

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

LET GOVERNMENTS REMEMBER PROHIBITION

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

President Dr. Rajendra Prasad sent the following message on the occasion of the inauguration of the Prohibition Week from the 15th to the 21st August, organized by the M.P. Government :

"I welcome the decision of the M.P. Government to observe a Prohibition Week. There is great need for propaganda work with a view to creating and educating public opinion in all matters concerning social reform. This is specially necessary for the successful implementation of Prohibition. A large majority of those who drink are not exactly addicts; having tasted the liquor once, they just continue to take it quite thoughtlessly and may be weaned away from the reprehensible habit, if they are rightly approached and explained how it harms them and if liquor is made difficult to get. I am therefore convinced that a well-organized and an extensive campaign in this direction will be highly valuable.

"The Congress as a political party had made up its mind on Prohibition even before the advent of Independence. And the Congress Ministries after assumption of office have also given effect to this policy in a number of States.

"There is certainly need for great perseverance for success in Prohibition. But along with that it is equally necessary to make well-organized and concrete efforts in this direction and to explain the importance of this measure to the people. This latter part of the work is a little difficult in view of their wide-spread illiteracy. Propaganda work is specially important in Madhya Pradesh where there are large tracts inhabited by aboriginal tribes. I am glad that the M.P. Government are alive to the necessity of this reform and are doing their best to bring it about. I wish success to them in their efforts."

Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said the following in the course of his message wishing success to the Prohibition Week :

"I learn that you are going to observe a Prohibition Week. I hope the effort will meet with success. Prohibition is not simply a pious principle, but an integral part of our national policy designed to remedy an existing evil.

"In some of our big cities and among a section of the people there has grown a strange idea that drink is part of the social fashion. So far as India is concerned this idea is totally erroneous and the sooner it is abandoned the better."

The occasion, we hope, will remind other State Governments, which may not have yet taken steps to bring about this reform, of their duty in this regard which they should never forget. I suggest that there should be drawn up a special five-year plan for this purpose also.

18-8-53

(From Hindi)

A POSITIVE APPROACH

(By Jawaharlal Nehru)

"Instead of always talking about unemployment, we should adopt a positive approach to this important problem. We should devise ways and means of providing more and more employment to our people in different spheres of national life. Our positive aim should be to provide hundred per cent employment to the millions of our countrymen. This, of course, cannot be done by any kind of magic.

"I do not believe in giving 'doles' to the unemployed; it is entirely a wrong policy. We should plan to give work rather than 'doles'. Our people should be given productive work. We must produce our own goods even at a higher price rather than import them from outside. We must keep our people going. Even manual work will do for the time being. If the educated young men do not accept manual work, our responsibility of providing employment to them ceases.

"We must encourage our small-scale and cottage industries even though their products may be dearer and cruder for the time being. The important thing is that we must produce more wealth and also distribute purchasing power among the people. This cannot be done through large-scale industries alone. The human aspect must be the over-riding consideration. Our people should feel the sensation of self-help in economic life. Imitating the way of other countries will not help us much. Our solutions must be based on our own conditions."

(From the A.I.C.C. Economic Review, 1-9-53)

PRICE vs. PROSPERITY

(By Prof. M. R. Agarwal)

[Prof. M. R. Agarwal, Engineering College, Banaras, has sent me a very interesting dissertation on the 'Economics of Swadeshi'. His thesis is that 'the price factor is illusionary'. Under a new heading, I summarize below his argument in his own words: 10-8/53 M. P.]

The world is faced today with an economic confusion of a gravity without a parallel in human history and this has led to sorrow and suffering on a very large scale.

Some countries have tried to relieve the economic distress by means of artificial expenditure on canal building, road construction and other similar public utility works. But it must be admitted that such measures can be only temporary, and that the economic distress and suffering of a nation cannot be relieved by building roads, canals and bridges or by awarding doles to the unemployed. We must also recognize that the poverty of 300 millions of human beings cannot be removed by organizing relief with the Government aid or by funds raised by public subscription.

Swadeshi is the central fact round which all our economic problems revolve and is a powerful weapon to fight the distressing condition of poverty to which we all have been reduced today. Therefore we must give a close study to the economic aspect of Swadeshi and the benefits it brings to those who practise it.

The greatest hindrance to the advancement of Swadeshi in this machine-age is the question of price. It is admitted by everybody who has studied the past that this country was one of the richest countries of the world when the East India Company came here in the 18th century. It is strange that such a country should have become so poor as to go a-begging to the world for the food to keep its population from dying of starvation. We are buying cheap foreign goods from a long time and every time that we buy a cheap article in preference to another for a higher price, we think we save some money. As a result of this saving extended over a period of more than 100 years, everybody in the country should have grown richer, but we find that it has not happened. We have instead lost all that we had. Let us, therefore, carefully investigate why our purchasing cheap goods for more than 100 years has not made us richer. The cause may be that the apparently cheaper goods are not so in reality.

We all know that money spent gives goods to us and purchasing power to the person from whom they are purchased. When buying, we concentrate our attention on the first aspect of our spending money, giving no attention to the very important second aspect of the transaction. The money we spend should become purchasing power very soon so that it may flow back to us as income. In buying cheap goods from rich manufacturers we give the money to those who do not use it as purchasing power for a very long time. The more widely the money spent by us is distributed, the more customers we shall get, because they shall spend the money to buy food, clothes and other goods.

The more needy the producer is the better customer he will make, because he will spend the money at once. Poor men are the best customers because they have not got the power to hold the money for a long time. The rich man who is already full, will not spend at once, because he can earn money and hoard it. If we purchase goods worth a hundred rupees from a rich man we get not a single customer because the money shall go to his iron safe. If the same amount spent reaches 50 poor persons we make as many good customers because they shall spend the money at once and we shall make profit with equal speed.

Let us suppose that in a small town, which can produce almost all it needs, there are four merchants A, B, C and D selling wheat, sugar, cotton etc. and they have practically equal number of customers scattered about in the town and have nearly equal income. Suppose every

one of these merchants wants to buy cloth worth Rs 250/- i.e. Rs 1,000/- worth of cloth in all. They can buy:

1. Foreign cloth which costs Rs 900/-.
2. Indian mill-made cloth which costs Rs 925/-.
3. Cloth made by local weavers costing Rs 1,000/-.

Let us now carefully examine which cloth is the cheapest for them and which cloth they should buy to their profit. Apparently the foreign cloth seems to carry the palm in this regard and it appears cheapest, but we have to examine this fact more closely.

1. All money spent on foreign cloth will be drained out of the country and go to the foreign mill-owners. A portion of this money will go to the railways, but they will spend that amount in buying plants and parts for their use from foreign countries. Out of Rs 900/- nothing will fall to the lot of village customers and therefore, no amount of this sum, thus spent, will find its way back to A, B, C and D.

2. Indian mill cloth will cost Rs 925/-. A big portion of this amount will be reaped as profit by owners and directors of the mills; a trifling may go to the Indian Insurance companies. Likewise a part will go to the hands of the foreigners who supply machinery, oil, fuel etc. and only a small amount will reach the workmen who will spend a large part of their income on wine and such other intoxicants. Thus only a negligible small amount from the Rs 925/- thus spent, may find its way back to A, B, C and D after a long time. Money lying safe in the safes of an Indian millionaire is of no worth and value to A, B, C and D, unless it is spent to buy Indian goods.

3. It will cost Rs 1,000/- to purchase cloth from the local weavers. This money will go to the local weavers who will buy cotton, wheat, rice etc. The money thus received by the spinners, carders, washermen etc. will also soon be spent on rice, wheat and other similar goods. In this way almost the entire sum of Rs 1,000/- will find its way back to the four merchants and they by making a profit of two annas per rupee, will reap a net income of Rs 125/-. In other words they will get Rs 1,000/- worth of cloth for Rs 875/- only.

True a hundred rupees more were spent in purchasing cloth, locally made; but it has also yielded an income of Rs 125/- which would not have been possible in buying any other cloth. How can the goods which bring in for us a saving of Rs 100/- but which cut down an amount of Rs 125/- from our income be termed cheap?

Let us not forget another very important factor. We have taken into consideration only one round of Rs 1,000/- which brings a profit of Rs 125/- to the merchants. But this money does not go outside the village and comes to the four merchants again and again. Thus the amount of Rs 875/- which the dealers actually spend on the goods which they sell to the weavers for Rs 1,000/- goes to the other persons who also are customers of A, B, C and D. When these persons spend this amount the merchants make a profit of Rs 109-6-0 on this sum at the same rate. If we continue this process in a similar manner we shall ultimately find that the sum of Rs 1,000/- spent by the dealers on cloth has all gone back to them as profit and the local cloth which they bought cost them nothing in reality.

This proves that foreign cloth or Indian mill cloth which appear cheaper are actually much dearer than the locally made cloth and that the latter is in fact the cheapest. Even this seeming difference in price is usually very small.

Therefore we conclude that—

1. Every person should practise Swadeshi for his own self-interest i.e. for his own economic prosperity.

2. The present economic distress has come about because the money has gone into the hands of a few and is concentrating into fewer and fewer hands.

3. Price does not depend only on what amount of money has been paid for an article but how and when that money goes into circulation. Price depends largely on the time taken by this money to become purchasing power.

4. Our prosperity depends on the prosperity of our customers. By killing our customers and destroying their prosperity we are killing our own prosperity.

5. Money is a medium of exchange. Let us not impede this process of exchange by hoarding money.

6. Money is not wealth, capital or finance. The goods and services which money can buy are the finance and real wealth.

If the money spent on an article of Indian manufacture or a greater part of it goes to the safes of millionaires, the article cannot be said to be Swadeshi.

If a majority of our people buy the goods that are truly Swadeshi we shall soon find that we have moved, a very long way towards economic freedom.

If a majority of the people in the world practise Swadeshi, the causes of war shall vanish in no time and peace and plenty shall be the order of the day.

SOAP MAKING WITH NEEM OIL

[Scheme for 1953-54]

Neem trees abound in the whole of India. Neem oil is produced in small quantities in certain areas of Madras, U. P., and Bombay. A small quantity of neem oil is used for lighting and medicinal purposes, while the bulk goes for the manufacture of soap in Bombay and Calcutta. The use of edible oils, such as groundnut, cocoanut, etc. in soaps not only renders them scarce for domestic use but necessarily inflates their prices. It is, therefore, necessary to exclude edible oils in preparing soaps and substitute them by non-edible oils like neem oil. The leaves, bark, fruits, etc. of neem trees are well known for their smoothening effects on the skin. The use of neem oil in soap is, therefore, essential from this point.

Of the total neem seeds produced, those collected for crushing the oil are about 28 per cent in Madras, 10 per cent in Orissa and 11 per cent in Madhya Pradesh. Thus, a small portion of seeds is used for crushing, while the bulk of seeds is wasted. Seeds which lie scattered along roadside and other tracts will, therefore, have to be collected. The extra oil crushed will be supplied to the existing soap-factories or to new soap-factories to be established as part of the scheme, and the oil-cake which is a valuable manure will be utilized for agricultural purposes.

Demonstration units will be opened at the following places where neem seeds will be collected, decorticated and crushed. The oil will be supplied to the central soap units where it will be used in soap making:

Centres	Agency
1. Sholapur	Maharashtra Seva Sangh
2. Mehmabad	District Industrial Association
(Khedra District)	
3. Colimatore	—
4. (To be decided later on)	—

Each unit will have 1 soap making centre to be fed by 7 neem-pressing centres.

The total expenditure for the four centres will be Rs 7 lakhs.

Expenditure on the neem oil manufacturing programme will be mainly by way of subsidies or loans to be granted to bodies such as those referred to above which would organize centres on the lines indicated by the Board. The subsidies will be for meeting the initial establishment charges and the loans for providing the working capital for the purchase of oil and for the purchase of equipment.

(From a bulletin issued by the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board)

SOAP MAKING

(as a cottage industry)

(By K. B. Joshi)

Pages ii+69 Price Re. 1-8-0 Postage etc. As. 4

NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA
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EXPORT OF INDIAN MONKEYS

The Editor, *Harijan*

Sir,

The *Animal Defender* (London) "devoted to the abolition of cruel experiments on animals" in medical laboratories in its issue of last June recently received in India from England editorially says:

"We recently circularized every member of the Indian Government begging that attention might be given to the deplorable export of monkeys from India destined to suffering and death in American vivisection laboratories.

"We have already received a number of replies expressing warm sympathy....Nor has opposition to this evil method of earning dollars been confined to words. We are informed that a Parliamentary Bill on the subject was introduced on April 10, and it is hoped that it will come up for second reading during the next session in August. Meanwhile according to a newspaper report appearing in *Evening Herald*, Dublin, there has already been some discussion of the scandal....We reproduce the report from our Irish contemporary:

'Indian clash over Monkeys

'Indian deputies, worried about what happens to exported monkeys, clashed with the Minister of Agriculture, Mr P. S. Deshmukh, in Parliament today.

'There was a great deal of angry protest when he said that the Government permits the shipment of monkeys for use in medical research, mostly in America' because we want to get rid of them. They damage five per cent of our crops every year; we have 50,000,000 monkeys in India,' he added.

'Members asked him to ensure that the monkeys are treated humanely in view of India's ideas of non-violence and the sacred place of the monkey in Hindu (religious) lore.'

"We have no authority to pursue our monkeys into foreign countries" Mr Deshmukh replied. To which the occasional humanitarian might well retort:

"No, but you have the moral responsibility of preserving the monkeys from suffering by having them put painlessly to sleep in your own country (India)."

All animal-welfare humanitarian societies in India should now vigorously take up the urgent matter of saving the Indian monkeys from cruelty in foreign countries.

54, Wodehouse Road, SORABJI R. MISTRI
Colaba, Bombay-5

[The Bill referred to is before the House of the People; we hope all sections of our people will welcome it and see that a good law on animal-welfare is put on our statute book.

3-9-53

—M. P.]

WHY THE VILLAGE MOVEMENT?

By J. C. Kumarappa

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1953

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES AND CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

An M. P. draws my attention to the following starred question No. 197 that was answered in the Parliament on August 6, 1953 :

Q. "197* Shri Dabhi : Will the Minister of Commerce and Industry be pleased to state :

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission has, in the Five-Year Plan, recommended the adoption of a policy under which oil mills are to produce only non-edible oils, while the production of edible oils is to be reserved for the village *ghanis* ; and

(b) if so, the steps Government have so far taken or are going to take to implement this policy ?

A. Shri T. T. Krishnamachari :

(a) The recommendation made by the Planning Commission is that 'in the oil industry the policy could be adopted of developing the production of edible oils through the village industry and the production of non-edible oils through oil mills.'

(b) The recommendation is under the consideration of Government."

The M. P. friend adds that this was followed by supplementaries from Shri Dabhi which were answered by the Minister in charge in the following manner :

"Q. May I know whether it is a fact that the meeting of the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board held recently at Bombay has recommended to Government to reserve for the village oil industry a portion of the edible oilseeds available in the country and to completely reserve the sesamum oilseeds for the *ghanis*, and whether Government have accepted this recommendation ?

A. I believe some such recommendation was made. All these recommendations are under the consideration of Government.

Q. May I know whether it is a fact that the Planning Commission has recommended the imposition of a small cess on mill oil for the benefit of the village oil industry, and, if so, when do Government intend to implement this recommendation ?

A. That is a fact, so far as the recommendation of the Planning Commission is concerned. As I said, all these matters are under the consideration of Government. Whether they would be implemented in that form or in some other form or would not be implemented at all

will depend when ultimately Government makes up its mind."

The M. P. friend further tells me of another (unstarred) question No. 122 answered on the same day, which dealt with Government purchase of hand-made paper, another important item of village industries and their encouragement. The question and its answer were as follows :

"Q. Shri Dabhi : Will the Minister of Works, Housing and Supply be pleased to state :

(a) Government's policy about the purchase of hand-made paper for the requirements of the various Government departments ;

(b) the total value of paper purchased for the use of the various Government departments during the years 1951-52 and 1952-53 ; and

(c) the total value of the hand-made paper purchased for the use of the various Government departments ?

A. Sardar Swaran Singh :

(a) It has been decided that hand-made paper should be purchased for all demi-official correspondence of the Government of India.

(b) (i) 1951-52 — Rs 4½ Crores Approx.

(ii) 1952-53 Rs 5 Crores Approx.

(c) (i) 1951-52 Rs 90,500/-

(ii) 1952-53 — Nil as sufficient stock from the closing balance of previous paper was available."

The two questions and their answers tell eloquently well how lightly the Central Ministry take their responsibility to encourage and promote village industries. Apart from the patent indifference that is apparent from the answers, the more serious matter is where Shri T. T. Krishnamachari says that the recommendations of the Planning Commission are still not considered by Government. The Five-Year Plan is a point in the major policy of Government. It has been deeply considered, by now for the last few years, by Government as well as the people, as their chief plank for the recovery of our national economy. The items and schemes enjoined therein are not dependent for their implementation on the ideas or whims of individual ministers. The Plan is a joint responsibility to the nation, of all Governments, Central and State. The indifference and delay that are revealed by the answers explain to an extent why unemployment is there in spite of the Plan. The village industries are the most potent instrument to fight unemployment, if not the only one unto our people situated as we are. The Planning Commission gave some place to them in the Five-Year Plan. If these are not being implemented, as is evident from the above questions, is it any wonder that the Plan is not effective in its most vital and necessary purpose, viz. removing unemployment ? Will the Central Government wake up and make amends for the delay and disregard and hasten to implement its own accepted policies ?

HOW TO COMBAT UNEMPLOYMENT

(By Vaikunth L. Mehta)

No problem has engaged such public attention in recent months as that of unemployment. This is due, mainly, to the growth of unemployment that has been observed in urban areas and especially among the educated classes. There has, however, been no census of unemployment carried out in the country and hence it is difficult to say to what extent unemployment has increased in recent years. There may be a greater degree of employment in the country and yet the number of the unemployed may be larger. It has to be noted, moreover, that with the modest annual increase in the population that has gone on during the last three decades the number of those available for employment is bound to have risen. For all these persons, the avenues for gainful employment have not grown correspondingly, especially, in the shape of employment on the land. Besides, the development of mechanized industries has resulted in the gradual extinction of corresponding cottage or village industries. As this process goes on, unemployment must necessarily go up, particularly in rural areas. During and after the World War, employment was being provided by the State for various administrative, trading and production activities. Though productive activities have developed in recent years the pace of absorption of persons in State secondary or tertiary services has slackened. The productive activities of the State in the shape of industries can absorb, comparatively, only a few of the large numbers offering themselves for employment. The public works programme can and does provide employment for the unskilled on construction works. The semi-skilled and the skilled or the educated cannot be taken on, however, to any considerable extent.

2. It seems paradoxical that while, on the one hand, development is taking place in several sectors of our life, there should be less of employment provided instead of more. But this seems to be begging the question. There is no evidence to show that the volume of employment has gone down in the country as a whole. It has to be recognized, however, that technological progress, obviously, involves displacement of human labour which adds to the volume of unemployment, unless, at the same time, there is additional employment available for corresponding numbers in the primary sector.

3. A comprehensive 11-point programme has been formulated by the Planning Commission, and this will, undoubtedly, assist in reducing the volume of unemployment. One of the proposed measures is extensive production and use of electricity. It is not clear, however, how the extension of electric power will help in providing additional employment, if it results,

for instance, in the replacement of hand-pounding of rice by rice mills or of flour-grinding *chakkis* by power-grinding units. This observation applies also to the measures suggested for the extension of small-scale industries. There are certain types of small-scale industries such as oil mills or power loom factories. There are others which produce goods that are not usually turned out by cottage workers. It is only when the production through small-scale industries replaces foreign production that there will be a net gain from the point of view of additional employment. Another of the measures suggested is the extension of the motor transport for carriage of passengers or freight. If motor trucks to carry goods even over short distances displace bullock-carts, evidently, they will rudely disturb rural economy and lessen the volume of local employment in rural areas for cart-drivers, carpenters, blacksmiths etc. The corresponding increase of employment in urban areas may not be of the same volume. The usefulness of some of these proposals may hence be somewhat limited.

4. It is extraordinary that in India, too, there are some sections of the community who may not be altogether happy at the ending of the war in Korea. It is their fear that this may alter the international economic situation to the detriment of the employment position in India. By and large, considering the huge volume of unemployment and under-employment that prevails in rural areas, the cessation of hostilities in Korea should have little influence on our unemployment situation. Apart from this, an era of peace leads to reduction of public expenditure of an unproductive type and, hence, should lead to more activity in the direction of social betterment and helpful production. Hence the advent of peace is always to be welcomed, whether it is on our own borders or in distant realms.

5. Occasionally, doubts arise whether the policies which the State pursues in the matter of international trade are such as to affect adversely the opening out of channels of employment. Since the establishment of a national Government, the considerations which govern our import and export policy are, in the main, such as aim at the encouragement of productive effort in the country. It may be that, temporarily or occasionally, there may be action taken, for special reasons, which may seem to operate otherwise. Taken as a whole, however, no decisions can be taken as will exert an adverse influence on the employment position.

6. The lines of action that should be pursued to deal with the situation are primarily those indicated in Chapter XXXIX of the report of the Planning Commission on the subject of employment, modified or supplemented by the outline of the 11-point programme adumbrated subsequently by the Planning Commission.

Land development, land reclamation, soil conservation, extension of irrigation, intensive cultivation, introduction of dry farming, resort to mixed farming, encouragement of subsidiary occupations for agriculturists, development of village and other cottage industries, these represent lines of action which taken together, will considerably relieve the pressure of rural unemployment and, simultaneously, raise the standard of living for the bulk of the people. Among these measures the development and extension of cottage industries has been recognized as the most fruitful from the point of view of adding, in the immediate future, to the volume of employment. The combined effect of all these steps will be to reduce the growth of unemployment in urban areas, since it will check the trek from the village to the town which, more than any other single factor, is responsible for the increased demand for urban employment that is witnessed today in our midst.

SOIL IS LIFE

(By Friend Sykes *)

One hundred years ago, the soil was first analysed by the German chemist, Von Liebig; who discovered that the four major elements were calcium, phosphoric acid, nitrogen and potassium. He visualized the possibility that, if we knew the exact proportions the growing plant needed, it might be possible to do without the agency of the soil altogether, and to grow our food in some kind of factory-process.

Since that time, the world's knowledge of these matters has increased, and the true soil scientist of today is a man of far wider vision than that original chemist. Today, we realize that the physical structure of the soil, its biological condition, its environment, and its chemistry are inter-dependent. Thus we have the studies of physics, biology, ecology and chemistry; and to attempt to understand the soil's problems without appreciating the inter-dependence of these sciences and their influence, is to fail in an elementary sense in the problem of food production.

What Is Life?

With meticulous accuracy, the chemist can analyse our bodies and he would no doubt tell us that they consist of 28 elements. But if he puts these together in the laboratory, they do not make you or me; yet that is the only discovery the analyst can make when he breaks up our physical structure. What is the difference bet-

ween that dead body, and the living organism as you and I know it? It is "life," which up to the present eludes the chemist. He cannot discover it; neither can he create it. Yet it remains one of the greatest forces on earth.

Correctly conceived, therefore, "life" has to be a part of the problem in an examination of the soil's potentialities. We find that the soil is life; and that a living soil contains a mass of micro-organic existence—the earth-worm, the fungi, and the micro-organisms. We learn that there is a minimum of 5-millions of these denizens to the cubic inch of living soil. What is their function, or right of existence? They are put there, as I see it, by Divine Will, to carry out the process of disintegration of the complexity of the soil's minerals. They break up the rock, splitting it into infinitesimal parts so fine that, consumed by their own microscopic bodies, these bodies live, die and decompose and, in a state of decomposition, consist of just the kind of food the green plant needs. The green plant grows, is consumed by the grazing animal, and through the dung and urine dropped by the animal micro-organic life, having passed through another phase, is returned to the soil whence it came. The animal and the plant are consumed by man and, in a properly-ordered state of society, the effluents from man's existence should be similarly returned to the land, associated with decayed waste vegetable cellulose. This in its turn would go towards the re-invigoration of living organisms in the soil, and the cycle would go on for eternity. This is the order of Nature. This life, of which we know so little, is the dominating factor. The chemistry, physics, and ecology are all there; but these are subsidiary to the dominant order, which is life.

What Do We Know about Life?

We know almost nothing; except, perhaps, five rather startling divisions of its cycle which ought to be understood and memorized by every child at school. They are these: Birth, Growth, Maturity, Death, Decay—and out of decay springs the resurrection of Life; and the cycle of living goes on for ever. It is only when man, in his ignorance and stupidity, interferes with the integrity of this cycle in Nature, that trouble begins. By the application of artificial stimulants to the soil, which at best are only artificial and not natural foods; (they have not been through the organic phase); by pressure in every direction in his haste to extract more in a given time than Nature is sometimes disposed to provide; by many acts of bad husbandry; and frantic legislation by ignorant Governments; the farmer is often compelled to follow courses in farming which his grandfather would have scorned. It may be the modern farmer is not always aware of the damage he may be doing. On the contrary, he may be fully aware of it, and

* Mr Friend Sykes is a well-known agriculturist. He is on the Advisory Panel of the Soil Association which has as its objects (1) To bring together all those working for a fuller understanding of the vital relationships between soil, plant, animal and man. (2) To initiate, co-ordinate and assist research in this field. (3) To collect and distribute the knowledge so as to create a body of informed public opinion.

justifies whatever he may be perpetrating as due to the present emergency. But this state of emergency, which has now lasted for nearly twenty years, is failing to pass. It is a permanent condition in which we find ourselves; for food is becoming scarcer every day, and land less fertile. While there are regions where output is being maintained, there are many others turning into dust-bowls, as we well know, in America. But dust-bowls and infertility are not the prerogative of the American Continent. Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and every country in the world can tell its story of soil erosion and diminishing fertility.

The Laws of Life

There is only one way by which fertility can be maintained, and that is by the preservation of the Law of Life—Birth, Growth, Maturity, Death, Decay. This cycle must be preserved. It must not be interfered with. There must be no act of husbandry on the part of the farmer that disturbs the steady turning of this regular wheel in Nature. If this can be maintained, fertility increases; for life multiplies life, and the greater the living soil-population, the greater will be the mass of mineral fertilizer that is made available; the more luxuriant and bounteous will be our crops, and we can sustain a greater population in mankind.

We Must Think Again

These are the simple laws of the soil and, so far as I see it, are the creation of the Divine Mind and intention; but it is necessary for us to re-orientate our thinking; to assume a different attitude towards the problems with which we have to contend; and to realize that the greatest inheritance handed down to man is the soil, by which alone we can provide for our physical existence. We are treating it far too much like any other commercial commodity; a kind of factory-process. The more machinery we use, the more artificial fertilizers we add, the greater the crops we are led to expect. Instead of this, the world is able to declare today that the output per acre has not increased; but shows a tendency to decline. This is not all. While the tonnage per acre is less, what of the quality—the life-sustaining character of the foods we produce? These, according to my own experience, are in like manner declining.

I have farmed now for many years, and I have found an increasing standard of health by the use of continued and increasing quantities of organic decayed vegetable matter, which produces not merely increasing crops, but a higher standard of health in all my live stock. Side by side with this exalted standard of health, I get larger crops; so the two targets would appear to run hand in hand: High quantity, and equally high standards in quality.

(Adapted from *The Sower*, Winter, 1952-53)

CAPITAL AND LABOUR

(By M. P. T. Acharya)

All civilization is being run on the credit of labour given to capital. It is not that capital advances money to the labourers and employees, but it is labour which is given that is advanced to capital, for the labourer or employee is paid only at the end of the week or month. If that is advance of money by capital, it is because capital sells goods later and cannot sell earlier. But without labour capital cannot get any goods.

While the labourer's or employee's wages are fixed, the prices of goods delivered are not fixed. Labour has no voice also in the fixation of prices. The employers can fix any price convenient to them. Naturally the difference between what is paid for labour and what is taken for the goods is accumulated capital which is again used for further exploitation and profits. Whether that is done by private individuals or States makes no difference. The fact is that capitalism can only be abolished by the people taking over all things for their common benefit. If they do not want to take any responsibility for their own welfare but want others to attend to them, others "who are experts" will only further enslave them. Too much dependence on experts will enslave all. We must simplify (decentralize) matters to make dependence on expert and managerialist unnecessary.

ARTICLE 47 OF THE CONSTITUTION

To

The Editor, *Harijan*,
Ahmedabad.

The following are the original English text and its authorized Sanskrit and Hindi translations of the latter part of Article 47 of the Constitution of India:

English text: "...in particular, the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption except for medicinal purposes of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health."

Sanskrit translation:

"विशेषतः राज्यं सादकानां पेयानां स्वास्थ्यहानिकारयानां च औषधानां, अन्यत्र भैषज्यप्रयोजनेभ्यः, उपभोगस्य प्रतिषेधाय प्रयतेत ।"

Hindi translation:

"राज्य ... विशेषतया, स्वास्थ्यके लिये हानिकर सादक पेयों और औषधियोंके औषधीय प्रयोजनोंके अतिरिक्त उपभोगका प्रतिषेध करनेका प्रयास करेगा ।"

It will be seen that, according to the original English text and its Sanskrit translation, the consumption, except for medicinal purposes, of all intoxicating drinks, irrespective of the question whether they are injurious to health or not, is to be prohibited by the State, while according to the Hindi translation, the consumption is to be prohibited of only those intoxicating drinks which are shown to be injurious to health.

Obviously, as the Indian Constitution passed

by the Constituent Assembly was in English, it is the English text of the Constitution which is to be considered as authentic.

So, in my opinion, the Hindi translation of the above-quoted portion of Article 47 is incorrect and requires to be corrected immediately.

I hope the learned gentlemen who are entrusted with the work of translating the Constitution into other recognized languages of India will not commit the mistake which the Hindi translators have made.

New Delhi,
8th August, '53

FULSINHJI DABHI
M. P.

THE SCHEDULED CASTES AND TRIBES (By Maganbhai P. Desai)

In a previous issue I had noted about a press release by Shri K. Rao (*vide Harijan*, 22-8-'53) on the problem of the Backward Classes. He has followed it up with another on the other two Backward Classes, viz. the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes. The first is a class of tribal people who inhabit some of our mountain jungles and are described as living a separate excluded existence and not fully assimilated in the main body of the people. These groups were also described as aboriginal or Adivasi Tribes, a name which is not very true and is now falling out of use. The second is the class of the Antyajas or the untouchables, now called the Harijans. The Kalelkar Commission is required to go into the question whether the revision of their Schedules as declared by the Presidential Order under the Constitution is needed or not. Shri K. Rao discusses this aspect of the case and raises the following poser in their regard :

Regarding the Scheduled Tribes he says, "The sooner the superstition of the aboriginal and the non-aboriginal is done away with the better for all concerned."

And regarding the Scheduled Castes he concludes : "It is unwise to confer privileges on the Harijans, which are not shared by non-Harijans. Discrimination in favour of one group implies discrimination against another and a departure from equality."

And he at the end enunciates that, "to recognize biological groups like castes, tribes, races and communities for cultural privileges is fatal to national solidarity. The individual should be unit and not a caste, class or community."

It is a little difficult to refute the logic of the argument advanced by Shri K. Rao. However, in matters social or of the nature under discussion, one can be too logical and scientifically accurate to be practically helpful; logic might perhaps deny life. And I fear Shri K. Rao's analysis will be found to suffer from such a drawback. Surely, I hope, he does not argue that the special needs of the Backward Classes should not

be looked into by the State, for the fear that it might mean a departure from equality. The question rather is, where is the equality from which a departure can at all be possible? Rather, the problem is to establish equality in places where there is obvious social inequality and even injustice. How to remove these is the main question, and not really to confer any privilege as such. However, placed as we are, we have to see that in removing inequality among the castes and the tribes or the classes we do not give a long lease of life to casteism and create something like a privilege of backwardness. The Kalelkar Commission's difficult task is to sort out different classes, castes and tribes for special treatment by the State and so do it that the distinction to be so made does not constitute a separatism in our body politic, and put a premium on casteism and tribalism.

We have vowed to be a nation without any distinctions of class, creed, caste, sex etc. In our social conditions as they are this is a difficult achievement. It is stipulated in the Constitution that these two Scheduled Classes will enjoy special representation in the Parliament and the State Legislatures; but that privilege will last for ten years only. Thus there is a limit set to this political privilege. Not so for the social inequality. It is not said when the special consideration to be shown to the Backward Classes will cease and how. Therefore the danger of separatism and privileged backwardness is not altogether unreasonable. The Backward Classes Commission should consider this aspect of their work also; because for equality to be real and complete there should be made no statutory distinctions on grounds of class or creed, sex or birth etc. in free India.

17-8-'53

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