

# HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, No. 8]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MARCH 8, 1942

[ FIVE PICE

## Notice

The next issue, to be published on 15th March, will contain *twelve pages* and will be priced at *two annas* per copy. Agents will please notify changes in their requirements, if any, by Thursday next. *Manager*

## Notes

### Indira Nehru's Engagement

I have received several angry and abusive letters and some professing to reason about Indira's engagement with Firoz Gandhi. Not a single correspondent has anything against Firoz Gandhi as a man. His only crime in their estimation is that he happens to be a Parsi. I have been, and I am still, as strong an opponent of either party changing religion for the sake of marriage. Religion is not a garment to be cast off at will. In the present case there is no question of change of religion. Firoz Gandhi has been for years an inmate of the Nehru family. He nursed Kamala Nehru in her sickness. He was like a son to her. During Indira's illness in Europe he was of great help to her. A natural intimacy grew up between them. The friendship has been perfectly honourable. It has ripened into mutual attraction. But neither party would think of marrying without the consent and blessing of Jawaharlal Nehru. This was given only after he was satisfied that the attraction had a solid basis. The public know my connection with the Nehrus. I had also talks with both the parties. It would have been cruelty to refuse consent to this engagement. As time advances such unions are bound to multiply with benefit to society. At present we have not even reached the stage of mutual toleration, but as toleration grows into mutual respect for religions such unions will be welcomed. No religion which is narrow and which cannot satisfy the test of reason will survive the coming reconstruction of society in which the values will have changed and character, not possession of wealth, title or birth will be the sole test of merit. The Hinduism of my conception is no narrow creed. It is a grand evolutionary process as ancient as time, and embraces the teachings of Zoroaster, Moses, Christ, Mohammed, Nanak and other prophets that I could name. It is thus defined :

विद्वद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिर्नित्यमद्वेषरागिभिः ।

हृदयेनाभ्यनुज्ञातो यो धर्मस्तं निबोधत ॥

[Know that to be (true) religion which the wise and the good and those who are ever free from passion and hate follow and which appeals to the heart.]

If it is not that, it will perish. My correspondents will pardon me for not acknowledging their letters. I invite them to shed their wrath and bless the forthcoming marriage. Their letters betray ignorance, intolerance and prejudice — a species of untouchability, dangerous because not easily to be so classified.

### Disgraceful

The Punjab press reports a deliberate and unprovoked attack on Pandit Sunderlal and Lala Jagannath of the Servants of People Society by four young Hindus at 11 o'clock at night while they were on their way to Lajpatrai Bhavan. The attack is said to have been made because of Pandit Sunderlal having delivered addresses in Lahore on Hindu-Muslim unity in which all offensive language was studiously avoided. One can understand, though never pardon, an attack on some provocation. But an attack such as was delivered on Pandit Sunderlal has no extenuating circumstances. These young men are reported to be members of the Hindu Mahasabha. I hope that the responsible officials will repudiate the action of the youths. Public opinion should make such hooliganism impossible. As for Pandit Sunderlal his cause will prosper for the savagery, and more so because of his dignified disregard and forgiveness of it.

Sevagram, 1-3-42

### Urdu Made Easy

Charity begins at home. As I was speaking to Jamnalalji's friends on the necessity of their learning Urdu if they believed in Rashtra Bhasha as recommended by the Congress, I thought of the good English proverb, and I began the charity of spreading the knowledge of Urdu in Sevagram. The result was a quick and good response. A class commenced last Wednesday, i. e. 25th February. Practically all, young and old, women and men, joined the class. The teacher captured their imagination. They learnt the primary letters in two sittings of thirty minutes each. By the time this is in print they should have learnt the forms for joining the letters. They will have learnt the alphabet in practically three hours. I know a friend who mastered it in four hours at a single sitting. The difficulty of reading Urdu is undoubtedly there. That can only be overcome by practice. Given the will, the way is easy. And love of the country should surely be sufficient spur to the will.

Sevagram, 2-3-42

M. K. G.



## A PEEP INTO BRITISH HISTORY

The fate of the British Empire along with India hangs in the balance. Those who still hold sway over us would fain have us help in order to save them from their sad plight. But even in their hour of trial they will not so much as get off our backs, if only to enable us to help them. On the contrary they even tighten the stranglehold and make our shortcomings an excuse for their unchivalrous conduct. On the other hand there are many among us who still feel that our salvation lies in British, rather than in our own, hands. It is indeed a pathetic state of affairs. It may be as well for all of us to try to learn from some salient facts from British history.

The Englishmen at the helm of affairs forget that the story of the British people for nearly a thousand years is a story of strife and foreign conquest, and it was only after a common national sympathy, which held the country roughly together, became an indissoluble bond that a real union was possible. At the time of the English Conquest there were the Angles in the East, the Saxons in the South, the Britons in the West, the Jutes already in parts of the South, and the Picts and the Scots in the North. Then came the Danes and the Normans. It is a multi-coloured medley of origins out of which a united England emerges. The medley has left its impress on the character and language of the people. Anglo-Saxon idiom remained the language of the people, while the aristocrats and the intellectuals spoke French. "There was a great fusion of tongue and minds. All the vocabulary of France remained, fixed within the framework of the old Germanic English and enriching it with an inexhaustible treasure of brilliant synonyms. Thus the peasant spoke of the beasts he tended in the farmyard as the sheep, the ox, the calf; the rich man called the roasts served at his table *mouton*, *boeuf*, and *veau*. And today England has mutton, beef and veal for the various meats as well as the old names for the living animals."

Those who came as conquerors but remained as 'natives' helped in welding themselves into a nation. The Roman State was getting weaker and weaker because "the dry rot from within more than any pressure from without was destroying the grand old fabric of Roman power in the West." (Esme Wingfield Strafford). "And yet the Roman organisation died hard, much harder, in fact, than anybody had imagined until Professor Bury discovered that at least as late as 428 the connection with Rome was being maintained, and the normal machinery of Government was still functioning in the province. It must have been very soon afterwards that the final separation occurred, and Britain was left to defend herself as best she might." (*Ibid*)

The Romans and their Legions left Britain for good, leaving their roads and the impress of their civilisation behind, as soon as they found themselves threatened at home by the barbarians from the North. It was those who remained in Britain, whether as natives, invaders, pirates or conquerors, that wrought the union of England. That is what

Mr. Amery had better remember again, if he has forgotten his history.

As for those of us who imagine that the British rulers can still protect us, there is another page of British history to which we may turn with profit. After the Romans left the Britons to shift for themselves the latter were threatened with invasions and raids from the North. There were two courses which were adopted, and both of them failed. The first was the time-honoured Roman expedient of setting barbarians to fight barbarians. "The one course left was to imitate the fatal policy by which the Empire had invited its own doom while striving to avert it, the policy of matching barbarian against barbarian." (Green) But the policy was "fatal". The other course, which Green has not noted but which other historians, including Gardiner, have noted, was the pathetic clutching at the foreigner who enjoyed no security himself. Says Tout:

"Early in the fifth century the Roman Empire on the Continent was overrun by fierce German tribes, anxious to find new homes for themselves. The settlement of Franks in Northern Gaul cut off Britain from the heart of the Empire, and Rome and Italy itself were threatened. With the Germans at the gates of Rome, it became impossible for the Emperors to find the men and money necessary for keeping up their authority in a distant land like Britain. After 410, the year which saw the sack of Rome by Alaric the Goth, the Romans ceased to send officials and troops to Britain. Henceforth the Britons were left to look for themselves, and their entreaties to the Emperors to help them in their distress were necessarily disregarded." (*An Advanced History of Great Britain*)

Gardiner gives a more detailed analysis. "After the departure of the Romans, the Picts from the North and Scots from Ireland continued their ravages, but though they caused terrible misery by slaughtering or dragging into slavery the inhabitants of many parts of the country, they did not succeed in making any permanent conquests. The Britons were not without a Government and an armed force, and their later history shows that they were capable of carrying on war for a long time against enemies more formidable than the Picts and the Scots." (Gardiner; *Students' History of England*) This capacity arising out of their own inner strength was realised later. But for the moment, "in their misery the thoughts of the Britons turned to those Roman legions who had defended their fathers so well. In 446 they appealed to Aetius, the commander of the Roman armies, to deliver them from their destroyers. "The groans of the Britons" was the title which they gave to their appeal to them. "The barbarians," they wrote, "drive us to the sea; the sea drives us back to the barbarians; between them we are exposed to two sorts of death; we are either slain or drowned." (*Ibid*) What did Aetius say in reply? "Aetius," says Gardiner in one brief sentence, "had no men to spare, and he sent no help to Britons."

Comment is needless.

Sevagram, 22-2-42

M. D.



## QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

## Riches v. Poverty

Q. How is it possible to earn lakhs in a righteous way? Jamnalalji, the merchant prince, used to say it was not. Moreover, however careful a rich man is, he is bound to spend more on himself than his actual requirements merit. Therefore why not lay more stress on not becoming wealthy than on trusteeship of riches?

A. The question is apt and has been put to me before. What Jamnalalji could have meant was in the Gita sense that every action is tainted. It is my conviction that it is possible to acquire riches without consciously doing wrong. For example I may light on a gold mine in my one acre of land. But I accept the proposition that it is better not to desire wealth than to acquire it and become its trustee. I gave up my own long ago, which should be proof enough of what I would like others to do. But what am I to advise those who are already wealthy or who would not shed the desire for wealth? I can only say to them that they should use their wealth for service. It is true that generally the rich spend more on themselves than they need. But this can be avoided. Jamnalalji spent far less on himself than men of his own economic status and even than many middle class men. I have come across innumerable rich persons who are stingy on themselves. For some it is part of their nature to spend next to nothing on themselves, and they do not think that they acquire merit in so doing.

The same applies to the sons of the wealthy. Personally I do not believe in inherited riches. The well-to-do should educate and bring up their children so that they may learn how to be independent. The tragedy is that they do not do so. Their children do get some education, they even recite verses in praise of poverty, but they have no compunction about helping themselves to parental wealth. That being so, I exercise my common sense and advise what is practicable. Those of us, however, who consider it a duty to adopt poverty and believe in and desire economic equality may not be jealous of the rich but should exhibit real happiness in our poverty which others may emulate. The sad fact is that those who are thus happy are few and far between.

## The Duty of a Manager

Q. Is it correct for the head of an institution, while demanding the utmost from his subordinates in the way of the simple life, to live in comparative luxury himself even though the money he spends on himself be his own earnings?

A. The manager who expects more from his co-workers than what he does is bound to fail. This of course applies only to philanthropic institutions whose managers have accepted the ideal of poverty.

## Individual v. Collective Cow-keeping

Q. Please explain more fully why individual care of the cow is violent and collective effort non-violent.

A. The present pitiable condition of cattle is surely enough proof. The cow today is a burden simply because individual ownership and care have failed. In a previous article I have explained how the individual cannot take proper care of his cattle, how he cannot keep a bull or grazing ground for himself, and how difficult it is for him to make proper arrangements for the sale of milk and ghee. It would be quite impossible for individuals in any country to make their own arrangements for sending their letters with the ease that the postal department does for crores of people, rich and poor alike. The same applies to cows. If at all the problem can be solved, it will be through collective ownership or use. Ownership and service go ill together. I may belong to one person, but thousands can serve me. If one person alone were to claim the right to serve me, where would I be? This is exactly what is happening to the cow. Individuals own the cow, they do not serve it.

Sevagram, 23-2-42

(From Harijansevak)

## Praja Mandals and the Congress

Q. Please clarify the position of the Congress vis-a-vis Praja Mandal Committees in States. Who should be responsible for political policies there?

A. Praja Mandals are independent bodies having no official connection with the Congress. They may or may not take their inspiration from the Congress policies. Such being the case I should advise them not to irritate State authority by an unnecessary identification with the Congress.

## Women

Q. While you have advised women in cities to go into the villages in order to escape from the danger of assaults, do you not think that some of us, at any rate, should be brave enough to face the risk? After all women cannot become brave or self-reliant, if they are always to be kept out of harm's way. Will not one death bravely faced help the woman's cause? There is danger today of our girls being put back into purdah, as it were, by their parents.

A. Of course those who are wanted in the cities must remain at all cost and face the worst. Nothing should be done in bravado. When they go to the villages there will be no purdah. It will be all work and no freedom from danger anywhere on this God-forsaken little ball which two teams are kicking for all they are worth. The days of the purdah are gone for good.

Sevagram, 2-3-42

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# HARIJAN

Mar. 8

1942

## AN APPEAL TO QAID-E-AZAM

(By M. K. Gandhi)

I have been painfully but regularly going through the English weeklies that come to me and that are devoted to the cause of the Muslim League. I read them so as to keep myself informed of what the Muslim mind as influenced by the Muslim League thinks. Not a week passes but these weeklies contain what to me appear to be distortions of truth and vilification of the Congress and Congressmen and Hindus. What has prompted me to write these lines is a virulent attack on Hinduism in one of the weeklies. Here is an extract from the article:

"Hinduism is the greatest curse of India, and it is based on intolerance and inequality. To call one's self a 'Hindu' is to confess that one is reactionary and narrow-minded. No decent, civilised, honest and sincere human being who knows what Hinduism is and what it stands for, would like to be known as a Hindu or join this faith of primitive barbarians. For it is on barbarity that this so-called religion is based. No other word can describe the state of 97 per cent. of the population who have been decreed by the gods and goddesses of this precious religion as impure and unclean beings fit only to serve the remaining 3 per cent. of the population. . . . We would far rather suggest to the students to prepare in their laboratories of the mind deadly bombs which would completely smash and destroy Hinduism, the greatest menace to India's welfare and well-being."

I hope I shall not be told that the article in question is taken from another newspaper. It has been taken in order to hold up Hinduism to scorn. Though the founder of this paper is Qaid-e-Azam himself and it is issued under the direction of Nawabzada Liaquat Ali Khan, Hon. Secretary of the League, I fancy that they have not seen the article in question.

What will be the state of Hindus under Pakistan? Will they be suppressed as barbarians? There is no attempt in the papers at looking at the other side. The policy adopted in the papers must lead to the promotion of bitterness and strife between the two communities. If the end is to be attained through strife and force and not by persuasion and argument, I can have nothing to say. But I observe from Qaid-e-Azam's speeches that he has no quarrel with the Hindus. He wants to live at peace with them. I plead, therefore, for a juster estimate of men and things in papers representing the policy and programme of the Muslim League.

Sevagram, 2-3-42

## IN MEMORIAM

On the night of the day on which Jamnalalji was taken from this earth, Gandhiji said, as he lay down to rest, "I do not know what I shall do without him," and ever since the catastrophe his waking thoughts have been full of him. Quick to act, as he always is, he issued an invitation to a great many of Jamnalalji's friends to meet here on the 20th and discuss the best ways and means of honouring the deceased's memory. The response to the invitation was remarkable. Many came from all parts of the country, and those who could not come sent letters to say they would do whatever Gandhiji wanted them to.

The following is the gist of Gandhiji's talks on the 20th and 21st afternoons. It seemed as if he were pouring out the pent up agony of his soul.

### First Day

"This is no ordinary meeting. There is no president. An insupportable burden has fallen to my lot, and I am before you not as a president but as a beggar. My relations with Jamnalalji began with my entry into public life in my own country. Since then I have never had to worry. It was an easy thing for me to rely on him to carry out my wishes, for no one had identified himself quite so much with every one of my activities as he. And our work went on smoothly. Now he has gone, and as I could not possibly ask any one person to shoulder the immense burden he carried, I thought I would ask his friends to help me by dividing it. I do not propose to ask for contribution for a memorial to Jamnalalji. Nor do I want to give the chief place to money for the various activities with which he identified himself. If I did so, I would be denying myself. I know that money will come if the work is worthy and worthily done. I want us all to do what is far more difficult, that is to fill ourselves with the spirit with which he worked. That means detailed application to the many activities with which he had identified himself.

"When I arrived at the mansion in the hope that I would find Jamnalalji alive I found that the spirit had departed a few minutes before. No one can really be heartless on such occasions, but I may have seemed so, for instead of sorrowing with Janakidevi I pleaded with her to renounce her all and carry on Jamnalalji's work and be a living sati in the place of burning herself on the funeral pyre as she wanted to. It has been my wont throughout life to throw burdens on people and get the most from them. Janakidevi hesitated a bit and said she had not the ability. I said, if she had the desire, Vinoba would tell her that God would give her the ability and strength. She rose to the occasion. She has renounced not only all her material possessions—about 2½ lakhs—but has dedicated all her time to the work of the Goseva Sangh. Jamnalalji's entire family will, I trust, follow their parent's example and shoulder the burden with their mother to the best of their ability. Jamnalalji had kept aside 6 lakhs for public work. His sons could have kept this sum for themselves. But



Kamalnayan — Ramkrishna is still a lad — has made over the entire sum to me to do as I like with. This includes land opposite the Magan Museum, another piece of land, and Maganwadi itself. Besides this they have decided on behalf of Jamnalal & Son to continue the hospitality in the guest house including the private bungalow in Bajajwadi. This may mean an annual expense of Rs. 20,000. Janakibehn will live in the hut in Gopuri which Jamnalalji had built for himself. All this augurs well for the future.

"You have seen a list of Jamnalalji's activities. I should like us to concentrate on his last activity first, viz. cattle preservation through the cow. But cow service is a very difficult task, more difficult than winning Swaraj. Swaraj we will have. But preservation of cattle, even aged, is still a problem to be solved. We work on the assumption that unfit and aged cattle need not be killed. The way Jamnalalji took it up and worked at it for two months is a remarkable proof of his single-minded devotion and powers of organisation. It is amazing what he was able to achieve in so short a time. But his body was too frail to stand the strain, and I had a premonition that we would lose him. His work cannot be replaced by money. It is sterling workers that are most wanted. The question is how to discharge the trust that has devolved on us. Such a death as his is accorded to one in a million. He was fortunate in every way. And we can only prove ourselves worthy of him and his purity, if we can identify ourselves with his activities, each according to the best of his ability. It is not an easy thing I ask, and you must not give simply because I ask it of you. You must only do what you can truthfully and without hesitation. I give goseva first place because Jamnalalji had taken it up in a special way. The work was started years ago. Jamnalalji was the president. But neither he nor I was happy about its progress. It is a great work. If we save the cow, we save human lives too. We could kill and eat the cow as other countries do, but we do not look upon that as human. We have chosen what we regard as the nobler way. But in saving her we must see that she and her progeny are a source of wealth, not the burden that they are today. In the all-India programme framed by Jamnalalji, reform of *pinjrapols* was one of the main items, and if we succeed in this, it will be a great achievement. Then there is the creation of good bulls, all important for the salvation of the cow and her breed.

"About his other activities, you know that he took his full share in the constructive work in which I had specialised. He gave as much time as, if not more than, I to khadi. I may have given the *mantra*, but Jamnalalji devoted his intelligence, his powers of organisation and his money to give form to the scheme. He had the gift of seeking out and creating workers too. He felt with me that Swaraj was to be found in khadi, and he organised it while I was in jail, or else it might have died. The same with the Village Industries Association, the Talimi Sangh, the Harijan Sevak

Sangh, etc. All of you are not full khadi wearers even today. You have not yet carried the message to every member of your own family. Let us be as fearless and correct as he was.

"Today the country is in danger. Japan is knocking at our doors. What is the mercantile class going to do? Will they lose India for us once again? Will they bow the knee to the new-comer? Seeking freedom from one, shall we submit to another? Jamnalalji's spirit would answer that query for you in no uncertain terms. Many of us harbour hatred for the British, for our understanding of ahimsa is elementary. If we were brave, we would sympathise with them. We want to be friends with them and everyone else, but we may not bend the knee to anyone. If we could win our freedom through non-violence from the British, we need not fear anyone. We would be invincible. But we are weak and therefore in danger, though the future all unknown is in God's hands. The British are a brave people. They have often saved themselves from the jaws of death. Let us face danger even as they do.

"Among Jamnalalji's special activities is the Mahila Mandal. He was exceptionally keen on woman's uplift. The Mahila Ashram was his own conception, and he founded it in order to take charge of the daughters of those who had given themselves to the country's cause.

"Then Hindu-Muslim unity was a cause very dear to Jamnalalji. He had not the slightest trace of communal or class prejudice in him. Let each one of us do what we can in this direction.

"There is again the question of the national language. As you know he was interested in the Rashtra Bhasha prachar. He was principally concerned in drawing me to the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. It was due to his sole effort that the great work of Hindi prachar in the South became possible. It was again due to his help that I was able to carry the resolution about giving an extended meaning to Hindi so as to include Urdu. I ask you all as a token of your regard for Jamnalalji, if you will, to try to learn the Urdu character today. You will find it quite easy to learn the primary letters."

### Second Day

On the second day he said: "One thing we may well learn from Jamnalalji's life is to be ever active. We must be more alert, more ready to renounce and submit to discipline. I sometimes feel that, if all of us had military discipline for a year, we would be different beings. Jamnalalji had gone through no military school, and yet he had imposed on himself the training of a soldier. May we learn to impose such training on ourselves. The urge instilled by ahimsa takes the place of an order. For 22 years I have been saying so from the house-tops. If the Congress has not succeeded in full measure, it is because Congressmen have not been true followers of ahimsa. We met yesterday under the call of an ideal. It was a great day. Swami Anand said Jamnalalji had hoped to enlist at least



1,000 members for the Goseva Sangh during the year. You can all help in this direction."

1. A committee of seven was formed under the chairmanship of Shri Rameshwardas Birla for the purpose of creating 1,000 first class bulls. The expenditure was reckoned at five lakhs, and the members gave five to eight years in which to work out the scheme including the raising of the necessary funds.

2. Rs. 50,000 was guaranteed by friends in Calcutta, and they undertook to collect Rs. 50,000 more. This one lakh was to be devoted to khadi work.

3. Shrimati Suvratadevi promised an adequate donation for khadi, village industry and educational work in Rajputana. She promised Rs. 25,000 for khadi work at the centre and to pay a quarterly visit to Wardha.

On the first day Gandhiji had said that he wanted Janakidevi to step into her husband's gadi, and he proposed her name for the presidentship of the Goseva Sangh for the reasons already stated. She has submitted to the ordeal in the hope that God will give her the ability to bear the burden. "When I asked Janakidevi to take up this difficult task," said Gandhiji, "I thought that it was perhaps woman's work, and that where man had so far failed woman might succeed."

Janakidevi was unanimously elected President, Seth Ghanashyamdas Birla was elected Vice-President. Shri Vinoba will be there for guidance and advice on all fundamental questions. Seth Ghanashyamdas will guide the outward activity of the Sangh. Swami Anand has consented to act as Secretary, if he can be spared by Balasaheb Kher.

Sevagram, 27-2-42

A. K.

## FOUR YEARS' WORK

### II

#### Syllabus

In the matter of covering the prescribed syllabus of co-ordinated studies Kashmir reports success. In Bombay the progress of children under the new method does not compare unfavourably with those who read the departmental syllabus. In the C. P. progress in the mother-tongue is good, it is satisfactory in mathematics, very satisfactory in social studies. In general science children show an interest in outdoor work, but in agriculture as in science the necessary equipment for anything but elementary gardening and nature study is not yet available.

The U. P. is the only province where art has obtained due recognition in basic education both for teachers and pupils. Pioneering work in correlating art with craft and self-expression in art is being done in the U. P. and should constitute a valuable contribution to the scheme. Music and physical education have been given a definite place in all basic schools. The danger of the central fact of the scheme being buried in the passion for art must, however, be guarded against.

#### Difficulties

The syllabus drawn up by the Zakir Husain Committee was only tentative. Any syllabus which aims at far-reaching reconstruction of education requires an extensive background of education and an experimental attitude of mind on the part of teachers. How far the syllabus has been worked in the right spirit it is difficult to say. It has not been worked wholly everywhere. There are all the difficulties attaching to a pioneer experiment. The question of correlation of studies is not easy. Teachers have as yet, generally speaking, neither sufficient knowledge nor mastery over the basic craft, there is also lack of necessary literature and reading material to guide them. The Committee appointed by the Sangh to help training schools has revised and systematised the syllabi of basic crafts for teachers and pupils and is preparing the necessary technical literature in spinning for teachers. Lack of literature for teachers and pupils is one of the criticisms of the scheme, but, as the report says, this is not altogether an unmixed evil. "Teachers and children have so long been used to the dominance of the printed word that the absence of books will stimulate initiative in both. Besides the feeling that the children and teachers are co-operating in the creation of their literature will bring a new pride and interest to their study." Really speaking, given efficient teachers, the need for text-books for children, especially in the early stages, should not arise.

#### Effect on Teachers

While the beneficial effect of the new scheme on children is definitely encouraging and in marked contrast to the dullness and apathy existing in most village schools, the Talimi Sangh has rightly recognised the importance of the effect on any scheme of education on the teachers. Kashmir notes that it is "having a healthy reaction on their professional outlook. They are more active, thoughtful, social, and conscious of their responsibilities." The Vijay Vidya Mandir says, "They work with love all day long, their knowledge has improved, their insight in child psychology has developed, their outlook on life has changed, and they have understood the importance of manual labour." This is surely a tremendous asset in comparison with the mentality of the average village school teacher.

Then there is the influence which the schools have exercised on the village community. The report claims that where the schools have done good work, and this is especially the case in Bihar, the atmosphere of apathy, suspicion and even hostility in which the schools started has given place to one of sympathy and co-operation. In Brindaban, for example, where an exhibition of the handwork of the children was held, many villagers came walking from long distances. To a large extent this interest and co-operation are the result of the community service undertaken by the schools.

#### Economic Possibilities

The report gives a few facts regarding the economic possibilities of the scheme.



The U. P. rejected the idea of self-supporting schools but have stressed the importance of self-sufficiency, i. e. that the material required may be supplied by the school itself. They suggest that the articles made by the children should be given away to them. Children are taken away from school for purposes of field labour. If they brought back cloth, for example, to their homes, the farmers might be induced not to remove them from school.

According to the first syllabus of spinning prepared by the Zakir Husain Committee it was reckoned that in a year of 288 working days with 3 hours and 20 minutes devoted to craft work a child could produce Rs. 2-10-0 worth in grade I and Rs. 7 worth in grade II. The standard has been attained only in a few cases for the reason that, efficient instruction, the proper amount of time, right equipment and raw material have not always been available.

Calculations of earnings in Bihar are interesting. 78 % of the pupils in Grade II and 71 % in Grade I earned above 50 % of the required standard. The actual maximum individual earning for the year was Rs. 5-4-3 in Grade II and Rs. 1-14-0 in Grade I. Against these the minimum was Re. 0-4-4 in Grade II, Re. 0-1-3 in Grade I. As a result of the year's working a sum of Rs. 2,112-3-0 was placed in the treasury as being the price of the yarn spun by the children and the cloth woven out of it as also their garden produce. There was in hand also stock worth Rs. 268-3-8. After deducting the cost of raw material and production, Rs. 1,124-9-9 represents the actual value realised. Later the individual earning of a child touched Rs. 7-3-4. But irregular attendance, less time allotted to the craft, and the fact that good cotton was not available have definitely brought down the average earning per head.

### Conclusion

The importance of free and compulsory primary education, that the medium of instruction throughout should be the mother-tongue, that the child's capabilities should be developed through some form of manual and productive work, have been recognised as sound principles by all educationists and Government authorities. The history of the first three years of basic education, as set forth in the report of the Talimi Sangh, gives ample cause for believing that the scheme is sound. Difficulties have not been minimised. The appeal of the Sangh for better public understanding and for more workers is one which should go home to all who realise the importance in our national life of the right education of our children. Is it too much to expect those Governments who have not yet adopted it to give the scheme a fair trial in howsoever small an area? Above all the Sangh itself has got to show results after 7 years in its own schools. It is their success in the end which must constitute a challenge to the Provincial and Central Governments and the general public and compel its universalisation.

Sevagram, 22-1-42

A. K.

## KHADI FORGES AHEAD

### I

The report of the All India Spinners' Association for the year 1940, which but for the temporary suspension of *Harijan* would have been reviewed ere this in these columns, is a businesslike statement of facts and figures of the work done by the Association through its own branches as well as certified private agencies. As the report was written in June 1941, in some respects it covers the first half of that year also. 95,51,438 sq. yds. of khadi (cotton, wool and silk), weighing 30,82,693 lb. and worth Rs. 51,36,983, was produced during the year. Though there was a slight fall in the yardage in comparison to the previous year (from 111 lakhs to 95), the value rose from Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 51 lakhs, which suggests that more money was paid either to cotton producers for the cotton purchased, or to artisans in the form of increased wages, or to both. The artisans did actually get more money in 1940 than in 1939. (The spinners and weavers got in 1940 the aggregate amount of Rs. 29,81,798 as against Rs. 28,47,560 in 1939.) The sales rose from Rs. 65 lakhs to Rs. 77 lakhs (a rise of 19%), which was a welcome sign of the increasing support khadi received from the people. 74 per cent of the total quantity were sold in the provinces of production. This is a healthy development, the value of which will be realised more and more as difficulties of transport increase and export becomes difficult, if not impossible. It is indeed a cardinal principle in the economics of khadi and village industries that their products should find a market primarily in the areas where they are produced, thus eliminating to a large extent the wastage in the distribution of goods. C. P. and Maharashtra, Gujarat and Sind have made the greatest progress in this respect, their provincial sales exceeding 90 per cent. The number of sale depots under the A. I. S. A. was 284. So far as the total net sales were concerned, Gujarat, Punjab, Bombay, Bihar and U. P. showed an increase of over a lakh of rupees each over the sales of 1939, while Tamil Nad showed a fall (for which there must be some special reasons) of over Rs. one lakh. The National Week and the Gandhi Jayanti were utilised as usual for pushing the sales, and over Rs. 10 lakhs worth of khadi was sold during the two Weeks—the pride of place belonging to Gujarat which, in spite of its comparatively small size, effected total sales during these two Weeks amounting to over Rs. 233 thousand. Taking 1928-29 as the basic year (for, after about four years of existence, in that year the A. I. S. A. can reasonably be considered to have put its full resources to use), the comparative figures of production and sales are as follows, and indicate the progress achieved by khadi in a short span of years, mostly by popular support and encouragement, with little, if any, aid from the Government:

	1928-29	1940
	(lakhs)	
Production (Rs.)	31	51
Sales (Rs.)	39	77



In 1940 the investment of the Sangh amounted to Rs. 43 lakhs. With the steady expansion in production the working capital presented a constant problem and exercised the organisers of the Sangh considerably. For years the capital was supplemented by raising loans, which again presented several difficulties, and in 1940, after full consideration, the Sangh resolved to pay off the Bank loans, to stop the policy of taking any more loans, and to raise the capital by donations made by the wealthy for liquidating unemployment. A few lakhs have already been secured in this manner, and an appeal has been made for more. If we take into consideration the huge amounts that States in the West spend by way of bounties to the new industries which they wish to foster (of which the beetroot subsidy in England is a conspicuous example),\* or by way of artificially maintaining a high level of prices for their farmers' products (as in England and Hitlerite Germany), and in paying the latter in order to restrict or even destroy their products (as in U. S. A. and Brazil), the amount of 20 lakhs asked for by the A. I. S. A. looks insignificant, and it devolves on lovers of indigenous small scale industries to supply the necessary capital, especially because the State has been—unlike the States in the West, which give all possible aid to their handicrafts—wholly apathetic.

The following abstract of figures, culled from the tables given in the report, will speak for itself:

1940	
Yarn produced	Lb. 27,03,351
Workers in A. I. S. A. Branches	2,933
Salaries to workers	Rs. 6,12,380
Workers drawing over Rs. 50	83
No. of villages served	13,451
" " spinners	2,54,968
" " weavers	16,801
" " other artisans	4,377
Total no. of artisans employed	2,76,146
Production centres	608
Wages given to spinners	Rs. 19,00,344
" " weavers	Rs. 10,81,454
" " other artisans	Rs. 4,83,611
Total wages	Rs. 34,65,409
Khadi purchased by spinners	Rs. 3,47,436
Habitual khadi wearers among spinners	23.7 %
" " " " weavers	68.2 %
Khadi sold	Rs. 77,62,750
No. of sale depots	284
Silk — production	Rs. 4,57,514

\* "Before the world depression began, the arable farmers (in England) had been aided by a subsidy on sugar-beet—a most expensive subsidy, which actually cost more than would have sufficed to buy the sugar abroad. . . . Moreover, the farmers were enabled to sell their wheat at a price much in excess of its market value, the amount of the subsidy being recovered from the public in the price of bread."

—G. D. H. Cole: *Practical Economics*, p. 230.

Wool — production	Rs. 12,84,611
Cotton consumed	Lb. 26,56,770
Spinners trained in carding	71,657
Spinners trained in spinning	73,356
No. of A. I. S. A. members	3,558
Total wages distributed in 1924-1940	Rs. 3,59,73,443

The report also describes briefly each of the special features of its work. 'Self-sufficiency in cloth' has been an important item in the programme before the Sangh for the last several years. The phrase was recently defined by the A. I. S. A. Council to include "those who fully and habitually wear khadi and regularly spin per month at least 7½ hanks (one hank=840 yds.) of yarn." The report mentions a good increase in spinning for this kind of self-sufficiency. Charkha clubs have been started in many places, and the Provincial Branches of the A. I. S. A. have facilitated the progress by arranging to get the spinners' yarn woven in the respective provinces.

Ahmedabad, 30-1-42

C. S.

#### Shankarlal Pattarai & Jamnalal Vidyalaya

Two important and appropriate memorials were opened by Rajaji at Tirupur on the 15th inst. One is a workshop (*Pattarai* is Tamil for workshop) for the manufacture of all tools and parts required for the khadi movement. This was most appropriately named after Shri Shankarlal Banker whose name is a household word in South India for his services in the cause of khaddar. Shri S. Ramnathan, the present A. I. S. A. Secretary for Tamil Nad, has spared no pains to make the Shankarlal Pattarai as efficient as possible. Shri V. I. Muniswami Pillai is now a whole-time worker in charge of the dye-works and the Shankarlal Workshop. Two Ex-Ministers of the Madras Government are thus absorbed in the khadi work in the South and continue to serve Rajaji in that way! The Harijan community may well be proud of their representative, Shri Muniswami Pillai, who has become charkha-mad.

Jamnalal Vidyalaya is the Khadi Training Institute attached to the Tamil Nad A. I. S. A. branch. Extensive grounds have been acquired for erecting the necessary buildings, and when completed it will be a fitting memorial for the memory of the great man who was President of the A. I. S. A. for so many years from its inception and whose passing away has left us all so disconsolate.

Sevagram, 4-3-42

M. D.

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