

The man put Mohinder Singh into the ambulance van of the railway station and carried him to the Civil Hospital. The nurses there examined his injuries. Mohinder Singh lay unconscious. Looking at him, the nurses began to talk thus, "Seven persons received injuries in this accident. Four of them died on the spot, two of them died here, and this, the seventh one, is on the verge of death." These things were conveyed to him later. Mohinder Singh wanted to say, "I am not yet dead, I am not yet dead. I don't want to die so soon, I don't want to die so soon. Not yet, not yet." He could not, however, utter a word, and in the attempt to speak lost his senses once again. On getting the information Karam Singh, too, reached the hospital. Who cares for a poor worker

in Civil Hospital. The nurses would feel his pulse or record his temperatures and then go away. Mohinder Singh's injury was very serious and deep. The doctor was perplexed. Karam Singh requested the doctor, "Sir, the child is extremely restless. Please do something. If you cannot understand the case, please permit me to call in a private doctor by paying his fee." The doctor roared, "This is a government hospital. You cannot bring a private doctor here. If you have no faith in us, take away your patient. We are to treat him as we deem fit. We are not to be dictated to by the relatives of the patients." Poor Karam Singh fell silent. He did not know what to do. The children at home were very small, and Kartar Kaur was away. He did not know whom to consult. When the nurses had gone away, a relative of a patient said, "They will not let a private doctor come here in this way." Karam Singh asked impatiently, "What is the way to make them do so?" The man whispered, "Put fifty rupees into the pocket of the doctor. Then, you may bring as many doctors as you like." Karam Singh quietly gave fifty rupees to the doctor, who said, "Usually we do not permit private doctors to come here, but we are full of

pity for your child. Go and call in any doctor you like.”

Karam Singh brought a private doctor. He examined Mohinder Singh very carefully and gave a number of injections. Then he asked the doctor in the hospital to operate upon Mohinder Singh. His heart had been pressed in. His eardrum had been rent and his abdomen had been convulsed. His eyes were blood-shot.

Mohinder Singh began to recover slowly. The doctor instructed that no one, who sat by him or came to enquire after his health, should either look into his eyes or weep.

When Kartar Kaur returned from Jabbalpur, she was not immediately permitted to see Mohinder Singh. She was made to understand that it was imperative for her to meet Mohinder Singh with a smiling face. Karam Singh and Kartar Kaur followed the instructions of the doctors to the full. Kartar Kaur would place Mohinder Singh's head on her thighs and gave him glucose water, but she would not look into his eyes. Mohinder Singh on her thighs and have him glucose water, but she would not look into his eyes. Mohinder Singh

had grown so weak that it was after 45 days that he was given a few slices of bread soaked in milk. Then he was removed to his home.

The nearer Mohinder Singh got to full recovery, the more was he overwhelmed by the thought that he had been left behind in the race of life.

He would often think, "I have been left behind. How shall I make up for this loss?" Very soon, however, despair would give way to hope and he would say to himself, "Hardly matters, I shall somehow make up. I will do it."

Getting well, Mohinder Singh began to attend to his duties once again. He could not, however, do justice to his work, for he had not the strength to do so. And the partner-proprietor would often remark that he was just malingering. "You are just making excuses", he would say. These words would make Mohinder Singh furious with rage. "Malingering is foreign to my nature. From now onward, my work will surpass your expectations." having said this, Mohinder Singh concentrating all his inner force began to do his quota of the work. Mohinder Singh was

working whole-heartedly, but fate kept dogging his steps. Sometimes, it seemed that misfortunes were making him brave and courageous and leading to his all around development. Sometimes, however, he was afraid that these blows of fate might lead to his defeat even before the start of the game.

Many felt jealous of him, for he was going far ahead of his co-workers. Kartar Kaur felt that the prophecy of the palmist was coming true.

In 1941, the company was not making much profit, as a consequence of which Karam Singh's family was getting into financial straits. So, Mohinder Singh started doing some work at home so that their circumstances might improve. Channan Singh setup a new company and the sign-board of Chakkar & Company was removed, but Mohinder Singh could not know that he was no longer a partner in the company. He and his brother kept working there. One day, Mohinder Singh was fixing a tool to the lathe and was fully engrossed in his work. As he bent down to pick up the compass, his vest was caught in the machine and was wrapped around it. The work-

man, standing by his side, saw this. Catching hold of Mohinder Singh by the head, he pushed him hard. The vest was torn off and Mohinder Singh's head struck the wall with great force. Mohinder Singh was dazed. He fell down and remained unconscious for a long time. This time Mohinder Singh was once again rescued from the jaws of death. When he got well, he began to ruminate once again, "Why do obstacles keep crooping up in my way? Why do I sustain injuries? My journey is so long. If things keep moving thus, how will I reach my destination?"

Then he would console himself, "If the one to create hindrances is powerful, the one to save me is equally strong. My miraculous escapes prove that I will reach my destination and that nothing can stop me." Sometimes, he began to hum these words, "Lions never suck, never say die."

In 1942, a labour law which laid down that the owner of a workshop could not make his men work for more than nine hours a day was passed. This law was enforced first of all in this factory.

In this way, Mohinder Singh, thinking this workshop to be his own, continued making very fine parts. Right from his childhood, Mohinder Singh was convinced that he who wanted to make parts of any kind in this machine age, had to make it a point to see that no defective part ever rolled out of his factory. It is this principle that lies behind the success of Mohinder Singh and has won him an enviable position in the bicycle parts market.

CHAPTER 7

REVOLT

The world famous Arab writer, Khalil Gebran, says, "Parents are a bow and the child, an arrow. The success of the bow and the arrow lies in the distance covered by the arrow in its flight from the bow. The bow which desires to confine the arrow to itself causes its own as well as its child's doom. It is an incontrovertible fact that the child excels its parents in knowledge by at least 20 years. This, too, is an eternal truth a father is senior to his child in experience by twenty years. Therefore, it is the duty of a father that instead of imposing his own nature, ideals and values on the child, should create opportunities for the child by virtue of his experience, paying due attention to his aptitude." Sometimes, parents tend to become a dangerous stumbling block in the way of their child's progress. The father of S. Sobha Singh, the artist, who was ignorant about art, felt unhappy at Sobha Singh's paintings and many a time he would beat him mercilessly. Many other examples of this kind may be cited. No one can suppress a man's sensibility, intelligence and

strong will. If somebody tries to suppress a man of genius, he will surely revolt. Contrary to the past, to-day no father can sacrifice his sons on the altar of his ideals. Incessant work was Mohinder Singh's religion and even to-day, he has an ardent faith in it. To work with sincerity is the very essence of his nature, a compulsion which has matured with years. Carelessness in work is, according to him, the worst sin.

Mohinder Singh was working very sincerely in Chakkar & Company. Sometimes, he would work as long as fourteen hours a day. Leaving his home at six in the morning, he would return home at ten in the night. Forgetting all thoughts of comforts and relaxation, he was all the time thinking of bringing improvements in the factory. He had the impression that Karam Singh got his share of the profit every month and handed it over to Kartar Kaur. However, the bad circumstances of the family saddened him. Finding his mother busy with one thing or the other day and night, he grew very sad and many questions raised their head in his mind. "Does my father not get money every month? If he is getting it, is it being used

to pay off old debts ? Or is mother repaying her own debts with it. After all, what is the matter?" would think. Mohinder Singh could not understand the reason for the bad condition of the family. However, he dared not broach this topic with his parents.

One day, Mohinder Singh came home on some important errand. Kartar Kaur was going out, taking something well concealed with her. Mohinder Singh noticed this, but put no question to his mother. Going back to the workshop, Mohinder Singh was thinking that most probably his mother was selling her jewellery to meet the expenses of the family, and bearing this silently.

One day, Mohinder Singh said to his mother, "You should ask father for money. He will be forced to bring it. We have fifty percent share in the workshop. Father is a saintly man. I am sure he is not demanding the money. When you ask for it, he will have to get it." Next evening when all had come back from the workshop and were sitting together, Kartar Kaur asked Karam Singh for some money. He said, "From where should I bring money ?" Mohinder Singh

said, "Why don't you get it from Channan Singh?" "We have a share in the workshop. All the three of us are toiling hard." Karam Singh said meekly "I have no share in the workshop." "What! Do we have no share in the workshop?" both the brothers spoke simultaneously. "No, I have no share. I made this arrangement to get you trained." "Then, let us have our salary." "There was no agreement regarding salaries for you. Whatever he pays for my work, I give you. I keep nothing for myself." "How much money have you taken so far?" "I have kept no account." "We have been working for three years, mind you. Tomorrow, I will have a direct talk with Channan Singh," Mohinder Singh said. Karam Singh got very angry and said, "Who are you to question my friend while I am living. It is for me to ask him for money. I may or may not ask for money; he may or not may pay. You have no right to interfere." "But, why not? Have we not worked?" Karam Singh got angry and went out. The whole family was lost in thoughts. "I will approach Channan Singh tomorrow. We have worked. We have every right to discuss this question with him. Channan Singh, no doubt, is father's friend, but this does not mean

that he can line his coffer with our labour and deny our right to us. We have been toiling, thinking the workshop to be ours.”

The next day, inspite of all the efforts to check him, Mohinder Singh went to Channan Singh and said, “Sardar Sahib, what agreement has my father entered into with you ? We were told that we three had half the share.” Channan Singh interrupted, “Karam Singh has no share in this company, nor has he decided anything about the salary. He had asked me to train his sons in the workshop and pay what I deemed proper. What I pay him is out of regard for a friend, otherwise he does not deserve that either.” Mohinder Singh got up and came home. There he said in front of Karam Singh and Kartar Kaur, “Father, I will not work in the workshop from tomorrow. We have neither a share in the factory nor does he pay you our salaries. How long can we work on an empty stomach and without any salary. You write all the letters. Am I a peon that I should post all the letters ? Like a watchman, I collect keys from Channan Singh’s house and open the workshop. In the evening, I close the workshop and handover the keys to him at his

house. Mother, how long can we live on the jewelery of the family? We have worked for three years, from 1939 to 1942. Let our dues for these three years be paid, otherwise I will never enter the workshop.”

Karam Singh roared, “You will have to work there. These are my orders. I cannot spoil my relations with a friend. And be sure that if you work elsewhere, nobody is going to pay you even a penny. You are not yet as deserving as you think yourself to be.” Karam Singh, by so saying, wanted to dissuade his son from doing so. “You may not spoil the relations with a friend-killing friend, but now you cannot force me to go there. I am not prepared to work and yet starve,” saying this Mohinder Singh got up and went out.

Mohinder Singh’s revolt gave a shock to the simple and saintly nature of Karam Singh, but Mohinder Singh was also helpless. He could not afford to ruin his future by following in his father’s foot-steps. He had in him indomitable energy and resolute will to achieve something. Now, he was no longer prepared to remain a prisoner

of the deceit practised by Channan Singh. Such revolts form the basis of progress.

Mohinder Singh stopped going to Channan Singh's workshop. It was Mohinder Singh's first revolt against docile simplicity of his father. Every pore of his being seemed to be saying, "Know yourself, do something. God has blessed you with intelligence, determination and diligence. Not to use a God-given talent or to keep it undeveloped is to insult Him." Mohinder Singh was feeling as if the sound of the word 'know yourself' had filled the whole atmosphere and lighted his path.

Mohinder Singh would often recall the prophecy of the palmist. Thus, Mohinder Singh decided to choose his path himself, for had the firm belief that where there is a will there is a way. The earth and the sky make way for swiftly flowing water.

Mohinder Singh had great respect for his father and was obedient as well. Karam Singh, too, had boundless love for his son and admired his capacity for action. But here their outlooks

were clashing with each other. While the one believed in what is, the other had faith in what ought to be. Karam Singh did not talk to Mohinder Singh for a month. Kartar Kaur did not think it proper to come between the father and the son, though she thought Moninder Singh to be right. During this period, the great patriot and Channan Singh's father, Baba Gurbax Singh, the silver-cutter, told Karam Singh that whatever Mohinder Singh was doing was right. He must be allowed to pursue his chosen path. No obstacles should be put in his way. This considerably lessened the bitterness between the father and the son.

Mohinder Singh could not, however, decide what to do. He had no one to advise him. He continued to think over the problem of finding a new path. Those who can think, do and act last start moving on the path that leads to their real destination.

CHAPTER 8

TRIUMPHANT WORKER

Mohinder Singh was at a loss to know whom to consult for chalking out his programme of action. He very well understood that a hasty step puts a man on the wrong path and takes him away from his destination. The very next day, Mohinder Singh went to Gurbachan Singh, the brother of Kartar Singh, who had once been an apprentice under Karam Singh. He told Gurbachan Singh, though rather diffidently, of his plan to work in a factory, after a trial. Gurbachan Singh appreciated this decision of his. He advised Mohinder Singh to appear for a trial in Punjab Machinery Works, where hosiery machines were repaired as well as manufactured. Gurbachan Singh himself was a mechanic in the Punjab Machinery Works.

There were two types of trials in this factory. On passing one kind of trial, the worker was employed at Rs. 30/- a month, while on passing the other, the wages were fixed at fifty rupees a month. Mohinder Singh was asked to make a part of the sock-making machine in three hours.

Mohinder Singh applied himself to the work and made the part within the stipulated time. The part was accurate and perfect from every point of view. This trial should have brought him fifty-rupees per month as his salary. When the man who had tried Mohinder Singh looked at the part, he said, "My boy, you have made a good job of it, but you will get thirty-five rupees a month instead of fifty rupees, because you are too young." Mohinder Singh wanted to be paid according to his performance in the trial and not according to his age. He said very boldly, "Mistri Ji, you should have asked my age before the trial. It is unjust to me to bring in consideration of age after the trial." The mechanic gave no answer and went in. Mohinder Singh came out, saying that he would get the pay in accordance with his performance in the trial.

The next day, Mohinder Singh happened to meet Bhag Singh, another ex-apprentice of his father. Mohinder Singh told him of his success in the trial at Punjab Machinery Works. Bhag Singh took him to Kundan Wood Factory owned by Lala Kudan Lal. It was a very big factory divided into many departments. The smithy of

this workshop manufactured circular sewing machines and many other kinds of machines needed for defence purposes. Here Sardar Gurdial Singh, now owner of Rait Steel Rolling Mills, was a shaper man and his elder brother, Shri Sadhu Ram, a fitter. A little before this, the best turner of Ludhiana, Babu Gobind Ram, was the workshop incharge. Later on, this gentleman, was renown in the sewing machine industry of India as the proprietor of Babu Gobind Ram Sewing Machine handles. Gobind Ram and many of the machanics working under him had been taken by Dalmia to his factory at Deolaly on higher salaries. Gobind Ram had prescribed the manufacture of the worm for cream separating machine as a difficult test for new turners. Making this worm was a difficult task because one end of a thin iron rod had to be threaded, and being thin it broke under the pressure exerted by the tool. As a result the man appearing for the trial failed. In fact, it was not something to be done with a lathe. Those days, Mohammaden turners dominated the trade. They did not let a Hindu or a Sikh turner gain foot. Sardar Khan was the chief turner. Many of the turners brought by him for trial had failed to clear it. Gobind Ram had fixed this difficult trial for a

job carrying a hundred rupees a month with a view to humbling the pride of Mohammaden mechanics. The job-seekers indeed had great patience and concentration. Many newly trained Mohamma-den boys, proud of their skill, had faced failure. And in a way this trial was only a way to humiliate job-seekers and take delight in their humiliation.

Bhag Singh took Mohinder Singh to the mechanics in the smithy here to try him. As luck would have it, Rai Sahib himself was present there at that time. Rai Sahib said to him, "My child, which trial do you want to appear in?" Mohinder Singh said very respectfully but firmly, "I want to appear in the most difficult one." In reality, he had come to know everything about the process of the trial in the factory before-hand from Bhag Singh.

"My child, the severest trial is for a hundred ruppees job, but you cannot clear this trial, for it is very hard and you are very young in years," Rai Sahib tried to belittle Mohinder Singh's firmness in a very polished way.

"Rai Sahib, I am fit for this trial. Give me a chance. Leave the rest to my fate." Mohinder

Singh's entire inner-force was by his side. Although Rai Sahib had his doubts, he could not say 'no' to Mohinder Singh's firmness and asked the foreman to have a thorough trial of the boy for hundred rupee job.

The first thing Mohinder Singh did was to clean the machine. Then, concentrating all his attention, he began to make the worm of the cream separating machine. Mohinder Singh did not go out for his lunch for fear that somebody might disturb the setting of the machine. In reality, Mohinder Singh was very careful about everything right from his childhood. He paid attention even to the minutest detail. He was also aware of the fact that attempts were always likely to be made to pull the leg of the man desirous of forging ahead. Sardar Khan often indulged in such tricks. This was one of the reasons why five or six boys had failed in the trial.

Mohinder Singh did not move away from his lathe unless the part had been prepared. The tiffin which he had brought with him was taken by him right beside the machine. An hour before the time allowed, Mohinder Singh had made the

worm and placed it on the table of Lala Harbans Lal, Rai Sohib's son-in-law. None of the persons appearing in this trial before him had succeeded in making this worm. Everybody examined the part. It was flawless. They were all very pleased as well as surprised. They would sometimes look at Mohinder Singh and sometimes at the part. Rai Sahib's son-in-law was the incharge of the workshop. Picking up the part he said, "How have you managed to make this part? In fact, you have not made it in the right way." Mohinder Singh had not made this part at the belt-driven lathe, but by moving the wheel with his hand. Sardar Khan was annoyed at his cleverness and he had incited Lala Harbans Lal against Mohinder Singh's using his own method. He found fault with Mohinder Singh for having made the part by turning the wheel with his hand. Mohinder Singh said boldly, "Look here, Sir, the part has been made. How I have made it and how it ought to have been made are points which I don't want to discuss. Examine the part minutely. Is it not well-made? If it is not, let me know what fault it has." Mohinder Singh's frank words rendered all answerless. The other workers were highly pleased. They were saying that for the first time in their lives, they had

seen a young worker who, by virtue of his determination, could work beyond his years and at the same time had the courage to present his case unambiguously and logically. Pleased with him, Rai Sahib said, "My boy, you are a very promising youth. Report for duty tomorrow, but mind you, you will have to work here for at least a year." Mohinder Singh said only this, "Thank you sir, I will report for duty tomorrow." At a hint from Rai Sahib, the manager got Mohinder Singh's signatures on a blank paper. Bhag Singh, Sadhu Ram Rait and other workmen placed Mohinder Singh on their shoulders and took him out in a procession. They were raising slogans "Long live Mohinder Singh." In this way, the workmen exhibited Mohinder Singh on the road. When the passers-by came to know of the reason for the procession, they looked with admiring eyes at Mohinder Singh's face. They found a great sense of victory and self-confidence in the eyes of this sixteen year old youngster. This trial told the tale of coming events, his method of working and success.

Rai Sahib and his son-in-law were really amazed at Mohinder Singh's workmanship. All

the workmen were also pleased at his skill. Mohinder Singh was not, however, satisfied with this victory. He wanted to go a very far indeed.

Having cleared the trial and received congratulations from the workmen, Mohinder Singh reached his home. He hoped to get appreciation from his father and the other members of the family, but they did not even pay proper attention to him. Mohinder Singh grew very sad, but he was not disheartened because he understood very well that when a man leaves his family far behind, the family on account of some inferiority complex, tends to grow inimical. Many times, even a father cannot bear to see his son's progress, for instead of looking upon his son as his next stage of development, he considers him his rival. Karam Singh's tragedy was that he failed to look upon Mohinder Singh's talent to be the advanced stage of his own talent. This situation has been perfectly embodied in a couplet by Dr Atam Hamrahi : "When a bird after hard efforts touches a high peak, I have often seen in this world that even the members of the family burn with jealousy."

Mohinder Singh joined duty and began to work with whole-hearted dedication. He had cleared the trial for a hundred rupees job. He was doing the job that deserved a hundred rupees a month, naturally therefore, he was expecting a pay of hundred rupees. On 7th of the month, when he was paid his salary, he was dumb-founded. He had been paid at the rate of seventy five rupees a month instead of a hundred. He was paid thirty rupees instead of forty rupees for 12 days.

Mohinder Singh refused to accept the salary. Going straight to the manager, he said, "Sir, I had cleared the trial for a hundred rupee job, why has my salary been fixed at seventyfive rupees? will not accept a penny less than my full salary." "I conceded that you were tried for a hundred rupee job. You are also right in saying that you emerged successful from the trial, but we cannot pay you hundred rupees a month," the manager said calmly. Mohinder Singh interrupted, "Why can't you pay this much? Why this injustice? To this, the manager replied with a show of authority, "For you are too young, just sixteen years old. By paying a boy of your age hundred

rupees a month, we shall be inviting trouble. The other workmen will be at our throats. The Manager was right in his place. The previous turners were paid sixty rupees a month, but the goods manufactured had many defects in them. Forced by military officers they began to engage at sixty five and a hundred rupees per month. A few months later, when Mohinder Singh left this job, the top turner of Ludhiana, Charan Dass, began to get one hundred and twenty five rupees per month. "Sir, what has the trial to do with age ? If you really think that there is a connection between age and workmanship, you should have informed me before the trial. You should display a notice to the effect that a person below sixteen cannot appear in a trial in your factory. Sir, why don't you understand that some persons learn in a month what others cannot learn in years. What an ordinary youngman learns in five years, I learnt without any guidance in just one month. Is the capacity to learn quickly my sin ? Since I deserve a hundred rupees a month on the basis of my performance in the trial, you will have to pay me that much."

These arguments left the manager answerless. He did want to retain the services of Mohinder Singh, but was unwilling to pay him his full salary. So, he said with a tone of finality, "We neither can pay nor shall pay what you demand. You will have to work at seventy-five rupees a month. Now get in, and attend to your duties."

"No, I will work only if I get my full salary," saying this Mohinder Singh went out of the workshop. There he began to write out his resignation in Urdu, which read thus :

To
The Manager

I beg to state that I was tried for a job of a hundred rupees a month. In the trial I made a part known as worm. The part was okayed. I was told that I would have to work for a year in the factory. I joined duty. Today, I have been paid Rs. 30/- as the salary for 12 days at the rate of seventy five rupees per month. This salary is not acceptable to me. Therefore, I am

tendering my resignation before you. I request you kindly to oblige me by accepting my resignation.

Your humble servant,
Mohinder Singh

Mohinder Singh went in and handed over the resignation to the manager. Holding the letter of resignation in his hand, the manager first looked at it and then at Mohinder Singh, and said, "My boy, think over the matter a little more. You will not get such a job again. Factories like this are rare. It is not proper to lose such a rare opportunity. The source of livelihood should not be spurned. Moreover, you are not burdened with family responsibility as yet. You have started thinking in terms of money alone. This is really surprising. Devote yourself to work and don't hanker after money," the manager exhorted him. Mohinder Singh replied to this with the wisdom of a grown-up, "Sir, money is not the thing involved here." "Then what else is involved" the manager said in an officer-like manner. "Principle. I should be paid for the job for which I have been tested. I was tried for a job of a

hundred rupees. Why should I work at seventy-five rupees. I may be a child, but I cannot give up my principle. Work is worship for me, but it is my right to get my wages in full. So, I cannot work at a lesser salary," Mohinder Singh presented his side of the case firmly.

The Manager could not rebut Mohinder Singh's argument. Taking advantage of his position, he said, "You will have to work," and tore the letter of resignation into pieces. Mohinder Singh came out of his office.

After he had left, the manager began to think, "What has happened is quite wrong. A very fine workman has been lost. The man for whom he will work is sure to prosper. I should not have behaved as I did. Should I call him back and raise his salary to a hundred rupees. No, if I do this, he will always have me under his thumb. Moreover, the other workers will raise a hue and cry, but then we cannot afford to lose him either "

The manager kept thinking for a long time. Then he thought of the agreement on which Mohinder Singh's signatures had been obtained

after the trial. He called for the agreement. The agreement read, "If after the trial I am employed in this workshop, I undertake to work in it for at least a year."

The legal position was that on account of the war, all the factories were covered by Defence, Act, and according to this act no workman could leave his job of his own accord. Making use of the agreement written in accordance with this act, the proprietor filed a suit against Mohinder Singh in a local court. Mohinder Singh had no inkling of this development. He wanted to work and he knew to work he was, however, completely ignorant of courts and litigation.

When summons were served on Mohinder Singh, he was deeply worried. "Now, I will have to appear in the court. Rich people can engage a renowned advocate. What shall a poor man like me do? On the other hand, if the proprietors win this case, I will have to work at seventy-rupees a month. I shall be humiliated. It will be an insult to the skill I displayed in the trial. What should I do? I can't win this case either," Mohinder Singh was surrounded by worries.

There was no one to stand by him in this hour of trial. There was no one to advise him either. Karam Singh, instead of encouraging him, showed signs of irritation. He said, "This boy should not be obstinate. He should agree to work at seventy five rupees. At first, he spoiled his relations with Chanan Singh, then he gave up his job with Punjab Mechanical Works and now he is repeating his mistake for the third time. Where will this get him ? This boy is getting foolish and self-willed. He is building castles in the air. Seventy-five rupees is not a small sum for a boy of his age. His wits have gone a wool gathering, but who can advise him ?

"I don't feel like advising for he will not listen to me," Karam Singh gave vent to his anger and annoyance before the family.

Mohinder Singh did not want to talk about the case to his father. He had no doubt that his father would ask him to start working at seventy-five rupees.

Thinking over the matter, an idea occurred to him. He decided to discuss his problem with

the great patriot, Baba Gurbakhsh Singh, the silver-cutter, who was sympathetic to him. Babaji advised him to engage a lawyer and put up a firm fight in the court. They went together to a lawyer and told him the whole story. Mohinder Singh submitted very respectfully, "Vakil Sahib, this is an insult not to me but to my skill. To go back upon their word and pay me only seventy-five rupees for a job of a hundred rupees is an attack on my self-respect. Please help me."

The lawyer felt that this promising and wise young mechanic was right. The factory owners, going back upon their promise, were not only paying him less instead of giving him his due, but were also forcing him to work at a lesser amount for a year through legal action against him. The lawyer said to Mohinder Singh, "It is nothing serious, my boy. Don't worry. I will win the case in your favour. However, you will have to do one thing to defeat these deceitful factory owners, though your conscience may not allow you to do it."

"I will do whatever you ask me to. I don't want to face defeat," Mohinder Singh said politely but firmly. "My boy, you should burn

one of your feet by pouring hot iron filings on it. Don't apply any medicine to it. Let the wound take its time to heal. You will have to suffer physically, but then there is no way out," the lawyer suggested a typical lawyer-like move. Getting a hint from Baba ji, Mohinder Singh agreed. Having decided to adopt this course both of them came back from the lawyer's office. Now, there began a clash between two opposing thoughts in Mohinder Singh, "Is it right to wound my foot in this way? Is it not a sin? No, this is not a sin. This is politics, otherwise they will out manoeuvre me." The second thought won a victory. Mohinder Singh decided to scald his foot. The court had fixed the next hearing a month later.

Mohinder Singh had taken a running workshop on lease and begun working. Taking white hot iron filings from a machine in his workshop, he threw them on one of his feet. The hot iron filings caused a wound as big as a one-rupee coin. Mohinder Singh suffered excruciating pain, but he applied no medicine. It caused a deep wound on his foot.

This was an unprecedented situation. A young worker of sixteen or so had been dragged

to a court of law, though the employers were totally at fault. The factory owners wanted to exploit the age of the worker for under payment. To force him to work for them they had resorted to legal action. No one advised the factory owners that they were doing something wrong by first cheating a promising boy and then by scaring him into submission through legal action. Nobody said to them, "Either pay his full salary or leave him alone." Pride of wealth does not bend easily. The common people felt that the poor workers would never acquire the courage to defy the affluent and demand justice.

"Mohinder Singh, son of Karam Singh Bhogal," the court peon called out. Mohinder Singh enters into the court room. All present were saying, "Why have the proprietors of so big a factory filed a suit against this handsome boy? Has he stolen something from the factory? Or has he leaked out a secret of the factory?" When they came to know of the whole story, they were surprised that the factory owners had gone to this extreme to make a worker withdraw his resignation. The court recorded the statements of both the sides, "Mohinder Singh son of Karam Singh is resigning because there is a serious

injury on his foot. He cannot stand on his legs to work. The attention of the court is drawn to the septic wound on his foot. The court is aware that to work at a lathe, the worker has to keep standing," Said Mohinder Singh's lawyer the advocate of the factory submitted that Mohinder Singh had inflicted the wound deliberately. Moreover, his resignation had not been received in the office of the factory. Mohinder Singh said, "Your honour, I had tendered a written resignation, but the Manager tore it into pieces. They are all telling lies. They are forcing me to work in this condition." Mohinder Singh's lawyer rejoined, "Your honour, the learned counsel does not know that a youngman will not scald his own foot though a man with a family may act thus." Dr Kanti Nandan also appeared in the court on behalf of Mohinder Singh. Each of the lawyers pleaded his case. The Judge heard the arguments of both the sides. He decided the case in favour of Mohinder Singh. "This young man has a wound on his foot. He cannot work standing on his legs at a lathe. His resignation is deemed to have been accepted."

The factory owners were humiliated. First,

the cause of action was very insignificant, secondly they had lost the case. In trying to save twenty-five rupees a month, they had not only lost an able worker but also invited derogatory comments from the public.

Mohinder Singh was very happy to have proved that nobody could under-price his skill. This further strengthened his courage. He was convinced that nobody could shatter his self-confidence.

He was consoling himself thus : "Those who have to find their own path and create opportunities for achievements have to face difficulties. True, the family circumstances are far from satisfactory, but I cannot sell my labour at a rate lower than its worth and thereby spoil my future. I will never give up my ideal of valuing others properly and having myself valued similarly." These thoughts brought a glimmer of happiness in his eyes.

The new shop was doing fairly well. The two brothers had started repairing buses and trucks on the lathe. At the same time they had

made a new small lathe to produce bicycle cones. Karam Singh was now happy at the diligence and skill of his sons. When Mohinder Singh used to work in Chakkar & Co. his major duty was to repair trucks and buses. So, he had a personal equation with many truck owners. The construction of the Air Port at Halwara was in full swing in those days. As a result there was a spurt in the repair work of goods carriers. Transportation rates being high, the truck owners were willing to pay the money demanded for repairs. Moreover, they preferred to have repairs during the night, since they did not want to lose a day's earning. This marked a turning point in the fortunes of the family.

CHAPTER 9

BEGINNING OF INDEPENDENT VENTURES

Opportunities tend to present themselves automatically to a man who fixes his objectives and ideals after careful consideration. One who keeps his eyes fixed on his destination is always able to find the right path. Mohinder Singh believed in the principle of being the architect of his own fate. Therefore, every event, mishap, change and political upheaval provided him with the opportunities to reach the place where he intended to.

The Quit India Movement gained momentum in 1942. Everybody was speculating about the chances of untoward happenings, for every one was now sure that the British could not stay in India for a long time. But he was equally sure that while going away they would create some trouble. That is why a Mohammaden closed down his small workshop. It was fitted with a drill, and a lathe. Mohinder Singh after consulting his father got the workshop from the Mohammaden on lease at two hundred rupees a month, for by now Karam Singh was

convinced that the boys were capable of working independently. The boys repaired the parts of bicycles and cinema machines alongwith cars and trucks. Mohinder Singh had acquired proficiency in making cones. Here Mohinder Singh began to make cones as well as hubs. Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh would carry even their meals to the workshop. After having their evening meals they would keep working till late at night. When they felt sleepy, they lay spent the night in the workshop itself. Mohinder Singh was interested in nothing but his work. This was the secret of his success. He was always thinking of undertaking new ventures. Qualities like devotion to work, concentration and single-mindedness cleared his path of all the obstacles.

The First Lathe :

In the absence of parents, an ordinary youngman often goes astray. He takes to a life of pleasures in the company of his friends and contracts many bad habits. It is a rare youngman like Mohinder Singh who makes creditable achievements in the absence of his parents.

Karam Singh along with other members of

the family had gone on a pilgrimage of the Gurudwaras at Kiratpur and Anadpur Sahib for a week. Mohinder Singh was the only one to be left behind. He would take his food at a neighbouring 'dhabha' and spend the whole time in the workshop. He would work for eighteen hours and sleep there for five or six hours. Presently, he started making a lathe 3'-6" in size. He somehow managed to obtain the mould for the lathe from Hasco Mechanical Works, a firm which catered to defence requirements. Mohinder Singh made this three and a half feet long lathe in a week, when he was only sixteen and a half years old. Certainly it was a big achievement considering his age. Most probably no other man in Ludhiana or for that matter in the Punjab had ever made a lathe working single-handed at so young an age. The lathe was really marvellous. Mohinder Singh's destination seemed to be nearer than ever. He decided to manufacture such lathe.

There was, however, a hassle, for recently a law had been promulgated that nobody could manufacture and sell lathes without obtaining a licence. Some ill-wisher happened to see the

lathe made by Mohinder Singh. He reported in the office of the State Controller for Machine Tools that a 15 or 16 years old boy was making lathes and selling them on the sly. A friend of Mohinder Singh's informed him that the next morning the police will raid his workshop.

Within a few hours at night, Mohinder Singh dismantled the lathe made by him and keeping some of its parts in his own workshop entrusted the rest with some of the neighbouring shop-keepers. Only the lathe-bed along with its base was lying in a corner of his shop. He instructed the workmen under him to work at the drill and the lathe and said, "Keep busy with your work. Don't pay attention to the parts lying about."

Just then the police arrived on the scene. The man from the Controller's office alongwith two constables and an A.S.I. entered the workshop. The A.S.I. thundered, "What do you manufacture?" "Sir, I make small spare parts and also repair them," Mohinder Singh said very cleverly. "You are telling a lie. You make lathes and sell them on the sly," the A.S.I. thundered

once again. "No sir, somebody seems to have lodged a wrong report with you. I don't make lathes. If you do not believe me, you may search the workshop. If you find even a single lathe made by me, you may inflict the severest punishment on me," Mohinder Singh said without any trace of fear. A constable said, "Last evening I myself saw a lathe manufactured here. Where is it now?" "Who buys a lathe at night?" Mohinder Singh clarified. Looking at a painted frame, the other constable said, "For what has this painted frame been made?" The lathe bed along with its base was lying there at which a fitter was doing something..... Mohinder Singh laughed and said "This is the lathe. I am telling you the truth when I say that I don't make lathes, how can I make a lathe at so young an age? And for your information, sir, the parts of every machine are like those of a lathe." The police searched the workshop thoroughly, but nowhere could they find a fully-assembled lathe. They were not so shrewd as to identify the scattered parts of the lathe and come to the conclusion that a lathe could be made by assembling them. Having satisfied themselves, they went away. By dint of his clever-

ness, Mohinder Singh once again saved himself from the legal proceedings. This incident convinced Mohinder Singh that he could not only make a lathe but also fully safeguard his business. He stepped up his work with greater course than before.

When Karam Singh reached Ludhiana with his family, he was both pleased and surprised on hearing the story of the lathe. He was pleased for the boy had made a lathe single-handed and surprised how Mohinder Singh had been able to save himself from the clutches of the police. By now, Karam Singh had come to repose full confidence in Mohinder Singh's workmanship.

From 1942 to 1945 they had been running rented workshops. In 1945, leaving their rented workshops, they set up their home-made lathe in Miller Ganj after taking some space and a running belt on rent in Harbans Electrical and Mechanical Works. This lathe was fitted only for making hubs, cones and pedal cones, but now the demand for their manufactured cones had gone up. So, leaving the rented belt, they rented

a shop 40 ft x 15 ft in size. Three more small lathes were set up and the manufacture of padal axles and hub-cups was also started.

In those days, it was very difficult to get a new power connection. Therefore, Karam Singh decided to have a diesel engine. Since the war had ended, high-speed engines were being imported from England for sale in India. They purchased an engine with the trade mark 'Victor' for Rs. 1200/- and installed it in their workshop. These high-speed engines were not in common use then and mechanics for their repair were not easily available. Other people also bought these engines, which developed faults very soon and could be repaired only after great efforts. Karam Singh had pointed out to Mohinder Singh the reasons which led to the faults. He would keep automiser and many other parts, and whenever the engine went out of order, repaired it at once and got it going. They repaired many engines which had gone out of order free of charge. This spread fame of their mechanical skill in the city. After a year or so, they got a 10 H.P. hot engine.

Bhogal Cinema and Bicycle Spare Parts :

So far, this had been the name of their workshop. In addition to bicycle parts, they made parts of cinema machines of which Karam Singh himself was an expert. Mohinder Singh himself went to Amritsar and Lahore for the sale of these parts. He would catch the Frontier Mail at 6 O'Clock in the morning and return by that very train at night. Sometimes he had to travel on the foot-board of a compartment with his bag hung around his neck in the piercing winter winds. He was, however, never scared of such hardships.

The war having ended, foreign made parts began to be imported once again. This led to a fall in the sale of indigenous parts. Looking to the trend of the market, the Bhogals manufactured and sold the handle screw and the hook-ball of sewing machines.

Hardening Stove :

In those days, the hardening of bicycle parts made of mild-steel was also a big problem at Ludhiana. No separate unit for this purpose existed then. Every small producer had to make his own arrangements for this process. The duty of hardening these parts manufactured by the

Bhogals was gladly accepted and discharged with a sense of responsibility by Mohinder Kaur the young wife of Mohinder Singh. Those days, Mohinder Singh would bring all the manufactured parts to his place. He made a crucible at home and explained to Mohinder Kaur the amount of mixture needed to obtain the degree of hardness required for each part. After being free from domestic chores, she would place the crucible on coal-stove and the goods would pass through the process of hardening. Thus, moved by Mohinder Singh's tactful inspiration, each member of the family was involved in the business of the workshop and within a few years the virtue of unity worked wonders. For nearly two years this domestic crucible kept on hardening these Bhogal spares.

Partition :

The partition played havoc with the people and the industry of Punjab. Panic and the exchange of population uprooted people from their homes and professions. But in those days, the blacksmiths of all religions got spates of orders for the manufacture of country-made weapons.

Swords of all sizes, daggers, spears, choppers, halberds, country-made pistols and guns began to be manufactured and sold by every blacksmith. The exchange of population on the basis of religion had turned the religious feelings of Punjab youth into religious frenzy. Parade and training in wielding sticks and staves was publicly imparted in open spaces. The R.S.S. held their branch meetings. The patriotic soldiers of the I.N.A., recently released from jails, dressed in uniform made out of indigenous cloth, trained people by using wooden rifles. The baptism of Sikhs by the Nihangs was also in full swing. This fanaticism of the young created hell for the common people in both parts of the Punjab. The bloodshed caused by her sons covered the land of five rivers with blood.

Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh would attend the R.S.S. branch meetings for exercises to toughen their bodies. As a consequence, they had good relations with serious-minded and adventurous Hindu youngmen. These youngmen would come stealthily to Mohinder Singh and get the outer-shells for handbomb prepared by him. Nobody knew of their activities, but this

work was done. The work which brought money almost came to a stop in August. They found it hard to sit idle. It is only the slothful who grumble; men of enterprise manage to find some way out of their problems before long.

Repairing of Motor-cycles :

While they thus sat idle, Mistri Hardit Ram, advised them that since all the Mohammanden mechanics, who used to repair motor-cycles, had migrated to Pakistan, this trade could flourish. Hardit Ram told Karam Singh and his sons that the shop adjoining his was lying vacant, they could use it. Further, Mohinder could dismantle an old and useless 'Harley Devson' motor-cycle standing in his shop and thus acquire knowledge of its working. All the three liked the advice.

Karam Singh was an expert in engines of all kinds. That very day, he dismantled the motor-cycle and explained to Mohinder Singh its working, its timing and all other things. Then he made Mohinder Singh dismantle and re-assemble it by himself. Within a day or two, Mohinder Singh was all set to enter the new line. The very next

day, a motor-cycle was brought to them for repairs. Although spares were not yet available, Mohinder Singh, under the guidance of his father, overhauled the motor-cycle, and, then, assembling the various parts made it road-worthy. This job, his very first, brought him sixty rupees. Both the brothers devoted themselves whole-heartedly to this job.

After the war, many men of means as well as hooligans had bought motor-cycles. Naturally, the brothers began to get a lot of repair work, for so far there was no other repair shop at Ludhiana. Repair work alone began to fetch in more than two hundred rupees a day. Many people would use their motor-cycles during the day and leave them with the Bhogals in the evening. They would bring these home. Thus, Mohinder Singh taught all his brothers and friends how to drive a motor-cycle. This income was put to a noble use. A free-kitchen was being run for the refugee families from Pakistan. The Bhogals took the lead in this philanthropic enterprise. Looking upon their fairly high income as a gift from God, they used it generously for the noble cause. The repair of motor-cycles was a temporary phase in their career. They did it only for

six months. Things having settled down, the old business was put on rails, and once again they turned to the making of bicycle parts.

The setting-up of 'Bhogal-Sons. :

Along with this rented workshop, they purchased a plot of one hundred and seventy square yards. They set-up a workshop on the ground floor and began to use the first floor for residential purposes. Attaching a dynamo to the engine, they made arrangements for electric light in the workshop as well as the residential part. Electroplating of parts was also started. They used the container of a battery for this job. This workshop was named 'Bhogal-Sons' in April, 1948.

Suchinder Singh, Fourman :

Right from the beginning to the construction of the factory, Mohinder Singh's younger brother, Suchinder Singh made a very valuable contribution. The two brothers working shoulder to shoulder with each other under the guidance of their father, overcame all the hardships of their family

through their united and tireless efforts. Both the brothers got training together. Suchinder Singh, was mainly Incharge of the production of bicycle parts. Mohinder Singh was responsible for administration, procurement of orders, sales and maintenance of machinery. Physically strong, Suchinder Singh was also full of perseverance and determination. Every new technique in the factory was introduced by him. He would determine the labour and the time to be devoted to each work done in the factory after doing it with his own hands. The ability and wages of the workers were decided on this basis. The man who could do three-fourths of the work done by Suchinder Singh was considered a first-rate workman. Ordinary men could do no more than half the work done by him. Everyone acknowledged his superiority in skill and technical knowledge. Therefore, it was that when 'Bhogals-Sons' was shifted to the new buildings, all the workmen and the members of the family conferred on him the title of a Fourman (not Foreman) for his having done single-handed the work usually done by four men. This invaluable gem of the family left for his heavenly abode on June 30, 1971, leaving the whole family crying and wailing.

First Automatic Lathe :

The demand for their products had by now risen very high. Besides hubs and cones, the Bhogals began to manufacture pedal-axles and the hubs and cups for the pedals. With a view to meeting the demand, the need for automatic machines was felt rather badly. They had not the means to purchase an imported machine on account of its high price. Otherwise, too, on account of their patriotic sentiments, they wanted to rely on indigenous technology. Therefore, Karam Singh designed the first automatic machine, using his God-given talent, and Mohinder Singh manufactured it in accordance with the designs, in Bhogal-Sons. For the blacksmith community of Ludhiana, which was then lacking in proper technical training, the making of an automatic machine was no less than a miracle. Other enterprising mechanics tried to find means of having a look at this wonder. They would approach the relatives of the Bhogals for this purpose.

Sometimes with Karam Singh's consent, Mohinder Singh would let some persons have a look at the running machine for a few minutes. Every beholder inwardly desired to make a similar

machine. It manufactured two cones in a minute and even today this machine works two shifts a day and turns out four cones per minute. It was through such automatic machines that the engineering units in Ludhiana underwent a revolutionary change, the miraculous results of which have made Ludhiana prosperous.

Mr H.V.R. Iyinger :

It was in 1953 that the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Industries, Mr H.V.R. Iyinger, I.A.S. came to survey the industry of Ludhiana. He saw the working of the automatic machine developed by Bhogal-Sons and was highly pleased. At first, he had reserved only five minutes for Bhogal-Sons, but he was so deeply impressed by the machinery and the techniques used by the factory that he extended his stay to half an hour. Later on, this very gentleman rose to be the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India and the Indian currency notes have his signatures. On going back to Delhi, Mr Iyinger presented his report on Ludhiana and made a special mention of the automatic machine of the Bhogals to the Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. In those very days, in a broadcast about

the industrialists in India, Pandit Ji, making a special reference to this machine, said, "The day is not far when the craftsmen of Ludhiana will bring not only the Punjab, but the whole of India to the top in the field of bicycle industry." This was the first national honour conferred on Bhogal-Sons for their technical achievements.

Ludhiana Industrial Area :

Immediately after the independence, the government turned its attention to industrial development. In Punjab, as in all other States, land had been earmarked for industries in all the big cities. In Ludhiana, too, a suitable area had been chosen and plans prepared. However, upto 1955-1956, no industrialist was willing to shift to this unpopulated area, situated far away from the city. Many meetings were held. The department asked the industrialists to submit suitable schemes for inhabiting this area. These meetings were attended by Mohinder Singh along with Shri Brij Mohan Munjal. They suggested to the government that it should advance long-term loans at low rates of interest to the industrialists for construction of factories and purchase of machinery. This plan was approved, and loans were offered at the rate

of 4 per cent per annum. Many craftsmen with rural background or those just coming from the countryside were almost illiterate. Being traditional in outlook, they were hesitant in taking loans. They were afraid that if they did not succeed in their venture, their property would be confiscated and they would thus have to face humiliation.

Seven entrepreneurs were the first to apply for loans in Ludhiana. Out of these, Bhogal-Sons received the highest amount of thirty-thousand rupees for construction purposes. This initiative was a historical event in the field of small scale industries in Ludhiana. This marked the beginning of financial facilities provided by the government for the growth of industry. It also provided a lead and much-needed encouragement to the other craftsmen.

Ludhiana become a big centre for manufacturing spare parts. Sloth was transformed into energetic endeavour, which, in the near future, brought wealth into the urban dwellings of rural and background craftsmen.

In this way, in 1956, Bhogal-Sons purchased their present plot and going through the various

stages of construction and installation of machinery started the factory in 1958 at full speed.

The First Automatic Hub-Cone Tapping Machine :

Now the need for an automatic machine for threading began to be felt. Karam Singh was the first to design a four-spindle hub-cone automatic tapping machine. Under the supervision of their father, Mohinder Singh and Suchinder Singh were soon able to make the machine in Bhogal-Sons itself. In 1959, when the then Central Minister of Industries, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, visited Ludhiana, he was invited to perform the inauguration ceremony of this machine. This was another creditable technical achievement for Mohinder Singh. Later on, many other machines were made both for meeting their own needs and for sale. The business of the factory began to grow day by day. Consequently, Karam Singh called back his third son, Dhanwant Singh from the Air Force. Resigning his job, he too, joined the factory. Thus, all the four brothers, Mohinder Singh, Suchinder Singh, Dhanwant Singh and Patwant Singh began to work together for this family business.

Mohinder Singh has a firm belief in the main-

tenance of the quality of his goods. He of tensays, "Do not let the quality of your products deteriorate, otherwise you will not survive." Unlike the average manufacturer, he does not lower the standard of his products when they grow popular, just for the sake of profit. This is the secret of his success and credit.

In keeping with this lofty ideal of his, Mohinder Singh inspects or gets inspected the goods going out of his factory. He never sends to the market a part which is even slightly defective. In order to maintain the quality, he is ready to condemn any number of parts, whatever the loss involved. That is why the products of Bhogal-Sons are popular everywhere. He makes things of quality and sends them to the market after a thorough scrutiny. That is also why he is unwilling to sell his products at low rates.

In 1958, the factory was fairly on sound footing. The parts manufactured by it grew popular in the whole of the country. Mohinder Singh's work expanded, his social circle became much wider. The importance of public relations for

industrial politics cannot be over-emphasised. So, at the age of 31 he purchased his first Ambassador car. In 1929, his step material grandmother had deprived him of the right of sitting in his maternal grand-father's car. After 29 years, he was able to have a car of his own by dint of hardwork. Besides, he re-created a happy atmosphere for the whole family of his father, Sardar Karam Singh.

CHAPTER 10

SALES ORGANISATION AND IMPORT OF FOREIGN TECHNIQUES

In 1948, the manufacturers of bicycle parts were doing fairly well. Even in the beginning, Mohinder Singh, instead of selling spares manufactured in his workshop to retailers, adopted more or less a set method. The method was that their products were to be sold to only those dealers who would promise to lift the whole lot at the settled prices throughout the year. This technique was followed firmly. From year to year, the number of dealers began increasing and some of them changed in keeping with the changed circumstances. This system ensured greater profit for the dealers when there was a rise in prices. Sometimes the products of the Bhogals were sold at twice the price paid for them. Bhogal-Sons did not grudge this profit to the dealers for they had already determined the prices of their goods on the basis of reasonable profits, where the other manufacturers refused to give supplies to their permanent stockists. Consequent upon a hike in prices or indulged in erosion, Bhogal-Sons never deviated from the business ethics adopted by them. In fact, this firmness and farsightedness of

Mohinder Singh have made an important contribution to the reputation of Bhogal parts. For many years, this very system continued to be used.

Although their goods were of a very high quality, yet they had not started fixing any trade mark on it. The goods were supplied without being properly packed. The dealers packed the goods themselves and sent them to other cities and states.

In 1950, Bhogal-Sons began to use 'Bhogal' as their trade mark and started packing their goods. Till then, the practice of packing the goods in the factory's own cartons had not become common. Their parts were so high in quality that when they bore no trade mark, the dealers sold them at very high prices by passing them off as imported. The dealers kept pressing Bhogal-Sons to supply them parts without any trade mark. They offered to pay higher prices for such parts. By yielding to this pressure, the Bhogals could certainly earn greater profits, for then as to-day, imported things had a greater attraction for customers. Mohinder Singh had; however, understood that selling their goods under their own trade

market reasonable prices alone would bring credit to Bhogal-Sons. Therefore, he was never lured by temporary gains. Steadfastness rather than expediency has been the outstanding characteristic of his personality.

In those days, the manufacturers of Ludhiana did not consign their manufactured goods to outside stations themselves. Distribution was entrusted to middle men. The production then was rather low. Further, there was a paucity of the means of transport, The manufacturers did not possess the business sense needed for the purpose. They lacked the required degree of courage, experience and imagination. Therefore, the big dealers of Ludhiana would buy manufactured goods from various workshops, and after packing them in cartons, consigned them to other cities. Consequently, only these dealers were known in the outstation markets while the real manufacturers remained non-entity for dealers elsewhere. The unity among the wholesalers of Ludhiana was responsible for keeping this distance between the manufacturers and the outlets for their goods.

The Initiative in consignment of goods outside the city :

In the field of production, Mohinder Singh was able to maintain a very good pace through his steadfastness, his father's technical guidance and his brothers' unity and devotion. Now many others had entered the field of production of bicycle parts. Therefore, the spirit of competition was seen amongst various manufacturers. Mohinder Singh came to the conclusion that if they did not send their goods to markets within and outside the country themselves, they would be ruined. At that time, the government was also advising the manufacturers to export goods of a high quality and earn foreign exchange. Therefore, a phased programme of first sending the products of Bhogal-Sons within the country, and then abroad, was chalked out. With this they would be able to check the unlimited profits made by dealers on their high quality goods and their exploitation. They would also be able to make their goods available at reasonable prices in the market. Thus, Mohinder Singh was determined to finish the monopoly of these middle-men at Ludhiana and establish direct business contacts with the dealers outside the city.

As the first step in this direction, he purchased the addresses of 200 dealers in the other

states from a widely-travelled and experienced agent. Bhogal-Sons, which was by then a registered industrial unit, sent letters to these dealers, giving them detailed information about the quality of their products and their wholesale agents in Ludhiana. Along with each letter were sent ten calendars, specially prepared for the firm. This too, was a new step in the engineering industry of Ludhiana. All of a sudden, the local stockists began to receive letters from the dealers in other cities making enquiries about the terms on which they would supply the products of Bhogal-Sons. The dealers of Ludhiana resented this move on the part of Bhogal-Sons, for they realised to their chagrin that they would not be able to overcharge their customers for Bhogal spares. These letters were received by almost all the dealers who used to supply goods to the dealers outside. The step taken by Mohinder Singh lifted the smoke screen created by the dealers, and as a result of the ensuing competition, their profit came down. Mohinder Singh still supplied the products to the local dealers, but he kept the outsiders informed of the new landmarks in the quality of their goods. This system was adopted for two years.

Now the direct links had been established with the outside dealers, they abandoned the earlier system of having local stockists and gave a general permission for the sale of their goods. A separate sales wing of the factory was established and the practice of sending their goods packed in the factory itself was started. In the first year, Mohinder Singh won the confidence of all the dealers by sending them a circular letter just after the onset of the rainy season. This letter informed the dealers that the goods spoiled by rains would be exchanged by the company. From the business point of view this was something unprecedented. Very few goods were returned for exchange, but the company was able to establish its bonafides. The direct sale to outside cities increased at a fast pace. The orders to the dealers at Ludhiana for Bhogal spares began to dwindle. This business manoeuvre on the part of Mohinder Singh caused much heart-burning among the dealers at Ludhiana, and they decided to manufacture goods in competition with Bhogal-Sons in order to take the wind out of their sails.

A few dealers joined hands to form a co-

operative concern. By then the hubs and cones of Bhogal-Sons had grown so popular that they had stopped making other parts. This company decided to oust the Bhogals from the market by making these parts. They were all successful businessmen, but they had neither any experience of production nor expertise in judging the quality of steel. In their zeal they bought a large quantity of iron without properly examining it and got 800 gross of goods manufactured. This much of material was produced by Bhogals in one month.

The steel had not been properly examined. So, when the manufactured material was hardened, the steel in three-fourths of the goods being defective it had to be condemned. When these goods reached the shops of the members of the co-operative, they had to beat at their heads in distress. They had been dreaming of ousting the Bhogals from the market, but a look at the spares convinced them that their partnership had been a folly, for the money spent on the manufacture of these parts was blocked.

One day Lala Janki Dass Chopra showed that defective material to Mohinder Singh, when

the latter happened to go to the market. Mr Chopra made repeated requests to Mohinder Singh to improve the quality of their defective parts, but he did not agree. Ultimately all these parts had to be sold as scrap. This partnership was dissolved after a year or so. The now well-known manufacturing concerns of Ludhiana came into being much later.

Thus, Bhogal-Sons were able to build their credit. After the period of depression, their goods started selling very fast. It was thus that a self-taught efficient mechanic learnt to face competition and be a successful businessman. In a matter of a few years, the Bhogals able to enter foreign markets as well.

FOREIGN TOURS :

The countries in the West and Japan are much more advanced than India in developing multifarious industrial production on scientific lines. In order to safeguard their interests and keep India as a source of raw material, the British did not permit the growth of industries in India. Engineering industry began to flourish only after the attainment of independence. The pioneering

contribution of the Bhogals in this field has been detailed earlier. Bhogal spares earned a name for themselves in the whole of the country. The Government of India was encouraging the industrialists to export spares. Sardar Partap Singh Kairon, the then Chief Minister of Punjab, also encouraged Mohinder Singh to establish business links with foreign countries.

VISHAVKARMA CHAMBER :

With a view to developing mutual contacts among craftsmen of the state, Mohinder Singh established Vishavkarama Chamber in 1960. He requested Sardar Partap Singh Kairon, when the latter came to Ludhiana, to spare some time for the members of the chamber. A meeting was fixed in the Canal Rest House, but the Chief Minister had to leave all of a sudden to attend the 'bhog' of a friend but he left a message for Mohinder Singh to convene the meeting at any place of his choice in the evening.

Sardar Kairon is called the architect of modern Punjab. He had built his political career after an arduous struggle. He was fully determined to take the Punjab to the top position in

the industrial field by making it move along modern scientific lines. It is said that Sardar Kairon would meet Punjabi youngman struggling in various fields in an informal atmosphere at short intervals. He would tell them the story of the days of his struggle and then after hearing their stories would offer advice, suggestions and help. The craftsmen of Ludhiana got such an opportunity through the efforts of Mohinder Singh Bhogal on that day.

This meeting with S. Partap Singh Kairon, was held in the new factory of Bhogal-Sons in Industrial Area 'B'. The first thing that the Chief Minister did was to see the working of the factory with great interest. Then, sitting cosily, he spoke thus : "My boys, I have not reached this position without effort. I had to put in back-breaking labour in utter destitution. I worked at machines in America. I swept floors with my own hands. I worked in fields. I completed my studies with the money thus earned. Coming to India, I started as a grass-root level worker. After years of struggle, I have come to a point where I can lead the Punjabis. Man should learn to labour. When you find something worthwhile, use all your resources to get it. These small factories of

yours can compete with those in foreign countries, if you use foreign techniques and first import foreign-made parts and then manufacture them. It is only thus that you can make parts which will sell in foreign markets. Mohinder Sihan, establish links with industries abroad, whatever the cost. I am ready to render you all kind of help on the official as well as personal level. I am pleased to see that the craftsmen of Ludhiana will bring about an industrial revolution in the Punjab.”

Mohinder Singh said, “Sardarji, if we go abroad on our own, no one will let us enter his factory to show us anything or teach us anything. If you prepare a scheme on the governmental level, we are ready to send our men to improve the technical know-how.”

Sarda: Kairon was a man with a deeply practical sense. He said, “Things move slowly on the official level, for bureaucrats tend to create unnecessary obstacles. You should make your own plans. I will give you letters of recommendation for persons known to me. I can tackle the financial side of the affair as well. You have,

however, to exert yourself, for without foreign technical know-how and foreign markets we cannot achieve the desired level of industrial prosperity." In this way, Sardar Kairon motivated and encouraged hundreds of entrepreneurs, and brought about great prosperity in the Punjab. The Bhogals continued their efforts for contacts abroad and at last in 1960, Dhanwant Singh was sent on his first tour to Europe.

Passing his F.A. from Arya College, Ludhiana, Dhanwant Singh had joined the Air Force. He had been the captain of the football team in the college. In the Air Force, he set up a new record in marathon walk, and in 1957 established the record for the same distance in the State Level Athletics in Punjab. Therefore, he has the power to concentrate all his attention on the job in hand. He knows how to express himself clearly before others, to understand their point of view, to present his side of the case and change his tactics according to the nature and temperament of the customer. He is very shrewd and knows his business well.

Before undertaking this tour, he learnt German, and in accordance with the special needs of

Bhogal-Sons went to Iran, Italy, West Germany, Switzerland and England to obtain technical know-how and machinery. He watched the Olympic Games in Rome where the Flying Sikh, Milkha Singh, set up a new record in races. In Italy, he happened to meet a Nigerian businessman who placed a big order for Bhogal spares with him. He got an order from Iran as well. Thus, Bhogal-Sons began to establish direct business links with foreign countries.

COLD FORGING :

Machine parts had begun to be manufactured through what is known as the cold forging technique in 1948. Karam Singh subscribed to a weekly magazine "Machinery Handbook" published from London. The annual number of this magazine was printed in a book form. Through this, Bhogal-Sons would get knowledge about the new techniques and new machinery used in Europe.

Right in 1955-56, the Bhogals had started thinking over the possibility of adopting cold forging technique for the manufacture of bicycle parts. In this connection, they contacted Hetabar,

a Swiss Company. Dhanwant Singh was to go to this company in order to get detailed information about cold forging and purchase the machinery required for the purpose.

Dhanwant Singh brought technical know-how from this company. After lengthy deliberation, Mohinder Singh decided not to purchase the machinery from Hetabar, for the steel needed for the use of this technique was not yet available in India. It would have to be imported. Therefore, this machinery was neither purchased from abroad nor manufactured locally in Turnomat Industries. By that time they had become experts in making automatic machines of all kinds for special purposes.

At last in 1979, they made their own machinery for cold forging at 'Indian Turn-o-mat' and in their new factory Bhogal Private Limited, Dhandari, began to manufacture B.B. axles through the cold forging technique. In 1981, B.B. axle cups, hubs and cones began to be made of iron sheets, and in 1985, of iron rods.

Dhanwant Singh made arrangements for

training his younger brother, Patwant Singh in the manufacture of fine machine tools with a firm in Germany. Patwant Singh who had a profound interest in electronics and acupuncture spent six months in Germany to get this training. In 1962, Mohinder Singh, going to Europe for the first time, entered into an agreement for technical collaboration with a firm. When Patwant Singh returned to India after his training, many improvements were effected in Turn-o-mat.

Bhogal's Love for Indigenous Machinery :

It is a fact that Karam Singh and his self-instructed family is the first among the Punjabi craftsmen in Ludhiana, which, inspired by patriotic sentiments, manufactured machine tools of a high level of excellence, though it did not make much profit. Till then the general mass of craftsmen knew next to nothing about the working of these complicated automatic machines. Karam Singh was extremely generous in disseminating technical knowledge. He was always willing to provide technical guidance to every entrepreneur and needy craftsmen. Although from the family point of view, it is a wise policy to keep the knowledge and experience earned by one to oneself, yet

Karam Singh gave technical knowledge and understanding to countless artisans and craftsmen in Ludhiana. Hundreds of stories in this connection may be heard from those engaged in iron industry at Ludhiana. That is why a very large number of Karam Singh's disciples, admirers and devotees are to be found at Ludhiana.

In 1961, 'Indian Turn-o-mat Industries' had been established. In it special-purpose machine for all kinds of parts, locks for pulling wires and whole plants began to be made. To get technical know-how and machinery for this company, Mohinder Singh went on his first foreign tour in 1962.

During this four-month tour, which was remarkable both from business and technical points of view, Mohinder Singh saw numberless firms and running workshops in the field of his interest in Iran, Italy, West Germany, France, England, Denmark, East Germany and Austria. He made a thorough study of their production and sales techniques. He had a close look at the techniques of making high quality machine tools and gained understanding of their organisation. He purchased instruments for the measurement

and inspection of raw material and manufactured parts. With this many faceted technical knowledge, he gave a practical shape to his father's determination of making mother-machines capable of making highly accurate and high standard machines. A very long time was spent on effecting high accuracy. Therefore, the production of these machines was a losing item to the Bhogals from the economic point of view. For fifteen years, it brought them very little profit. They never lowered their standard, refusing to sell anything sub-standard. They adopted the technique of using pattern drawings for parts and then mutually changeable parts were made for the first time in Turn-o-mat.

In this connection, making use of a scheme by the Central Government, the Bhogals kept a foreign expert from an English firm in their factory for full four months, bearing all his expenses. The Bhogals were making a fairly good income from bicycles, but the partriotic spirit of the family to make indigenous parts gave them the inspiration as well as the strength to provide technical leadership to the industrial world through high class machines made in the country itself. Whatever

know-how Mohinder Singh could import was communicated to workmen and industrialists of all categories in meetings held in Indian Turn-out. With great love and affection, he freely distributed among his brethren at Ludhiana all the information about the foreign tours, difficulties likely to be faced, facilities available and centres of know-how, etc. In short, he told them all he knew or they liked to know.

The market in Ludhiana has always been beset with the problem of the sale of low quality material through the unauthorised use of well-known trade marks. This has always been a threat to the prosperity of firms believing in quality. The prices of popular goods from firms of repute are higher and their demand is greater. Therefore, spurious parts pose a never-ending challenge. Bhogal-Sons have many times faced dubious traders who have used their mark to sell their own things at lower rates furtively. Once Mohinder Singh, showing extra-ordinary alertness, caught such a trader along with his spurious goods and exposed him to public ridicule by taking him out in a procession through the main streets. He would have prosecuted him. He relented only when the culprit begged to be pardoned on the

basis of his poverty and promised not to resort to this practice again. Mohinder Singh made enquiries from Germany regarding this problem of counterfeit trade marks. He was informed that the Associations of manufacturers of such parts boycott such counter-feiters. Mohinder Singh prompted the Associations of industrialists at Ludhiana to adopt this procedure against imitators, but it seemed that this effective weapon could not be adopted on account of pressure exerted by the culprits.

In 1965, Dhanwant Singh made a second foreign tour. 'The Indian Machine Tools Manufacturers Association of Bombay' had sent a delegation for the study of machine tools to Japan. After a fortnight's stay there Dhanwant Singh returned home with new ideas about Japanese techniques.

In 1967, Mohinder Singh and his right-hand man, his younger brother, Suchinder Singh, "Fourman" went on a four-week technical tour of Thailand, Hong Kong and Japan to acquire the knowledge of Japanese techniques for the production of bicycle parts and machine tools. This

tour was totally self-financed. After this tour, making a comparative study of Japanese and European techniques, the required technical improvements were brought about in the factory of the Bhogals. This time, too, the experience gained and know-how imported were shared with the members of the industrial brotherhood and officers of the Central Department at separate meetings held in Indian Turn-o-mat. This was indeed a great service to the Industrial Community of Ludhiana. This interest in dissemination of knowledge made its significant contribution to the development of Ludhiana into the Manchester of India.

WOLRATH PROJECT :

The Government of India requisitioned the services of a German expert, Mr Wolrath to suggest how Indian spares might be exported to Germany and other European countries. In 1953, Mr Wolrath conducted a survey of Ludhiana city. During the survey, he came to Bhogal-Sons where his remarks have been preserved in the written records of the company. He prepared a project, under which the Central Government began to send Indian experts to foreign countries for the purpose of export promotion. It was essential for

the person chosen to be a graduate. None of the Bhogal brothers fulfilled this condition. Consequently, their application was rejected every time. In 1968, two applications were invited for participation in a delegation, and in order to motivate the craftsmen of Ludhiana, two German experts came on a tour of this city along with Central Government officers. Every team from abroad was taken around the factories of the Bhogals by the District Industries Officer at Ludhiana. This team met Mohinder Singh in his factory and was pleased to see the high technical standards maintained there.

Mohinder Singh had not sent his application this time. When the officers from the Central Government asked him the reason for it, Mohinder Singh said, "We are not graduates. We do not fulfil the conditions laid down by you. Therefore, you reject our application every time. So, we have given up the idea of applying altogether." When this conversation in Hindi was conveyed by the officers to the Germans, they dismissed the objection as frivolous. At that time, Dhanwant Singh was present on the scene. He had learnt German from Professor M.C. Sharma of Government Col-

lege, Ludhiana. Mohinder Singh beckoned to Dhanwant Singh to converse with the German experts in their own language. When these gentlemen heard Dhanwant Singh speaking their own language, they were utterly surprised. In fact, they were rooted to the spot where they stood feeling joyed and honoured. When they were shown the signatures and photographs of the pioneers of this project, Mr. Wolrath, they were all the more pleased. They made repeated requests to Mohinder Singh to send his man as a member of the delegation that year. They promised to recommend the man sponsored by the Bhogals. Next day, Mohinder Singh consented in response to their insistence. It was decided to send Hardaman Singh Bhogal under this project. Hardaman Singh at that time had gone to Madras to display the machines manufactured in Turn-o-mat International Exhibition there. He was selected for going to Germany. The selection took place in Bombay. He did a special course in German from Pune. He was the only Punjabi Sikh technician in the Indian delegation. Hardaman Singh spent nearly nine months in Europe. He toured many a country. In Holland, he happened to meet one Mr D. Hans, who had risen from a bicycle me-

chanic to a big businessman. He placed an order for Bhogal spares. He was made their wholesale agent in Holland. Now, Mr D. Hans has very intimate relations with the Bhogals. When he came to India, he got himself photographed with all the Bhogal brothers. He was seen wearing a turban in the photograph.

This very year, Hardaman Singh met a family of Sikh businessman in Iran. They were keen to set up a plant for nut-bolts and bright bars. A youngman from this family, Amarjit Singh came to Ludhiana and stayed in Bhogal-Sons for many months and got the plant manufactured by them. Later on this very gentleman came to be the Proprietor of many International companies. Bhogal-Sons sold many more plants in Iran.

THE TOUR IN 1983 :

A centre was being set up at Ludhiana for research in bicycles and sewing machines with U.N. assistance. The testing machines needed for this centre were to be purchased from the International market. The Central Government gave sanction for the visit of a team to Japan and European countries, This team was proposed to be led by the Addi-

gional Director of Industries and Industrial Advisor, Sardar H.S. Bains. The selection of the persons to be included in this team was to be made in consultation with the president of the United Cycle and Parts Manufacturers. Mohinder Singh was the President of the Association. So, H.S. Bains was accompanied by Mohinder Singh Bhogal, Harbhajan Singh Sohanpal, Om Parkash Gupta, and Harminder Singh T.S.N.S. on this special tour.

This team visited the firms concerned in Poland and Holland. The manufacturers of the machinery needed in England were also invited to Holland. A thorough selection of high class machinery was made. From Europe, this team went straight to Japan, where it surveyed bicycle factories. Then, after having a look at the factories and workshops in Korea, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand, they came back to their homeland. In Honk Kong, an Indian friend arranged a meeting between Mohinder Singh Bhogal and a Sikh business mangnate. That business tycoon bowed to Mohinder Singh and told the directors and engineers working under him that he was his mentor, S. Mohinder Singh. This gentleman

was no other than Amarjit Singh of Iran, who had to leave Iran after the the political upheaval there. Now, he was the Proprietor of eight companies in Hong Kong. He hosted a sumptuous dinner for the team and also provided them with all the facilities they needed for moving about in Hong Kong.

Thus, it was that the Bhogals established their foreign links. Now they exhibit their goods in all the two-wheeler fairs held in Europe. Members of the Bhogal family themselves go to Italy, Germany and Holland to exhibit their spare parts in the Milan fair in Italy, Cologne Fair in Germany and the various fairs in Holland.

CONTRIBUTION TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRES

There are only a few craftsmen in the industrial world of Ludhiana who have set up small scale workshops or factories after receiving technical training in some industrial school. The industrialists of Ramgarhia Biradari in particular are all of them self-taught and self-made.

Consequent upon the policies of the Central

and the State Government, when the steel industry in Ludhiana got going, the need for technical facilities for a number of things began to be felt. To provide guidance and facilities to industries of various kinds, many government centres were established by and by. The Bhogals in general and Mohinder Singh in particular made a pioneering contribution in the establishment of many centres. It is the personal efforts of an individual that create history. Behind every monument lie the dynamic efforts of many builders. The background of the establishment of some Government Institutions is the result of Mohinder Singh's spirit of enterprise.

FINISHING AND TESTING CENTRE :

Mohinder Singh's uncle—the husband of his mother's sister—Sardar Pritam Singh Bhogal, was at one time an Instructor in the Industrial Schools of Punjab. In 1949, he went to Delhi and rose to be a Director in the Department of Labour and Employment. He developed intimate official relations with a prominent Engineer, S. Sarup Singh Gill, who was at that time the Superintendent of the Heat Treatment Section in Hindustan Motors. The small industrialists of Ludhiana felt the need for many collective facilities which they could not afford to have individually.

Sardar Karam Singh thought of having a Government Centre opened at Ludhiana for the provision of the much-needed facilities to the steel industries in Ludhiana. He broached the topic with his brother-in-law, S. Pritam Singh. The latter corresponded with the Punjab Government and for the survey preliminary to the opening of such a centre managed to procure the services of Sardar Sarup Singh Gill. Sardar Gill is a highly experienced metallurgist. He made a survey of the industries at Ludhiana, tried to understand the difficulties and needs of the factory owners and charging only a small sum of Rs. 1500/- submitted a scheme to the Government of the Punjab. Sardar Karam Singh Bhogal made a notable contribution through S. Pritam Singh Bhogal in the implementation of the scheme. This centre was established in Industrial Area 'B', which was at that time coming up in Ludhiana. This Centre had furnaces for hardening of mild steel and alloy steel, painting, nickle painting, enamelling, normalizing etc. These furnaces not only finished the products of small factory owners, but also made a provision for their training so that they could set-up similar furnaces in their own workshops. The establishment of this Centre is a historic event in the

steel industry of Ludhiana. This centre is now known as Industrial Development Centre.

SMALL INDUSTRIES SERVICE INSTITUTE: (S.I.S.I.)

The workshop of Bhogal-Sons was situated in an overcrowded and congested part of Miller Ganj. Taking well-dressed officers and foreign experts there was not an easy task. The Bhogals had, however, so distinguished themselves through the high quality of their goods, manufacturing skill and their distinctive ways of working that the District Industries Officer, Sardar Parhlad Singh, would never fail to take every team of foreign experts to have a round of the Bhogal-Sons. Sardar Parhlad Singh was a very enterprising and hardworking officer, who rendered a youngman's service to put the developing steel industry at Ludhiana on a firm footing.

The Ford-Foundation of U.S.A. had prepared an international plan to impart technical know-how to the developing nations of the world. The experts of the foundation conducted a survey of all the cities in India and the name given to this institution in India was Small Industries Service Institute. The American team was brought to

Bhogal-sons. They were all praise for the machines and spares manufactured by Bhogal-sons. The scheme for opening S.I.S.I. in Ludhiana began to be considered. The central office of the organisation had already been set up at Delhi.

We have already mentioned that the Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Industries, Shri H.B.R. Iyengar had visited Ludhiana and had a look at the automatic machine made by the Bhogals and that he had spoken highly of it to the then Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It is said that the Secretary, before coming to Ludhiana, had already made up his mind to allot the Centre to some other city, but seeing the sense of devotion and enterprise displayed by the craftsmen and industrialists of Ludhiana, he changed his mind, and that very night announced his decision in favour of Ludhiana. Mohinder Singh played a leading role in getting this important Centre allotted to Ludhiana.

MIRADO CENTRE:

It was the continuous endeavour of S. Partap Singh Kairon to bring experts, technicians and planners from other States to the Punjab in order

to open such centres for technical guidance as would change the Punjab from an agricultural to an industrial state. In pursuance of this policy, S. Sarup Singh Gill, was brought from Hindustan Motors as the Advisor to the Department of Industries, Punjab. Sardar Gill made several schemes for the guidance of the factory owners in Punjab and saw to it that these schemes were given a practical shape. One such institution is Mirado Centre, situated just in front of Guru Nanak Engineering College. In Mirado Centre, the machinery needed for the production of any thing is designed. They charge royalty from the manufacturer for the machine designed. Mohinder Singh lent his wholehearted cooperation in the setting up of this institution as well.

LUDHIANA PRODUCTIVITY COUNCIL :

Ex-president, Giani Zail Singh being a Ramgarhia, was a member of the Upper House, and he had naturally very close relations with the sikh craftsmen in Ludhiana. Mohinder Singh wanted to go on a foreign tour. So, he met the then Central Minister for Industries, Shri Manu Bhai Shah, through Gianiji. At that time, the Director of the Ludhiana Productivity Council was Shri H.D.

Shori, who had once been the Director of Industries, Punjab and was personally known to Mohinder Singh. Once he had selected Mohinder Singh as a member of the delegation to visit Japan. When Mohinder Singh met him in Delhi, the gentleman placed before him the proposal for setting up a Productivity Council in Ludhiana. Through this Centre the Government planned to send industrialists on foreign tours organised at the national level. This was also a scheme sponsored by Foundation, and it had industrial offices in all parts of the world. The industrialists at Ludhiana made concerted efforts, and, in the beginning, pooled their resources to establish a centre of Ludhiana Productivity Council. By then, Dhanwant Singh had got his release from the Air Force. He was the most highly educated young-man in the domain of steel industry at Ludhiana. Therefore, he was elected the first secretary of the Ludhiana Productivity Council. This Institution guides both small and big industrialists in the production of steel parts of all kinds. It arranges lectures. At the same time, it arranges to provide guidance keeping in view the individual needs of a factory.

LUDHIANA QUALITY MARKING CENTRE :

This Centre was opened at first in a small room and Sardar Jagnahar Singh Randhawa was its incharge. Once S. Sarup Singh Gill had come from Chandigarh to Ludhiana on an official tour. Sardar Randhawa placed before Mohinder Singh the problem of the smallness of his office and requested him to have a plan prepared by Mr. Gill for the construction of a big building. Sardar Mohinder Singh persuaded Mr. Gill to have a suitable building constructed by acquainting him with the problems and needs of the local entrepreneurs. It was thus that the present building of the Centre came into being in the Industrial Estate. Before this, the industrialists had no Community Hall, where they could sit together to think over and solve their problems. The Guru Nanak Hall of the Ludhiana Quality Marking Centre is the first hall in the city, which has so far been used only for the meetings of the industry. Through this a new sense of co-operation and brotherhood developed in the industrial circles, and new professional ties were forged for mutual help and co-operation.

TRADE CENTRE :

In 1970, a meeting of the All-India Small Scale Industrial Development Board was held at

Gauhati. Sardar Mohinder Singh Bhogal was in those days in Calcutta in connection with some personal work. Sardar Mohinder Singh was return to Ludhiana by train. S. Surinder Singh Parmar, ning Director of the Industries, Punjab and the Industrial Advisor, S. Sarup Singh Gill, on their way back from Gauhati were also travelling by the same train. All of a sudden, Mohinder Singh recognised the shrill voice of Mr. Gill, who occupied the adjoining seat. Mr. Gill took him aside and said, "The Central Government has decided to open a Trade Centre in each of the States. The entire expenses have to be borne by the Centre Government. Where, in your opinion, should such a centre be located in the Punjab?"

Mohinder Singh said, "Punjab should have two centres instead of one. Please tell the Director to set-up Light Engineering Centre at Ludhiana and the Machine Tool Centre at Batala."

Mr Gill liked this proposal. So, he told Mohinder Singh to place this proposal before Mr Parmar without any delay. The exchange of views between S. Mohinder Singh and Mr Parmar took place in the train itself, and the Director was persuaded to decide that the first Trade Centre in

the Punjab would be set up in Ludhiana itself. Thus, according to the plan of Mr Gill and Mohinder Singh, the Trade Centre at Ludhiana came into being. This Centre is proving helpful in exporting the goods manufactured at Ludhiana to all parts of the world. Improvements in the working of the centre continue to be effected.

CENTRAL TOOL ROOM :

The Central Tool Room, established at Ludhiana with the help of Germany, is a very important institution from the point of view of the technical accuracy of spare parts. This institution manufactures jigs and fixtures for the manufacture of dies and accurate parts. Its establishment was the result of the joint efforts of Sardar Gill and Shri G.G. Duggal, the Deputy Director of S.I.S.I.

S. Ajit Singh Kular took incessant pains in translating the idea of this institution into reality. This institution holds short-term training courses for managers and workers of factories to train them in all kinds of processes connected with their trades. The industries in Ludhiana have greatly benefited from this centre.

BICYCLE AND SEWING MACHINE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE :

The plan for the setting up of this centre was also drawn up during the tenure of Sardar Gill, but the credit for seeing it through goes to S. Harbhajan Singh Bains. He is the Additional Director-*cum*-Industrial Advisor to the Department of Industries, Punjab. To purchase machinery for this centre, a team consisting of Mohinder Singh Bhogal, Sardar Harbhajan Singh Sohanpal, Shri Om Parkash Gupta and Sardar Harminder Singh went to Europe and Japan in June, 1983 under the leadership of Mr Bains. This centre has led to the availability of many amenities to the twin industries of bicycles and sewing machines. Now, this centre is being run by a veteran technocrat, Sardar Jagnahar Singh Randhawa.

THE ORGANISATION OF THE BICYCLE INDUSTRIES :

When the production of indigenous bicycle parts gained momentum in Ludhiana, many organisations of producers and dealers came into being. The East Punjab Cycle Parts Manufacturers Association was formed in 1948. Sardar Channan

Singh, the Silver Cutter was the president of this association till his death. Sardar Karam Singh Bhogal was its treasurer, but Mohinder Singh worked on behalf of his father. Sardar Channan Singh looked upon Mohinder Singh as his disciple. The respect due to a teacher never let Mohinder Singh oppose him. Later on, Mohinder Singh himself was appointed the treasurer. A little later, a few other organisations were formed in Ludhiana. Disputes often arose between the producers and dealers. To resolve these, all the organisations were disbanded to form a new one, called United Cycles and Parts Manufacturers Association. Mohinder Singh was elected the Treasurer, and he held this office from 1960 to 1970. The fact that he was always elected unopposed speaks volumes for his popularity. Cracks appeared in this association as a result of the members' failure to pay their dues in time and the office holders' failure to render accounts in time. The Association split into three factions. In 1967, there were five candidates for the office of the president. Sardar Piara Singh Viridi put up Mohinder Singh for the office of the president. In view of the mounting tension, Sardar Mohinder Singh was unanimously entrusted with full powers. Mohinder Singh got letters

of resignation from all the five candidates, and then tried to make all of them agree on some consensus candidate. When unanimity could not be reached, Mohinder Singh's supporters forced him to accept the resignations of the rest of the candidates and declare himself to be the President. Thus, Mohinder Singh became the president of this big organisation of producers for the first time. On assuming his office, he vowed that he would frame a constitution of the organisation and get it registered. With a view to resolving the disputes between dealers and manufactures, he co-opted Inder Raj Sethi, the president of the dealers association as a member of the executive. This wise step taken by Mohinder Singh reduced the number of disputes. In this way manufacturers and the dealers co-operated with each other.

After two years' persistent efforts, Mohinder Singh got this organisation registered under the Company Law. This is the only organisation in the Punjab to be thus registered. This step regulated the activities of the association according to set rules. Since then it has been moving on right lines. After the registration in 1969, Mohinder Singh renounced his office. On the reappearance of mu-

tual bickerings in the organisation, he was once again elected the president in 1981-82. Now, its structure is so well-regulated that the office holders have to work in accordance with the rules, and its accounts are properly audited by Government officials every year.

LUDHIANA CHAMBER :

Once labour problem took a complicated turn in the industrial world of Ludhiana. In order to tackle this problem on a collective basis, a chamber of industrial and commercial undertakings was set-up at Ludhiana. Lala Prem Nath Gupta was made its first president and Mohinder Singh, its financial secretary. In fact, the financial responsibility for these elective organisations has always been that of the Bhogals. Mohinder Singh was the president of the chamber in 1984-85. The representatives of all the industries in Ludhiana are the members of this chamber.

In the beginning, the main function of this chamber was to grapple with labour problems and establish liaison between the government and the industrialists for the solution of various problems. Gradually, the number of industrial units

of different kinds increased in Ludhiana. Moreover, small workshops grew into factories and mills. As the problems grew various and complicated, the work of the chamber began to get more complex, multi-purpose and important. Now, this chamber tackles the problems of the industrialists regarding raw material, finance, power supply, labour and removal of pollution. It offers suggestions and co-operation to the Government regarding the formulation of industrial policies.

During his tenure as president of the chamber, Mohinder Singh achieved the very important objective of getting an expert appointed to tackle the problem of the polluted water released in the form of effluents by industrial units. This expert provides technical advice to every factory owner for the disposal or the treatment of polluted water. Such water has a very adverse effect on the health of the people in industrial areas. Mohinder Singh felt that it was an imperative to find a solution to the problem of polluted water, may poisonous water, so that it may not pose a threat to the health of the people. In order to lay guidelines for the proper and economic use of electric power, S. Mohinder Singh was also appointed as an expert

in electricity, for such an expert can be employed only collectively and not by individual consumers.

INDIAN STANDARDS INSTITUTE :

The Government of India established an institution called Indian Standards Institute to lay down standards of production for all kinds of manufactured goods. In Ludhiana Bhogal-Sons was the first to enroll itself as its member. Both Mohinder Singh and his brother, Dhanwant Singh, attended the inauguration of this institute in Delhi. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru was the dignitary chosen for the inauguration ceremony. Both the brothers heard all the lectures arranged by this institution. When the standards for bicycle parts were to be fixed, a separate council was formed for the purpose. All the organisations of bicycle manufacturers unanimously elected Mohinder Singh as its member. He participated in all the meetings held in various cities of India, at his own expenses. He added to his technical knowledge and mechanical skill, and shared all his experience and knowledge with others in the trade.

The rules of I.S.I. were very strict. Every

manufacturer could not manufacture goods in conformity with its conditions on account of the non-availability of the right type of steel in the country. It was, therefore, felt that a standard little below that of the I.S.I. must be adopted so that the goods of small manufacturers might also be exported. To get this done, Mohinder Singh got a project prepared by S. Jagnahar Singh Randhawa, Director, ISI and Incharge, Punjab Quality Marking Centre. For the implementation of this plan, Mohinder Singh paid daily visits to both these centres for about six months. The designs for spares were prepared by S.I.S.I. and special gauges were evolved by Quality Marking Centre. This scheme, prepared and sanctioned by the Punjab Government, was given approval by the Export Inspection Agency of India. This agency still follows the rules framed then. The bicycle parts, manufactured on the bases laid down through Mohinder Singh's efforts, are exported. How this effort put in on behalf of the whole community helped the country can easily be imagined. This is the remarkable contribution made by this self-trained craftsman to the quality of manufactured goods in Ludhiana as a whole.

SELF-EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF THE FAMILY

Mohinder Singh had come to Ludhiana after passing the seventh class from Arya Middle School, Bassi Kalan. The story of his professional career has already been narrated in the foregoing pages. Another aspect of his personality, which led to his success, has also to be described. This aspect concerns his formal education. He would open the workshop at six in the morning, and along with his brother Suchinder Singh, would go on working till 10.00 p.m. He had never even thought about entertainment or leisure. He was so hard-working that his devotion to work inspired all the members of his family to dedicate themselves whole-heartedly to their business.

In 1950, it occurred to him that in order to place his work on sound business footing, he must pursue higher studies. Being fully engrossed in his profession, he had almost forgotten what he had studied at school. He made up his mind to resume his studies. He engaged a private tutor and started learning English from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m.

He would devote one hour to studies and spend another hour to dictate accounts to a part-time accountant. His residence was situated just above the workshop. Getting ready by 8.30 a.m., he would come down to the workshop, where he would keep totally busy till 10.00 p.m. The pressure of work went on increasing. Still, within a few months he learnt the art of writing and dictating business letters in English. Then the pressure of work forced him to give up further studies.

When Bhogal-Sons began to send their goods to outside stations independent of middlemen, Mohinder Singh felt that without proper studies, his mission would not be accomplished. So, he resumed his studies once again. At first, he passed 'Budhimani' and 'Vidwani'. Then in 1951, he passed Matric with English only. After this, he passed Giani and F.A. in English through private coaching from Dr. K.C. Gupta. While preparing for Giani, he stayed with me at Amritsar for some time. These qualifications equipped him to perform his professional duties with efficiency. During the period of studies, he had made it a point to reach his teacher's place at 5 a.m. in summer and 6 a.m. in winter. This punctuality is the basis of his success.

By and by, he became a member of several official committees. By learning the lectures of experts and participating in discussions, he got the much-needed practice of speaking in English on professional matters.

TRAINING OF THE CHILDREN OF THE FAMILY :

S. Karam Singh has a big family, which the Lord has gifted with the unique blessing of unity. It is a measure of Mohinder Singh's far sightedness that he has managed to keep his brothers united like the beads of a rosary. He is himself a self-made craftsmen-*cum*-industrialist. He has struggled very hard and has proved an example for his brothers, sons and nephews. Whatever one of these brothers learns from anywhere is always imparted to the other brothers. There is no official or unofficial tour or exhibition, which one of the Bhogals has not attended. The knowledge attained by anyone of them has been the property of the family as a whole. If an invitation is received regarding a technical, managerial or banking programme from any part of India, a representative of the family has always made it a point to attend it. In particular, they have reached every gathering

in connection with bicycle or machine tool industry held in any part of India. This is how the Bhogals have gathered their technical and mechanical knowledge. They have also kept the children of the family under strict discipline. Where the industrial revolution has brought prosperity to the community of craftsmen in Ludhiana, it has also given use to certain wrong and foolish notions, the results of which have manifested themselves within a few years. The economic prosperity of a family always depends upon its expertise. It is only by preparing the children for their family vocation from every point of view that the family concerns flourish. The inflow of money has led many members of the younger generation to neglect training required by the professional needs of the family and go in for unnecessary non-technical education. The new generation could not maintain the business of the first generation at the same level. The ultra-modern outlook and wrong notions have led to the downfall of many a family, Looking at this destructive tendency in their environments, the Bhogals have always been on the alert. They have adopted a rigorous course of training for the children of the family so that along with formal education they might have strong bonds of affinity with their family business.

Every child of the family is required to be present in the factory during the summer vacation after he has passed the 8th standard. In the first year, they are taught drawing, filing, preparing blue-prints from drawings and helping designers. When they are in the 9th class, they are made to work as helpers of the foreman in some section of the workshop.

After Matriculation, they are required to pursue college education. At the same time, they are taught typewriting and shorthand. Besides, they are trained in accountancy in the famous institution for the purpose, "Viridi Accounts College" run by Giani Mota Singh Viridi. Accountancy is also learnt by the daughters of the Bhogal family so that they may learn how to run the house efficiently. When the children grow up, they are taught to operate big machines independently. They are sent on tours like agents so that they may get acquainted with the hardships in the outside world and learn to overcome them. By touring the whole of India, they get all the practical experience from the worldly point of view. In this way, all the youngmen of the Bhogal family learn to do with their hands all kinds

of work done in their factories. They also become members of service clubs. They handle the various sections of the workshops entrusted to them with a full sense of responsibility. This discipline enforced in the family has blessed the Bhogals with unity as well as prosperity. Each member of the family is fully conscious of both his rights and duties. As a consequence of the rigorous training imparted to them, they grow not only into successful citizens, but also able heirs to the reputation earned by Mohinder Singh. The families of other craftsmen should emulate the high and lofty ideals of unity, integrity, honesty, strict discipline and hard work adopted by the Bhogals.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Marriage occupies an important place in human life. With it, there begins a new chapter in a man's life. Many a time, a man suffers reverses in life for the simple reason that there is a clash of temperaments between him and his wife. Instead of discovering each other's virtues, they start finding fault with each other. They insist upon having their own ways. This renders life unpleasant and disturbs the peace of the family. The disturbed

atmosphere in the family ruins the business of a man of enterprise and initiative. A good companion is a gift which nature bestows upon a man. Where Mohinder Singh was lucky in his maternal and paternal ancestors, he was also fortunate enough to get a wonderful life partner. Mohinder Singh was married to Mohinder Kaur in January, 1945, when he was only nineteen. Mohinder Kaur is the daughter of S. Karam Singh and Sardarni Puran Kaur of Chak Apra, District Jalandhar. She was born in 1929. The fact that they as well as their fathers bore the same names points to the existence of a strange spiritual kinship between the two. Mohinder Kaur was born and brought up in a simple family. She inherited love for 'Gurbani' from her mother, and learnt devotion to the Great Gurus from her grandmother-in-law. Mohinder Kaur has a firm faith in serving the elders. In fact, she looks upon selfless service as the chief part of man's duties. She often says that the joy and peace, that are her assets to day, are the miracles wrought by the blessings of her grand-mother-in-law, Bhagwan Kaur.

Soon after her arrival in her husband's home,

she took charge of all the household duties. At the same time, she had an intuitive understanding of the ideals of her husband. Mohinder Singh would make spares in his workshop during the day, while Mohinder Kaur would harden them in the evening on the stove at home. This fact has already been mentioned. Though the family was hard up, Mohinder Kaur never grumbled. On the other hand, she kept looking after the family with utter sincerity.

She has a thorough understanding of Mohinder Singh's nature. In fact, she can read him like a book. Unlike ordinary women, she has never bothered her husband with domestic problems. On the other hand, she has borne hardships of kinds all with a cheerful face. Being the eldest daughter-in-law in the family, she has tackled the problems of the family with her native broad-mindedness and generosity. Since she has worked shoulder to shoulder with her husband and shared the ups and downs of life with him, she has also acquired great self-confidence and tolerance. She is capable of bearing hardships and difficult times with a smiling face. She has cheerfully faced difficulties of all kinds to uphold Mohinder Singh's ideal of keeping the family united. Even during Kartar

Kaur's life time, she had taken the heavy burden of the family on her young shoulders. She has not only brought up her husband's brothers and sisters like a mother, but has also played a leading role in arranging their marriages and celebrating them with love and enthusiasm.

Mohinder Kaur is a mature woman, having a deep knowledge of all the traditional rites to be performed in a family. This fact is borne out by what happened in 1983. The marriage of Abhilash Kaur, the daughter of Mohinder Singh's younger brother, Fourman, was to be held on the 19th of November, 1983. I sought her permission to leave before the arrival of the wedding party because I had to attend a marriage at Bham on the 20th of November after meeting my daughter at Hoshiarpur. Mohinder Kaur said to Binde, her niece, the daughter of Mohinder Singh's brother Mohinder Kaur's sister, "Uncle is leaving, pack sweets for him." I said, "I am not going direct to Amritsar. Sweets may be sent later." She interrupted me saying, "Uncleji, will you go empty-handed to your daughter's house ? This can't be. Binde, my child, give him a packet of sweets and depute somebody to take him to the bus-stand in a car." An ordinary women could not think of this gesture at a time when she was awefully busy.

She has learnt from her husband to do everything systematically and on time. At the time of marriage, however, big the crowd, she is not at all worried, but pays personal attention to every guest. If some guest happen to be vegetarian, she gets vegetarian food prepared for them.

Mohinder Kaur knows her husband inside out. While preparing food, she keeps his taste in view. Service of the elders is the first and foremost ideal of hers. She looked after her ailing father-in-law with tender and devoted care. In this era of selfishness, no rich women can look after her father-in-law for five years, day in and day out. During the days of his illness, S. Karam Singh would sometimes get very nervous. I would often tell him, "Sardar Karam Singh, it is true that your trouble is very painful but you should be happy that in this materialistic age, your daughter-in-law personally attends upon you inspite of having so many servants. Only a lucky man gets so good a daughter-in-law."

She looks upon the elders as divine blessing for her. When after the 'bhog' ceremony, of S. Karam Singh, my wife and I began to take leave

of her, she burst into loud lamentations, and enfolding my wife in her arms, began to weep profusely, "Auntie ji, please keep visiting us. I have no one to bless me now. I cannot do without your good wishes." We consoled her and said, "Dear daughter, what help can we render to a wise daughter-in-law like you? God Himself will look after you."

Touching the feet of my wife she said, "Auntie, by God's grace I have everything, but without your blessings all that is useless." Today, when daughters-in-law grow rich and happy, they cast aside their father-in-law, mother-in-law and other relatives of their husband like tattered and useless clothes.

Like Mohinder Singh, she always remembers the days of her poverty. Keeping in mind the good time done by someone is a permanent quality of hers. When Mohinder Singh was to appear in Giani, he stayed with me for some days in house number 16 of Khalsa College, Amritsar. Since we had a rural background, we kept a buffalo. Serving milk and milk products to our guests was the only hospitality in our family, for we had been vegetarians and teetotallers right from the begin-

ning. I do not remember clearly whether when Mohinder Singh stayed with us, our buffalo was in lactation or gestation, nor can I recall whether or not my wife gave him a cup of milk at supper time. Mohinder Kaur has not forgotten whatever little bit I did. When she performed the name-giving ceremony of her grandson, she presented my wife with a suit piece and a hundred rupees. My wife said, "Mohinder Kaur, I won't accept these presents. I don't deserve it on the basis of our relationship, nor can I afford to reciprocate this gesture." Mohinder Kaur said, affectionately, "Auntie ji, I can never forget those days, though you seem to have forgotten them, when you used to serve glass after glass of milk to your nephew. Auntie ji, we cannot hope to repay that debt of love in many a life. Whatever we have, is because of you. If I have offered a little out of what you gave us, does it matter? Don't consider it a present to be reciprocated. The family of your own fruit-laden are being offered to you. We are giving something not to you, but to those who invoked God's blessings on us. What can fruit and leaves give to the root." We were rendered speechless.

Mohinder Kaur has effected a harmonious blend of traditional and modern ways of life. This

blend has 'Gurbani' as its basis and is leavened by the spirit of service.

Mohinder Kaur has given a practical shape to the ideals of Mohinder Singh. Unlike ordinary women, she has never let the development of the family come to a standstill.

FAMILY :

Sardar Mohinder Singh has two sons and a daughter. The elder of the sons, Avtar Singh, is married to Avtar Kaur. The young couple have a son and a daughter. The younger son, Harainderpal Singh, is married to Avtar Kaur's sister, Rani. Tajinder Kaur, the daughter of S. Mohinder Singh, is married to Gursharan Singh Sangatpuri of Delhi. She has a son.

The elder son is growing into a fine personality. He is unconsciously assuming the characteristics of Sardar Hari Singh through the impact of Mohinder Singh's personality. He is very docile and obedient. He adopts an artistic approach to all problems. He can manage big functions with efficiency. The younger son is gifted with modern sensibility. He has a passion for his work, but he

endeavours to rise above old ways, and is ever keen to think of new lines. Tajinder Kaur is also a very wise and well-mannered young woman.

Both the daughters-in-law of Mohinder Singh come of a very rich and respectable family of Jam Nagar. They have started following in the footsteps of Mohinder Kaur. Both of them understand the significance of showing honour and respect to elders. Avtar cooks food herself, packs it in a tiffin-carrier and places it in Mohinder Singh's car. When I happen to go to Ludhiana, she serves me as devotedly as she has served her father-in-law. To serve elderly relatives with such respect and pay them personal attention, when there are so many servants around, is the mark of a wise young woman. The daughters-in-law of rich families behave very differently in these days. Instead of serving the elders, they keep commenting on their habits.

Like Mohinder Singh, Avtar Singh too, has a keen sense of responsibility and knows the importance of courtesy to the elders. Once I was to go to Chandigarh for receiving the State Award for being the outstanding litterateur of the year. I spent the night at Mohinder Singh's bungalow.

Mohinder Singh, along with his wife, was away to Bombay for the treatment of his ear. Avtar Singh said to me, "Grand-father, you are not to travel by bus. The chauffeur is just coming with the car, you will go with him. When the programme is over, he will drive you back to Ludhiana. The cars here all belong to you." His words intoxicated me with joy.

Mohinder Singh's younger son does not lag behind his brother in this respect. To make a long story short, God has blessed Mohinder Singh and Mohinder Kaur with very good children. They will surely take the family to still greater heights of glory. These children possess modern sensibility, and yet have not lost their original moorings. They also believe in Mohinder Singh's ideals and at the same time they are fixing new targets for themselves. In fact, the spirit of Mohinder Kaur's faith and the fragrance of Mohinder Singh's ideals runs through their veins.

PERSONALITY AND TEMPERAMENT

A wise old Persian saying goes thus : A man's personality is known by his gait, his conversation and his turban. An effective combina-

tion of these three creates the human personality which is in turn known from them." Therefore, a creative analysis of Mohinder Singh's turban, demeanour and conversation is imperative.

Mohinder Singh is fond of a white turban right from his early years. His family did not permit him to wear a white turban. Mohinder Singh believed, and still believes, that every other colour fades or loses its original brightness, but the white one never gets faded, though it has to be guarded from many angles. This colour keeps a man alert and balanced. At the same time, it blesses him with concentration and watchfulness. Intellectuals, thinkers and serious-minded persons generally wear a white turban. He folds his turban and ties it straight. I mean to say that he neither twists his turban to give it the shape of a carded roll of cotton nor does he pull it to increase its length. This obviously implies that he does not believe in stritching and strining things. His turban is always neat and tidy. One cannot mistake it even in a gathering of thousands. In fact, his turban has established itself in Ludhiana as the symbol of his unusual personality. He did not wear a coloured turban even at the weddings of his sons and daughter.

He wears a Patka under his turban. Thus, like devout Sikhs of yore he never keeps his head bare. This is on account of the religious sentiments unconsciously assimilated by him.

Mohinder Singh's speech or conversation is very gentle and sweet. He has the art of conveying much through minimum of words. He weighs each and every word before speaking. His voice seldom grows loud and bitter. However, when he has to clarify his stand, his voice is firm and weighty with reason. His conversation is always rational, not sentimental. In other words, he exercises artistic restraint in his conversation. There is a dramatic quality about it, for he has purified his body and mind by dint of sincere labour. Thus, his word scarcely weighed by restraint, brevity and balance.

The peculiar characteristics of Mohinder Singh's conversation is that though he may talk much, he never indulges in self-exhibition. He is a man of few words. He never loses his temper, neither repeats his words nor leaves his sentences incomplete. That is why, many a time his conversation has gravity and the ring of a proverb. Gravity

is the essence of his talk. His conversation indicates that the speaker has passed through many ups and downs of life. Mohinder Singh's gait shows gentleness, grace and the maturity of an old but alert man. There is no hurry or limping in his gait. It is distinguished by uniformity, rhythm and impressiveness.

NATURE :

Mohinder Singh unconsciously believes in the saying that if a man never forgets to respect his parents and the teachers, he will always remain happy and contented. So, he has great regards for his elders, though in his young days he had to revolt against many of his father's ideals which though noble were detrimental to his interest. Even later on Karam Singh, instead of giving advice to his son, would guide his rivals in business and remove their difficulties. The reason for this was that Karam Singh, being a noble and pious soul always rendered sincere advice. This won him countless disciples and admirers. Still Mohindre Singh has always held his father in highest esteem. There was a world of differences between the thoughts, words and deeds of Mohinder Singh and Karam Singh, but he never answered

back his father and made it a point not to interfere in his work. During the days of his father's illness, he not served him with tender care despite his having a large number of servants. Mohinder Singh has so profound a regard for his father even today that in accordance with his will-like orders, he renders financial help and patronage to Gurudwaras, saintly persons and freedom fighters cheerfully. How many sons will do this in this era, howsoever, rich they may be He is providing maximum possible facilities of all kinds to the famous freedom fighter and writer, Amar Singh 'Teg' in deference to the instructions of his father. Otherwise too he is very considerate to the elderly. This attitude represents an important aspect of his practical religion.

Mohinder Singh symbolises frankness and honesty. In accounts, he demands perfect accuracy. He considers it a sin to do anything unprincipled. Carelessness is foreign to his nature. Condonation of others' flaws is his chief virtue. He is a model of generous forbearance. Mohinder Singh has a soft corner for sadhus and saints. The regard for the saintly has been handed down

to him by his ancestors. His grand-mother served the saints with whole-hearted devotion. His father, S. Karam Singh, would also serve them to the best of his capacity. Though S. Mohinder Singh respects man of God yet he does not have blind faith. His religious faith is not for show, but for the attainment of spiritual strength, purity and humanity.

Mohinder Singh has an answering faith in 'Gurbani'. He looks upon it as the supreme source of bliss. When he is at home, the daily 'parkash' of the holy Guru Granth Sahib for his spiritual guidance, is a regular routine with him. In the evening Mrs. Mohinder Kaur Santokhs the holy Granth Sahib. He always keeps tapes of hymns from Gurbani and discourse on it in his car, because he is extremely fond of the devotional Shabad. Mohinder Singh's chauffeur knows this trait of his character. When he opens the door of his car, the chauffeur at once switches on the tape-recorder. According to Mohinder Singh, just as it is necessary to clean the machine before starting it, it is also essential for a man to clean the machinery of his mind before leaving for his work. Recitation of holy verses purifies the

mind and helps in concentration. Mohinder Singh has the firm faith that during his youth he was able to do many a thing because before leaving for his work, he would concentrate his mind either by a tuning it to his ideal or through the recitation of 'Gurbani'. Mohinder Singh always keeps in his heart the first holy text learnt from his grand-mother Bhagwan Kaur: "One who seeks shelter in the Lord is never exposed to pain, When he himself keeps a watch over me, how can sorrow touch me." Sometimes I feel that just as according to Bhai Jodh Singh, the verse, "Since Lord is the benefactor of all, cannot forget Him" always protected him in the same way, this verse always comes to Mohinder Singh's rescue. In short he is a large-hearted Gursikh, possessed of a single-minded devotion to the Lord.

According to him only those workers get caught in machines and only those drivers get involved in accidents who do not cleanse and concentrate their minds before leaving for their posts of duty. Mohinder Singh hears 'Kirtan not for the sake of redemption but in order to be motivated towards good deeds and to achieve purifi-

cation and concentration of mind. Ordinary car owners usually hear the hit songs of the day. If they have a tape of 'Gurbani', they play it so loudly that they seem to be making a show of their religious fervour. Mohinder Singh, on the other hand, becomes an embodiment of concentration as soon as he enters his car. As a result, all his faculties are in harmonious balance. The harmony of faculties and concentration alone leads a man to success. This is a discipline correspondent to the converging of light rays on a point by passing them through a lens. Man is then in harmony with himself. He has a tape-recorder in his car to hear devotional music and not to make others hear it. He has achieved this concentration through a hard and conscious struggle as well as self-culture.

Mohinder Singh was continuously goaded by the two-fold desire to set up his own independent factory and to retrieve the lost glory of the family. Therefore, it was that in the days of his youth, he could not think of anything but his work. Grim struggle and difficulties never let playful youthfulness enter his life. Not to talk of games, he could not even spare time for studies. When, in 1966 he reached the road to success and his adminis-

trative duties increased manifold, he made it a regular feature of his life to go for a walk in the morning.

In summer, Mohinder Singh goes for a walk from 5 a.m. to 6. a.m. and in winter from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. Half an hour is devoted to brisk walking and the second half to slow walking. A few people join him, but none of them can walk as briskly as he. Before going out for a walk, he takes a cup of milk. His walk has the regularity and precision of a machine. When he is out of station, he has a walk just outside the hotel in which he is staying. As far as possible he does not break his routine. It is abundantly clear that he has disciplined himself perfectly. He knows how to communicate with his unconscious mind. Therefore, he need not use an alarm for getting up in the morning. He gets up exactly at the fixed time.

In Mohinder Singh's temperament, there are a few peculiarities which are seldom seen in others. He is gifted with a sense of great tolerance. He wins over his enemies without reacting openly to them. The noble example of such tolerance

could be seen when his own brother, who by working with him had brought prosperity for the Bhogal family, stood in opposition to him.

Riches attract flatterers and parasites just as jaggery attracts flies. At such a juncture, it is very difficult to avoid fair-weather friends. Clever guys lead astray or misguide even sensible persons for the sake of loaves and fishes. They grind their own axes by luring them into evil doings. The Bhogals, too, had to undergo the curse of these evil designs.

Suchinder Singh, who had worked with Mohinder Singh for fifteen hours a day at a stretch to build the factory, unfortunately fell into wrong hands. Those people had been left behind in the race of life on account of their failure to maintain the unity of their families and now wanted to disrupt the rock-like unity of the Bhogals. They ingratiated themselves into Suchinder Singh's favour by telling him that he was a wonderful flute player. They made him feel that he had been exploited by telling him "Fourman," the factory owes its existence to your arduous labour and indefatigable efforts. You are its real

builder, while your brother is enjoying the fruit of your labour. You have worked much harder than your brother and yet he is all in all now. He is a rival in the garb of a brother. Don't forget that brothers are no longer brothers when they get married. You are a simpleton for you don't realise that he has gained influence and recognition while you have nothing to boast of. Get your share of the property and you will see that within days your brother will come to know his real worth." They would daily incite Suchinder Singh in this way. In fact, they wanted Fourman to have his independent business so that they might enjoy themselves without any fear of interference from Mohinder Singh's side. At first, they urged him to have a separate farm of his own. Mohinder Singh tried to buy peace by purchasing 27 acres of land in a village for setting up a farm. Fourman's friends turned the farm into a drunkards' den.

Land brings prosperity to one who labours on it. On the other hand, if it is neglected, it tends to ruin the owner. This farm was not properly managed. So, it began to eat into the resources of the factory. At last, Mohinder Singh had to bring the farm under his personal care and super-

vision. For two years, he would get up in the early hours and go to the farm, before he went to the factory. Farming had no prospects for them. The farm been had set up to satisfy the whims of his younger brother and keep the family together. At last, this farm, which was going in a loss, was disposed of.

Then those who wished the Bhogals ill, prompted Fourman to have a division of the factory. They would instigate him to adopt a devilish behaviour towards his brother. They would enjoy his hospitality and make him issue all kinds of threats to his brother. These were very difficult days for the Bhogals. Never before had they faced so big a domestic calamity. Suchinder Singh was Mohinder Singh's brother-in-law as well, having married his wife's sister. He kept persuading his brother to mend his ways and at the same time went on preparing himself for any eventuality. He was determined to keep the family intact. He was keenly alive to Suchinder Singh's contribution to the prosperity of the family. He faced this threat to fraternal ties with unprecedented composure, far sightedness, patience and manliness. The enemies could not succeed in breaking the

bonds of unity that tied the Bhogals, But as a result of their conspiracies, led that gem of a worker, Fourman, into the jaws of death. It bears testimony to Mohinder Singh's humanity, wisdom and fraternal love that he has discharged the family responsibilities of his brother in the most appropriate manner. It further goes to his credit that he has not let the tragic death of his brother to be an economic and social disaster for his family. May God bless every family with such virtues of fraternity, forbearance and unity.

Mohinder Singh had resolved in his very childhood to set up a factory belonging to the family as a whole, by facing heavy odds. So, he set such an example of hardwork before his family that all the brothers stood firm in raising the family to new heights of glory. There are seven brothers, that is, fourteen labouring hands. Mohinder Singh, late Suchinder Singh, Dhanwant Singh, Patwant Singh, Hardaman Singh, Pardaman Singh and Surinder Singh. Mohinder Singh had a firm faith that unity leads to prosperity and that one's brothers are one's arms. Therefore, he made all the arms of the family work in the same direction. In spite of the worst efforts of the enemies, he did

not let this seven-flower bouquet of the family break apart. In Ludhiana, success has been attained only by those families which have maintained the unity of the family at all costs. Mohinder Singh had to face many clever moves, motivated to benefit from the mechanical skill of the Bhogals. The bicycle shop owned by the proprietor of Avon Cycle was called N. S. Hukam Chand & Company. Before the partition, they had a bicycle store at Sialkot. When they settled at Ludhiana, they sold the goods manufactured by the Bhogals at Ludhiana and other cities. They wanted to start the production of bicycle spares. So, Babu Hans Raj Pahwa invited Mohinder Singh to have a 50 per cent partnership with him. He made a very tempting offer to Mohinder Singh, saying that the whole investment would be his while the profit would be shared equally. Mohinder Singh gave a polite 'no' to the proposal; yet he offered to render all technical help needed in a time of emergency. Then Babuji complained to Karam Singh that his son was not agreeing to his proposal. Karam Singh said, 'Well, it is Mohinder Singh's sweet will. I won't interfere in his affairs.' Later, when Mr Pahwa imported a nickle-plating barrel, it presented some difficulties. Mohinder Singh sent his father to the

Pahwa who after examining its fault, set it right.

ADHERENCE TO TRUTH :

Mohinder Singh has an unlimited power to stick to his decisions. He is quite frank and remarkably far sighted. He has the capacity for an intuitive apprehension of the future and to take decisions accordingly. Inimical eyes cannot escape his notice.

Bicycle had began to be manufactured in India through the use of indigenous and imported parts. The parts which were not manufactured in India were, of course, imported; but the dealers were bent upon importing even those parts which used to be manufactured here during the days of the war and were still being manufactured. This was bound to hit the business of the local manufacturers. They did not like such imports. Lala Jagjit Rai Maini was the leader of the people who thought in terms of importing spares to earn higher profits. His shop was known as Jaspal Cycle Store. He sold imported parts as well as those manufactured by the Bhogals. Mohinder Singh had a clear idea of the harm that this craze for imported goods would do. Both dealers and manufacturers were members of the East Punjab Cycle Parts Manu-

facturers Association of Ludhiana. The dealers were determined to import, for they had not yet turned into manufacturers. A deputation of this Association went to Bombay to attend a meeting called by the Chairman of the Tariff Commission, Shri A.R. Bhatt, in January 1948. This deputation consisted of S. Karam Singh Bhogal, Mr Jagjit Rai Maini, Lala Janki Das Chopra of Super Cycles, Babu Daya Nand Munjal of Hero Cycle, Sardar Channan Singh, the silver cutter of Ranjit Cycle Industry, S. Balwant Singh Chhatwal, Babu Hans Raj Pahwa of Avon Cycle, etc. Foreign businessmen had also been invited to this meeting. The dealers told Shri Bhatt that the parts manufactured in India were not to the mark, and, therefore, it was imperative for the government to permit the import of all the parts. S. Karam Singh explained to Mr Bhatt in Hindi that the manufacturers of bicycle parts in India were helpless. They had neither good machine nor good raw material. If they were given good machines and raw material of a high quality, they would be able to produce parts comparable to those manufactured in the best factory of the world. He pointed out that during the days of the war, it was the indigenous parts that had kept bicycles in India

moving. He wondered why these parts could not be used then. It was no doubt true that the parts made in India did not come up to the standard of those manufactured abroad. The country had gained freedom and, therefore, the local manufacturers deserved to be provided with opportunities. They would try their best to produce standard goods. However, since the dealers outnumbered the producers and the influence of foreign businessmen still counted for much, the import of bicycle parts could not be banned by law.

Till then no duty was imposed on imported goods. Therefore, imported parts did not prove costly. After this meeting, though the Government did not impose any restriction on import, seventy-five per cent duty was levied on all imported goods. This led to an increase in the prices of imported parts, and there was a consequent decline in the demand for them. This resulted in a virtual ban the manufacturer of indigenous parts received a fillip. Later on, leaving aside the parts not manufactured in India, the import of all other parts was banned.

The Government wanted to encourage in-

digenous production. There were, however, some parts that could not yet be manufactured in India. So, in 1952, the Government wrote to the Association at Ludhiana that the Government would permit the import of those goods which had been recommended by the Association.

A meeting of the executive of the Association was called. Mohinder Singh was not a member of the Association, but he would accompany S. Karam Singh to every meeting. Till then the Bhogals made only hub-cups and B.B. axles. Jagjit Rai was bent upon importing these parts. He stressed in the meeting that the Association should recommend to the Government in writing that B.B. cups and B.B. axles be imported. He had a poor opinion of the parts manufactured in India. Mohinder Singh strongly opposed Jagjit Rai. He said, "I undertake to give you all the goods you want and of the standard you demand. The recommendation for imports should not be made," A heated discussion ensued. At last, Jagjit Rai tried to silence Mohinder Singh by pointing out that he was not a member of the executive. He said that Karam Singh, being a member of the executive could speak. Mohinder Singh had no

right to do so, Mohinder Singh stood up and said firmly, "No doubt, I am not a member, but I have been coming with my father and attending every meeting held so far. My suggestions have been accepted by the Association many a time before. Why can't this suggestion of mine not be accepted? If you want to decide the matter, you may get the opinion of the members on this point by a show of hands."

The members turned down the resolution of Jagjit Rai, and Lala Janki Das Chopra, the President of the Association, was so deeply impressed by the arguments and far-sightedness of Mohinder Singh that he recommended on behalf of the Association a ban on the import of bicycle parts.

Although Jagjit Rai sold the goods manufactured by the Bhogals, yet he nursed a grudge against them for their successful opposition to his proposal. He was on the look out for an opportunity to humiliate them. We have already mentioned Mohinder Singh would enter into an agreement with the dealers for the purchase of his goods for the whole year at fixed rates. He supplied them the goods continuously and would collect the

payment at the end of a week. This Bhogal Dealers Association had six members. In order to damage the reputation of the Bhogals, Jagjit Rai sorted out those spares of the Bhogals which were a little defective and putting them in a box told the other dealers that the Bhogals were supplying sub-standard parts. Mohinder Singh saw through this diabolical trick. He told everybody that Jagjit Rai had set apart the defective parts. "Look at the rest of the parts. They are perfect. I agree that sales come to a standstill during the rainy season, but how am I to blame for this ? I supply goods according to my promise and collect the money. This is my right." Thus, he has been successfully countering the clever moves of his opponents by adhering to truth and keeping a jealous eye on his interests.

DISCIPLINED LIVING—:

Mohinder Singh had organized his life in his boyhood itself. He had firmly resolved to make some remarkable achievement. Therefore, he never got time for games and pastimes. Although his maternal grand-father owned a cinema house and he had been seeing the plays of Parsi Theatrical Companies and silent movies and had been projecting films in Batta theatre, he is not very fond

of pictures. It is only occasionally that he watches a movie with his wife, and that too on weekends. He is fond of newspapers, but he does not let this fondness interfere with his professional work. He reads newspapers in his leisure. Unlike his father, he is not fond of buying modern and expensive things for his household. He finds pleasure in purchasing good things for his friends and relatives.

He knows how to keep himself fit. When he was buried under a falling roof and had come out of the jaws of death with great difficulty and the accident had caused a twist in his heart and rent his ear drum, he had adopted himself to this state of health and had started having just one chapatti a day. Mohinder Singh keeps away all worries while having his meals. He very cheerfully eats whatever is served on the table. If the members of the family forget to add sugar to his tea, he takes it as it is and lets no one to know that it is sugarless. An ordinary man is beside himself with anger at such lapses. Mohinder Singh thinks that while having meals, one's mind should be as clean as at the time of prayers or performance of duty, otherwise food turns into poison and causes

various troubles. Since he belongs to the Doaba he has a sweet tooth. Jaggery, ice-cream, 'urad' and vegetables are his favourite items of food.

He dispels half his troubles with his firmness of mind. Once when he went out on a tour, irregular meals led him to hypertension. He consulted the experts at Ludhiana and said to them, "I will in no case take medicines, I am however, ready to abstain from or take any kind of food you suggest." A doctor advised him to eat raw vegetables. Showing self-restraint, Mohinder Singh kept eating raw vegetables like radish, carrot, peas, tomato and cabbage every two hours for months together. In this way, he was able to bring down his blood-pressure. By God's grace, he has never again suffered from hypertension. In fact, his whole life is extremely well-regulated.

The secret of his peace of mind is that he is not irritated by the changes taking place in the new generation; on the other hand, he says, "We have had our day and are, in fact, still having it. I never let anyone dictate to me. It will be unfair for me if I dictate to the next generation. Of course, I will render them all possible help if they so desire.

This is my duty. My children represent the next stage of development in my intellect.”

If he fails to like something about the new generation, he does not condemn it outright. He advises them at the right time like a senior friend rather than a father. If the person concerned does not agree, instead of feeling irritated, he tells himself, “The duty of the flower is to blossom, whether or not others enjoy its fragrance matters little to it.” This is an article of faith for him.

A wise man is he who never loses sight of his pasts. S. Mohinder Singh always keeps that spot of time before his mind’s eyes, where he had resolved to set out on his journey.

S. Mohinder Singh is blessed with another great quality. He obliges others on his own and then not to speak of making them conscious of it he does not even talk about it. Sometimes the man for whom he does something, comes to know of it after many years. He has elevated discipline to the level of an art. Sometimes it seems to me that this is the real secret of his success. In 1947, he served the refugees coming to Ludhiana to the

best of his capacity, but he let no-one know what he had done. He fed them, supplied them with rations and clothing and also rendered them financial help. He made many of them economically independent by giving them jobs. The fraternal relations between the craftsmen of Ludhiana have grown stronger with the prosperity brought about by industrialisation. There has also been a realisation of the need for co-operative efforts to solve problems faced by the community as a whole. The Ramgarhias of Ludhiana have established many Ramgarhia Institutions. The industrial revolution has drawn many business communities to the steel industry. This has led to an unprecedented social and economic co-operation. In 1960, Mohinder Singh had won appreciation from Sardar Partap Singh Kairon by establishing Vishvkarma Chamber, but this plan did not meet with the success envisaged. Later on, under the guidance of Mohinder Singh, some of his prominent industrialist friends set up Vishavkarma Foundation International with the help of some intellectuals on the 29th of May, 1982. The aim of this organisation is to recognise the creative genius of man. This institution has vowed to patronize intellectuals, artists, writers, painters, patriots and other talented men in need of help. More

than a hundred industrial concerns are its members. The functions held by this organisation in Ludhiana have very salutary effects on the life in Ludhiana. Under the able leadership of Mohinder Singh, this organisation is engaged in making some very important and worthwhile contributions. Thus, he has given evidence of his social sense by patronising useful social activities.

Another remarkable quality of Mohinder Singh is that he shows great respect for a good worker. He always makes it a point to encourage good workers. He does not look upon mechanics and workers as low; on the contrary, he shows great regard for them. He does not like to be called a factory owner or industrialists, for he looks upon himself as a worker. On the 24th of April, 1983, he very proudly said on the occasion of the release of a book in honour of Gurdial Singh Phul, "I am mere mechanic. I know nothing of literature. Labour is my deity, and when somebody calls me a worker, every fibre of my being is thrilled with joy."

As has been mentioned earlier, Mohinder Singh has been to many countries of the world. He has met many great industrialists and experts,

but his ideal is D-Hans, the Dutchman who started his life as a repairer of bicycles and rose to be the President of the Association of Bicycle Dealers in that country. The gentleman is a multi-millionaire to-day. He still retains the first shop he opened. He looks upon the Bhogals as his brothers.

Since Mohinder Singh is an artistic craftsman who has trained all his faculties, everything done by him, whether it is a marriage or a conference or condolence meeting or some work pertaining to the factory, is not only well-organised but also has an artistic touch about it. If you ask him what the secret of his success is, his answer is concentration, single-minded devotion and self-confidence.

He often says to the workers in his factory, "If you do not feel like working, take rest for half an hour or so, but never undertake a work without your heart in it. Never show carelessness. This is an insult to labour, the job entrusted to the worker and work itself. This is suicidal and may lead to a catastrophe. If some miracle is to be performed, it can be performed through concentration alone. All the modes of workship are the means to the achievements of concentration and the instru-

ments of self-knowledge.” He has the capacity to condone the most serious loss caused by a worker, if he dares to be true.

HONOURS AND OFFICES

The individuals and organisations striving to attain a high level of excellence in any field get at long last the recognition they deserve at the hands of society and government.

The story of the progress which Mohinder Singh made as the guiding spirit of the Bhogals, starting from a scratch to the establishment of Bhogal-sons and its sister concerns, is infact the story of the industrial revolution of the Punjab. Mohinder Singh and Bhogal-Sons have been getting and still hold many honours and offices in the local as well as state-level organisations. Before talking of the offices held by Mohinder Singh, we shall talk of the honours awarded to Bhogal-Sons at the State and the National level.

1. HONOURS :

Best Industrial Unit in the Punjab (1965-66) :

In 1966, Bhogal-sons was honoured by the

Punjab Government as the Best Industrial Unit in the state. Along with this, they were awarded a Shield on September 18th, 1966 by the Director of Industries, Punjab, for manufacturing bicycles, sewing machines and their quality components. It is evident that they have established their expertise and supremacy in the Punjab by virtue of their professional skill. This first award was presented by Shri Dharam Vir, Governor, Punjab, at a special function held at Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.

2. EXPORTS SPECIAL AWARD (1980-81) :

In 1980-81, the Department of Industries, Punjab, honoured Bhogal-Sons with Exports Award.

3. A.R. BHATT AWARD (1984) :

In India, an organisation called Federation of Association of Small Industries of India honours the factories established by the self-trained industrialists of India through their own efforts for their invaluable services every year. Bhogals Private Limited has achieved remarkable success in the field of cold-forging for which they were honoured with A. R. Bhatt Entrepreneurship

Award on the 22nd of September, 1984 in New Delhi by Shri R. Venkataraman, the Vice-President, of India. The President of this organisation Babu Bhai Rathi. We have already written in detail about cold-forging in the earlier pages.

4. DISTRICT LEVEL PRODUCTIVITY AWARD (1985):

The Department of Industries of the Punjab Government honours factories every year at the state and district levels. Bhogals Private Limited was given the first District Level Award by the state government at a function will be held at Chandigarh, in August, 1986

The Bhogals have fixed their net targets with great prudence and have always achieved them with seriousness and firmness. These honours speak volumes about their unity and efficiency. They are a perennial source of inspiration for small entrepreneurs to strive hard for progress in the industrial sector.

OFFICES :

The steel industry of Ludhiana is, so to say, the contemporary of Mohinder Singh. When he

came to Ludhiana in his childhood, the industries in Ludhiana were at the take-off stage and the production of spares had just started. As the spare parts Industries in Ludhiana progressed, Mohinder Singh Bhogal was taken from time to time on various committees of trade associations and those set-up by the Department of Industries, Punjab at the state level. We have already narrated the story of his contribution in this field. Here we give the list of some of the offices held by him in the past as well as at the present time in various organisations and committees, so that a graphic picture of his Industrial engagements besides his family business, may be presented.

PREVIOUS OFFICES :

Executive Member : East Punjab Cycle-Parts Manufacturers Association, Ludhiana (1948-53).

Cashier : 1. Ludhiana Cycle Parts Manufacturers Association, Ludhiana (1953-60)

2. United Cycle and Parts Manufacturers Association, Ludhiana (1960-67).

President : 1. United Cycle and Parts Manu-

facturers Association (1967-68, 1968-69, 1981-82).

2. Chamber of Industrial and Commercial Undertaking, Ludhiana. (1984-85).

Patron- President : Quality Control and Inspection Rules, 1967 (for bicycle export)

Member Governing Council :

1. Bicycle and Sewing Machine Research and Development Centre, Ludhiana.
2. Central Machine Tools Institute, Bangalore.
3. Central Tool Room, Ludhiana.

Member Executive Committee :

All India Machine Tools Manufacturers Association, Bombay.

Finance Secretary : Chamber of Industrial and Commercial Undertaking, Ludhiana. (1967-84).

Member : 1. Board of Industries, Punjab. (1971-75).

2. District Industrial Advisory Committee, Ludhiana.

3. State Industries Advisory Board,
Punjab, Chandigarh.
4. I. S.I. (Cycle Panel), New Delhi.
5. Small Industry Service Institute,
Ludhiana.
6. Punjab Machine Tools Development
Committee, Chandigarh.

PRESENT OFFICES :

Founder : United Cycle and Parts Manufacturers
Executive Association, Ludhiana.

Member Governing Council :

Punjab Trade Centre, Ludhiana.

- Member** :
1. District Industrial Advisory
Committee, Ludhiana.
 2. State Level Coordination Commi-
tee, District Industries Centre,
Ludhiana.
 3. State Level Sales Tax Advisory
Committee, Chandigarh.
 4. Local Sales Tax Advisory
Committee.
 5. Punjab Financial Corporation
Advisory Committee, Chandigarh.
(since 1968 without a break).

6. Punjab State Export Promotion Board, Chandigarh.
7. Quality Marking Centre Advisory Committee, Ludhiana.
8. Coordination Committee, Punjab State Electricity Board (Circle Level).
9. Industries Advisory Committee, Punjab State Electricity Board (State Level).
10. Punjab Industrial Safety Council, Mohali.
11. Technical Advisory Committee, Central Tool Room, Ludhiana.
12. Confederation of All India Bright Bar Manufacturers, New Delhi.
13. Punjab State Productivity Board, Chandigarh.
14. Re-orientation of Training, I.T.I. Punjab.

OFFICES IN SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS :

Chairman : Vishwakarma Foundation (International), Ludhiana.

Founder Member : Ludhiana Aviation Club,
Ludhiana.

Executive Member : 1. Ramgarhia Education Council, Ludhiana.

Member : 1. Rotary Club (Main), Ludhiana.
2. Sutlej Club (Regd.), Ludhiana.
3. District Communal Harmony Committee, Ludhiana,
4. District Child Welfare Council, Ludhiana.
5. Punjab State Rural Development Committee, Ludhiana.
6. Indian Red Cross Society, Ludhiana.
7. Population Education Project, Ludhiana.
8. Advisory Board Sandwich Diploma Course, Guru Nanak Engineering College, Ludhiana.
(1966 to 1972).

BHOGAL'S SALIENT ACHIEVEMENTS :

His main contribution towards the industrial society of the State has been the abolition of import of Cycle Parts and impart technical guidance to his fellow-skilled artisans through his father S. Karam Singh Bhogal. He himself

shared foreign and imported technical know-how and the knowledge of itineraries with his industrial kins at his factory. With his constant diligence, as the President of the United Cycle and Parts Manufacturers Association, he got designed the spares from S.I.S.I. and inspection gauges from P.Q.M.C., Ludhiana. This opened up quality production of cycle spares and the avenues of export. Consequently Ludhiana has become the largest centre of cycle and cycle parts production in the world.

He implemented his dream of establishing the **BICYCLE AND SEWING MACHINE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**, at Ludhiana. He visited Europe and Japan in 1983 as a leading member of the team for the purchase of machinery and selection of foreign experts required for the centre. The setting-up of **CENTRAL TOOL ROOM** at Ludhiana, with German Techniques, is one of his other major achievements. He has always been helpful in shaping the Industrial Policy of the State with his practical suggestions. He has been the Technical Advisory of the Punjab Financial Corporation, since 1968. He encouraged the

practice of awarding the best entrepreneurs of the year at the District and State levels by the State Government. With his keen association with the Punjab State Productivity Awards Committee, he has always been an ardent Advocate of justice and fair-play in the choice of awardees. He is the Founder-Chairman of the VISHWAKARMA FOUNDATION (INTERNATIONAL), Ludhiana, a social organisation of the Industrialists of Ludhiana, which aims at the recognition of the 'CREATIVE GENIUS OF MAN'. This organisation has envisaged the installation of a THREE FACED BRONZE STATUE OF LORD VISHWAKARMA at Ludhiana.

HIS MESSAGE

Mohinder Singh Bhogal has a firm belief from his past experience that 'Work is Worship!' His advice to the young is that they must develop the habit of hard work right from the beginning. He also feels that every individual must learn to work with his own hands and acquire some practical skill. This saves him from dependence on others, apart from enabling him help the needy.

Punctuality, he believes, is the best habit to acquire. It saves a man from mental tension and brings him calmness of temper. The punctual never gets worsted in life. One should always try to speak the truth.

**Rang Lati Hai Hinna
Pathar Pe Ghis Jane Ke Baad**

