

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

GOD AS TRUTH

(By Gandhiji)

You have asked me why I consider that God is Truth. In my early youth I was taught to repeat what in Hindu scriptures are known as one thousand names of God. But these one thousand names of God were by no means exhaustive. We believe—and I think it is the truth—that God has as many names as there are creatures and, therefore, we also say that God is nameless and since God has many forms we also consider Him formless, and since He speaks to us through many tongues we consider Him to be speechless and so on. And when I came to study Islam I found that Islam too had many names for God. I would say with those who say God is Love, God is Love. But deep down in me I used to say that though God may be God, God is Truth, above all. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description, I have come to the conclusion that for myself God is Truth. But two years ago, I went a step further and said Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements, viz. that God is Truth and Truth is God. And I came to that conclusion after a continuous and relentless search after Truth which began nearly fifty years ago. I then found that the nearest approach to Truth was through love. But I also found that love has many meanings in the English language at least and that human love in the sense of passion could become a degrading thing also. I found, too, that love in the sense of *ahimsa* had only a limited number of votaries in the world. But I never found a double meaning in connection with truth and not even the atheists had demurred to the necessity or power of truth. But in their passion for discovering truth the atheists have not hesitated to deny the very existence of God—from their own point of view rightly. And it was because of this reasoning that I saw that rather than say God is Truth I should say Truth is God. I recall the name of Charles Bradlaugh who delighted to call himself an atheist, but knowing as I do something of him, I would never regard him as an atheist. I would call him a God-fearing man, though, I know, he would reject the claim. His face would redden if I would say, "Mr Bradlaugh, you are a truth-fearing man and

not a God-fearing man." I would automatically disarm his criticism by saying that Truth is God, as I have disarmed the criticism of many a young man. Add to this the difficulty that millions have taken the name of God and in His name committed nameless atrocities. Not that scientists very often do not commit cruelties in the name of truth, I know how in the name of truth and science inhuman cruelties are perpetrated on animals when men perform vivisection. There are thus a number of difficulties in the way, no matter how you describe God. But the human mind is a limited thing, and you have to labour under limitations when you think of a being or entity who is beyond the power of man to grasp. And when we have another thing in Hindu philosophy, viz. God alone is and nothing else exists, and the same truth you find emphasized in the *kalema* of Islam. There you find it clearly stated—that God alone is and nothing else exists. In fact the Sanskrit word for Truth is a word which literally means that which exists—*Sat*. For these and several other reasons that I can give you I have come to the conclusion that the definition—Truth is God—gives me the greatest satisfaction. And when you want to find Truth as God the only inevitable means is Love, i.e. non-violence and since I believe that ultimately means and end are convertible terms, I should not hesitate to say that God is Love.

'What then is Truth?'

A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells you. How then, you ask, different people think of different and contrary truths? Well, seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that the evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another, and hence those who have made experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions to be observed in making those experiments. Just as for conducting scientific experiments there is an indispensable scientific course of instruction, in the same way strict preliminary discipline is necessary to qualify a person to make experiments in the spiritual realm. Everyone should, therefore,

realize his limitations before he speaks of his inner voice. Therefore, we have the belief based upon experience, that those who would make individual search after truth as God, must go through several vows, as for instance, the vow of truth, the vow of *brahmacharya* (purity), for you cannot possibly divide your love for Truth and God with anything else — the vow of non-violence, of poverty and non-possession. Unless you impose on yourselves the five vows, you may not embark on the experiment at all. There are several other conditions prescribed, but I must not take you through all of them. Suffice it to say that those who have made these experiments know that it is not proper for everyone to claim to hear the voice of conscience, and it is because we have at the present moment everyone claiming the right of conscience without going through any discipline whatsoever that there is much untruth being delivered to a bewildered world. All that I can in true humility present to you is that truth is not to be found by anybody who has not got an abundant sense of humility. If you would swim on the bosom of the ocean of Truth you must reduce yourselves to a zero. Further than this I cannot go along this fascinating path.

Young India, 31-12-'31

MAN AND THE MACHINE*

(By *Wilfred Wellock*)

Work is a human necessity. From the moment of his emergence on this planet man has lived and developed by hard work, by ingenuity and invention, and when these have declined he and his life have declined. To yield to ease and luxury is usually the prelude to the fall of man.

Thought and action, or ideas and their application are the means whereby civilizations come into being and thrive. Science, art, religion, philosophy, all appear in due order to play their part in man's evolution. The totality of this evolution is work made manifest.

Work has five primary functions: to earn one's bread and the wherewithal to a full life; to develop all one's powers — of perception and understanding, of skill, creation, achievement, including personal wholeness; to discover the laws of nature and the art of living; to make one's maximum contribution to the wellbeing of the community and thereby win the right to enjoy the fruits of others' labour, and a rich harvest of fellowship; to learn the art, and the values, of co-operation.

Work in its fullest content therefore acts like social cement in the cultivation of a rich matrix of community relationships.

Our age has made the tragic mistake of equating abundant life with abundant possessions or what it calls high standards of living. In conse-

* Adapted from *The Orchard Lea Papers*, No. 6.

quence it has sacrificed with scarcely a quail the values of creative living for those of mechanical living and quantitative production. The latter values depend chiefly upon cash, the former upon the quality of a man's mind, the breadth of his vision, the ripeness of his understanding, the plenitude of his spiritual storehouse, including his wealth of social relationships.

The latter is an economy of the spirit and calls for the culture of the whole man, whereas the former is a cash economy which demands a high percentage of fragmented workers.

Who can count the cost of this degradation in frustration, in crime, in the spread of self-indulgence, of narcotics and other forms of dope, or estimate the loss in beauty, in the character of our towns and villages, in the quality of human personality and in vital human relationships?

No wonder employers are having great difficulty in holding the workers' attention to their jobs, and that many of them are calling in psychologists to help them in this inglorious task. What in fact the latter are doing is to degrade science by using it to condition human beings to function at a sub-human level. That the method "succeeds" is to our shame.

Criminologists are increasingly coming to the conclusion that repetitive industrial processes are one of the chief causes of crime today. Two Swiss professors in criminology and mental hygiene stated in an article which appeared in the first issue of the *British Journal of Delinquency*, that a:

"serious source of aggression is the mental state of many who are caught up by modern techniques of production, particularly workers stationed along conveyor lines, where it is almost impossible for any human being to sublimate and satisfy his affections, his love and aggressiveness by work. This emotional starvation, the desire for real life, cannot be fed with substitutes, with Hollywood films, mass-meetings and crime stories."

Experiments have proved that one of the best means of rehabilitating mind-warped and mind-wrecked human beings is creative occupation such as handicrafts.

Modern industry may make profits and quantity of goods, but it unmakes men, dwarfs their minds and cramps their spirits, while people who do not work creatively usually end by getting their pleasures on tap. On the other hand, men who work creatively almost invariably use their leisure creatively. Every modern Dictator knows that when life is reduced to mechanistic and monetary terms, mass power and money and not the "freedoms of democracy" determine the politics of the mass-man.

Vocationalism is the supreme means of developing the genius of a community, of raising the quality of its life, and developing a valid democracy. Under vocationalism creative genius reaches its greatest perfection and society its maximum stability.

It should therefore be the primary aim of every State to make it possible for all its members to embark upon a self-chosen vocation, and to train its youth to labour gloriously. The right to a vocation is basic, and gives meaning to all the other freedoms. Moreover the hope of peace finally lies in the balanced lives of whole men and women, of societies in which material demands are conditioned by spiritual values. This is the creative revolution which our age awaits.

NOTES

An Obviously Good Activity

Shri Rajagopalachari in an article for the 'N.P.S. India', replies to those who, in and out of season, proclaim that Prohibition is a failure specially because of illicit distillation. He says:

"One cannot hope for complete success all at once in Prohibition when we have had the devastating system of public drinking shops for a hundred years past and more. But those who claim that because of illicit practice the whole adventure must be taken to have failed are exaggerating. Has crime ceased to be? No, yet the Indian Penal Code must remain.

"The poor undoubtedly benefit from State Prohibition, whatever the addicts may feel and whatever the ex-liquor businessmen may say."

Let us begin to realize that prohibition is an obviously good activity. It is a moral, social and economic revolution undertaken by free India and her people.

23-6-'53

M. P.

A Big Gamble*

Passing of examinations and competitions of various kinds were all a big gamble. Those who failed naturally got angry. They were also not satisfied with a job once they got it. After getting a job they wanted to go up and up, and if they were unable to do so they were worried. That kind of competition was not among the masses. They carried on their work. But people might ask: "Does this connote advancement?" He would only reply that other countries had progressed, because they did not attach too much importance to Government jobs. Each one did his work in his own sphere.

Religion and Drink

A Columnist in a Bombay Paper had the hardihood to declare that Hinduism 'regards wine with great favour.' But as a matter of fact drink is condemned in the Rigveda (VII, 86-6) along with gambling as one of the causes of sin. With gambling and lust it figures as one of the three chief evils in *Maitrayani Samhita* (III, 6-3). The Chhandogya Upanishad (V, 10-9) looks upon drink as a sin equal in wickedness to Brahman-murder. Manu (XI, 54) also places it in the category of cardinal sins. And Brihaspati goes so far as to say that the man who drinks can be purified

only if he pours red-hot wine down his own throat. Maddened by drink, the Yadavas, Krishna's clansmen, fought among themselves and perished to a man.

The Columnist is equally in error as regards Christianity. Solomon remarks that wine biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder (Proverbs 23: 32). Cardinal Mercier similarly testifies that alcohol kills more men than war and kills them in a dishonourable manner.

V. G. D.

Encouragement of Hand-pounded Rice*

An immediate ban on the huller type of rice pounding mills was demanded in one of the resolutions passed at the third meeting of the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board held in Bombay in May 1953. The resolution also demanded that there should be no further increase in the number and capacity of sheller mills. Why this ban on huller mills is a legitimate question, and the reply is not far to seek. The huller mill is, in the opinion of the Food Ministry, a destructive type of equipment for milling, particularly raw rice.

The output of the whole grain is low, lower by 7 to 12 per cent than that of the sheller and the hand-process. The nutritive value is also less because there is loss of bran. The power consumption by a huller mill is higher by cent per cent than by the sheller mill. There is thus wastage of electric power also. The bran produced by huller mill is also not in a pure form. It contains broken paddy husk and other fibrous matter with great admixture of silica. This bran is harmful to cattle and is, therefore, consumed as fuel by the rice mills. This means that the huller type mills are a permanent handicap and reduce food quantities of the country either for human food or for cattle feeds.

The Ministry of Food has been pressing upon State Governments to eliminate the huller type of rice mills.

In fact, unlike the other cottage industries, the rice pounding industry by hand has survived to a great extent and till recently continued to handle practically three-fourths of the paddy processed. It was only during the period of controls and procurement of paddy by Government for rationing purposes that the mill quota has gone up to 40 per cent of the paddy processed, the remaining 60 per cent being still hand-processed. Action of Government, therefore, was directly or indirectly responsible for the recent increase of rice mills. This has worked against the hand-pounding industry. This can be remedied by the State Governments by refusing to give procured rice paddy for milling by the huller or sheller rice mills.

The hand-pounding industry is a natural adjunct to the agricultural processes. Hand-pounded rice is tasteful and nutritious, the hand-pounders get wages in kind, the agriculturist prefers selling husked rice to selling paddy for it gives his cattle bran, and the women-folk work. It is for all these reasons that the Board has urged the restriction of the number of sheller mills to their present strength. Let the hand-pounders get the work taken away from them by the 15,000 huller mills.

The Board has in hand the designing of introduction of improved methods of hand-processing paddy. It expects to extend the use of paddy-husking *chakkis*. Attempts at organizing societies for dehussing of paddy are also part of the programme. The problem is being tackled from all view-points, and the placing of a ban on hullers and the imposing of restriction on the introduction and extension of rice mills is only one part of the programme.

* From Shri C. Rajagopalachari's speech at Thakkar Bapa Vidyalyaya, Thyagarayanagar, Madras. *The Hindu*, June 20, 1953.

* From the Bulletin issued by the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board.

HARIJAN

July 11

1953

ABSENTEE SHARE-HOLDING

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

A correspondent catches up a hint contained in my article 'Amenities to Workers' (*Harijan*, June 27, 1953, p. 132), viz. "The political parties and trade union workers should apply their minds to finding out a way that will restore labour as co-partner with capital which is today the sole owner of our industries both in law and practice. This is unjust. Labour and capital should be joint partners and the evil of absentee capital-owning or share-holding must go." And he writes how this can be done. He says:

"In your article 'Amenities to Workers' in the *Harijan* of 27th June, you say in the last para 'share-holding must go'. You are right, but it should go to the workers by a regular process. The worker, instead of being paid Bonus in cash, should be paid in Shares.

"The existing law should be so amended that a worker after rendering one year's service satisfactorily must be given one share compulsorily. He will own 25 shares after 25 years service and will be getting good remuneration as dividend after retirement.

"This process will turn the ownership from absentee-capitalist to actual worker; a greater responsibility will be placed on the shoulders of the workers."

I hasten to say that this was the very thing in my mind when I wrote the above-mentioned article. And, as I said at the end of that article, I now develop the idea further by citing an instance in point:

The recent Bombay tenancy legislation is based on the principle that along with the owner of the land, or the *Khatedar* under the Raiyatwari System, he who works on it as a tenant has also a right to it. Rather, while the former has a mere proprietary right under law, which is in no way a productive element of the economy, the latter truly creates wealth and gives value to land, without which the proprietary right is meaningless and without any economic content. While the ownership is a mere legal trick created by the economic order prevalent today, tilling land is a living reality without which the legal trick will have no meaning and significance. Therefore, in the name of social justice, the actual tiller of the soil also must have certain specific legal right to land. The Bombay Legislature is enacting tenancy laws on this fundamental principle.

Let us apply this principle to industrial relations. What do we come to?

The industrialist, on the strength of his ability to commandeer the know-how of an industry, pools capital by the trick of floating a limited company; invests money so obtained to set up a factory; and in the name of the shareholders virtually owns it by a legal fiction under

the Company Act. Shortly speaking, he owns capital and on its strength and value hires labour, skilled and unskilled, to ply his factory. Surely the factory as such has no value in the economy of the country unless labour creates wealth by working it. Thus, as Gandhiji repeatedly told us, not only capital but labour also is a part of the process, as both contribute in the creation of wealth as consumers' goods. Both therefore must be co-owners of the project. Justice requires that industrial relations of these two wings of production, therefore, must be on the recognition of this basic principle.

But what do we find today? The shareholders are the only legal owners, though they need not be contributing any way in the actual productive activity. Like the absentee land-owner they can function as absentee capital-owners.

And whence did they get surplus capital to spare and invest and thereby secure unearned increment as dividend etc.? This is a very big question and I may only rest content with saying this much here that, like land, capital or surplus value that is created by society belongs to society and must therefore be ploughed back for production of wealth under a social policy and a national directive. He who has a share of it may himself use it for further use by himself; otherwise he should deposit it in banks which should all be owned by the State on behalf of and as trustee unto the people. The banks might allow as interest what amount the general economy of the people may allow from time to time. But in no way should a capital-holder be an absentee shareholder in an industry, if we care to secure healthy industrial relations in society.

Now let us turn to the labourer: who also contributes his share through labour, but who, under the present order, has no legal recognition as a share-holder. Hence the diarchy of employer and employee and the wage-system, complicating our industrial relations and loading the dices in favour of the employers or the capital-owners. This diarchy is unjust and must be removed by legislation. The Company Laws, viewed from this point of view, are born of the industrial age when, industry and capital ruled and the devil was free to take the hindmost. That age is now passing away even in the land of its birth, viz. Europe. India must not repeat it, but shun it as an anachronism, and prepare itself to make a fundamental change by organizing a new approach which requires that both capital and labour should in equal right be owners of industry; legislation must be amended accordingly. The industrial sector of our economy must be tackled on this basis and a suitable plan of work should be prepared by Government and labour organizations.

TRULY CHRISTIAN

[Dr. H. C. Mookerjee, the Governor of West Bengal, is a devout Christian. He loved Gandhiji and his work immensely. He keeps in touch with the Navajivan which publishes Gandhiji's writings. He often corresponds with the Manager on various topics. His recent letter dated 15th June, 1953 to the Manager, Shri Jivanji Desai is worth bringing to the notice of the readers specially at a time when some Christians are discussing conversion etc. Gandhiji used to say that we should never wish that 'any one should be converted, but our innermost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, and a Christian a better Christian.' Like Gandhiji's Hinduism, Dr. Mookerjee's Christianity also teaches him to behave in a similar way, as can be learnt from his letter to Shri Jivanji Desai reproduced below.

23-6-'53

M. P.]

15th June, 1953

My dear Jivanjibhai,

I am sending you herewith a copy of the *Srimat Bhagwat Gita* containing the original Sanskrit text together with a Nepali translation of the same.

The publication of this Nepali *Gita* was the result of what I observed at Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong during my stay in October last year in this particular district of West Bengal.

To my dismay and grief I found that many Nepalis who describe themselves as Hindus are guilty of practices abhorrent not merely to Hindus but even to a Christian in the third generation like myself.

The thought therefore came to me that it was my duty to provide the Nepali hillmen with Hindu scriptures in their most concentrated form as found in the *Srimat Bhagwat Gita*.

I took the matter up with certain businessmen of Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri who have settled in these places and appealed to them to provide me with funds to publish an edition of the *Gita* in Nepali. Later on, I also approached four big businessmen of Calcutta and succeeded in collecting altogether Rs 5,743.

I next approached Sir Paul Benthall, who has just retired to England and who was the Managing Director of the Titaghar Paper Mills, to supply all the paper required for the Nepali *Gita* at a concession rate. He not only agreed to do so but manufactured a specially tough kind of paper calculated to stand hard wear and tear.

Pandit Dharani Dhar Sharma, M.A., B.T. an old student of the Central Hindu College, Banaras, who has just retired from Government service, and who, moreover, is himself a Nepali Brahmin, supplied the translation and corrected the proofs.

Ten thousand copies were printed the cost per copy being nearly 10 annas. My plan is to sell each copy at five annas, of which one anna will be taken by the bookseller as commission and four annas will come back to the original fund.

You will no doubt be pleased to hear that already 7,000 copies have been taken by different

booksellers and I have every confidence that the rest will be sold within a year at the most.

Pandit Bhanu Bhakta Sharma, who died round about 1840, is the author of the *Ramayana* in verse in Nepali. There are one or two editions of this *Ramayana* but they are full of errors.

I have asked the present Headmaster of the Government High School here, who is also a profound Sanskrit scholar, to provide a life of this poet and a glossary of the difficult words together with an authorized variorum edition of this great work.

I am planning to print 10,000 copies at a cost between Rs 30,000 and Rs 35,000 and to make the book available to the hillmen at about Rs 1-8-0 per copy. This, I believe, is the only way to help in the cultural renaissance of the hill people inhabiting this part of our motherland.

I am giving you all this information in the hope that my attempt to assist the people here may have the support of your prayers to the Almighty Whom we all worship in our different ways.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,
H. C. Mookerjee

VINOBAJI IN GAYA

II

In the women's meeting held in the morning, Vinobaji first referred to Gandhiji who gave them the consciousness of their worth as independent beings and of the important part they could play in national life. Vinobaji said, "Gandhiji believed that women have the quality of Ahimsa in a greater degree and they are therefore better qualified to carry out his work than men." As an example he referred to the work of Shri Janakidevi Bajaj, wife of the late Seth Jannalal Bajaj. Shri Janakidevi has been moving about in the villages under scorching sun and collecting gifts of ornaments from women. She has taken a vow to get 108 wells constructed in this district. Vinobaji said, "Ornaments are the main cause of the timidity generally found among women. Let them throw away the ornaments and become fearless." Vinobaji was pleased to hear that the Gaya Mahila Samiti had both Hindu and Muslim women as its members and that there was perfect understanding and goodwill among them. Replying to a question asked by a Muslim sister, Shri Vinoba said, "It is men who create the element of fear and insecurity in social life. With women coming to the fore and taking up responsible work the evil of fear will disappear. Let us create peace around ourselves and there will be peace in the world."

Then he went to the Bihar Bhodan Workers Conference which was attended by more than 600 workers from all corners of the province. A worker from each district gave an account of the work done in his part of the province. They were followed by Shri Damodarbai who spoke of his most exhilarating experience of the progress of

Bhoodan work in the Gaya District. The Gaya District, it will be remembered, has been the laboratory of the Bhoodan work, and Shri Damodarbai has been the main force behind its success. Finally came the exhortation from Shri Vinoba, who said, "There is much talk of revolution but it is little understood that revolution demands the undivided devotion characteristic of a *sati*, i.e. a truly devoted wife. A *sati* has no life apart from her husband. Such spirit of dedication has not come into existence in our country in any appreciable measure, though there are notable exceptions. For example, Shri Ravishankar Maharaj, the foremost constructive worker of Gujarat has given himself up to this work in this spirit. He will not do anything else till 1957. He is old in years but has the zeal and fire of a young man. He is constantly moving about in the villages of Gujarat and spreading the message of Bhoodan. And I am therefore perfectly certain that Gujarat will contribute its due share in the success of this movement. Another example of what I mean by revolutionary zeal and fire is Shri Jayaprakash Narayan. Those who have heard him speak know that though he is very calm and controlled in his utterances, yet there is a fire burning in his heart." Revolutionary work cannot be done without such fire.

Speaking about those who wanted fame Shri Vinoba said, "The workers should concern themselves only with work, and not with fame. Not our individual names but God's name comprehending and transcending them should prevail. We are out to create Ram-rajya, that is, the kingdom of God. Naturally our individual names will get merged in that of God."

Shri Vinoba represents not only the poor but also the rich because he wants that all should be equally happy and prosperous. We have had several instances of the Zamindars coming to him for his advice about their difficulties and voluntarily offering their co-operation to him for the success of his mission. Shri Bhup Babu a member of the Vinoba Reception Committee of Gaya and a big zamindar of the place has donated all his land to Shri Vinoba and has earnestly taken up the Bhoodan work.

In his prayer speech in the evening Shri Vinoba asked the workers to go on doing their work unobtrusively without any feeling of conceit about it. "It is not men of limited vision and narrow minds who can undertake this task of transforming the society. It needs workers of high character who can rise above petty egotism and attachment to fruit. The fruit has to be dedicated to God."

The prayer-meeting was followed by the meeting of the Bihar Congress workers, held at the same place under the presidentship of Dr Anugrahanarayan Sinha. It was at this meeting that the Bihar Congress decided to collect

32 lakh acres of land and thus achieve the total solution of the land problem in the province. It was a great decision and Vinobaji was highly pleased with it.

He said, "I congratulate the Bihar Congressmen for having passed this resolution. It shows that the Bihar Congress has now accepted full responsibility for this work. Bihar's first target of four lakh acres has been fulfilled and just as the Ganga becomes more expansive in Bihar than in U.P. even so the average per day collection of a thousand acres in U.P. has risen in Bihar to more than two thousand acres." Vinobaji said that the success they had achieved was due to the grace of God. The people of Bihar suffered from the handicap of interminable wranglings amongst its numerous political groups. They were disunited and weak and yet they were bold to make this great decision. "How are we to account for it? I believe the only reason, why they, though weak and disunited, felt prompted to rise to the occasion and make the decision which they have done, is this that there are seeds of merit lying embedded in this land. Today both Gautam and Gandhi are watching over our efforts and blessing them. They started their work of turning the wheel of *dharma* in this province. It is imbued through and through with sacred memories which may infuse life into the lifeless and power into the powerless. The Upanishads say: 'Thou art Brahma'. In no other language of the world is there a saying so short in size and yet so rich in meaning. We are weak and prone to the ways of sin but the Rishi tells us that you are not this transient body but the immortal soul. Shake off this outer covering and indrawing yourself look at the blissful spirit within. This saying has always sustained me, otherwise I have not seen a weaker man than myself."

Speaking of the defects which hamper our progress, Vinoba said, "Indolence and ill-will against one another are two of our principal defects. All others centre round them. But I am sure we will soon be consigning them to the rising flames of this great *yajna*. The trust which the Indian people have shown in me is a very great thing for me. Whatever merit you find in me is not mine, it is derived from Mahatma Gandhi and the Rishis. If we fulfil this task, we will have created an unprecedented example in human history which people from all over the world will come to see and learn from. When we have dedicated ourselves to such a high task we should forget all our petty likes and dislikes. We should throw the doors of our heart wide open. The sun is waiting outside with its wealth of endless light."

Expressing his gratefulness to the Bihar people Vinoba said, "May God make me worthy of your love and affection."

N. D.

(Adapted from Hindi)

COLIN CLARK VS. MALTHUS

[Professor Colin Clark is a well-known economist in England. His remarkable broadcast on population is reproduced from the *Listener* of March 26, 1953, pp. 503-4. — V. G. D.]

I

Children are born in accordance with the wishes and consciences of their parents, and it is a matter of national right that they should be. But there are now many people calling themselves Malthusians, who say that children should not be born, or at any rate that they should be born only in very small numbers. The reason which they generally give is an economic one, though most of them have no qualifications to discuss economic problems.

Let us consider first the purely economic questions. A large part (but not all) of the economic activities of a modern industrial community are carried out under what economists call the Law of Increasing Returns. These activities include large-scale manufacture, transport, postal communication, banking, insurance and the like. The larger the scale on which these services are operated, the greater the possible consequential economies. To everyone engaged in any one of these types of economic activity, therefore, an increasing population is an economic gain, not loss. A large and densely settled population is not only economically advantageous for these forms of production — it is, in many cases, a condition without which they could not exist.

Diminishing Returns

The Law of Increasing Returns was not known to Malthus and other economists of his time. They knew only the Law of Diminishing Returns, which they thought universal, but which we now know to be only applicable in agriculture, mining and handicraft. Most people who use the phrase "diminishing returns" do not understand its real meaning. In most countries the returns or output from agriculture are steadily increasing year by year. The Law of Diminishing Returns says only that if you do not get additional capital, and cannot make use of modern farming methods, then returns per head in a densely populated agricultural country will be less than in a less densely populated one.

But using more capital and better farming methods is precisely what progressive countries have done when faced with increasing populations. This is not just a theoretical speculation; it is an established fact. The agricultural population per square mile of cultivable land is about the same in Denmark as it is in Russia, but the returns per worker are five times as great in Denmark. A similar comparison could be made between Ireland and the Philippines. The agricultural population per square mile of cultivable land in India is a matter of great concern to many people, and undoubtedly it is extremely high. But it is equally high in Italy, where the return per worker is more than twice what it is in India. If someone could explain to the Indian not how to operate the milking-machines and tractors but just the simple arts of dairying and fruit growing and rice cultivation as practised by the Italian peasant, the *Indian would within a few years be twice as well off as he is now*. The Dutch, a really successful farming people, have a rural population per square mile of cultivable land as much as two-thirds of the Indian, but the Dutch return per square mile is about six times the Indian. If all the cultivable land in the world were farmed at Dutch standards of skill and hard work, and our consumption per head of farm products was also at the present day Dutch standards (which is quite a high one), then the *world could support a population somewhere between 10,000,000,000 and 15,000,000,000 people* as compared with the mere 2,300,000,000 people it is supporting now. And this is before allowing for any future improvements in farming methods which may take place, or seeking any harvest

* The italics are mine. V. G. D.

from the sea. (The sea's capacity for photo-synthesis, per square mile of surface, appears at any rate to be comparable with those of low-grade farm land.) Nor have I yet taken into account the possibility of starting settlements on other planets, or any other ideas which our successors may have to consider a few centuries hence. Whether the human race will last long enough for us even to need to try out these interesting ideas is something which we do not know. Christians believe that the world will be brought to an end at some finite date. When Sir Charles Darwin sets out to make provision for 1,000,000 years, many people regard this as an excess of prudence.

But before we speculate further about the future of the human race, we ought to examine some of the concrete facts of history which Malthus appears to have ignored. The fact which stands out quite unmistakably is that rapid population increases are very rare events in history, and that for the greater part of its time on this earth the rate of growth of the human race was one of almost pre-natural slowness, and that there are many authenticated historical instances of stationary or declining populations over long periods of time in Egypt, Ceylon, India, and elsewhere.

It is obviously false to say that all these examples of stationary and declining population are explained by lack of food supply, or to be more precise, by the lack of cultivable land. The population which India appeared to carry unchanged through so many past centuries was only about one third of what she can carry now. The Arabic historian of the fourteenth century, Ibn Khaldoun, answered Malthus centuries before he wrote, pointing out that limited population was 'not the land's incapacity to cope with increasing demand but the political chaos and physical oppression which invade the State in its decline.'

Even in the modern world, whose population has doubled in the course of a century and is far larger now than it has ever been before, even now, cases of extreme population density, though undoubtedly serious, are by no means the general rule. India, Pakistan, Indo-China, Eastern China, Java, Egypt, perhaps some other Middle Eastern and East European countries — that about exhausts the list. Nobody is seriously worried about dense populations in advanced industrial countries, which find it relatively easy to sell industrial productions and to buy food in return, large areas of land climatically suitable for agriculture remain uncultivated in the modern world. Europe, outside Soviet Russia, has the equivalent of 1,400,000 square miles of cultivable land. On this Europe raises the greater part of the food supplies for 450,000,000 people. But North America has 3,000,000 square miles of cultivable land for a far smaller population, while South America and Africa, also with much smaller population, have 6,000,000 square miles each. Great areas of good cultivable land in Asia, many people will be surprised to hear, are uninhabited, in Ceylon, Burma, Siam and Malaya, and the whole of Indonesia outside Java. Even in western China, according to O. E. Baker, there is a great deal of uninhabited, semi-arid land on which American or Australian farmers would have no difficulty in making a good living. I am aware, of course, that in many tropical areas which are climatically suitable for agriculture there are serious soil deficiencies. I have lived for years in the tropics myself, and once knew something about chemistry. All these soil deficiencies, of calcium, phosphorus, potassium and nitrogen, can be replaced if we make sufficient effort to do so.

(To be continued)

SELF-RESTRAINT V. SELF-INDULGENCE

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HOW TO ABOLISH POVERTY

(By M. P. T. Acharya)

The Indian National Congress Movement sponsored by Shris Dadabhai Naoroji, D. E. Wacha, Sir William Digby, Sir William Wedderburn and A. O. Hume complained against increasing poverty of India under British rule and gradually came to the conclusion that unless British (foreign) rule disappeared the drain to England could not be stopped. The object of the Congress was to abolish poverty. The argument was if British quitted, the wealth which remained in the country would enrich the people. The Congress said they knew how to abolish poverty and would abolish it if they came to office or power.

It is not remembered that the Romans complained that India was draining away their gold by supplying luxury goods. We were also doing it though not ruling Rome but just by trade.

During the Civil Disobedience days, Shri Vithalbai Patel told in a public meeting that "we become poor so that the poor may become rich".

Instead of all that, after independence the drain which was going away to England is now going upwards to some people and Governments in the country. If tomorrow people earned more, they will be taxed more and will continue to remain poor.

The Government wants to expand economics on the narrow basis. That is exactly what cannot be done. The Government can have no control or influence on the narrow economic set-up on which it is based. The economy will run as it is set up and the Government will have to adapt itself to its running.

No constitutions, no elections, no parliamentary debates can make narrow economy work for a broader basis: It can only get narrower.

Economics is not a matter which can be run according to legislation. It is time that people were told not to attach any importance to all these talks in Delhi or other capitals and prepare themselves to feed themselves. The Government cannot do it even if we had a Bolshevik Government. Either the people organize themselves to feed themselves or they must get prepared to go without food. It is waste of time to read and hear what luxurious people are trying to do. We must concentrate attention only on the economic problem with special preference to food. Self-help is the best help. We must produce food and distribute it with or even without money. Otherwise it is shilly-shallying with the food question.

Food production — all production is a technological matter only. It cannot be produced if certain conditions are attached to it. Government cannot do so. There can be no legislation in advance of time i.e. according to foresight. Legislations are seals on accomplished facts only. One cannot, for example, abolish landlordism by

legislation. That is why the Government must ask tenants to secure compensation and after the compensation is paid, the tenants must pay taxes to the Government and become tenants to the Government which becomes the landlord. That is the way of legislation. Even distribution of land is no solution. It is only when all food is at the disposal of people who contribute labour in productive and useful purposes, can the food problem be solved. All should be taken care of out of common production. There should be no question of employed and owners. The Government takes for granted that there must be a class of people who must remain employment-seekers and must live for wages. It is the most degrading thing. The Republic of Greece and Rome were built upon slaves who were not members. That is the kind of republic with employers and owners. That exists also in Russia today. We must abolish employment-seekers looking for wages. Slaves cannot collaborate. Fear of being starved is the worst method of seeking collaboration. Slave collaboration is unwilling collaboration and cannot be of any use.

The Roman Emperor Diocletian tried by decree to fix wages and prices. The result was the wages went down and the prices went up. He got disgusted and went to cultivate cabbages. The Chinese Emperor Wangchang Nai introduced State ownership of all things, but it broke down after a time. Since then, all these two thousand years, they are trying the same thing everywhere as if history has no lesson to teach. They are all vain attempts and Government will break against economics. Leave the Government alone. If people want to organize themselves to feed themselves, they will have enough sanctions to do so. No Government can stand against them in all villages. Villages can starve Governments if necessary. They must not seek aid of Government. Local solidarity is the best answer to outside interference and tyranny.

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