

HARIJAN

Editor : PYARELAL

VOL. XI. No. 48

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1947

TWO ANNAS

NOTES

A Worthy Example

Shri Dilkhush Divanji of Karadi fame reports the glorious death at his post of one of his staunch workers. The late Valjibhai was the nephew of Panchakaka, the famous farmer of Karadi, who took part in the No-Tax Campaign of Bardoli. He never wavered. He refuses even now to till his land or to pay the tax. He rightly says that there is no *Swaraj* of his dream so long as we need the police to guard our homes and the military to protect us from ourselves. The deceased left a lucrative job and purely from a patriotic motive became a weaver. He proved worthy his uncle and died in harness. No man can wish for a nobler death than Valjibhai's. It is to be wished that the weavers who were trained by him would multiply themselves. If India is to come to her own, she needs thousands of weavers who will weave nothing but hand-spun yarn and expects every man and woman and child above six years to spin good yarn daily for at least half an hour. Such is Divanji's dream and Valjibhai died for its realization.

Stock Grain in Villages

Shri Vaikunth Lallubhai Mehta writes to say that in view of general decontrol it is imperative that there should be sufficient grain stocked in the hands, if possible, of the village *panchayats*, not for profiteering, but as an insurance against scarcity by whatever cause induced. His original letter is in Gujarati which I have reproduced and dealt with in the Gujarati columns. Here has been given the pith of his argument. I have always held that whatever may be said in favour of cash payment of taxes, its introduction injured the nation to the extent that the system of stocking grain in the villages was disturbed. The conservation of grain in the villages is needed for the reason already mentioned. The condition always must be that the growers and dealers must not be greedy or unscrupulous. When this simple honesty becomes common, the consumer cannot be cheated. There is no question of high or low prices when a nation's economics are put on a sound basis and when all parties have an income commensurate with the expenditure required for the necessities of life.

The Gates of Somnath ?

Pandit Sundarlal has contributed to the *Hindustani* columns an interesting article on the reputed gates of Somnath. The curious must see the original. The main point made by the writer is that the gates

which were taken away to Ghazni were never brought back as then stated. The gates were a fabrication and when the fraud was discovered the exhibition of the 'gates' never travelled beyond Agra. Pandit Sundarlalji is anxious that by an oversight the fabrication might not be used in the projected renovation of the famous temple.

New Delhi, 22-12-'47

M. K. G.

GANDHIJI'S ADDRESS TO THE MEOS

Addressing a gathering mainly of the Meos in the village of Jesarah in the Gurgaon Tehsil on 9-12-'47 Gandhiji remarked that his voice was not so powerful as it once used to be. There was a time when whatever he said was acted upon. If it had the original power, not a single Muslim should have found it necessary to migrate to Pakistan from the Indian Union or a single Hindu or Sikh leave his hearth and home in Pakistan and seek asylum in the Indian Union. What had taken place—the orgy of murder, arson, loot, abductions, forcible conversions and worse that they had witnessed—was, in his opinion, unmitigated barbarism. True, such things were not unknown before, but there was not that wholesale communal discrimination. Tales of such happenings had filled him with grief and shame. Even more shameful was the demolition and desecration of mosques, temples and *gurudwaras*. Such madness, if it was not arrested, must spell ruin to both the communities. They were far from freedom while this madness reigned.

What was the remedy, Gandhiji continued. He had no faith in the force of bayonets. He could only present to them the weapon of non-violence, which provided an answer to every emergency and which was invulnerable. It was common to all great religions—to Christianity no less than to Hinduism etc., but it had today been reduced to a mere copy-book maxim by the votaries of religions and in practice they all followed the law of the jungle. His might be today a voice in the wilderness, said Gandhiji, but he had no other message to give them except this message of non-violence—of meeting the challenge of brute force with power of the spirit.

Gandhiji then referred to the representation which was read to him by a representative of the Meos in which had been catalogued their complaints for which they wanted redress. He had placed that letter, Gandhiji told the audience, in the hands of Dr. Gopichand, their Prime Minister and the speaker would leave it to him (Dr. Gopichand) to tell them what he proposed to do in regard to the various points set forth in it. All he could say was that if any Government officer had been guilty of misconduct, he was sure, the Government

would not hesitate to take suitable action against him. No individual could be allowed to usurp the function of the Government and expect a reshuffle of Government officers at his bidding. He was clear too that no conversion or marriage of a woman to a member of the opposite community could be recognized as valid on the plea of consent or free will. It was abuse of words to talk of free consent when terror reigned.

He would feel happy, continued Gandhiji, if his words could bring some consolation to them in their distress. Referring to the Meo refugees who had been driven out of the Alwar and Bharatpur States, Gandhiji remarked that he looked forward to the day when all enmities would be forgotten and all hatred buried underground and all those who had been driven away from their hearths and homes would return to them and resume their avocations in perfect security and peace as before. His heart would then dance with joy. He would never give up that hope so long as he lived. But he was free to confess that today conditions were not ripe for it. He was sure that their Union Government would not be remiss in discharging its duty in that respect, and the States would have to listen to the advice of the Union Government. The Instrument of Accession did not give to the rulers of the States the freedom to oppress their subjects. The rulers had to be trustees and servants of their subjects if they wanted to retain their status.

Gandhiji concluded by giving a word of advice to the Meos. He had been told, he remarked, that the Meos were almost like criminal tribes. If the statement was correct, it called for an all out effort on their part to reform themselves. It should not be left to others to do the work of reclamation. He hoped that the Meos would not resent his advice, but take it in the spirit in which it was offered. To the Government he would say that even if the allegation regarding the Meos was correct, that was no argument for sending them out into Pakistan. The Meos were subjects of the Indian Union and it was its duty to help them to reclaim themselves by providing them with facilities of education and establishing settlements for them to settle in.

Dr. Gopichand, being next asked to address them a few words, said that it was not the policy of the East Punjab Government that a single Muslim should leave his hearth and home and go out of the Indian Union. As a representative and servant of the people, he was bound to carry out their collective will. It was his duty to ensure equal protection to all the sections and communities in the State. He wanted them to return to their homes and resume their avocations. They should till the land which was lying uncultivated and help grow more food. If anybody tried to molest them, the fact should be brought to the notice of the authorities who would give them due protection. As regards Government officers against whom they had complaints, he would ask them to communicate the same to the authorities through the proper channels and to appeal to the higher authorities if they failed to get proper redress. He was sorry that he could not accept their suggestion that all officers who had been serving in their areas before should

summarily be transferred and other officers from the Ambala Division be brought in to replace them. All officers of the Government were equally bound by their oath of loyalty to carry out faithfully the policy of the State and he could not discriminate against officers of any particular Division as such. All he could promise was that any officer who acted contrary to the policy of the Government would be suitably dealt with. As regards providing them with food and clothing, he had already issued orders to the Deputy Commissioner to make adequate arrangements. He had further instructed the District authorities not to be guided merely by their officers, but to act in close co-operation with the representatives of the affected people.

As regards those who wanted to return to the Bharatpur and Alwar States, from where they had been driven out, continued Shri Bhargava, the matter could only be dealt with through the agency of the Central Government.

Finally, about the abducted women, he made a fervent appeal to those who held them, to return them to their respective guardians and relations. A committee had been formed to help recover such women and he would ask them to get into touch with it. He reiterated that no conversion would be recognized as valid by his Government on the plea of willing consent, considering the circumstances prevailing at the time when the conversions were made. He regarded such conversions worse than useless—they were a negation of religion.

PYARELAL

GROWING OF HOT WEATHER VEGETABLES

Kind of vegetable	Seed rate per acre	Time of sowing P: Plains H: Hills	Depth of sowing	Period of germination	Distance apart		Period of availability of vegetable
					Rows	Plants	
Bottle-gourd (Lauki or ghia-kaddu)	3-4 lbs	P. March-July H. April-end May	5"	5-8 days	8'	4'	Mar. to Nov.

Remarks: Raised beds of width of 8' are separated by furrows of 2' width. The seed is sown on both sides of the furrows which are used for irrigating the vines. The vines spread on the raised beds. For early crop, the seed is sown in October and the vines are protected throughout the winter by some sort of thatches. Four to five seeds are sown at each hill and later thinned to one per hill. For individual gardens, sow in round beds about 3' in diameter. If sown near wall of house, will climb over roof.

Red gourd (Miha-kaddu or Sitaphal)	3-4 lbs	P. Feb. to July H. March to June	5"	5-8 days	8'	4'	June onwards
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Remarks: The cultural details are the same as mentioned in case of bottle-gourd. Unlike the bottle-gourd, it is usually picked when fully ripe and with penduncle (stem) on. It stores very well and can be had almost throughout the winter months and after June in the summer.

Songe-gourd (Kali tori & Ghia-tori)	3-4 lbs	P. Mar.-July	5"	5-8 days	8'	4'	May to Dec.
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Remarks: Staking is necessary in case of second crop which should be done when the vines are 5 to 6 inches high.

Bitter-gourd	3-4 lbs	P. March- July	75" days	8-10 days	2' 5' 1'	May to Sept.
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(Karela)

Remarks: The vegetable is grown for its bitter immature fruit. The fruit assumes orange-red colour on ripening and is not then fit for consumption as vegetable. Staking is necessary for satisfactory yields. The bitterness of the skin is removed by means of common salt to render the fruit fit to be cooked or fried as a vegetable.

Lady's finger	16-20 lbs	P. Mar.- end July	5" days	5-6 days	2' 5' 1'	April to Dec.
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(Bhindi) for early crop & H. Apr.- 8-10 lbs mid-June for late crop

Remarks: The pods should be picked when tender as they cook well only in this condition. Picking should be done every second or third day. If the pods are allowed to ripen, the plants stop producing them.

Musk-melon	3-4 lbs	P. Mid-Jan. to end March	5" days	5-6 days	5' 3'	May-June
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(Kharbuza)

Remarks: The crop needs hot and dry atmosphere during ripening period to develop the high sugar content and fine flavour. The plant is killed even by light frost. Four to five seeds are sown at one place on both sides of the furrow running through the raised beds. The plant and fruit must remain on dry land. Pick the ripe fruits in the morning. Water should be applied in the evening if the crop is sown on flat.

Long-melon	3-4 lbs	P. Mid-Feb. to end Apr.	5" days	5-6 days	5' 3'	May-June
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(Kakri)

Remarks: It is a much hardier crop than melon. The fruit is eaten raw like cucumbers. When soft and tender the fruit is covered with downy hair and is green in colour.

Water-melon	3-4 lbs	P. Mid-Jan. to end March	5" days	5-6 days	5' 3'	June-July
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(Tarbuz)

Remarks: The cultivation of first crop of watermelon is usually carried out in dry river beds, where the fruit attains large size and develops good quality.

Tinda	3-4 lbs	P. Mid-Feb. to April	5" days	6-12 days	5' 3'	1. June-July 2. Oct.
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Remarks: It required a dry and warm climate for its successful cultivation. Early crop is sown on raised beds of five feet width separated by two feet wide furrows for irrigation. Irrigate immediately after seed sowing and repeat it after every 8-10 days. The second crop is usually sown by broadcasting the seed. The field is watered till the vines are well grown.

Vegetable Marrow or Squash	4-5 lbs	P. Feb. to mid-April	5" days	6-12 days	3' 3'	May to July
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(Vilaiti-kaddu) H. Mid-March to mid-June

Remarks: The seed is sown on raised beds 4 to 5 feet wide with hills about 3 feet apart. Usually 3 to 4 seeds are sown per hill but when the seedlings are 3 to 4 inches tall thinning is done to keep one plant per hill. Irrigation is given every 4 to 5 days.

Sweet-Potato (Shakar-kand)	Propagated from cuttings.	P. April- end June	Vines are cut into sets having 3-4 buds each and the central portion is buried in the soil	6-8 days	2' 5' 1'	Nov. to Jan.
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Remarks: Ridges two to two-and-half feet apart are made for the sowing of sets.

Pursilance (Kulfa-sag)	3-4 lbs	P. Mid-March to end June	25"-5" days	6-8 days	2' 5' 1'	June to Oct.
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Remarks: It is a pot herb with small fleshy leaves which are anti-scorbutic in properties. The seeds are sown thickly by broadcasting and are lightly covered with fine soil.

New Delhi, 22-11-'47

MIRABEHN

From the A. I. V. I. A. Board Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Management of the All India Village Industries Association was held in Delhi on the 11th of December, 1947. Apart from the routine administrative work the following business was transacted:

It was decided to change the end of the financial year from 31st of December to 30th of June.

The Annual Report as circulated was passed and the Secretary was authorized to publish it.

The question of partaking in Government and other exhibitions was considered. It was decided to continue our present policy in regard to exhibitions—partaking only in exhibitions that are mainly educational in their objective, and which restrict themselves to *khadi* and village industries.

The extent to which the Association can go in helping the programme of the Governments was discussed. Now that we have popular Governments it was decided to extend our co-operation when invited to do so by lending expert assistance wherever needed to carry out items which are in harmony with our work and approach.

The Secretary stated that the term of office of the present President and Secretary expires on the 2nd February, 1948. The Board decided to re-elect Gandhiji as President and Sri J. C. Kumarappa as Secretary for the next period of three years.

The Secretary reported:

Though the departments of paddy husking and flour grinding have been kept going yet because of the rationing there has not been much activity. Rationed rice is supplied from the rice mills.

Kerosene oil being now easily available the demand for *Magandipas* has gone down. The work here too is more or less at a standstill.

The pottery department is being built up. We have improved the smokeless *chulla* and installed them in our *Vidyalaya* kitchen and some staff quarters.

J. C. K.

A correction

In *Harijan* of 14 December 1947 on page 469, column 2 in place of *Maxwell* read *Manwell*.

HARIJAN

December 28

1947

LAWS OF HEALTH

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Shri Brijlal Nehru, himself a faddist like me, has written to the Press belauding the statement of the Minister of Health that "a very great deal of our ill-health is due to our own fault" and saying that there is to his knowledge no governmental agency responsible for removing this fault. He adds: "The attention of our Health Ministers has so far been confined to the establishment of hospitals, sanatoria, clinics, dispensaries etc., i. e. devices for the treatment of disease; no institutions have been founded for the prevention of disease by bringing home to the people the need of correct living and the methods of doing so."

He then goes on to suggest that "a separate branch be established to attend to the promotion of health as distinguished from treatment of disease. This agency may be given the assistance of an advisory body of both experts and laymen so that the experts may devise their schemes with the full knowledge of the requirements of the people and the limitations under which they have to live and work." Why does this fellow faddist want a separate branch for this very necessary purpose? This was the fashion under the old regime which went on piling expenditure on expenditure and deluded itself and the gullible public that the greater the expense the greater the utility. I would have the Minister of Health require the doctors under her and the other staff understand that their first care must be the attainment and preservation of the health of the public whom they are paid to serve.

As a preliminary step the writer "would have the production of a book on health laws and correct living in the conditions prevailing in India. To carry weight with the public, the book must be brought out under the authority of the Health Ministry of the Government of India. . . . The duty of writing such a book may be entrusted to the Indian Medical Association, who should be required to produce it within a stated time. A transfer of emphasis from disease to health in the teaching given in our medical colleges would in itself be most desirable."

Indeed, the teaching of the laws of Health should be obligatory in all schools and colleges. If the treatise recommended by Shri Brijlal Nehru is brought out, I hope the authors would be instructed to avoid the introduction of disease under the guise of preserving health such as the craze for various inoculations.

New Delhi, 21-12-'47

COMPOST MANURE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

An all India Compost Conference was held in New Delhi during the month to consider the question of compost development on the widest scale possible. It was the conception of Shrimati Mirabehn and was presided over by Dr. Rajendra Prasad. Sardar Datar Singh, Dr. Acharya and other eminent men in the line took part in it. Several important resolutions were passed by it on schemes for towns and villages. A sub-committee consisting of Shrimati Mirabehn, Shri Shivakumar Sharma, Dr. B. N. Lal and Dr. K. G. Joshi (with Dr. B. N. Lal as convener) was appointed to prepare a skeleton scheme for the provinces. The resolutions emphasized the necessity of "the agricultural utilization of town sewage, sullage and sludge, the utilization of the by-products of the slaughter house and other trade wastes (for example, wool waste, mill waste, leather waste etc.) and for the composting of other materials like water-hyacinth, cane-trash, press mud, forest leaves etc."

These resolutions are good and useful if they do not remain merely on paper. The chief thing is whether they would be reduced to practice throughout India. To do so will tax the resources of many Mirabehns. Given the willing co-operation of the masses of India, this country can not only drive out shortage of food, but can provide India with more than enough. This organic manure ever enriches, never impoverishes the soil. The daily waste, judiciously composted, returns to the soil in the form of golden manure causing a saving of millions of rupees and increasing manifold, the total yield of grains and pulses. In addition, the judicious use of waste keeps the surroundings clean. And cleanliness is not only next to godliness, it promotes health.

New Delhi, 21-12-'47

GANDHIJ'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

Birla House, New Delhi, 15-12-'47

DISGRACEFUL DEFIANCE

Here is what pained me to read in the papers:

"The buildings of six Municipal schools have been occupied by refugees and, in spite of the best efforts of the Delhi Municipal Committee, they have not vacated them. The Committee proposes to approach the police authorities to get the buildings vacated."

This report appears to be reliable. It is a shameful instance of lawlessness and worse. That such defiance can take place in the Capital of the Union reflects no credit on anybody. I am hoping that the trespassers themselves will repent of their folly and vacate the school premises and, that failing, their friends will succeed in bringing sense to them and that the Government will not feel compelled to put their threat into execution. There is a general charge against the refugees that the terrible affliction they have gone through have not made them sober, sensible and industrious workers. Let us hope that the refugees in general and

these trespassers in particular will by their repentance disprove the charge.

LAWLESSNESS AND CORRUPTION

On Saturday I dealt with lawlessness in Calcutta in another setting and by non-refugees. It is up to all leaders, no matter to what persuasion or party they belong, to be jealous guardians of India's honour which she cannot keep if lawlessness and corruption become the order of the day. I mention corruption in the same context for it belongs to the same brood. I hear from many trustworthy sources that it is on the increase. Will everyone be for himself and none for India?

A CUNNING MOVE

A correspondent writes :

"I have just heard over the radio your post-prayer speech delivered on the 11th December, 1947. In this you say that certain U. P. Muslims who had been to Lahore, had come to you and assured on behalf of the Pakistan officials that non-Muslims especially the Hindus could go to Lahore and start their businesses there. Firstly, this invitation, to the Hindus alone and not to the Sikhs, is a cunning move on the part of Pakistan officials to create a split amongst the Hindus and Sikhs.

"All such assurances are farce and mockery and people like you alone perhaps can be misled by such Muslims. Herewith I am sending you a cutting dated 11-12-47 from the *Hindustan Times* which speaks for itself and fairly exposes the sincerity of the Pakistan Government. After going through this, do you please still believe that such Muslims who come to you are honest? They only mean to show to the world that the Pakistan Government is quite fair to the minorities and everything is well in Pakistan whereas the facts are quite the contrary. If these Muslims come to you again, kindly show them this cutting.

"Further, I am sure you remember well what fate the Hindus and the Sikhs met on the 20th November, 1947 when they went to Lahore to take their valuables from their banks. Even the Indian Military, under whose protection the Hindus and the Sikhs went, was attacked by Muslim mobs in the presence of the Pakistan officials who took no steps to check the rioters."

The cutting referred to by the correspondent reads as follows :

"Non-Muslim businessmen and shopkeepers who had fled eastwards during the recent communal disturbances are gradually returning to Lahore with a view to opening their trading concerns now closed for months, but on seeing the impossible conditions they are required to sign before getting possession of their shops, many of them have gone back to India in disappointment, according to a recent report published in the *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore.

"The report adds : Shops are being opened by owners on behalf of the Rehabilitation Commissioner. The following terms are required to be signed by these shopkeepers :

1. A promise to maintain proper accounts of all sales.
2. That the owner will not transfer any interest in his shop without previous written

permission of the Assistant Rehabilitation Commissioner.

3. That he will continue to manage his shop as a running concern.

4. That all sale proceeds shall be deposited daily in a Scheduled Bank and shall not be withdrawn without the previous permission of the Assistant Rehabilitation Commissioner.

5. That the shopowner will continue to reside permanently in Lahore.

"Many businessmen who had returned to Lahore with a view to opening their concerns have gone back to India. They feel that the conditions which they are being required to sign before possession is actually given them are such that it will not be possible for them to conduct their business etc. with respect in the face of so much interference and supervision by the Government.

"Besides, they say, since the Pakistan Government have promised the minorities 'generous treatment' it does not behove them to treat non-Muslim businessmen in a different manner. A leading businessman said : 'No such restrictions are being imposed on Muslim traders and businessmen.'"

TRUST BEGETS TRUST

I dealt with the disappointment only the other day. Whilst the information may be quite accurate, it does not necessarily vitiate what the Muslim friends told me. They have not only their own reputation to keep but also of those in the Union whom they represent and of the Pakistan authorities who gave them the assurances. Let me add, too, that the friends are in touch with me. They came in today. As I was silent and busy writing my prayer speech, I could not afford to see them. They have, however, sent me their assurance that they are not idle; they are prosecuting their peace mission. I warn my correspondent against being hyper-suspicious and hyper-sensitive. He will lose nothing by believing. Disbelief is a treacherous mate. Let him beware. For my part, I am unrepentant. I have trusted all my life with my eyes open. I propose to trust these Muslim friends too till they prove themselves untrue. Trust begets trust. It gives you strength to combat treachery. If there is to be return on either side by the evacuees to their homes, it will be only by the means I have adopted and am pursuing.

AN UNWORTHY FEAR

The correspondent's fear that the offer is intended to create a rift between the Sikhs and the Hindus is unworthy. I told the friends that their proposal might bear that sinister meaning. They said an emphatic 'no' to it. I see nothing wrong in making the passage smooth for recross over. It is not to be denied that there is stronger prejudice in Pakistan against the Sikhs. But there is no doubt that the two must sink or swim together. Only they must not have evil designs. There is no such thing as an honourable partnership between conspirators.

CITIZEN OF UNDIVIDED INDIA

A friend from Eastern Pakistan asks : "How can I declare myself as an inhabitant of Undivided India when it is cut into two and when to be of one part excludes you from the other?" Whatever the legal pundits may say, they cannot dominate the mind of man. Who can prevent the friend from declaring himself as a citizen of the world even though legally he is not and though he

may be, as he will be, prevented from entering many States under their laws? Legal status should not worry a man who has not reduced himself to the state of a machine as many of us have. So long as the moral condition is sound, there is no warrant for anxiety. What every one of us has to guard against is the harbouring of ill-will against a State or its people. Thus, one cannot do so against the Muslims of Pakistan or its Government and still claim to belong to Pakistan as to the Union of India. Such a state, if it is general, must lead to war. Any State will declare traitorous the conduct of every inhabitant who entertains hostility against it and even helping the enemy State. Loyalty cannot be divided.

Birla House, New Delhi, 16-12-'47

RESULTS OF DECONTROL

In his post-prayer speech this evening Gandhiji told the audience certain figures placed before him by Shri Brijkrishna Chandiwalla indicating the results of decontrol in as far as it had gone. As a result the price of *gur* (jaggery) had fallen to eight annas a seer from a rupee. He hoped that it would fall still lower. In his youth *gur* was sold at one anna. The price of *shakkar* had fallen from Rs. 34 to Rs. 24 per maund. One rupee now brought one and a half seers of pulses instead of 14 *chhataks*. The price of gram had fallen from Rs. 24 to Rs. 18 per maund. The blackmarket price of wheat had been Rs. 34 per maund. It had come down to Rs. 24. He was rightly accused of knowing nothing about orthodox economics and the fluctuations of prices. He talked of decontrol in his ignorance, but the consequences would have to be borne by the poor people. The results, however, so far had falsified the fears. The poor seemed to be better off without the control. He had received numerous congratulations for decontrol. He could not appropriate them for many causes and many persons had worked towards the same end. If the middleman and the grower thought more of the whole country than of themselves, he had no doubt that decontrol all round would be an unmixed blessing. All fear about decontrol was due to the supposition that the business community would not play the game. The sceptics distrusted the producer and the middleman. If the majority of the people were selfish and untrustworthy, how could democracy, *panchayat raj* work? Gandhiji would ask the Government to utilize the services of non-civilians equally with those of the civilians. The difference was that the latter were highly paid and the former were volunteers. Each was amenable to law for any fraud.

SALARIES AND CIVIL SERVICE

He had received complaints about the high salaries of the civil servants. The Civil Service could not be done away with all of a sudden. Their numbers had already been reduced, with the result that those remaining had to work harder. The Sardar had, therefore, congratulated them for their work. He (Gandhiji) did not grudge credit where it was deserved, but he could not help noting that they drew salaries which before independence the Congress had considered too much. The real Civil Service were the people. After all, Congressmen had been working without any salaries in the past. If a Congressman becomes a parliamentary secretary today, why should he be paid a high salary? He did not know that parliamentary secretaries were needed. The Congress party must be chary of imposing

more paid secretaries on the Government. It would be wrong to tone down the high standard the Congress had set before the country. Greater care was necessary in that they had now crores at their disposal. It would be imprudent to let the expenditure go up when the income remained stationary. Every business firm had to see that the credit side was larger than the debit side. Could they run the business of free India by ignoring this basic fact? They had some money today and they could squander it in any way they liked. But it would not last long unless they acted like wise businessmen.

Birla House, New Delhi, 17-12-'47

FORCIBLE OCCUPATION

In his post-prayer speech Gandhiji referred to the letter of a Punjabi friend from the East Punjab. He had a house there and had his business in the West Punjab. Like others he had to leave the West Punjab and on coming to the East Punjab found his house occupied by a Government servant. In spite of all his efforts, he was unable to get it vacated and could just get two rooms in his own house. He asked Gandhiji if the East Punjab Government should help him to get possession or whether he must resort to a court of law for the purpose. Gandhiji agreed that the Government should help him to get his house vacated without his having to go to a court of law. And as the occupant was a Government servant, it should not be difficult for the Government. Whilst he held that houses belonging to the refugees should be vacated, he had to remind the refugees that some of them were forcibly occupying other people's houses. They were reported to have broken open the locks of vacant houses especially when they happened to belong to Muslims. Such lawlessness was not good for the country or for the individual concerned. Could bloodshed, arson and loot ever benefit anybody?

SWEET TALK

Gandhiji was being warned that in spite of sweet talk by Muslim leaders in Pakistan, no Hindu or Sikh could live in Pakistan with any self-respect or safety. Congressmen had always held that their State was a secular State, where there could be no distinctions of caste and creed. But many Hindus and Sikhs were acting otherwise. If both the States were to lose their moorings, it must spell the ruin of both.

CONDITIONS FOR RETURN

A friend had written to him as follows: "Forced by circumstances and to save valuable human lives, we had to leave Lahore on the 17th August with family and take shelter in Delhi with a relation. Our house was looted and our shop given to some Muslim by the Pakistan Government. We approached the Ministry for Refugees, Delhi, to help us in bringing our goods here on 9-9-'47, when all the things were intact, and receiving no acknowledgment even and after receiving news of loot and passing of the shop to a Muslim, our dear father went to Lahore on the 1st December and approached the Pakistan Government in accordance with the decision between the Pakistan Government and the Indian Government that people who liked to go back to their original places would be given all facilities to restart their business and afforded all protection, applied to allow us to open our factories and work the same. We learn from our representative that the Director of Industries, Lahore, has refused to give us the permission, saying that the factories are allotted to ten refugees

jointly (although the possession of the same has not been handed over to them) and the decision cannot be altered." Gandhiji's reply was that he had not asked anyone to return without assurances and arrangement by the Pakistan Government. It pleased him that some Muslims were working for the return of Hindu and Sikh evacuees. But the time was not ripe yet for their return. He would let them know when he thought that they could safely return. The Muslim friends about whom he had made mention and even he himself might accompany the first batch.

INDIANS IN EAST AFRICA

Next, Gandhiji referred to East Africa. The railway was made by the Sikhs under great hardship. The Sikhs were an enterprising community. And now an Anti-Indian Immigration Bill was brought before the local legislature. Indians, Hindus and Muslims, had gone to East Africa before the Europeans. They had gone there not as exploiters with rifle in hand. They were businessmen. They had become friends with the indigenous population. They had worked for the prosperity of the land. It was discreditable to treat them as interlopers. The representatives of the Indians in East Africa had wired to Pandit Nehru and had sent Gandhiji a copy thereof requesting the Indian Government to intervene on behalf of the Indian settlers. India was independent and could not tolerate legislation against her nationals. He hoped that the authorities in East Africa would realize the inadvisability of losing India's friendship. Pandit Nehru would, he was sure, do all that was possible to help the Indians in East Africa.

Birla House, New Delhi, 18-12-'47

A CONFUSED ARGUMENT

In his post-prayer speech this evening Gandhiji dealt with a letter in which the correspondent had said that he was painfully surprised to hear from Gandhiji's lips that it hurt him to continue to receive letters in English. Gandhiji had said that India was friends with all. If he had equally friendly feelings towards Muslims and Englishmen, how was it that he was working for preserving Urdu and displacing English? Gandhiji was amazed at the question. It displayed gross ignorance of facts. English was an international language but it could never become the national language of India. English was a foreign language, not so Urdu. He was proud of the fact that Urdu was a language which had evolved in India and was an Indian language. It was originally the language spoken in the military camps during Muslim rule and the military largely consisted of Indians, whether Hindus or Muslims. Muslim rulers had become domiciled in India. When Gandhiji returned to India as a barrister, he was a youngster. After two year's stay in India, he went away to South Africa, where he had stayed for twenty years. Ever since his return to India from South Africa, he had been crying from the house tops that the national language of India could be none but the one that was spoken in the North by the Hindus and the Muslims and written in the *nagari* or *urdu* script. It was the language of Tulsidas. The poet saint had not disdained to use Arabic and Persian words even in his time. That language which had undergone evolution was the interprovincial speech written in the two scripts. The provincial languages must be helped to develop and become richer. The all India speech or

national language must displace English, which blocked the progress of all the Indian languages. With the disappearance of English rule must disappear English speech. Its proper and unrivalled place was as an international medium. Urdu was a language replete with Arabian and Persian words including some of the grammar. Hindi tended to exclude Arabic and Persian words. Hindustani was a happy blend of the two with the grammatical structure unaffected by Arabic or Persian.

SHEER IGNORANCE

The correspondent then reminded Gandhiji that if it was difficult for Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to forget Urdu, was it not equally difficult for the South Indians to forget English? This question again betrayed ignorance. He had been to Madras often enough. When he went there before he had become a *Mahatma*, he could not make himself understood by the *jatkawala* in English, but he could do so in his broken Hindustani. English was not the mother-tongue of the Tamilians as Urdu was of Sir Tej. Lala Lajpat Rai was a friend of his. Gandhiji used to twit him by asking him when he would learn to speak and write in pure Hindi. Lalaji said that he could not do that. And yet Lalaji was a staunch Arya Samajist. He said that his mother-tongue was Urdu in which he could hold audiences spell-bound. Gandhiji had twice been the President of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan. They had then welcomed his drive for the national language as defined by him. Why did they now resent it? Was he any the less Hindu or Indian for his desire for a blend between Hindi and Urdu?

NEGATION OF RELIGION

Gandhiji then referred to the riot at Ajmer with sorrow. Did they think they could protect Hinduism by killing the Muslims in the Union or driving them out? Did they hope to serve All India speech by excluding the Urdu script or language? He would not be with them for ever. They would remember his words when he was gone. All religions taught men to be good and peaceful. Intolerance was the negation of religion.

Birla House, New Delhi, 19-12-'47

VISIT TO A GURGAON VILLAGE

In his post-prayer speech this evening Gandhiji told the audience that he had been to meet the Meos who had been rendered homeless. Many had been driven away from the States of Alwar and Bharatpur. Some had gone to Pakistan, others were undecided whether they should stay or go away. Dr. Gopichand Bhargava had accompanied him and had assured them that those who wanted to stay had every right to do so. Their lives and property would be safeguarded by his Government. Gandhiji said that he could never be reconciled to the exchange of population. To uproot lakhs and lakhs of men, women and children from their homes was a devilish act. In the face of the calamity it was idle to speculate as to who started or whose was the greater violence. Such calculation was not the way to peace. Those who wanted to go to Pakistan of their own accord were free to do so. No one would obstruct them. Nor could any one compel them to leave the Union. The Meos were a fighting community. Some said that they were like a criminal tribe. Even if the charge was true, the State could not banish them. The right way would be to reform and induce them to become worthy citizens.

PRICES AND DECONTROL

A friend said that where he was living, the decontrol had caused a rise in the price of sugar. Gandhiji said

that in other places prices were reported to have fallen. There must be a local cause for a local rise.

CONTROL ON PETROL

There was the transport difficulty which came in the way of proper distribution. Dr. Mathai had his difficulties. There was shortage of coal and wagons. The Minister was trying to overcome them as early as he could. India carried on her business when there were no railways. But now when she had them, shortage of transport caused a real difficulty. What was then a proper substitute for or an addition to railway transport? Motor transport at once came to the mind. But that transport could not function if there was no petrol. This pointed to the removal of the control over petrol. He did not know why it should be difficult. One could not do things by halves. If control had to go, it should at least go from petrol. Petrol was not a thing which was required by everybody. The Government might keep enough for their own requirements. They could any day buy petrol in the black market in daylight. If motor transport became easily available, there would be no dearness in the price of salt. He was told that production of salt was fair enough but the difficulty of transport came in the way.

COMPOST MANURE

The food shortage was due to deficient production. One potent way of increasing production was proper manuring. Artificial manures, he was told, were harmful for the soil. Shrimati Mirabehn who had become a *kisan* and loved animals, especially the cow, as well as human beings, had been instrumental in getting together a Compost Conference in Delhi. Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Sardar Datar Singh and others had participated in it. After three days deliberations they had passed a series of resolutions, enunciating ways and means of preparing compost manure from cow dung and human excreta and refuse. The compost manure emitted no bad odour. It would save lakhs of rupees and also increase the fertility of the soil without exhausting it. The participants in the Conference had as their sole object increase in production. Shrimati Mirabehn had gone to Rishikesh that day and she would continue the work of cattle improvement and making compost manure universal in India. It was a difficult task whose fruition depended upon the co-operation of the people.

Birla House, New Delhi, 20-12-'47

SHED COWARDICE

Gandhiji expressed sorrow at the recrudescence of trouble in Delhi even though it was on a very minor scale. If the Hindus and the Sikhs of Delhi or the Pakistan sufferers in Delhi were determined not to let the Muslims stay here, they should say so boldly and openly and the Government should declare that it could offer the affected Muslims no protection. It would be a declaration of bankruptcy on the part of the Government. It would mean a decline and extinction of the Hindu and the Sikh religions if the disease spreads. Similarly, if Pakistan would let no Hindu or Sikh stay there with safety and honour, it would mean extinction of Islam in India. He wanted them to shed all cowardice. He held it to be cowardice to force out any one by indirect means. If the Muslims were bad, goodness on the part of the Hindus and Sikhs would make them good. In

the *bhajan* that they had just heard Mira said that she felt happy when she saw a devotee of God and grieved when she looked at worldly men. The sight of the godly men made her feel godly. The way to deal with bad men was to reform them, not to turn them out or kill them.

THE VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

Gandhiji then referred to the meetings of A.I.V.I.A. that he had attended at the Harijan Colony during the week between the 6th to the 13th instant. He had told them about three meetings but was unable to deal with A.I.V.I.A. meetings. He had said that the spinning wheel was the Sun in the village system of India, if not for her few cities also. The various village industries were like planets revolving round the Sun. Without the Sun the planets were nowhere. He felt that the reverse was equally true, though he could not prove it scientifically. But he could say so confidently about the villages. There were many villages round about Delhi. If they developed village industries, the villages and the city of Delhi would add to each other's prosperity. Then they would have no time to think of communal strife. He had heard that many artisans in Delhi and round about were Muslims. Their departure had greatly disturbed life of the city. At Panipat large numbers of Muslims were employed in making blankets. Their departure had greatly hampered the work, if it had not stopped it altogether. Hindus and Muslims in many cases had their different industries. Hindustan and Pakistan were both suffering heavily as a result of this dislocation.

CAPITAL AND LABOUR

Gandhiji had talked to them about compost manure the previous evening. The excreta of animals and human beings mixed with refuse could be turned into golden manure, itself a valuable commodity. It increased the productivity of the soil which received it. Preparation of this manure was itself a village industry. But this, like all village industries could not give tangible results unless the crores of India co-operated in reviving them and thus making India prosperous. This was the fundamental distinction between capital and labour. Capital exploited the labour of a few to multiply itself. The sum total of the labour of the crores, wisely utilized, automatically increased the wealth of the crores. Therein lay true democracy, true *Panchayat Raj*. Unless India concentrated her whole energy on this vast constructive effort, and if her children occupied themselves in unseemly communal strife, her fate would be like that of the Yadavas of old who wasted their time in drink, debauchery and gambling and ended by cutting one another's throats.

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