

# HARIJAN

Editor : MAHADEV DESAI

VOL. IX, NO. 11]

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, MARCH 29, 1942

[ FIVE PICE

## Notes

### The National Week

The National Week comes every year with the certainty of seasons. It has come for over twenty years now, and yet we seem to be as far as ever from our freedom or communal unity or universalisation of khadi. We started the celebration with these three definite things. They were convertible terms. If we had unity, we could get freedom, and so also if all were converted to the khadi cult. Though we have added many things since to our constructive programme, the original is as true today as it was when it was first conceived and started.

How shall we behave during the forthcoming Week? Let us not treat freedom apart from its components. Then there remain communal unity and the thirteen other items, at the centre of which stands khadi in its widest sense.

Communal unity at the top will come in its time. We want freedom for the masses, and so do we want communal unity for and among the masses. If we have it in our hearts, let us show it in our daily little acts towards one another.

I will not mention the other items. All organisations will look after them. A word is necessary about khadi. Hitherto we have had khadi sales. This time, thanks to many causes, we have no khadi to sell. But we can all produce, we can all collect funds. If we have enough capital, we can produce more khadi. But we can also do *tunai* or carding and even weaving not for self but for the nation. We would therefore give our output to the A. I. S. A. at its depots in our localities.

And let me not forget the 24 hours' fast on the 6th and the 13th April. Thousands believed in it when we began. We did not err in fasting. Let those who have faith in it not forget fasting and prayer.

### The Curse

A Harijan sevak writes:

"1. There are in our country hotels, hair cutting saloons, etc., which deny admission to Harijans. Is it not expected of our national workers — khadi, Hindi and Congress propagandists — to boycott such institutions and use their influence to get these disabilities of the Harijans removed?

2. There are washermen employed by the A. I. S. A. Some of these washermen observe untouchability in their profession and are not prepared to wash the clothes belonging to persons other than Brahmins and Nairs. The A. I. S. A. dispenses with the washermen who are addicted to drink. Similarly, should not the

A. I. S. A. dispense with those washermen who observe untouchability in their profession?"

The questions are appropriate. Both have to be answered only in one way. All institutions which deny access to Harijans should be boycotted by those, whether Congressmen or others, who feel keenly that the curse of untouchability has to be removed if Hinduism is to remain as a faith to live for and, if need be, to die for. In the posers put by the sevak the difficulty is sometimes serious. But nothing can be achieved unless serious difficulties are seriously faced and surmounted.

The question gives rise to a dilemma on some occasions. The washermen are supported by the A. I. S. A. in common with the other artisans. These cling to untouchability with a tenacity that defies all attempt to make them see the superstition that the curse is. Whilst I cannot offhand ask A. I. S. A. workers to boycott the artisans that observe untouchability, there is no doubt that there should be greater vigilance than heretofore in these matters. Preference should certainly always be given to those who have shed the superstition. Much will depend upon the spirit in which the persons afflicted with the virus of untouchability are approached.

Sevagram, 23-3-42

### A Correction

In *Harijan* of February 22nd 1942, there was an announcement that Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh had been nominated a member of the Board of Management of the A. I. V. I. A. This was a mistake, as he being a member of the Congress Working Committee cannot become a member of the A. I. V. I. A. Board.

Sevagram, 18-3-42

M. K. G.

### Bhils and Harijans in Rajputana

Thakkar Bapa's work entails a good deal of touring. He snatches odd moments during his travels to write to Gandhiji. The following is extracted from the account of the recent tour Shrimati Rameshwari Nehru and he had in Rajputana.

Speaking of Udaipur he opines that education is terribly backward. There is only one primary school to cater for 20-25 villages and only two high schools in the whole State. Thikanedars — landholders who make states within a state — who comprise nearly half the State spend all the revenue on themselves and do nothing for the ryot. The State has, however, decided to open 40 new schools every year where Harijans and Bhils too may have some opportunities of educa-



tion. On His Highness' birthday the interest from 2 lakhs was set apart for the service of Harijans and Bhils as well as an annual grant of Rs. 10,000.

Branches of the Harijan Sevak Sangh have been opened in Mewar, Chittor, Bhilwada, Chhoti Sadri and Nathdwara, as well as two schools for Bhils and Minas in Rishabhdev and Kesariaji. It is an uphill task for Harijan workers, for there is great prejudice against Harijans in Rajputana. For example the images of Harijan gods may not have four hands. Only two are permissible for them! They may not take out processions on festival days in the main streets of the town. Music, other than drums, is not allowed to them during their weddings. A Harijan bridegroom may not wear a 'sehra'. One poor boy had the temerity to do so with the result that his associates received a sound thrashing from the inhabitants of Karjoo village, the party was robbed of all the money—Rs. 75—they had and 3 tolas of gold were literally pulled off their ears. Could tyranny go further? And even the Mahajan community, supposedly more advanced, harbours these prejudices.

At Nathdwara, one of the most famous Vaishnava temples in Mewar, Rs. 800 is spent daily in Prasad. How many Harijans and Bhils could be maintained with this money!

Women's education is next to nil in Rajputana and purdah is rife. In Jaipur Harijans are conspicuous by their absence in State schools and college. Harijan children need scholarships to encourage them to enter educational institutions. They should be given preference in State services. The age-long and cruel custom of forced labour should be put an end to. Sweepers and scavengers are terribly underpaid. Men get Rs. 7-8-0 and women Rs. 1-12-0 per mensem. No leave or provident fund facilities are given.

#### Barter in Bezwada

Shri Sitaram Sastry of Vinayashram writes that Shri Venkatakrishtnayya of Gunadala (near Bezwada) has, since 1929, been carrying on with success a system of barter in his Khaddar Samsthanam.

To begin with he issued 138 and 50 chits worth Re. 1 and Rs. 3/8 each respectively. The chits were countersigned by the firm in which the funds of the Khaddar Samsthanam to the extent of Rs. 20,000 were then deposited. They circulated for four years among the residents of the institution and ultimately came into the hands of the firm. They served the purpose of coin, and holders were able on presentation of them to get the necessary articles or money. Later in 1933, because some people invariably wanted money in exchange, it was decided to give one bag of paddy per chit—a bag at that time being worth Rs. 3/8—and make paddy the medium of exchange. Other articles equivalent in value to the bag of paddy according to the scale of barter were given and cash was rarely used. For example a bag of paddy fetched 4 pairs of countrymade shoes. It was equal to 12½ lb. of carded cotton or 25 lb. of chillies or 6 lb.

of ghee, 50 lb. of tamarind, 8 yards of khadi 45" wide, or 25 lb. of oil, etc.

Recently Shri Venkatakrishtnayya has developed the idea of a food ticket. He gives slivers and, if a person spins 1,000 yards of well-twisted, uniform yarn of about 12 counts, he gets 90 tolas of cooked rice and 30 tolas of soup and vegetable. The cost of this meal, which suffices for an adult, is one anna. The spinning wage thus works out at an anna for 1,000 yards, which would mean about 3½ annas per day of 8 hours, if the spinner were efficient enough to turn out 400 yards per hour.

Shri Sitaram Sastry is anxious to bring into practice Gandhiji's dictum that 'yarn is our basic coin' in his Ashram. At the present market rates one bag of paddy would be equivalent to 96 food tickets, i. e. the spinning wage payable for 96,000 yards of yarn or 5½ lb. of yarn of 12 counts. It would be good to try the experiment on a small scale and appraise results. But accurate observation is necessary, if success is to be ensured.

Sevagram, 21-3-42

A. K.

### QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

#### About Children

Q. I quite agree that as society advances marriages between the different communities will increase and should be welcomed. You rightly advocate no change of religion for the parties concerned. But what do you advocate for the children? In which religion should they be brought up, the father's or the mother's?

A. Presumption in such marriages is that the parents respect each other's religion. If they are religiously minded, the children will unconsciously imbibe what they think is best for them and choose their own faith without let or hindrance from the parents. If the latter are indifferent, the children will also be probably indifferent and label themselves anyhow. This is what I have observed in such marriages. The difficulty crops up when there is a serious difference arising between the parents as to the upbringing of the children.

#### Conversion without Conviction

Q. You oppose all conversion without conviction. But are you not inconsistent? You profess equal respect for all religions. Why then worry about how the conversion is brought about?

A. I have extracted the question from your long and plausible letter, cleverly written. Conversion without conviction is a mere change and not conversion which is a revolution in one's life. You seem too to forget that equal respect implies respect for my own faith as much as for yours or any other neighbour's. My respect for my own faith forbids my being indifferent to my children abandoning their parents' faith without conviction. And I should have little respect for you, if you led my children astray by making all kinds of worldly promises in which matters of the spirit had no place.

Sevagram, 23-3-42



## HINDUSTANI

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Dr. Tara Chand, who has made a close study of the vexed question of the national language, recently wrote a Hindi letter to Shri Kakasaheb, from which the following important extracts are translated below:

"Hindustani and Brij were both colloquial languages at one time. What their status then was it is difficult to say. History only records that in the 12th century Saad Salman wrote a Divan in Hindi, but not a single poem of it has survived. Hindi or Hindustani made its first appearance in the 13th century, and its literature actually came into being in the 14th and 15th centuries in South India. Its language is the same as Khadi Boli (खड़ी बोली) and is the basis of modern Hindi. No writings in Brij are known to have appeared before the 16th century. In *Prithviraj Raso* there are some verses in this language, but when this work was written, especially the Brij portion of it, is not certain. Most persons attribute it to the 16th century.

"Rajasthani or Dingal was in vogue before Brij. The *Raso* is nearly all written in Dingal. Surdas was the first poet to write in Brij in the 16th century.

"The Muslims were the first to create literature in Hindustani. Their faqirs and saints used this language for their religious teachings and explained the principles of the Sufi religion in it also. Later, poets adopted it, and because Muslims used the language there came about a mixture of Persian and Hindi words. The sounds of Persian and Arabic letters also crept in which are not found in Brij but which have remained in Hindi up to date.

"The colloquial language which the Muslims employed is the language spoken even today round about Meerut and Delhi. It is termed Khadi Boli or Hindustani.

"Modern Hindustani, Hindi and Urdu are three forms of this language. Hindi and Urdu are its literary forms into which many Sanskrit and Persian and Arabic words have freely crept. Hindustani is that form of the language which includes both Sanskrit and Persian words. Writers of Hindustani lean towards one or the other according to their taste. But they try to avoid both as much as possible.

"In my opinion neither Hindi nor Urdu should be the lingua franca of India. Either we must agree to call Hindi the language of the Hindus and Urdu that of the Muslims, or we must try to make Hindustani the common language. So long as we call either Hindi or Urdu the national language we are certain to raise a controversy.

"I think you are on the right track. But truth is often not seen clearly because of prejudices. I should like you to save the country from going on the wrong path. The question of language involves the larger question of Swaraj."

Sevagram, 9-3-42

(From *Harijansevak*)

## AN ENGLISHMAN'S TRIBUTE

[In the course of a letter to me Verrier Elwin thus writes about Jamnalalji. M. D.]

"During the last few years I had seen very little of Jamnalalji though at one time we were very close together indeed, and I have never failed to think of him with love and gratitude. Only last week as we were walking over the sharp and rugged mountains of the Abujhmar, one of the wildest places in India, I was telling a friend how ten years ago when I went to see Jamnalalji in jail at Dhulia I had been so shocked at finding him placed in the 'C' class that I had sworn to go barefoot (except in towns and cities where it would look conspicuous) as long as such things were possible in our country. I am still today having to go barefoot, and this single circumstance often served to remind me of my friend.

I remember, too, how when I had an operation in Bombay Jamnalalji, with all the burden of business and weight of administrative Congress duties upon his shoulders, came over to the hospital and sat beside me during the whole of the ordeal. They at first only gave me a local anaesthetic, and he was thus able to talk to me and distract my mind. I remember him again coming up to Karanja to see our work for the Gonds (and it was from the mouth of Jamnalalji in a motor car driving through the streets of Ahmedabad that I first heard the word 'Gond' which has come to mean so much to me later on) with Miss Muriel Lester and the lady who is now Mrs. Kripalani. I shall never forget the enthusiastic interest with which he examined everything, the generous and ready help that he gave when it was needed, and the remarkable sympathy and interest that he showed immediately into all our little problems.

In the old days, to visit Jamnalalji's simple little house in Wardha was a wonderful experience. Jamnalalji's own life never lost its simplicity, but when Wardha became a metropolis, naturally many other buildings and institutions sprang up and the others became crowded; but in 1931 and 1932 the note of simplicity and peace was as evident as in a sadhu's home. I think that only a very few Englishmen visited Wardha in those days, and Jamnalalji was never so well-known in England and America as some other Congress leaders, largely because of his unwillingness to talk much in English. I think that was a pity, for there was much in Jamnalalji to appeal strongly to the Western man. His simplicity and honour, his straightforwardness and plainness of speech (I remember him frequently rebuking me for saying 'thank you' so often, which, he said, I could not possibly mean), and his Quakerlike attitude to existence would have made a strong appeal. His devotion to truth was unique in a very rich man. You felt that every word he uttered was fit to be audited by a Chartered Accountant; you felt that all his emotions would balance properly and that his ideals would never show a deficit. I loved him very dearly, and now that he is gone, even though I had hardly seen him in the last few



years, I feel a great gap. I realise, too, what a loss his genial, affectionate, generous and liberal presence must be to you all at Wardha and to the country. Please give my love and my deepest sympathy to Mrs. Bajaj and the other members of the family; and if you like to do anything else with this letter, you know you may do so."

## HARIJAN

Mar. 29

1942

### INHUMAN IF TRUE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The Honorary Secretary of the Social Service Department of the Marwari Relief Society writes:

"I have to place before you a very brief review of the activities of the Marwari Relief Society, Calcutta, in connection with rendering relief to evacuees from Burma and Malaya, absolutely irrespective of caste, creed and colour, and also to humbly seek your invaluable advice on a very grave matter. The Society has undertaken to provide food, medical aid, and facilities for repatriation to thousands of helpless refugees who are arriving in Calcutta daily by rail, road, and sea. Several emergent cases of delivery have also been attended to. The Society is also trying to secure suitable jobs for unemployed evacuees with the kind co-operation of respectable local firms.

In this connection I beg to report a certain very regrettable incident to you, and shall be grateful if you kindly advise me as to my duties in the matter.

On the night of the 14th March, shortly after the arrival of the Chittagong Mail, as I, in company with a number of volunteers, was attending to the wants of the evacuees, a British Tommy got hold of a small child belonging to one of the poor evacuees and threw it under the train. Although I am a humble follower of your noble creed of non-violence, it was with the greatest difficulty that I restrained myself and my volunteers from punishing the soldier bodily for his brutal act. I reported the matter to the station military authorities, but their attitude was anything but sympathetic. I later approached Mr. K. C. Sen I. C. S. over the matter, and though he promised to duly enquire into the matter, nothing has been done as yet to rectify it. There are still large numbers of soldiers loitering about the platforms every night, and a violent clash between these soldiers and relief volunteers and the public is a possibility which has to be tackled in no time. I have already placed the matter before the Bengal Congress Civil Protection Committee.

I should be thankful, if you kindly advised me on the following points:

1. Should I start an agitation in the press over the matter?
2. Supposing a soldier behaves indecently towards a helpless female evacuee, are we to put up with it silently, or should the soldier be forcibly dealt with?

It would help us very greatly, if you kindly issued a statement in *Harijan* in this connection. I am prepared

to accept all responsibility regarding the truthfulness of the above incident."

I have suppressed many letters giving me authentic details about the misbehaviour of soldiers. I have published them when it would have been wrong, if not cowardly, to suppress them. The letter in question demands, in my opinion, the widest publicity, not merely for the safety of the public but also for the sake of the soldiers and the Government. The Marwari Relief Society is a big philanthropic institution of twentyfive years' standing having an all-India reputation. It has funds and seasoned workers. Its prestige should have been enough security for the good behaviour of the soldiers in the presence of its workers. The soldier must have run amuck or been under the influence of drink to have behaved as he is reported to have done. I trust that the Marwari Relief Society will not leave the matter till it is thoroughly thrashed out; and I trust too that the authorities will not wish to hush up the matter but will make ample amends, if the case is proved as reported by my correspondent.

So much for the case itself. The correspondent desires my guidance about similar cases in future. The action of himsa or ahimsa would have been identical. The volunteers should have, if they could, bodily prevented the soldier from touching the child or snatched the child from him, even if the soldier had been hurt in the act of preventing or snatching. The proceedings after the delivery of the child or the failure of the attempt would vary according as the deliverers were actuated violently or non-violently. Non-violent behaviour would dictate generous and gentle behaviour towards the culprit. But generosity and gentleness would have to be thoughtful and reasoned. It is difficult to lay down in advance the rule of conduct applicable in all cases. I can say this much that a truly generous act demands sincere recognition on the part of the culprit. I have known instances of Africans in South Africa insulted at railway stations saying to the rude white men, "My brother, God will forgive you for your rudeness," and the white men giggling, if not adding injury to insult. In similar circumstances I have myself remained silent and suffered the insult. I am quite clear that the Africans' so-called generosity was a mere mechanical act justly evoking derision. Mine was timidity. I did not wish to evoke further insult. I certainly did not want to take legal proceedings. I was trying then to shape my non-violent conduct. If I had had the real courage, I would have expostulated with the insulters and risked the worst.

I have interpolated an examination of so-called non-violent conduct in cases of personal insult or injury. What about the child injured or the injury imagined by my correspondent? I think non-violent conduct would not, should not, be different. The distinction that is often drawn between personal injury and injury done to wards is unjustified, if not wrong. A man is not expected to do more for his wards than he would for himself. He would no doubt sacrifice himself for his ward's honour,



but he would be expected to do likewise for his own. If he did otherwise, he would be voted a coward and is not likely to protect his ward's honour, if he is not able to protect his own. But I own that correct non-violent conduct does not come through mere reasoning. Reason is a necessary preliminary. But correctness of conduct will come only through repeated practice, maybe even repeated failures.

What violent conduct should be surely needs no examination.

Sevagram, 23-3-42

### THE ANDHRAS

(By M. K. Gandhi)

The following has been sent to me by Maharaj Kumar Vijaya Anand of Vizianagram :

"There is a strong feeling amongst us Andhras that you do not like us, that you are against the formation and the establishment of a separate province. Despite Andhra Desh being overwhelmingly Congress, it never received your blessings. If three crores of yearning hearts are asking for a separate existence, would you not allow them the 'right to sin' as the great Tilak Maharaj once said? People of my Desh are so definite about your dislike for the Andhras that they even attribute your visit to Benares recently for the purpose of commanding me to drop the Andhra agitation. The Andhras would like to know whether you ever gave any advice to Tamil Nad regarding Andhras, and also wish to know whether during the last ministry the Andhra question was referred to you or not; if so, what advice did you give them? Do you put the Andhra question on the same footing as that of Karnatak and Kerala whose revenues may not be enough to have separate provinces? Pray, what is your opinion regarding Andhra Desh being self-supporting? Is it not a fact that, owing to steadfast loyalty of the Andhras to the Congress movement, they did not achieve what Orissa did? It is felt that, had the Andhras taken a different line of action when the Simon Commission came to India, they would have got their hearts' desire."

I can only say that the Maharaj Kumar is in bad hands. Being a novice in the art of handling masses, he has evidently not taken care to inquire into the credentials of his informants. I should like to know the Andhras who have given him the information which he has chosen to transmit to me. I am not a stranger to Andhra Desh myself. I refer the Maharaj Kumar to Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappayya, Shri Prakasam, Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Shri Kaleshwar Rao and Shri Sitaram Sastry. They will probably bear witness to the fact that I was principally instrumental in securing from the Congress the recognition of the redistribution of the Provinces for Congress purposes on a linguistic basis. I have always agitated for the acceptance by the Government of such redistribution. I have indeed advised Tamil Nad, when such advice was needed, not to resist the Andhra demand. I know that the Congress ministry headed by Shri C. Rajagopalachari tried its best to get Andhra recognised as a separate

province, and it was no fault of the ministry that Andhra Desh has not yet been so recognised. But it is true that I recognise no distinction between Karnatak, Kerala and Andhra or for that matter any other province recognised by the Congress as a separate province. I do not know enough about any province to be able to say which can be self-supporting on being recognised as separate. As to my visit to Benares, the purpose is too well known to need any clarification. The Maharaj Kumar is a sportsman, and he should be above worrying about baseless suggestions made about him. He would be an unworthy leader who can be deflected from his mission even by a Mahatma. I hope this answer will satisfy the Maharaj Kumar, if not even those who duped him into putting the questions he has.

Sevagram, 20-3-42

### THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE

(By K. G. Mashruwala)

Is a member of a *Shanti Dal* (Peace Brigade), by reason of the creed of non-violence, precluded from exercising his legal right to use violence in self-defence?

This question is raised, firstly when one does not perceive the difference between individual and collective violence, and secondly when one is not clear about the exact position which he, as an individual, chooses to take up in the task of advancing and perfecting the technique of non-violent resistance.

On the first point, the imperfections of human character will always give rise to acts of individual violence either deliberately or on sudden provocation. In such cases, until a fairly certain non-violent method of self-defence is discovered and made known to everyone, a spirited man will always resist the aggressor with counter-violence. This will take place even amongst such fully pledged disciples of non-violence as monks, sadhus, and the like. So again, not only children will fight with one another, but even parents and children, husband and wife, and blood brothers will sometimes abuse, beat and even go to the extent of committing murder. Even in a predominantly non-violent society we shall have such happenings amongst peaceful citizens, even as we hear of motor car accidents. As usual, the cause of quarrel will be generally property, sex, or petty selfishness in the enjoyment of common comforts. On such occasions there will be at times a combination of several individuals also. This combination may be premeditated or accidental. If it is the former, it is organised, and is not covered by the 'legal' right of self-defence. Even where arms and military training are given to every person, citizens are not allowed to organise themselves in a body, except under the control of the State.

Thus there is a difference between individual violence, collective unpremeditated (and so, unorganised) violence (such as by a mob), and collective organised violence, as by a trained body of goondas, dacoits, volunteers, policemen or soldiers.

In the suggested organisation of *Shanti Dals* (Peace Brigades) the problem of violence and right



of self-defence by individuals cannot arise. They are concerned with the problem of organising collective protection of citizens against the violence of unsocial elements. And the principle laid down is that the *Shanti Dals* must not meet this violence by organised counter violence.

The personal right of self-defence is here not touched. But it does not follow that an individual may not choose to forego that right. The *Shanti Dal* is an entirely new type of organisation. Its purpose is to perfect a new method of counteracting violence by adopting its opposite. There will be two types of men amongst its members. They may be either members of a militia or a non-violent corps. Members of the latter, though not bound in rule, will not use violence even in self-defence, as that will interfere with the development of the new technique. If an engineer is studying the problem of friction in his factory, he will not be heedless of that factor in his private laboratory. So, too, an individual member of a peace brigade. He will rather court risk of defeat through non-violence than achieve an apparent success through violence. It is for each individual member to choose which place he would like to fill in the peace organisation.

The same considerations incidentally dispose of the question, whether a votary of non-violence may not also help the organisation of a corps, not pledged to non-violence, if the latter seeks his guidance. It is clear that he can do so only at the risk of defeating his own objective.

Sevagram, 22-3-42

### COW'S MILK FOR LEPERS

[Dr. Santra is an authority on leprosy. What he says should carry weight. Apart from my views on the cow, the medical profession owes a duty to the country to discover the relative values of different milks.]

Sevagram, 23-3-42

M. K. G.]

"Recently I was in Bajajwadi in connection with work at the Maharogi Seva Mandal. During my spare hours I visited places of activities at Maganwadi, Nalwadi and Mahila Ashram, etc.

I bought some pamphlets and reports, and it was very pleasing to read what you said on the 30th September, 1941. You said, 'Fundamentally by protecting the cow we realise our duty towards all living beings, but having reduced cow service to a farce we have forgotten our real duty.'

Some fifteen years back when most of my evenings were spent in villages giving magic lantern lectures on leprosy, I laid particular stress on the protection of the cow while explaining the effect of milk on leprosy. I told people that, if we have more leprosy, it is because of the fact that we have ill-treated the cow which was supposed to be a goddess but was the most neglected, and therefore God punished us with leprosy.

It might appear to be a sentiment or a religious mania. I cannot offer scientific argument in favour of the theory that protection of the cow will protect us from leprosy, but there are indications that the use of milk reduces the virulence of leprosy.

In the last century a Sikh Baba got the reputation of curing leprosy at Sitalani in the Amritsar district. This reputation reached the ears of the Government, and the popular belief regarding the cure was so strong that the Government instituted an enquiry. The Civil Surgeon of Amritsar visited Sitalani and reported that the reported improvement was true, and that it was due not to any secret remedy but to the inclusion of a liberal amount of milk in the diet of the lepers who came to stay there.

Dr. Muir, the father of anti-leprosy campaign in India, advised that lepers should take two seers of milk a day. The propaganda leaflets that he prepared had the picture of a cow, and he advocated the use of cows' milk.

In recent days Dr. Cochrane of South India found that children having a malignant type of leprosy became benign more quickly when they got skimmed milk in addition to treatment. He would have done a great service, if he had obtained the milk locally rather than getting the powder from foreign countries. That would have given an opportunity to the lepers to do goseva and provide manure for the kitchen gardens. Some time back it was claimed that vitamin A produced changes in leprosy toward good. We know that cows' milk, specially of those who feed on green grass, is very rich in vitamin A. Thus we have some scientific indication that the use of cows' milk will decrease the virulence of leprosy. When it becomes benign, the disease being unable to propagate itself, the number of lepers will naturally decrease.

To my mind today a leper in India is neglected as much as, or more than, our cows. They are not dumb like the cows, but they have not organised any association through which they could speak their mind. The care of the leper like the care of the cow was a part of Indian culture. Even today daily meals for lepers at the local leper asylums at Deoghar and Puri are supplied by the temple authorities. In South India there are temples where there is a special place for a leper to live. Their food is supplied by the temple authorities. Customs like this might have originated from the time when Manu laid down laws for the conduct of lepers. He advised them to leave their homes and spend the remaining part of their life at holy places. I met Shastriji (who is a case) of Sevagram and requested him to study the status of lepers in our old shastras.

Today our culture might have been rendered weak but it has not vanished. The protection of the cow and eradication of leprosy will progress in proportion to the effort we make to revive our old culture. They should have their place in the national planning of our country."

### Status of Indian Princes

By Pyarelal

Price Four Annas, Postage 1½ as. extra.

A series of essays based on diligent research.

Can be had at Navajivan Office, Post Box 105, Ahmedabad, and at 130 Princess St., Bombay.



## LOVE OF ONE'S OWN LANGUAGE

## I

In his pamphlet on the Constructive Programme, referring to our indifference to and disregard for our indigenous languages, Gandhiji has cited, by way of contrast, the examples of Japan and the Chinese Generalissimo, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek. A few facts about both of these are given below in the hope that they will interest the reader.

The Japanese language is very difficult to learn. "A child should learn about 3,000 different characters by the time he is ten or twelve; he must know about 5,000 to read a newspaper intelligently. These characters are Chinese, but the *language* is different." The efforts of the Japanese to simplify interpretation of the Chinese characters have only made Japanese "by all odds the most formidable tongue in the world", says John Gunther. But the Japanese have neither given up their language nor do they think of Romanising their script. All their education is given through their own tongue, and yet "Japan has a record in education that no Oriental country can remotely match." Japanese literacy is 95% as compared with less than 15% in India and 10% in China.

The Japanese Emperor, Hirohito, is a man of wide culture and the first Japanese Emperor to travel abroad. He prefers, though he knows a little English and French, to use his own tongue, Japanese, while speaking to foreigners. "One discovers soon," says Gunther, "that Tokyo, for all its modernity, is the hardest of the great eastern capitals to get around in. This is largely because a recent Home Minister . . . abolished foreign language street signs. . . Later when tourists became hopelessly confused, some English signs were permitted to reappear at railway stations." The authorities frown even on such semi-English expressions among Japanese as "Papa-san" which children use for father.

The Chinese language is perhaps no less difficult than the Japanese. Yet the Chinese have not given it up. They are now trying to evolve a simple variant of it in order to make it easier for the masses to learn. Though pronunciations differ widely from province to province, the written language is the same throughout China, and "the uniform written language has played a colossal role in keeping China together."

The love of one's language is shared in an eminent degree by the Generalissimo, Marshal Chiang Kai-shek. When the Generalissimo and the Madame meet a foreign visitor, she interprets for him since his only foreign language is Japanese. Here is one of the makers of modern China, one whom Gunther describes as "probably the strongest Chinese individual since the third century B. C. when the Great Wall was built", feeling no sense of shame because he cannot talk in any language other than his own. Gunther also reports that the Marshal was responsible for the removal of English road signs in China. The Marshal's insistence on the use of his own tongue is shared by some of

his most prominent associates like General Chan Cheng who is reputed to be the choice of Chiang Kai-shek as his successor.

## II\*

Let us now turn to Western Asia. It has been a characteristic common to all nationalist movements of modern times that the resurgence of the national spirit has been accompanied by a linguistic revival. Arabic was the predominant language of Western Asia, being the language of the Koran, and was the common bond that united all sects of Islam. It was also the mother-tongue of the populations inhabiting Arabia, Syria, Egypt and some other territories. Syria was the first to "awaken to the idea of nationalism in its modern form . . . Like European nationalism, Arab Syrian national consciousness had its origin in a literary renaissance. The ancient, classical language and the poetical and philosophical works written in it were studied: new life and a spirit of romance were breathed into the old, traditional subjects: the speech which for decades had only been current among the people or used for theological disquisitions was raised once more to the dignity of a modern literary language by the creation of a new terminology: foreign classics were translated, and finally the new knowledge was sifted and collected in great encyclopaedias and dictionaries." The linguistic revival made rapid strides in subsequent years. The most remarkable fact emerging from this movement was the determination of the educated ones — both Arabs and Christians — to refashion and develop their own mother-tongue in order to make it an efficient vehicle of modern thought and science, and their insistence throughout on making it a medium of instruction instead of adopting a foreign tongue for the purpose.

In the first decade of the present century, when attempts were made by the Turkish rulers to force the Arabian provinces to adopt Turkish customs and to suppress Arabic even in the schools, Arabic national sentiment rose in revolt which spread even to Mesopotamia hitherto less advanced than Syria. Among the demands made by the Syrian Arabs from the Turkish rulers were these: "Arabic was to be recognised as the official language in the provincial administration and courts of law; Civil servants were to know Arabic; European experts employed to reorganise the administration were to sign a 15 year contract and were to know either Arabic or Turkish."

In Egypt, where the people's language was Arabic, the people had to struggle for years to get the English rulers to make adequate provision for the teaching of Arabic and adopt the people's language as the medium of instruction in schools. The national leaders, however, carried on the political education of the masses through papers

\* The facts and quotations in this and the subsequent sections have been taken, unless otherwise indicated, from Hans Kohn's *A History of Nationalism in the East*.



conducted in Arabic and acquired, in the meanwhile, a remarkable hold on them.

John Gunther, writing in 1938 about the regime of Reza Shah Pahlevi in Iran, says that "only Persian characters may be used in street signs and the like. Name-plates of foreigners in Teheran will be torn from the doors unless they are in Persian. Even kilometre posts along the roads are painted with Arabic numerals which are quite different from the English numerals." It is necessary to note that the national language which was thus fostered and encouraged not only did not prove a barrier to the progress that Iran made in recent years but the message of reform and enlightenment perhaps reached the masses more easily because of its being conveyed in their own language.

### III

The brotherhood of Islam included many nations. In several of these countries nationalist movements often began with an effort to break away from the common religious language. In Morocco, for example, "as early as the 12th century Ibn Tumart, who was champion of Berber nationalism, translated the Koran into Berber and had the call to prayer proclaimed in Berber instead of Arabic." Turkey of the eighteen-fifties seems to have taken the lead in the movement, inspired by the liberal sentiment that was aroused in the wake of the Crimean War. The Edict promulgated by the Sultan in 1856 breathed a new spirit of liberalism. Till 1860 literary Turkish had been a highly artificial language made up of Persian and Arabic words and turns of speech. The people could not understand it. With the growth of the nationalist sentiment there grew up also "a new unaffected and natural language akin to the vernacular". Shinasi Effendi was the father of the new language, which he was the first to use in translations and his newspapers. Turkey woke up from her torpor. A similar movement was afoot amongst the Russian Tatars of Crimea and the Volga who wanted to substitute "the Russian alphabet for the Arabic in the Turco-Tatar language and replace all Arabian and Persian words by words of pure Turkish derivation."

There are a few States belonging to people of non-Russian Asiatic origin within the U. S. S. R. Be it said to the credit of the latter that the peoples within its borders are allowed "to lead a national life of their own and to develop their own language and traditions. In every small autonomous republic or territory the vernacular was the official language and became thus a written, literary language." In the province of Turkistan, inhabited largely by Muslims, the indigenous language is used as the medium of instruction, and these local tongues are coming into general use and beginning to oust Russian as official languages. Even Afghanistan, without adopting English or any other Western language as the medium of instruction, achieved remarkable results. The progress made in education, the

London *Times* (1929) declares, can hardly be described as other than astonishing.

Hebrew is now the language of the Palestinian Jews not only in schools and colleges but in all cultural and social activity, having completely replaced Arabic.

### IV

Europe has not been free from this universal process, and the national upheavals there, which preceded those in Asia, had this one feature common to all. The struggle of the Irish nation, to cite but one instance out of several, for establishing its birthright of using its own national language in all spheres of life, is a glorious episode in the history of humanity's fight for freedom. Even the Englishmen's love for their own language and the devoted labours of generations of them to enrich it provide an object-lesson to us. And it was a German lexicographer, Jakob Grimm, who, in his introduction to the German dictionary, wrote thus: "German fellow countrymen, whatever your political allegiance, whatever your religious faith, enter the portals of your ancient hereditary language that stands open to you all, learn it and hold it sacred and cleave to it. Your national vigour and survival depend upon it."

In none of the countries mentioned has education suffered a setback because it did not adopt a foreign language as the medium of instruction, nor has any of them found it an impediment in their self-expression. What Gandhiji has been saying on the subject is, as is evident from the foregoing facts, wholly in consonance with experience and entirely in keeping with the spirit of the times. Indeed the national awakening in its many aspects penetrated the masses of our country only after, and in so far as, the Congress adopted the national language or the provincial languages in the conduct of its affairs and succeeded in popularising the use of the latter in the provinces.

Ahmedabad, 25-1-42

C. S.

### CONTENTS

QUESTION BOX	...	M. K. GANDHI	94
HINDUSTANI	...	M. K. GANDHI	95
AN ENGLISHMAN'S TRIBUTE	V. ELWIN		95
INHUMAN IF TRUE	...	M. K. GANDHI	96
THE ANDHRAS	...	M. K. GANDHI	97
THE RIGHT OF SELF-DEFENCE	K. G. MASHRU-		
	WALA		97
COW'S MILK FOR LEPERS	...	SANTRA	98
LOVE OF ONE'S OWN			
LANGUAGE	...	C. S.	99
NOTES:			
THE NATIONAL WEEK	...	M. K. G.	93
THE CURSE	...	M. K. G.	93
A CORRECTION	...	M. K. G.	93
BHILS AND HARIJANS IN			
RAJPUTANA	...	A. K.	93
BARTER IN BEZWADA	...	A. K.	94