

# HARIJAN

12 Pages

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

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[ TWO ANNAS

## AN UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCE

### Chokhamela

When Gandhiji consented to address the boys in the Chokhamela Boarding House at Nagpur on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the House he had no idea of the trouble he was inviting on himself. Chokhamela was one of the Harijan saints in Maharashtra whose name is still revered, who kept the torch of true religion and right living and devotion to God burning when there was darkness in the land, and who has been honourably mentioned by the late Mahadev Govind Ranade in his *Rise of the Maratha Power*. He was a Mahar, but as he revealed the light of self-realisation in his life he was canonised by the people and is revered by Brahmins and non-Brahmins alike. To associate an institution of Harijan boys with his name is in the fitness of things. When the boys of the Boarding House came to invite Gandhiji to address them he had not the slightest notion that, although the boys had unanimously invited him, one of the members of the Committee was opposed to the proposal. Much against his will he agreed to give a few minutes on his way back from Benares by breaking journey at Nagpur.

### What Awaited Him?

But what awaited him? When he was told that a few Mahar youths were going to stage a black flag demonstration he simply smiled and said, 'I do not mind it.' As our car approached the quarter, a number of youths rushed towards the car shouting, 'Gandhi go back, Gandhi boycott.' Among them was no boy from the hostel, but only rowdies from the neighbourhood. In the compound was a large meeting of the hostel boys, and thousands of men and women from the city who had come for the celebration. Pandit Ravishanker Shukla, who was presiding over the function, was distributing the prizes as we went in. Within a minute or two he finished the function and Gandhiji began to address the gathering. There was noise. In a moment a youth sprang to his feet and said: "This is not the ordinary noise. We are protesting against your coming." Gandhiji invited him to come to the rostrum and say what he wanted to say. He had nothing more to say than this: "We do not want you here. Those who invited you here had no right to do so." "But why don't you want me here?" asked Gandhiji of him. "Because you have done nothing for the Harijans." "That's all? Have you anything more to say?" "Nothing more," he said, and after a while disappeared. No sooner than Gandhiji had uttered a few sentences a shower of stones came upon the audience from the rowdies, some of whom had now got upon the walls of the compound. They

were, it seems, bent on breaking the meeting. They continued to pelt stones from outside in great fury. Two little children and a young man were hurt and two of them began to bleed profusely. Pandit Ravishanker Shukla and Gandhiji asked the audience to be quiet and to keep sitting no matter what happened. Two boys from the hostel were badly injured and they had to be removed to the hospital. The audience showed exemplary behaviour and listened to Gandhiji, whose address, which would otherwise have been finished in five minutes with a few words of blessings and advice to the boys, took a different turn. It was for him a rich experience and an occasion for further self-introspection and a fresh test of ahimsa, and direction to those who would wipe out the blot on Hinduism with non-violent means.

### A Call to Self-purification

This is what he said in Hindustani:

"I am told by the friend who raised the voice of protest that those who invited me here had no right to do so. The fact is that it was the students of the Chokhamela Boarding House who came to Wardha to invite me. I had begged to be excused, but Shri Chaturbhuj Jasani intervened and told me that, if the work that carried me to Benares was after my heart, this might be even dearer inasmuch as it was the Silver Jubilee of an institution that had served Harijan boys. And since the abolition of untouchability is my life's work and I even toured the country for the same cause for one whole year, I agreed.

"But assuming that those who invited me had no right to do so, it was surely not my fault. These protests do not displease me. The Harijans have suffered all these centuries at the hands of the Savarna Hindus as from no one else, and as I am one of the latter I am participant in their sin. And I am never accustomed to weigh my sins in golden scales. I can atone for them only if I made a mountain of a molehill. The reason is simple. Man can never see his faults in proper perspective, and, if he really did so, he would scarcely survive them. The remedy is, therefore, to magnify one's shortcomings. And the sin of untouchability is so heinous that it is impossible to exaggerate it. Those who suffer from it are naturally liable to be angry with those who are trying to wipe it out. They may well say to me: 'Who are you to remove untouchability? We shall wipe it out with our own strength.' Now the way of demonstrating one's strength is of two kinds: one is the eternal, God-given way of self-purification, where man takes the blame upon himself of all the wrongs he is suffering from; the other is the way of retaliation, the Mosaic law of tooth for a tooth and nail for a nail.



The latter is quite natural in that we have descended from the state of brutes, and some of their qualities may have been exaggerated in us. It is Hitler's way. Because a Jew or many Jews may have wronged the Germans he thinks it is his duty to exterminate the whole Jewish race. To those Harijans who would destroy Caste Hindus and Hinduism I would say that the Hindus deserve it. But the Caste Hindus too owe a duty to themselves and their religion. Let them receive lathis and stones from Harijans, but they should continue to serve them.

"What, however, is to be done, if they will not receive our service? (Shower of stones at this stage, and a slight interruption due to the stones having injured a few from the audience.)

"Let the stones rain on us, we have to keep quiet and to hold this meeting. I had promised to stay here for ten minutes, but I am in no hurry to go now. Send word to the demonstrators that, if they will have a separate meeting, I am prepared to stay and address that meeting and answer the charges they may have to make against me. And what after all is my crime? That I am labouring for them? That I am endeavouring to put a little money into their pockets? That I am telling the Sanatanists day in and day out that they have to purge themselves of their sin? And why rain stones on the innocent audience?

"They wanted to hurt me, but what have they succeeded in doing? They have hurt a few innocent people including two children in the audience. If they wanted to punish me or those who invited me, they should have gone directly for us. Let me tell them that this hooliganism is the opposite of bravery, humanity, civility. Let me tell them they are going about the wrong way. They are injuring their own cause.

"Now a word to those assembled here. Though this is a boarding house, those who receive their board and lodging here are all students. I hope your stay here will be fruitful and give you what is real education. Let today's demonstration be a lesson to you. It should make you neither angry nor afraid, for anger and fear are twin sins. Let the demonstration awake you to your sense of duty and burn the eternal truth indelibly on your minds that only Truth quenches untruth, Love quenches anger, self-suffering quenches violence. This eternal rule is a rule not for saints only but for all. Those who observe it may be few but they are the salt of the earth, it is they who keep the society together, not those who sin against light and truth.

"I ask you not only *not* to punish the demonstrators but not even to have the wish. They are not wicked. It is through them that God works to open our eyes to the wickedness within us. Let, therefore, today's demonstration purify you, as I know it will purify me. True *vidya* (knowledge) is the art of self-purification. Now I want you to stay here until the storm ceases, lest your going out just now should infuriate them. Let us wait until their fury ceases, and then quietly go back to our homes. In the meanwhile let us all recite *Ramdhun* together, let someone give us a hymn, and we shall disperse only when we are told that everything is quiet outside."

## Krishnanand Sokhta

Soon there was demand from the audience for Shri Krishnanand Sokhta who appeared on the rostrum and delivered in a heart-stirring way in impromptu verses the message of truth and ahimsa, and asked the audience to join him in reciting Ramanam. This went on for a good few minutes. It heightened the atmosphere of peace and self-purification that Gandhiji had created, and the meeting peacefully dispersed thereafter. The Silver Jubilee had been celebrated in a manner unexpected by the boys, but it has left them a lesson which some at least will treasure all their lives.

Sevagram, 25-1-42

M. D.

## BENARES NOTES

### I

### A Pilgrimage

The visit to Benares is made doubly sacred by the memories of our ancient spiritual heritage that Benares must wake up in the mind of every Indian and by the *darshan* of Bharatbhushan Pandit Malaviyaji whose life has been a continuous dedication. It is that burning love for the country that is the indissoluble bond of union between Malaviyaji and Gandhiji.

Few people have been able to see their dreams fulfilled in a measure that Malaviyaji has done. For the fulfilment of his dream he laid under tribute each and every one who professed a love for India's ancient culture. The Hindu Rajas and Maharajas and rich men came under his spell. The vision of the University was vouchsafed to him as he sat one day in contemplation, after a bath in holy Ganges, and the story goes that he shared the vision with his father, who parted with a hard-earned sum of Rs. one hundred and one and along with it gave also the blessing that that amount may be multiplied to a crore and one. The blessing was fulfilled, and for five and twenty years Malaviyaji has seen rise before his eyes edifice after edifice, and thousands of youths of the land come and grow under his benign influence. The youths have in turn imparted to him their youth and energy, and old age in one like him has become an object of pride and veneration.

No wonder the Silver Jubilee Convocation, to which flocked thousands from far and near, became a unique festival of thanksgiving, and Dr. Radhakrishnan, on whom Panditji's mantle has fitly fallen, voiced the feelings of all when in a wonderful paean of praise he said that sages like him render holy places real *tirthas* — places of pilgrimage — तीर्थकुर्वति तीर्थणि, and wished him life for a hundred autumns.

### A Dream Unfulfilled

And yet to him the dream is far from fulfilment. A book of memoirs published recently by Pandit Ram Naresh Tripathi — तीस दिन — मालवीजीके साथ (Thirty Days with Malaviyaji) — gives us a glimpse of his days and dreams. Even now he says to his doctor: "I would still like to make a tour of India. There is much yet to be done. I want a magnificent hall of music where the boys may learn music, so that they may go about through life with devotional music inspiring them. I want to see here a Nalanda where ten thousand



students may live and study together in order to revive our ancient glories." One day he goes out in fair moonlight and exclaims: "What a glorious sight! There is enough space here for our sages to come and build their ashrams and be a perpetual source of light and life to our youths. The object of the Vishwavidyalaya will be fulfilled only when we have a Vasishtha, an Atri, a Gautama, an Angiras, each with his ashram to impart his unique message." Again: "I want some of our pandits to do research regarding the works of Tulsidas and other saints. I want absolutely authentic editions of their works." Again: "I want to name some of our roads here after Harishchandra, Yudhishtira, Hanuman, Ashoka, Pratap." Also: "No, no, have as many scholarships here as possible for the poor. Who knows there may be many an unknown Shivaji, Pratap, Harishchandra, Dhruva among them?" One more: "I have deliberately arranged a weekly Gita class here, so that a regular reading of our unique book may be an inspiration to them."

### The Voice of the Sentinel

Gandhiji was there as a pilgrim no less than others. But he had the mission of a sentinel to fulfil. He was no good for a convocation address. It was not in his line. But lest our festivities should make us lose sight of the fact that those who are to be the heirs of the venerable sage have to work together to bring to a complete fulfilment his dream, he took upon himself the task of sounding a note of warning.

Twentyfive years ago he had performed a similar task. The then Maharaja of Darbhanga, who welcomed him as one "who though born in luxury and affluence had voluntarily chosen to identify himself with the poor", did not know he would prove true to the description. But Malaviyaji knew. He had taken him into his secrets. Gandhiji knew what a Herculean task it had been for Malaviyaji to secure a charter for the University, and also what was Malaviyaji's unfulfilled ambition. Malaviyaji had met Sir Harcourt Butler, who was then a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, in charge of education, and told him that education in the University would be imparted through Hindi. But Sir Harcourt knew his business better. He said: "That will not do. You had in that case better go on your own and do without Government's help and support. So long as you conduct your affairs in English we are safe, we know where you are and what you mean; but when you use your own language we are completely at sea." Malaviyaji, who has often agreed with his adversary rather too quickly, had promised not to press the idea. But not so Gandhiji. Malaviyaji knew what Gandhiji would say on the occasion, in fact Gandhiji had warned him beforehand. But Malaviyaji would not take a refusal. He compelled him to speak in English, but also asked him to say whatever he wanted to say. And so he had let himself go. Even today that speech reads as though it was delivered yesterday. It was an impromptu speech as on the present occasion, and Gandhiji perhaps does not recall today the exact words he said. But they have the same authentic ring, and the whole was couched

almost in the same language! "It is a matter of deep humiliation and shame for us that I am compelled this evening, under the shadow of this great college in this sacred city to address my countrymen in a language that is foreign to me." That is how he began, and hoped that "this University will see to it that youths who come to it will receive their instruction through the vernaculars. . . . If we were receiving our education today through our vernaculars, what should we be today? We should have today a free India, we should have our educated men not as if they were foreigners in their own land, but speaking to the heart of the nation; they would be working among the poorest of the poor, and whatever they would have gained during the past fifty years would be a heritage to the nation." He then deplored the thousands of years that were lost to our nation as a result of the terrible handicap under which our youths had to labour, and then took the liberty of "thinking audibly" before them. He turned his eyes about him, and as he did so he sighed at the sight of the gorgeous show of jewellery which "made a splendid feast for the eyes", but which compelled him to say to the bedecked ones: "There is no salvation for India unless you strip yourselves of this jewellery and hold it in trust for your countrymen in India."

I will not summarise the whole of that speech which the curious can read even today with profit. Some of the things that followed, which were really meant to deprecate the cult of the bomb, jarred on an un-understanding audience then, so much so that most of the big people left the meeting in a body. The times are changed. Harder things than he said that day have been said by him, and when on the evening of the 21st January he began to address the audience in Hindustani no one felt that anything unexpected was happening. But the University has still got to be the Vishwavidyalaya of Malaviyaji's and Gandhiji's dream. And it did one's soul good to see the eighty year old Malaviyaji deliver in distinct and chaste Hindi a speech that was heard by the vast concourse that had gathered there, corroborating every one of the sentiments uttered by Gandhiji. "The Sun that radiates light and warmth is there," as Gandhiji said, "we have but to receive and enjoy that light and warmth." His blessing is there given in a Sanskrit verse of his own composition:

सत्येन ब्रह्मचर्येण व्यायामेन विद्यया ।

देशभक्त्याऽऽत्मत्यागेन संमार्गः सदा भव ॥

(May thou be deserving of honour by means of truth, brahmacharya, healthy body, learning, love of thy land, and self-sacrifice.)

Sevagram, 28-1-42

M. D.

(To be continued)

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# HARIJAN

Feb. 1

1942

## A DEPLORABLE INCIDENT

(By M. K. Gandhi)

As Sardar Vallabhbhai was leaving Sevagram the other day he told me of a dacoity in a home in Kheda District. Armed dacoits entered the house, belaboured the inmates, and escaped with the loot. The story was heart-rending. What should I do under similar circumstances, I thought to myself. What should Congressmen do in the circumstances was the next thought; and since then the train of thought arising from the dacoity has taken possession of me. The Congress has been working continuously since 1920 under the policy of non-violence. The province of Gujarat has also had the advantage of a leader of the Sardar's calibre. And yet daring dacoities can take place. How far then can Congress influence be said to have penetrated? People imagine that, if the British Government were to cease to function today, it would be the non-violent Congressmen who would automatically take over. But it is not so. I have been working to this end for the last twenty years, but my dream has not materialised. For the Congress has not had a living faith in the very means which it adopted in 1920. Therefore the non-violence of the Congress has really been non-violence of the weak. But Governments can only be run by the strong. And a non-violent Government can only be run by those who believe that non-violence is the mightiest force on earth. If we had had this strength, there would be no Hindu-Muslim riots, there would be no robbers or dacoits. Some might say that for such strength you need either a Jesus or a Buddha. But this is not so. Neither Jesus nor Buddha tried non-violence in the political sphere, or it would be truer to say that the present-day type of politics did not exist in their day. The Congress experiment is, therefore, a new one. The tragedy is that Congressmen have not tried it with full faith, full understanding and sincerity. If they had had these three essential qualities, the Congress would today have been far taller than it is. But I may not cry over spilt milk. I refer to the past only in order to guide us in the present. Even if we wake up now, the game is ours; if we do not, we shall surely lose. Power invariably elects to go into the hands of the strong. That strength may be physical or of the heart, or, if we do not fight shy of the word, of the spirit. Strength of the heart connotes soul force. If today we decide that we should try to get power by force of arms, we shall have to undo all the work of twenty years among the masses. We shall have to spend a considerable time in giving people a contrary training. We cannot afford to give the required time at this critical juncture. It is certain that today whoever has any strength of any kind will use it for seizing power. It is my firm conviction that, if Congressmen are to get power, it should only be through non-violence or soul force.

We have neither time nor material to do new work even in this line. When we have so far employed non-violence as a weapon of the weak, how can we all of a sudden expect to convert it into a weapon of the strong? But in spite of this I feel that at the present moment this experiment alone is feasible and proper for us. There is no risk involved in it. Even failure in it takes the form of success because, even if the people are not able to go the whole length in the experiment, they cannot possibly be led into a ditch. By following the way of physical force they may not only be proved cowards, but in attempting to follow an untrodden path thousands may also be destroyed.

It is then the duty of Congressmen to seek out dacoits and robbers. They should try to understand and convert them. Such workers cannot be had for the asking; but Congressmen should know that this work is just as important as it is fraught with risk, and a certain number of them have to devote themselves to it.

The second thing requisite is that we should prepare such workers as would, under difficult circumstances, stand up to dacoits and, whilst trying to check or convert them from their evil ways, be prepared to suffer hurt or even death. Perhaps few workers will be forthcoming for this task too, but peace brigades throughout the country are a definite necessity. Or else in times of chaos Congressmen will lose all the reputation they have so far gained.

Thirdly, the rich should ponder well as to what is their duty today. They who employ mercenaries to guard their wealth may find those very guardians turning on them. The monied classes have got to learn how to fight either with arms or with the weapon of non-violence. For those who wish to follow the latter way the best and most effective *mantram* is: *तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथाः* (Enjoy thy wealth by renouncing it). Expanded it means: "Earn your crores by all means. But understand that your wealth is not yours; it belongs to the people. Take what you require for your legitimate needs, and use the remainder for society." This truth has hitherto not been acted upon; but, if the monied classes do not even act on it in these times of stress, they will remain the slaves of their riches and passions and consequently of those who overpower them.

But I have visions that the end of this war will mean also the end of the rule of capital. I see coming the day of the rule of the poor, whether that rule be through force of arms or of non-violence. Let it be remembered that physical force is transitory even as the body is transitory. But the power of the spirit is permanent, even as the spirit is everlasting.

Sevagram, 25-1-42

(From *Harijanbandhu*)

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## HINDUSTANI

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"(a) The proceedings of the Congress, the A. I. C. C. and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Hindustani. The English Language or any Provincial Language may be used, if the speaker is unable to speak in Hindustani or whenever permitted by the President.

(b) The proceedings of the Provincial Congress Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the Province concerned. Hindustani may also be used."

— Article 25 of the Congress Constitution

The Congress has not carried out this resolution to any appreciable extent. It is a sad reflection. The fault is Congressmen's. They will not take the trouble of learning Hindustani. Their effort for learning languages is evidently exhausted with the performance of the impossible task of acquiring a knowledge of the English language equal to a learned Englishman's. The result is tragic. It has meant impoverishment of the provincial languages and displacement of the all-India language described by the Congress as Hindustani. It has also meant a break between the millions and the English-educated few who happen to be the natural leaders for the simple reason that they are the only educated class. There is no education worth the name apart from the schools established by the Government. The Congress has to perform the Herculean task of displacing the English language with Hindustani. With the passing of the resolution it should have created a bureau for fulfilling the purpose as it might do even now. But if it does not, individual Congressmen and those who are interested in evolving an all-India language should do so.

But what is Hindustani? There is no such language apart from Urdu and Hindi. Urdu has sometimes been called Hindustani. Did the Congress mean Urdu in the article quoted? Did it exclude the more extensively known Hindi? Such a meaning would be absurd. It evidently meant, and could only mean, a scientific blend of Hindi and Urdu. There is no such written blend extant. But it is the common speech of the unlettered millions of Hindus and Muslims living in Northern India. Not being written, it is imperfect, and the written language has taken two different turns tending to widen the difference by each running away from the other. Therefore the word Hindustani means Hindi and Urdu. Therefore also Hindi can call itself Hindustani, if it does not exclude Urdu but tries to assimilate Urdu as much as is scientifically possible without damaging the natural structure and music of the original. Urdu can do likewise. There is no separate Hindustani body attempting to blend the two streams which today threaten to run away from each other.

The noble task can be performed by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and Anjuman-e-taraqqi-e-Urdu. I have been connected with the former since 1917 when I was invited to preside at its session of that year. I acquainted the audience with my views on the all-India medium. When I presided again at its session in 1935, I was able to persuade the Sammelan to

define Hindi as the language spoken by Hindus and Muslims of the North of India and written either in Devanagari or Persian script. The natural consequence should have been for the members of the Sammelan to expand their knowledge of Hindi by living up to the definition and producing literature that could be read by both Hindus and Muslims. This should have meant the members learning the Persian script. They seem to have denied themselves this proud privilege. But better late than never. Will they bestir themselves now? They need not wait for the Anjuman to respond. It will be a great thing, if the Anjuman does. Each Association can, if it will work in harmony with the other. But I have suggested unitary action independent of the other party. That Association which will adopt my plan will enrich the language it stands for, and will ultimately be responsible for producing a blend which will serve the whole nation.

It is unfortunate that the Hindi-Urdu question has assumed a communal shape. It is possible for either party to undo the mischief by recognising the other and incorporating the acceptable part in a generous spirit. A language that borrows unstintingly from the others without harming its special characteristic will be enriched, even as the English language has become enriched by free borrowings.

On the way to Wardha, 23-1-42

WORKING COMMITTEE'S  
RESOLUTIONS

## 1. Present Situation

[The Working Committee passed the following resolutions at its recent sittings at Bardoli.]

Fourteen months have elapsed since the Working Committee held their last meeting and during this period the world has fallen ever deeper into the abyss of war and rushed headlong towards self-destruction. The members of the Committee have met again on their release from prison and given earnest thought to all the national and international developments during this fateful period of human history. The burden of guiding the Congress and the nation at this critical stage when old problems assume a new significance and war approaches the frontiers of India bringing new problems in its train, is a heavy one which the Committee can only shoulder worthily with the full co-operation of the people of India. The Committee have endeavoured to keep in view the principles and objectives for which the Congress has stood during these past many years and considered them in the larger context of world conditions and world freedom. The Committee are convinced that full freedom for the people of India is essential even, and more especially, in the present state of world turmoil, not only for India's sake but for the sake of the world. The Committee also hold that real peace and freedom can only be established and endure on the basis of world co-operation between free nations.

The Committee gave full expression to their attitude towards the War in their statement issued on September 14, 1939, wherein they condemned Nazi and Fascist aggression and expressed their willingness to help the cause of freedom and democracy, provided the objectives of the war were clearly stated and acted



upon, in so far as was possible, in the present. If freedom and democracy were those objectives, then they must necessarily include the ending of imperialism and the recognition of the independence of India. Subsequent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government and their reactionary and oppressive policy made it clear that this Government was determined to maintain and intensify its imperialist hold and exploitation of the Indian people. British policy was one of deliberate insult to Indian nationalism, of a perpetuation of unrestrained authoritarianism, and the encouragement of disruptive and reactionary elements. Not only has every offer made by the Congress for an honourable compromise been rejected, but public opinion voiced by organisations regarded as moderate has also been flouted.

The Congress was, therefore, compelled, in order to defend the honour and the elementary rights of the Indian people and the integrity of the nationalist movement, to request Gandhiji to guide the Congress in the action that should be taken. Mahatma Gandhi desirous of avoiding embarrassment to his opponent as far as possible, especially during the perils and dangers of war, limited the satyagraha movement which he started to selected individuals who conformed to certain tests he had laid down. That satyagraha has now proceeded for over fourteen months and about twentyfive thousand Congressmen have suffered imprisonment, while many thousands of others who offered satyagraha in the Frontier Province and elsewhere were not arrested. The Committee desire to express their respectful appreciation of Gandhiji's leadership and of the response of the nation to it, and are of opinion that this has strengthened the people.

Throughout this period the attitude of the British Government has been hostile to Indian freedom and it has functioned in India as a completely authoritarian government, insulting the deeply cherished convictions and feelings of the people. Neither the professions of freedom and democracy, nor the perils and catastrophes that have come in the wake of war, have affected this attitude and policy, and such changes as have taken place have been for the worse.

The recent release of a number of political prisoners has no significance or importance, and the circumstances attending it, and official pronouncements made, make it clear that it is not connected with any change of policy. Large numbers of detenus, who are kept in prison under the Defence of India Act without trial, and whose only offence seems to be that they are ardent patriots impatient of foreign rule and determined to achieve the independence of the country, still remain in prison. Recent arrests of prominent persons and their treatment in prison also indicate that the old policy is being pursued as before.

While there has been no change in Britain's policy towards India, the Working Committee must nevertheless take into full consideration the new world situation that has arisen by the development of the war into a world conflict and its approach to India. The sympathies of the Congress must inevitably lie with the peoples who are the subject of aggression and who are fighting for their freedom. But only a free and independent India can be in a position to

undertake the defence of the country on a national basis and be of help in the furtherance of the larger causes that are emerging from the storm of war. The whole background in India is one of hostility and of distrust of the British Government and not even the most far-reaching promises can alter this background, nor can a subject India offer voluntary or willing help to an arrogant imperialism which is indistinguishable from fascist authoritarianism.

The Committee is, therefore, of opinion that the resolution of the A. I. C. C. passed in Bombay on September 16, 1940, holds today and defines Congress policy still.

## 2. Gandhiji Absolved

The Working Committee have received the following letter from Gandhiji and recognise the validity of the point he has raised and therefore relieve him of the responsibility laid upon him by the Bombay resolution referred to by Gandhiji. But the Committee assure him that the policy of non-violence adopted under his guidance for the attainment of Swaraj and which has proved so successful in leading to mass awakening and otherwise will be adhered to by the Congress. The Working Committee further assure him that it would like to extend its scope as far as possible even in free India. The Committee hope that Congressmen will render him full assistance in the prosecution of his mission, including the offering of civil disobedience.

Bardoli,  
30-12-1941

Dear Maulana Sahab,

In the course of discussion in the Working Committee, I discovered that I had committed a grave error in the interpretation of the Bombay resolution. I had interpreted it to mean that the Congress was to refuse participation in the present or all war on the ground principally of non-violence. I found to my astonishment that most members differed from my interpretation and held that the opposition need not be on the ground of non-violence. On re-reading the Bombay resolution I found that the differing members were right and that I had read into it a meaning which its letter could not bear. The discovery of the error makes it impossible for me to lead the Congress in the struggle for resistance to war effort on grounds in which non-violence was not indispensable. I could not, for instance, identify myself with opposition to war effort on the ground of ill-will against Great Britain. The resolution contemplated material association with Britain in the war effort as a price for guaranteed independence of India. If such was my view and I believed in the use of violence for gaining independence and yet refused participation in the effort as the price of that independence, I would consider myself guilty of unpatriotic conduct. It is my certain belief that only non-violence can save India and the world from self-extinction. Such being the case, I must continue my mission whether I am alone or assisted by an organisation or individuals. You will, therefore, please relieve me of the responsibility laid upon me by the Bombay resolution. I must continue civil disobedience for free speech against all war



with such Congressmen and others whom I select and who believe in the non-violence I have contemplated and are willing to conform to prescribed conditions.

I will not, at this critical period, select for civil disobedience those whose services are required to steady and help the people in their respective localities.

Yours sincerely  
M. K. Gandhi

## THE MONTH IN BARDOLI

### II

#### With Harijan Sevak

It was impossible for Gandhiji to respond to the calls of various workers in Gujarat to visit their centres. The call from Ahmedabad was almost irresistible. But the Sardar had to take the odium of being ruthlessly impartial, and so every one of them came to Bardoli. Among these were Harijan sevak who had met in Sabarmati under the Presidentship of Thakkar Bapa. They came with questions ready framed and thus made Gandhiji's work easy.

The first was the question about the wells: "Should we seek the co-operation of Harijans, and, if so, to what extent?" "Co-operation," said Gandhiji, "is necessary, but we must not take the Harijans in a body and invade the Savarna quarters. We should visit the wells, ascertain the classes of people using them, and reason with these to let the Harijans use them. Regarding local board wells the help of officials may be freely sought, and such Harijans may be asked to go and use the wells as may be prepared to stand ill-treatment. But the brunt should be borne by the sevak, care being taken to stand between the Harijans and those who would threaten to molest or belabour them. The Harijans should be invariably asked to use clean vessels and observe all the ordinary rules of cleanliness. We can also dig wells for Harijans and invite the Savarnas to use them. It is likely that the Harijans may be boycotted, but we should see that they get employment elsewhere. The Harijans have to be taught to learn to assert themselves firmly and non-violently, and the Savarnas may be gently reminded that injustice cannot last for ever. These are broad principles, but everyone has to take measures suited to the circumstances in each case."

Q. "Can't we insist on the admission of Harijan boys to hostels where all non-Harijan Hindu boys are admitted?"

A. "Of course, but care should be taken to see that the hostel is not exclusively for a particular community or section of Hindus. Where all sections are admitted and only the Harijans are excluded, the workers should strain every nerve to get the Harijans admitted.

"When I said that removal of untouchability did not include the removal of restrictions on interdining and intermarriage, I had the general Hindu public in mind, not the Congress workers or Congressmen. These have to abolish untouchability from every part of their life."

The next question was about the temptations given by Missionaries in the shape of books, school

fees, etc., with a view to the boys' ultimate conversion. How was one to deal with them? "The missionaries have of course the right to preach the gospel of Christ and to invite non-Christians to embrace Christianity. But every attempt to press material benefits or attractions in the aid of conversion should be freely exposed, and the Harijans should be educated to resist these temptations."

Q. "What are the qualifications that a Harijan sevak should have in order to make his work felt?"

A. "Such a question is rather late in the day. But I shall try to answer it again. It is a misfortune that politics have been mixed up with anti-untouchability work, which is essentially one of self-purification, justice, humanity. Long before I took to politics I felt that abolition of untouchability and Hindu-Muslim unity were essential for national well-being. In order to prevent the vivisection of Hinduism I had to fight it with my life, and the question did receive a political complexion, but in essence it is a purely religious and moral question. Every sevak must be fired with a passion to purify Hinduism, and must be ready to lay down his life in the attempt. Such a sevak will be ready to sacrifice his all—family connections, social advantages, and life itself—in order to wipe out the blot on Hinduism. The work should be as one of life's essential functions, e.g. offering one's prayers, ablutions, etc. not carrying emolument or reward. If the worker is fired with this passion, the way will be clear before him. Thus a worker would rather starve than allow the Harijans to be starved, would hesitate to use amenities which are denied to the Harijans and feel increasing identification with them every day. All this work is to be done without regard to the political results. Assuming for a moment that Swaraj does not come as a result of the abolition of untouchability, the work has to be done in order to keep Hinduism pure and alive. I know that with some of the Congressmen the work has only a political meaning, but it is wrong. If they seek justice from an alien Government, they must first do justice to their own kith and kin. That is the fundamental maxim of equity—he who seeks equity must do equity.

"There is, I know, a section who says that political freedom must be won first and social reform would follow later. It is a wrong idea, and certainly inconsistent with one who would win Swaraj by non-violent means. But the Harijan worker has to educate both the orthodox and exclusively political-minded people. Let him not judge others, but by selfless self-effacing service set an example to them."

#### With Khadi Workers

Sardar Vallabhbhai has created a khadi organisation in Gujarat in order to intensify khadi production, and he has enlisted for this work a number of khadi workers, and he collects the necessary funds also. These workers too came for guidance and advice.

"We are producing 2 lakhs of rupees worth of khadi, but the demand exceeds 12 lakhs," they said. "How are we to meet it? We have not enough weavers and workers, and there is the question of funds too."



"Let me take up the last question first," said Gandhiji. "It is my firm conviction which has grown upon me with the years that, if there are workers, no work suffers for want of funds. But the real question is of the capacity to produce. Supposing someone gave you one crore of rupees, I know you cannot produce ten crore rupees worth of khadi. The reason is lack of workers, lack of efficiency, and lack of faith. It is good that there is a growing demand for khadi—though 12 lakhs of rupees worth of khadi is nothing extraordinary where 8 crores of rupees worth of khadi could be used. But the increased sales mean that the liking for khadi is also on the increase. We should contact these consumers and persuade them to spin. And here comes in the *Dhanush Takli*. You may know that I can spin on the ordinary wheel better, but I have made a point of using only the *Dhanush Takli*, and I am now almost an expert in it. The reason is that, whereas Laxmidasbhai cannot execute an order for 25 lakhs of wheels, the people can themselves make as many *Dhanush Taklis*. It is so easy to make, so cheap, takes very little material and practically no technical skill. It is a wrong policy to manufacture wheels in Sabarmati in order to export them to the Punjab or South India. They should be made locally everywhere, and for that purpose the *Dhanush Takli* is the thing. Universalisation of this will increase production by leaps and bounds.

"You have to catch the increasing love of spinning by the forelock. In none of our previous campaigns was spinning done on such a large scale as during the last campaign. The figures for Sabarmati Jail were good, but the figures for Agra and Bareilly were also good. Badshah Khan has been able to popularise spinning as he had never been before. We have, therefore, to take this tide at the flood and bring expert knowledge to bear on the love for spinning that is growing.

"We have to go from house to house and enlist willing spinners ready to contribute their yarn.

"I take it that all khadi workers are believers in the attainment of Swaraj by non-violent means. Yours then should be the largest contribution to constructive work.

"Some of you have to be weavers too. There are enough hand-loom weavers in India to produce all the cloth we need. We have to persuade them to take to weaving hand-spun yarn and also to get their womenfolk and children to produce yarn in their homes."

#### A Record Spinner

Gandhiji has referred to the record spinning in jails by the satyagrahis. Even now he gets letters from satyagrahis still in jail to say that even in the Punjab some satyagrahis, who came in with an initial aversion to spinning, ended by becoming regular spinners. But all records were broken by Shri Ashabhai of Ras who never missed a day's spinning during the 9 months and 11 days of his imprisonment. He is an agriculturist. He might have kept all his yarn for home consumption, but he brought it to Bardoli and laid it at Gandhiji's feet to be used as he liked. Here are figures of his spinning:

9 months 11 days.

1,237 hanks of 840 yards each, i. e. 10,39,080 yards, i. e. over 3,700 yards per day. Weight 59 lbs.
668 hanks of 24 counts Rs. 36-4-0 spinning wage
263 " 20 " Rs. 14-7-0 "
306 " 18 " Rs. 16-0-6 "

Rs. 66-11-6

This will yield 280 square yards of khadi worth Rs. 175. Shri Ashabhai kept excellent health, attended to his daily needs of washing etc., and did some amount of reading also.

Sevagram, 19-1-42

M. D.

#### TO GUJARATIS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

You have sacrificed a great deal in the cause of Swaraj. But it is not enough. You can contribute still more in the form of money, labour, and increasingly intelligent and fresh minds.

Is it not sad that Rs. 2 lakhs worth of khadi only is being produced in Gujarat whereas Rs. 12 lakhs worth is wanted? It may be that there is not so much poverty in Gujarat as in the other provinces. But that does not mean that Gujaratis cannot, if they wish, produce all the khadi they need. Reckoning the population of Gujarat at 1 crore, the people would need at least 3 crores worth of cloth. You should produce at least this quantity, i. e. 15 crore yards.

The time is fast approaching when we shall not be able to get mill cloth. There is scarcity even today, and what if the mills are bombed, what if they are used as munition factories? Either each one of us, young and old, rich and poor, men and women, has to spin and provide for his own clothing or else go naked. There is not the least exaggeration in this. In the warring countries people are rationed for food and clothing, and as the war is prolonged even the necessities of life are being used up and munitions are produced only to end in smoke. The war is thus working double destruction.

We have been wilfully dragged into the vortex. But we are not yet so hard put to it as the people in the warring countries. If, however, we sit with folded hands until the trouble comes upon us, we shall be found to have been fools. We must be wise and adopt the necessary measures in time.

It is my request then to those Gujaratis whose ear I can reach that they should give as much money and as much yarn as they can to the Mahagujarat Khadi Mandal. Receiving centres should be opened where necessary so as to save people the cost of posting yarn. The master-key to producing the requisite khadi lies in the wheel plying in every home. If good yarn is spun, weavers will be available, though I have already advised that we should take time by the forelock and train voluntary weavers also.

Will every Congressman rise to the occasion and spin for the nation?

Sevagram, 25-1-42

(From Harijanbandhu)



## KASHI VISHWAVIDYALAYA ADDRESS

[The following is a fairly full translation of Gandhiji's Hindustani address on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Convocation of the Benares Hindu University on the 21st January. M. D.]

### Pilgrimage

Revered Malaviyaji, Sir Radhakrishnan, brothers and sisters,

You all know very well that I have neither the physical strength nor the inclination to undertake long journey, and yet when I received Sir Radhakrishnan's invitation to deliver an address on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Convocation of the Benares Hindu University I had not the heart to decline it. You know the strong bond of affection that binds me to Panditji, and it is with a certain amount of pride and satisfaction that I obey his behest whenever it is at all possible for me. I therefore could not say 'no'. Sir Radhakrishnan's letter was a call to a pilgrimage.

Great as are Malaviyaji's services to the country, I have no doubt that this University constitutes his greatest service and achievement, and he has worn himself out for the work that is dear to him as life itself. It was out of my great regard for him that twentyfive years ago I accepted his invitation to attend the foundation ceremony of this University. I knew that in that august function, which was to be attended by the Viceroy and the ruling Princes of India, there was no place for a poor man like me. I had not then been made a 'Mahatma', and if anyone called me by that name, I knew I must have been mistaken for Mahatma Munshiramji, as the late Swami Shraddhanandji was then called. For there cannot be a number of Mahatmas, and I knew even when I was in South Africa that Munshiramji's great work had entitled him to that name. But Malaviyaji has a knack for detecting servants of the people, however obscure they may be.

### The Sun Radiating Heat and Light

Everyone knows that there is no greater beggar than Pandit Malaviyaji on the face of the earth. He has never begged for himself, by the grace of God he has never been in want, but he became a voluntary beggar for causes he has made his own, and God has always filled his bowl in an overflowing measure. But he has an insatiable appetite, and although he got the crore he wanted he is still asking for more. Even at this moment he whispered into my ears that he had a good donation from the Maharaja of Darbhanga, our Chairman.

It is a rare good fortune to have him still in our midst, a living example of a pure life of plain living and high thinking; but I have a fear that, though he is physically in your midst, many of you are untouched by his great example. The fault is wholly yours, not his. The Sun radiates heat and light to all on earth, but how can even the Sun help those who will shut themselves from him? But I am not here to sing Malaviyaji's praises. This platform has rung with them. He has deserved them all. I must now address a few words to you — the teachers and the students

of the Vidyapith. When I accepted Sir Radhakrishnan's invitation he had asked me to send a copy of my address to him. I told him that I had no time to write anything, I did not even know what I should be able to say. A feeling of nervousness overpowers me when I am in the midst of learned men. Ever since my return to India my lot has been cast among the poor and the downtrodden — those whom the Congress represents — and whilst in their midst I feel no sense of constraint or hesitation. In your midst I feel tongue-tied. I simply said to Sir Radhakrishnan that I should trust to the inspiration of the moment. That inspiration has come, but I do not know how you will welcome my plain speaking.

### A Painful Anomaly

As speaker after speaker spoke and left the dais, I longed for someone who would address the audience in Hindi or Urdu, or Hindustani, aye even in Sanskrit, — even in Marathi, or for that matter any of the Indian languages. But no such good luck befell me and you. Why? We are slaves and have hugged the language of those who have kept us enslaved. It has become a fashion to blame the Englishmen for all our ills. I have not hesitated to blame them for many things they have done. I have never charged them with compelling us to adopt English as the medium of expression. We devote precious years of our lives to learning the English language, our ambition being to be able to speak English as Englishmen, and our breast swells with pride when an Englishman pats us on our back for speaking flawless English. Think of the time and energy of our youth expended on learning the English language, as if it was our mother-tongue, and calculate by simple multiplication the number of years and the volume of precious energy that are lost to the nation.

And yet all this is happening in the Kashi Hindu Vishwavidyalaya which has been extolled today as the living embodiment of Indian culture. Malaviyaji did all that was necessary to draw the best possible teachers by attractive salaries, but he could not do the rest. It was not his fault; Hindi did not take the place of English. The teachers are the product of the tradition which they have inherited, and the students are content to accept what they get from them. They need not be. They go on strikes and even hunger-strikes often for trivial reasons. Why will they not insist on having their tuition in the all-India language? There are, we were told today, 250 students here from the Andhra Province. Let them go to Sir Radhakrishnan and ask for an Andhra section of the University and ask to be taught through the medium of Telugu if they will not learn the all-India language.

### Japan's Example

You know what has happened in Japan — a country which I do not regard as essentially great — but which is regarded as great in Asia in that it has successfully challenged the supremacy of the Western nations. The thousands of boys and girls in the Japanese schools and colleges receive their education not through the medium of English but through Japanese. Their script is difficult, but it is no bar to their learning it and



they have not given it up in preference to the Roman. Not that they boycott English and other European languages. But they economise their energy. Those who need to learn them do so for enriching the Japanese thought and knowledge which the West alone can give. They take care to turn into Japanese all that is worth taking from the West. That is because the mind of Japan's youth is fresh and alert. The knowledge gained thus has become national property. Our ambition does not go beyond becoming clerks in Government offices, lawyers, barristers, judges, all helplessly serving the system they would fain destroy. And we have not succeeded either in mastering the English language. I get numerous letters from English-educated people—some of them possessing the highest degrees of our universities—but they betray a woeful ignorance of the English language. The reason is simple. Malaviyaji and Radhakrishnans are rare, and the thousands cannot achieve what they have done.

### No Discipline

As I was listening to the English speeches I was amazed at the patience and innate courtesy of our people who, though they do not understand a word of what is said, do not mob us, as they well might do. If there is any doubt in your minds about this, I can demonstrate to you by a show of hands how few—even from among the students—have followed the proceedings here.

There is another thing to which I am tempted to draw your attention. I witnessed this morning a scene that I had least expected here. There was the Vasant Panchami day procession of the students who had to march past Malaviyaji's house after receiving his silent blessings. The way in which they were walking betrayed a lack of even elementary physical training. Instead of walking in step, erect and disciplined like soldiers on the march, they walked haphazardly in a desultory fashion.

### Give Hindi the Pride of Place

I cannot help saying a word about the sight that greets you as you enter the great portals of the University. Thanks to the money that Malaviyaji can get for the asking, the gate is in consonance with the splendour of the edifices here. But what did I find on the top of the gate?—the bulk of the space (three-fourths) taken up by the words **BENARES HINDU UNIVERSITY** in English, and the fourth given to the inscription in Hindi which is the language through which you would derive your knowledge. I wondered what need there was of the English language? Just a little thought on the part of those who were in charge of such things would have been enough to tell them that what was needed there was the name written in Devanagari and Persian scripts—which would have symbolised to the people the desire on the part of Malaviyaji's University and Sir Radhakrishnan for communal harmony. It would have been in the fitness of things too, as both Hindi and Urdu are understood in these parts and both the scripts are familiar. The fact is the years we have wasted on English have ossified our minds and stunted our memory and imagination.

Surely it is no difficult thing for a non-Hindi-speaking person to learn Hindi or Hindustani. I can undertake to teach Hindi to anyone knowing Gujarati, Bengali or Marathi in the space of three months. Even the South Indian languages—Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kanarese—are full of Sanskrit words, and, if there was just a little fervour and love of the country in us, we should not hesitate to decide to write all the Sanskrit-derived languages as also the Southern group in the Devanagari script. These languages have not only a fairly common vocabulary, there is also a striking resemblance in the scripts. If our minds were not fagged, we would easily know half a dozen Indian languages. Then there is Urdu which should not be difficult to learn, if only our Urdu scholars did not make it a matter of pride to pack it with Persian and Arabic words, as the Pandits pack Hindi with Sanskrit words.

### A Distinctive Feature Suggested

One more thought I should like to leave with you. Every university is supposed to have its tradition, its distinctive feature—Oxford and Cambridge, for instance, have theirs. But I am afraid our universities are the blotting-sheets of the West. We have borrowed the superficial features of the Western universities, and flattered ourselves that we have founded living universities here. Do they reflect or respond to the needs of the masses? Now I am told that a special feature of your University is that Engineering and Technology are taught here as nowhere else. I should not consider this a distinguishing feature. Let me suggest one to you. Have you been able to attract to your University youths from Aligarh? Have you been able to identify yourselves with them? That, I think, should be your special work, the special contribution of your University. Money has come in, and more will come in if God keeps Malaviyaji in our midst for a few more years. But no amount of money will achieve the miracle I want—I mean a heart-unity between Hindus and Muslims. I would like you to go out to invite Mussalmans to come here, and not to mind if they reject your advances. You are the representatives of a great civilisation which according to Lokamanya Tilak is 10,000 years old and according to later scholars even older. The special contribution of that civilisation is to befriend the world, to turn so-called foes into friends. Our civilisation has absorbed, like the holy Ganges, many streams from outside, and it is my prayer that the Hindu University which is endeavouring to represent Hindu culture and Hindu civilisation may invite and absorb all that is best in other cultures and be a model to all of communal unity and harmony. That should be its distinctive feature. English will not help you to evolve this. It is our own ancient learning that will teach you this—our scriptures learnt and understood in the proper spirit.

One thing more and I have done. You are living in palatial hostels, but look at the little house in which Panditji lives in utter simplicity and without the least splendour. You enter his room. There is no decoration and barest furniture. You, who will be his heirs, should model your lives accordingly. Many of you are children of poor parents. Don't forget



that you have to represent the poor, and that therefore a life of ease and luxury is inconsistent with the poverty of our land. May you be all models of plain and simple living and high thinking like Malaviyaji. May God bless you with long life and the wisdom to carry out what I have said, if it has appealed to you.

On the way to Wardha, 23-1-42

## PLAIN LIVING AND HIGH THINKING

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"An ideal society is that in which every individual will be able to live a life of progressively increasing wants with a minimum output of labour." Thus writes a friend from Ahmedabad. The proposition is pleasing and is backed by plausible argument which many may accept. The writer forecast that the Viceroy was bound to refuse the Congress proposal. He does not believe in the freedom of the individual, and is therefore of opinion that it was only meet that the Viceroy should turn down the proposal. Because his forecast turned out correct he may even hold his argument to be sound and say, "I told you so." It is therefore necessary for me to take note of the letter.

The writer may not derive any satisfaction from the Viceroy's refusal. All my colleagues had foretold the result. But I wanted to go not so much in the expectation of getting acceptance as, in the event of failure, to return with added strength. Nor does the rejection of the proposal mean in any sense that the Viceroy does not believe in individual freedom. Britain has not gone that length. Europe has no doubt entered upon a new phase in denying individual liberty. If this goes, then surely all is lost, for, if the individual ceases to count, what is left of society? Individual freedom alone can make a man voluntarily surrender himself completely to the service of society. If it is wrested from him, he becomes an automaton and society is ruined. No society can possibly be built on a denial of individual freedom. It is contrary to the very nature of man. Just as a man will not grow horns or a tail, so he will not exist as man if he has no mind of his own. In reality even those who do not believe in the liberty of the individual believe in their own. Modern editions of Chenghiz Khan retain their own.

Just as the writer's ideas on individual liberty are impossible, so also is his other theory. That everyone in this world should be able to maintain as high a standard of life as possible with the least possible output of labour is just as fantastic as to expect a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. The writer's high living would appear to mean luxurious living which is an impossible proposition for any society as a whole. And when there is no limit to luxury where shall we stop? All the scriptures of the world have taught the exact opposite. Plain living and high thinking is the ideal that has been placed before us. The vast majority recognise its truth but are unable to get there because of human frailty. It is, however, perfectly possible to envisage such an existence. That the crores in India should be guaranteed a certain income is only right, and to achieve this ideal large scale machinery is not only not necessary but wholly destructive.

Man falls from the pursuit of the ideal of plain living and high thinking the moment he wants to multiply his daily wants. History gives ample proof of this. Man's happiness really lies in contentment. He who is discontented, however much he possesses, becomes a slave to his desires. And there is really no slavery equal to that of his desires. All the sages have declared from the house-tops that man can be his own worst enemy as well as his best friend. To be free or to be a slave lies in his own hands. And what is true for the individual is true for society.

Sevagram, 7-10-40 (Translated from Gujarati)

## QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

### Unitary Method

Q. You seem to be advocating what you call the unitary method in the solution of many questions. Will you explain it a little more fully than you have done?

A. It is as simple as it is sure. A contract or pact is between two parties. There is also consideration passing from one to the other. Such was the Lucknow Pact between the Congress and the Muslim League. The same thing could have been accomplished by the unitary method. Only then there would have been no compromise dictated by fear and distrust. The Congress could have done, according to its notion, absolute justice, i. e. yielded the maximum consistent with the welfare of the whole nation without the expectation of any consideration from the League. In a well-regulated family the relations are governed by the unitary method. Thus a father gives to his children not as a result of a pact. He gives out of love, a sense of justice without expecting any return therefor. Not that there is none. But everything is natural, nothing is forced. Nothing is done out of fear or distrust. What is true of a well-regulated family is equally true of a well-regulated society which is but an extended family. My advice about the adoption of two scripts by Hindus and Muslims is based on the unitary method. My equal love for all communities dictates its adoption. Properly applied the method never fails. It disarms criticism and opposition. It presupposes a clean conscience and clean action. I propose to unfold in these columns the application of the method in all our communal relations. The views will be personal to me, as are all such since the Bardoli resolution. They will be addressed to Congressmen for adoption only in so far as they appeal to their reason.

### Rajaji

Q. What has come over Rajaji? You and he seem to be drifting away from each other.

A. Yes, we seem to be and yet we are not. The seeming drift is but a prelude to a closer bond and clearer understanding. His loyalty is above suspicion. He would have gladly suppressed himself, if I had not strongly encouraged him to propound his views with a view to their adoption by the public. We own allegiance to the same goddess. Our interpretations differ. If he is erring, he will retrace his steps as soon as he discovers it. And he knows that I would do likewise, if I discover mine. I feel, therefore,



absolutely safe with him, and I ask all questioners to do likewise.

### Untruth

Q. Do you know that you are reported to have said at Benares that it is sinful for any Indian ever to study or speak in English and you are charged with insincerity in that you make such liberal use of the hated language when it suits you?

A. The report is wholly untrue. But once an untruth gets a start it is most difficult to overtake. Many untruths about me have had such a start. They created a temporary sensation and got a decent burial without any effort on my part. So will this one. No untruth has ever done any harm to anyone if there was no bottom to it. I am answering the question, not to protect my reputation but to carry my point further. The charge of insincerity is itself the best refutation of the untruth. For my free use of the English language is not a thing of today. The charge should have been regarded as unworthy of belief. Let it be known that I am a lover of the English language and the English. But my love is wise and intelligent. Therefore I give both the place they deserve. Thus I do not allow the English language to displace the mother-tongue or the natural all-India language—Hindustani. Nor do I let my love of the English displace my fellow-countrymen whose interest I can in no way allow to be injured. I recognise the great importance of the English language for international intercourse. I hold its knowledge as a second language to be indispensable for specified Indians who have to represent the country's interest in the international domain. I regard the English language as an open window for peeping into Western thought and sciences. For this too I should set apart a class. Through them I would spread through the Indian languages the knowledge they have gained from the West. But I would not burden India's children and sap their youthful energy by expecting the expansion of their brains through the medium of a foreign language. I do hold it to be a sin on the part of those who are responsible for producing the unnatural condition under which we are being educated. Such a thing is unknown in any other part of the world. Being too near the scene of the wreck we are unaware of the damage the nation has suffered by it. I can see the enormity of the damage because of my daily and close contact with the dumb and suppressed millions.

### Another Untruth

Q. You are reported by the Press to have approvingly referred to the progress made by the Japanese in adopting Western methods with a thoroughness hitherto unknown in the East. Is not this a contradiction of all you have written about the West? Or is there one law for India and another for Japan?

A. This is another untruth like the one about the English Language. The reader will find out for himself from Mahadev Desai's report of my Benares speech as to what I actually said about the Japanese. The burden of my speech was the undesirability of making English the medium of instruction and all-India

speech. I said in this connection that, however harmful in my opinion the Japanese adaptation of the West was, the rapid progress was due to the restriction of the learning of the Western mode to a select few and using them for transmission of the new knowledge among the Japanese through their own mother-tongue. Surely it is easy enough to understand that the Japanese could never have adapted themselves to the new mode, if they had had to do so through a foreign medium.

Sevagram, 27-1-42

### 'Other Organisations'

Q. What do you mean by associating with other volunteer organisations working for similar ends? Do you include communal organisations?

A. I do. Unfortunately we have very few other non-communal organisations. 'Similar ends' naturally means constructive ends, using 'constructive' in the widest sense of the term. Thus you will tender your help to a Muslim League, or Hindu Sabha, volunteer in putting out fire or tending the wounded. You will also invite their help in such matters.

On the way to Kashi, 20-1-42

### 'Constructive Programme'

While I was writing the pamphlet on the thirteenfold, now fourteenfold, constructive programme, Rajendra Babu was doing likewise in his own way. His pamphlet has now been published by the Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad, at 4 annas (postage 1 anna extra). It may be called a companion to mine. The reader will find much of interest and instruction in Rajendra Babu's treatise. It gives details which I have omitted. No worker should be without either.

Sevagram, 27-1-42

M. K. G.

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A specimen copy will be supplied on receipt of postal stamps worth two annas.

Manager

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