

HARIJAN

Pages 16

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TWO ANNAS

BASIC EDUCATION

[We have received a copy of the report of seven years of the work of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh in Basic Education as an account of an experiment in a scheme aiming at revolutionizing our whole educational system. The report is very important and needs perusal by all interested in Education. Due to want of space we are not able to reproduce the whole of the report in these columns, but two important and instructive extracts are given below.

English and Hindi copies of the report can be had from the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram (Wardha C.P.) for a price of annas eight each. ED.]

1

STANDARD OF ATTAINMENT

The most important point for assessment will be the development of children—physical, intellectual and spiritual—as a result of the seven years of basic education. The pupils in the basic school at Sevagram and Champaran will complete seven years in December, 1946 and their development has been assessed.

The standard of attainment at the end of the seven years of basic education was laid down as that of Matriculation minus English. The question is, therefore, often asked whether the pupils who have completed the seven years of basic education have attained the Matriculation standard.

Now, it is necessary to define the "Matriculation standard". According to current terminology the pupil has to obtain a certain percentage of marks in five academic subjects in order to pass the Matriculation Examination. Some subjects are compulsory and some are optional. The subjects and standards prescribed slightly vary from university to university. The objective of the High School Course which goes up to the Matriculation Examination is to make the pupil obtain a certain percentage of marks in the prescribed subjects and gaining entrance to University Education. The success or failure of a pupil is determined by the percentage of marks obtained in one written examination which is held annually.

In the basic education course the craft forms the medium of education. Pupils gain knowledge of various subjects taught in correlation to the basic craft as occasion arises. The syllabus is there for guidance but not to be strictly adhered to. The pupil learns through observation and experience and not merely through oral instruction. There are no formal examinations for promotions from grade to grade. It is the quality of the work done, the record kept by the pupils and teachers, of the daily work, regular attendance and the opinion of the teacher that decide the promotions.

The objective of the basic education course of eight years including the pre-basic class is the training of a citizen of a new social order with the following qualifications:

1. A harmoniously developed body—healthy and agile—capable of doing hard physical work.

2. Clear understanding of the ideology of the new co-operative social order and the place of cottage industries in rural economy.

3. Ability to earn if necessary from the basic craft, sufficient for his own balanced diet and clothing.

4. Ability to produce cloth from raw cotton.

5. Ability to grow vegetables sufficient for his own consumption.

6. Ability to cook meal and skill and knowledge in all allied processes in connection with the storing, cooking and serving of food for a family or community, including budgeting and maintaining of kitchen accounts.

7. Knowledge of the elements of dietetics and fundamental rules of health.

8. Knowledge of the fundamental rules of village sanitation and personal hygiene.

9. Knowledge of first aid, treatment and nursing of common ailments.

10. Knowledge of the principles of co-operation in running co-operative stores and keeping of accounts.

11. Ability to speak clearly and fluently at public meetings.

12. Ability to express ideas clearly in writing and prepare reports.

13. Appreciation of literature in the mother-tongue and a working knowledge of Hindustani.

14. Ability to read and write simple Hindustani in both the scripts.

15. Ability to sing in chorus, devotional and national songs.

16. Appreciation of paintings and pictures and ability to draw and paint.

17. Ability to ride a bicycle, and a horse and drive a cart.

18. Ability to help in organizing festivals in school and village.

19. Elementary knowledge of the world economic, social and political problems as gained through the study of current events reported in newspapers.

20. Elementary knowledge of the mechanical principles in the different equipment and processes of craft work.

21. Acquaintance with the fundamental scientific principles in growing food and cotton, in cooking and allied processes, in the processes of the basic craft and in the maintenance of personal health and the health of the community and village sanitation.

22. Knowledge of the geography of India and the world through food and clothing.

23. Ability to use newspapers and journals intelligently.

24. Knowledge of the history and development of the fight for freedom in India.

25. Respect for the different religions in India and desire for communal unity.

26. Freedom from caste restrictions and prejudices.

27. Love for one's own village and rural area. Readiness to stay and work in villages. Village-mindedness.

PLANNING WITH VILLAGE BIAS

III

6. TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE

The training of students in our agricultural schools and colleges may be largely supplemented by a system of posting stipendary apprentices on well-known farms or gardens owned by experienced and enterprising agriculturists. A good number of first rank farmers, fruit-growers and garden-owners from all over the province may be invited by Government to take in and train a fixed number of apprentices every year. These apprentices should have certain educational qualifications and also have already a year's previous grounding at a Government agricultural school or farm. They should then be selected to complete their training on these private farms as post-school study apprentices, with one or two years' course of practical working: a year for practical study of local conditions, soil, monsoon, cropping and manuring schemes, labour, etc., another for cost-accounting, farm management, marketing, co-operative working and for a special training in any particular branch of horticulture etc.

Such training farms should have Government recognition and hold Government credentials (which may be renewed every year or so) to grant a diploma to those trained on the farms at the end of their training period, stating the general qualifications and proficiency of the holder and also the particular branch of agriculture he may have specialized in. And these diplomas should be on a par with those of Government institutes or training establishments. Even post-graduate training in agricultural chemistry and other branches of research or highly specialized and intensive branches of agriculture or horticulture may be thought of on this basis.

Such a course of planning may train a thousand or more students annually with first rate practical training which would in no way be inferior to that imparted by Government directly and yet would be much cheaper inasmuch as it would save the Government considerable expenditure over lands, buildings, teaching staff and establishments. The farm-owners too would gain inasmuch as they would get a number of intelligent and willing farm hands as overseers, assistants etc., to help them at negligible cost besides gaining in status and position in their own districts and the province.

7. POULTRY FARMING

This is an excellent village and farm-house industry. One great handicap in its pursuit for the villager is the havoc played by seasonal epidemics and poultry diseases. The villager is at his wit's end against it and often feels utterly ruined under the losses entailed. His own insanitary living and habits contribute not a little to his misfortune. He

should therefore be supplied with detailed instructions in taking proper care of his stocks and in combating disease. Social workers can help a good deal the Government propaganda in this direction.

8. FISHING

This industry is very important in view of India's 3000 miles of coast line and of the low and ill-balanced diet of our countrymen and in the midst of the terrible food deficiency of the present times. But as this industry is already receiving due attention by competent official and non-official persons, I do not dilate upon it here.

9. PALM JUICE

In the Bombay Province millions of date, cocoanut and palm trees abound, food contents of whose juice are beyond dispute. Other uses (mainly local) of their by-products are innumerable and well-known. Toddy-juice should not be allowed to be confused with liquor in the popular imagination. While liquor is mainly an intoxicant, toddy-juice is rich, valuable and yet the cheapest food for millions of humble village folk if only its fermenting process could be successfully prevented and if it is not carried away to the towns and cities like milk produced in the Kaira district. Effective protection and encouragement should be given by the State towards local consumption to the elimination of the trading interests and middlemen.

As against its use as an alcoholic drink it should not be difficult for Government institutes like Half-keine at Bombay, or the one at Coonoor to find out a drug (as harmless to human health as the colours proposed for use in order to distinguish vegetable ghee) which would prevent all process of fermentation in toddy-juice for 24 or 36 hours. The use of the drug should then be made compulsory by law for all toddy-tappers.

10. BEE-KEEPING

This is one of the finest food-yielding and remunerative industries for gardeners and for farmers who live in the neighbourhood of forests. The forest-dwellers gather wild honey in many parts of our country mainly for selling it in towns, but there is considerable adulteration and deceit. Besides, their method of gathering honey are primitive and revolting. It involves wholesale killing of the bees. The modern method of bee-rearing and apiaries alone is worthy of encouragement and vastly more profitable to the villager. Excellent cooperative societies of bee-keepers on such lines have been formed during recent years in the North Kanara district and are flourishing. Every effort should be made to protect and encourage this industry and spread it in other parts of the province such as the garden areas of Khandesh, Nasik, Poona and Gujarat.

11. SALT, GRASS AND FIRE-WOOD

These should be made free as gifts of nature to the humblest villager even as air and water. All monopolies and all private mass production on trade-basis in these should be abolished. The villager should be allowed to help himself and supplement his income by selling these headloads in his own neighbourhood as far as he can go on foot and return home by the evening.

Vapi

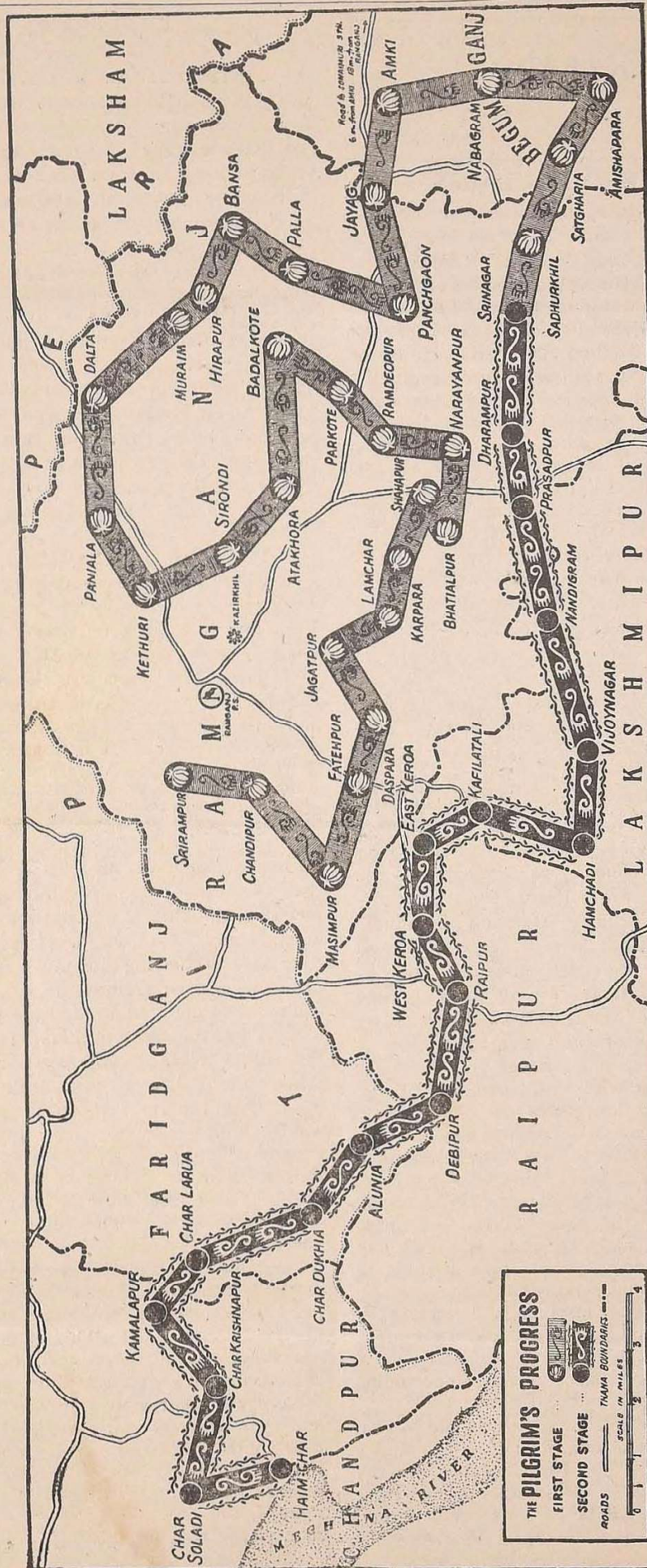
SWAMI ANAND

(To be continued)

MAP

[Map showing part of the Noakhali District of East Bengal where Gandhiji is walking on foot from village to village carrying his message of love and peace. This map shows the villages of the first part of the tour which was completed on the 4th February at Sadhurkhal as also the villages of the second part which ends on the 25th of February.

We are indebted to the *Hindusthan Standard* of Calcutta for this excellent map.]



Gandhiji is visiting the villages named serially and the date of his stay in the village stated against it.

Srinagar	5th February;	Char Dukhia	19th;
Dharampur	6th;	Char Larua	20th;
Prasadpur	7th;	Kamalapur	21st;
Nandigram	8th;	Char Krishnapur	22nd;
Vijoyanagar	9th and 10th;	Char Soladi	23rd;
Hamchadi	11th;	Haim Char	24th and 25th.
Kafilatali	12th;		
East Keroa	13th;		
West Keroa	14th;		
Raipur	15th and 16th;		
Debipur	17th;		
Alunia	18th;		

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PREPOSTEROUS CLAIMS

We had suggested the appointment of an impartial tribunal to go into the question of settling the so-called 'Public Debts' and Sterling Credits. The need for such a tribunal is emphasized by very many irresponsible claims that are put forward by acknowledged leaders in Great Britain. The war time Premier, Mr. Churchill, himself in the House of Commons stated "that the Governor-General of India in the time of the late Government was notified that Britain reserved her full right to present a counter claim on account of effective defence of India by all means—land, sea, air and diplomacy—by which the freedom of India from foreign invasion was secured." This claim itself raises many questions which may have to be decided judicially. How did Japan come to invade India? The Japanese or the Germans had no enemies in India other than the British. Hence it is that all direct and indirect results of the war must be borne by Great Britain. If this is so, India would be entitled to damages for the British occupation of the country, for the reckless use of the forests during the time of the war and the consequent famines that have been visiting our land annually. Because of the war, even the reserves for seeds had been drained out of the country and we are now drifting on with occasional catch crops. Then again the unprecedented inflation in the country has upset the economic order beyond the country's capacity to recover with the result that the people are suffering from great distress in necessities. This too is a matter on which India can rightly base a claim for damages. Apart from all these material losses India has sustained, without provocation, an irreparable loss of three million lives during the Bengal Famine of 1943. How shall we compute the equivalent of this in terms of money?

As though this were not enough the *Times* of London has come out with still further fantastic suggestions and threats. It suggests that if the sterling balances were to be demanded, England may resort to an unilateral blocking of such balances with the approval of the United States. May we ask who made the United States judge over us? It pleads inability to pay the capital sum out of the revenue as an adequate reason for adopting such an attitude. Will any court of bankruptcy accept such a plea in the case of an individual without taking into account his assets and liabilities before insolvency is granted? If England wishes to repudiate the credits in a straight forward manner we can understand it; but these preposterous claims and suggestions are unbecoming of a great financial race as the Britishers are.

If such irresponsible claims are to be laid to rest, it can only be done by a judicial, impartial enquiry into the whole question and Mr. Churchill and the *Times* would then have an opportunity to state their case. We trust no time will be lost in setting up such a judicial enquiry.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

INTELLECTUAL AND MANUAL WORK

Q. Why should we insist on a Rabindranath or Raman earning his bread by manual labour? Is it not sheer wastage? Why should not brain workers be considered on a par with manual workers, for both of them perform useful social work?

A. Intellectual work is important and has an undoubted place in the scheme of life. But what I insist on is the necessity of physical labour. No man, I claim, ought to be free from that obligation. It will serve to improve even the quality of his intellectual output. I venture to say that in ancient times *Brahmins* worked with their body as with their mind. But even if they did not, body labour was a proved necessity at the present time. In this connection I would refer to the life of Tolstoy and how he made famous the theory of Bread Labour first propounded in his country by the Russian peasant Bondaref. Dharmapur (Noakhali), 6-2-'47

KEEP A REGULAR DIARY

I would like to draw the attention of village-workers to a defect which has come to my notice. Very few of them keep a regular diary. This is not good. It must become a part of their daily routine.

It must briefly record the work done during the day and the worker's experience, retrospection and introspection,—daily or periodical,—material as well as spiritual. It is not expected to take the shape of an article or literary writing.

Writing is one of the exterior means which promotes thinking. I have seen several workers who do a good deal of hard work and yet make no improvement or progress in it. The reason is that they never do any thinking. Some of them feel that thinking is a pastime for the idle and the unenergetic. Those who work do not need to waste their time on chewing thought. This attitude itself indicates the under-development of the intellect which cannot even understand the necessity of thinking.

It was the result of thinking that first prompted the worker to take to village service. But after having taken to it and started it according to his then light, he gave up thinking further for himself. The result was that he ceased to make progress. One cannot expand or improve one's business on old capital alone. So also in other spheres of work. As Buddha has said, "The house must be cleaned and arranged every day; so also the mind." You must think anew and study new things everyday.

Gandhiji is seen initiating new schemes and methods everyday. He has always something fresh to say on the various problems. It is so, because he thinks, takes a retrospect and makes introspection everyday. But some of the workers do not read even Gandhiji's writings. This is very regrettable.

Every worker who wants to serve intelligently and progressively must regularly set apart some time both for study and thinking for himself. For the latter, keeping a regular diary is a helpful means. It will quickly show excellent results.

Pavnar

VINOBA

(Adapted from the original in Marathi)

GANDHIJI'S WALKING TOUR DIARY

27-1-'47

In a written speech at Palla, on Monday the 27th January which was his day of silence, Gandhiji first expressed his satisfaction at having been accommodated in the house of a weaver friend. He then said that the cottages of Bengal had become dearer to him than the prison-like solid walls of palaces. A house full of love such as this one was superior to a palace where love did not reign.

The hut in which he had been accommodated for the day was full of light and air and nature's abundance was showered on the country all around. What however made him sad in such a fair and potentially rich country was that the Hindus and the Musalmans should have brought themselves into hostile relation with one another. Should differences in religion, he asked, be sufficient to overshadow our common humanity? He prayed that these fundamental commonsenses reassert themselves so that all contrary forces might be overpowered in the end.

In his pilgrimage, continued Gandhiji, he had come across homes which lay ruined and desolate, bazaars and schools which lay empty; and he had also found members of the two communities in a stage of non-co-operation with one another. Whom did all this profit, the Hindu or the Muslim? Agriculture had not been properly attended to and the spectre of famine lay waiting in the offing; the villages were dirty, the water unclean; and only a new and extensive scheme of education could raise the people from their slumber of ages. He prayed that God might give both the Hindus and the Musalmans intelligence and strength enough to grapple with these problems. He thought that if they succeeded in their attempt to solve these common problems without troubling the government, it would go a long way to overpower the forces of disruption evident today.

28-1-'47

Gandhiji referred in his prayer speech to the pleasurable fact, as he called it, that he was taken this morning during his walk to a Hindu *badi* and two Muslim *badis*. Of these he had no previous knowledge but he was solicitous for friendship of the heart and when he saw friendly eyes he readily went to the *badis*. They were anxious for him to take something. He said that was not his time; but they could send the fruit with him and he would take it with pleasure. His grand-daughter, who was with him, went to the *zanana*. The womenfolk met her with affection and an old lady embraced her when she came to know who she was. Then in one *badi*, they asked her to take the *roti* and fish they were cooking. The poor girl said she could not take fish but she could certainly take the *chapati*, but wanted to be excused as it was too early for her. But the womenfolk suspected pollution. When she realized the suspicion, she readily took a morsel much to the relief of the ladies. For him or his there was no caste and no restriction as to interdining. But he would ask his Muslim friends to be tolerant of Hindus who believed in pollution. He admitted that it was wrong. But after

all real affection was not to be tested through interdining etc. The error was bound to go in time. Much headway had already been made. Meanwhile wherever they saw real friendship, there should be appreciation. Thus and thus only would they come together and live as perfect friends. In this connection he instanced an event he had noticed on the 26th January. The pressmen with him had arranged a simple meal between the Hindus, the Muslims and others. The Muslims did not come but the poor man whose hut they were occupying said that they should not press him to join the inter-dinner. For he argued that the event might land him into trouble. When they were gone, he might be invited to embrace Islam. The speaker saw the force of the fear and advised the pressmen not to have this dinner on his precincts.

Gandhiji then continued that he would strive for the day when the Hindus and the Musalmans would be able to shed their respective weaknesses and come closer to one another in heart. He did not know when the consummation would take place but he was prepared to lay down his life for the purpose, if need be. He finally asked the audience to join him in his prayer to God that the day might come soon.

29-1-'47

Addressing the prayer meeting Gandhiji at the outset dealt with a question that was raised by some Muslim friends. Did he want Muslims to attend his prayer meetings? The reply was that he wanted neither the Muslims nor the Hindus to attend the prayer meetings. If the questioner meant to ask whether he would like the Muslims to attend such meetings he had no hesitation in saying that he would certainly like them to attend. What was more, numerous Muslims had attended his prayer meetings which had gone on for years. The next question was whether he, the speaker, did not consider wrong for him, a non-Muslim, to recite anything from the *Quran* or to couple Rama and Krishna with Rahim and Karim. They said it offended Muslim ears. The speaker replied that the objection gave him a painful surprise. He thought that the objection betrayed narrowness of mind. They should know that he had introduced the recital from the *Quran* through Bibi Raihana Tyebjee, a devoted Muslim with a religious mind. She had no political motive behind the proposal. He was no *avatar*-man as was suggested. He claimed to be a man of God humbler than the humblest man or woman. His object ever was to make Muslims better Muslims, Hindus better Hindus, Christians better Christians, Parsis better Parsis. He never invited anybody to change his or her religion. He had thought, therefore, that the questioners would be glad to find that his religion was so expansive as to include readings from the religious scriptures of the world.

The next thing was that some friends had said that all prosecutions, initiated by the Hindus against the Muslim offenders, interfered with the progress of the peace mission between the two. It surprised him. What had peace between gentlemen to do with the prosecution of criminals

He could understand the objection if it meant that false prosecutions should be withdrawn. He would be whole-heartedly with the objectors. He went further and said that all such persons should be brought to book as perjurers. He said also that the proper course to avoid court procedure was for the guilty persons in all humility to make an open confession of their guilt and stand the judgement of the public. He would gladly help any such movement.

The third thing was that young men who had gone to Calcutta and other places in search of a career were bound to give a portion of their time to the villages. The easiest thing for them to do would be to meet among themselves and make an arrangement by which say half of them would take leave from office and serve for a stipulated number of months, at the end of which their place would be taken by the next batch. If they had a will there would surely be some way also for serving the cause of the villagers. Those who did not find it possible to offer personal service might help by cash.

Gandhiji ended by citing the example of England, Russia and other countries where every family had sent as many able-bodied men and women as possible for the defence of their country. This was how unity of heart was actually achieved in the world and he hoped that we in our country would be able to rise above small selfish considerations and create that unity without which life itself would not be worth living.

30-1-'47

Gandhiji began by apologizing for the fifteen minutes' delay. It was due to his being occupied with Zaman Saheb and Yusuf Saheb. These officers took him to a model cottage they had had erected. It was a good house but in his opinion unfit for human habitation in the Indian climate. Such a house could well be described as a box. The inmates would be baked as in an oven and they would be suffocated when they closed their doors and windows as had become their habit. He, therefore, suggested comfortable cottages of bamboo, straw and thatch. Such cottages will be airy, cool and artistic in the Indian setting, specially in the midst of stately palms of cocoanut and *supari*.

He was also pleased when these officers informed him that the refugees had commenced to return from the places where they had taken refuge. He hoped that this return would continue with unabated zeal. He was of opinion that the people should dismiss all fear from their minds and feel safe in the midst of their own countrymen, whether Hindu or Muslim. When they learnt to fear their Maker alone they would cease to fear their fellows. They would find that there were no people to frighten them if they were not afraid themselves. This had been his uniform experience in the course of the last sixty years of his life.

The third question taken up by him was in connection with some fishermen who had met him on the previous evening. They had complained that in this country where fishing was confined to privately owned ponds for the major part of the year, it was impossible for them to live if they were boycotted

by the majority community. Gandhiji expressed his surprise at this state of affairs and suggested that unless the Hindus and Muslims could rise above their present political differences and reasserted their common humanity and common brotherhood, life would become an impossibility where nature had designed otherwise. He hoped, therefore, that the alleged conditions would be corrected by the joint efforts of the people concerned and real peace restored in the countryside.

31-1-'47

In the course of his prayer meeting speech at the outset Gandhiji congratulated the audience, which was exceptionally large, on the perfect quiet they observed throughout the prayer. He then referred to two communications he had received from Muslim writers who consoled him against his critics who questioned his right to speak about the *pardah* or other things pertaining to Islam. The writers held by quoting from the *Quran* that it was broad-based and was exceptionally tolerant. It welcomed criticism and invited the world to study the *Quran*. One of them also held that no group or nation had remained without a prophet or teacher. He mentioned these communications to show that all Muslims did not hold what he considered to be intolerant views. He hoped too that the audience which contained a large number of Muslims would appreciate the testimony of the two writers who did not appear to be biassed writers.

The speaker then dealt with the following question addressed to him by some of the workers.

The Muslims were boycotting Hindu artisans and craftsmen and were taking to occupations like fishing, fir trade, *pan*-cultivation etc. Workers who desired to bring about peace between the two communities did not know what to do under the circumstances.

Gandhiji said he hoped that the news was exaggerated and that the boycott was confined to the fewest Muslims possible. He thought that it could not be sustained. The logical result was that any such move would be a compulsory exodus of the Hindus from the Muslim majority provinces, a result he had not heard a single leader encourage or contemplate. He invited his informants to bring the news to the notice of the authorities, not with a view to having the movers punished but with a view to having an authoritative pronouncement from them. He further advised the audience to pray for wisdom to both the communities.

The second question was: There is a movement for reducing the share of the owner from half to one-third of the agricultural produce. What is your opinion about this?

The speaker welcomed the move for the reduction of the landlord's share from half to one-third. He thought the move was substantial. The land belonged to the Lord of us all and therefore to the worker on it. But till that ideal state of things came about, the movement towards the reduction of the landlord's portion was in the right direction.

But he warned the movers against the use of compulsion or violence. He could have no part or

share in violence. It was a reform to be brought about only by the cultivation of healthy public opinion. The reformers must have patience. He believed implicitly in the aphorism: 'As the end so the means.' In his opinion it was pernicious to hold that so long as the end was good any means, however violent or unjust, were justified. Many movements had come to grief by reliance on doubtful means.

1-2-'47

This meeting eclipsed all the previous ones in point of numbers of both the Muslims and the Hindus. Consequently there was much noise when Gandhiji came to the meeting. He drew the attention of the audience to the fact that the universal law applicable to all meetings was that the visitors should be perfectly still and observe silence no matter how vast the audience was.

Yesterday evening a Maulvi wanted to speak for a short time. The speaker had sensed what he wanted to speak. He therefore contrary to wont allowed him to speak for the five minutes which he wanted by the watch. The Maulvi Saheb took no more than three minutes but said what he wanted to say. He resented Gandhiji's remark on the *pardah* system in vogue in Bengal. He had no right to speak on the Islamic Law. Gandhiji thought this was a narrow view of religion. He claimed the right to study and interpret the message of Islam. The Maulvi Saheb further resented coupling of the name of Rama, a mere young King with Rahim, name of God, similarly of Krishna with Karim. Gandhiji said this was a narrow view of Islam. Islam was not a creed to be preserved in a box. It was open to mankind to examine it and accept or reject its tenets. He hoped that this narrow view was not shared by the Muslims of Bengal or rather India.

In this connection Gandhiji wanted to draw the attention of the audience to the work Dr. Sushila Nayyar was doing in Changirgaon. She wanted to go to Sevagram to attend to the hospital for whose management she was responsible, but her Muslim patients would not let her go till they were restored to health. She had also mentioned that in the village, partakers of the loot of October last were of their own accord bringing back some of the looted property. He was of opinion that this was a happy omen. If the infection spread, the courts would have no work to do so far as public loot was concerned. He for one would ask Government to waive the right of prosecution if the looted property was returned. But he said the return must be sincere and full, whether by the guilty one or the public, and not a mere token to avoid prosecution. What he aimed at was a change of heart and not a truce superimposed by the military or the police. A popular ministry could not impose its will on the people.

Gandhiji then answered the following question:

You have asked rich men to be trustees. Is it implied that they should give up private ownership in their property and create out of it a trust valid in the eyes of the law and managed democratically? How will the successor of the present incumbent be determined on his demise?

In answer Gandhiji said that he adhered to the position taken by him years ago that everything belonged to God and was from God. Therefore it was for His people as a whole, not for a particular individual. When an individual had more than his proportionate portion he became a trustee of that portion for God's people.

God who was all-powerful had no need to store. He created from day to day; hence men also should in theory live from day to day and not stock things. If this truth was imbibed by the people generally, it would become legalized and trusteeship would become a legalized institution. He wished it became a gift from India to the world. Then there would be no exploitation and no reserves as in Australia and other countries for White men and their posterity. In these distinctions lay the seed of a war more virulent than the last two. As to the successor, the trustee in office would have the right to nominate his successor subject to legal sanction.

3-2-'47

Gandhiji referred with hesitation to the resolution passed by the Muslim League on the Constituent Assembly. It considered the Congress resolution to be dishonest and did not mean what it said. It was also said that the elections and other dealings of the Assembly were illegal. The speaker pleaded that there should be no imputation of dishonesty by one party to the other. It was not good for the great organizations which they both were. There was no reason why they should regard them as enemies, one of the other. That practice would not lead them to independence. If the elections and proceedings were illegal their legality should be challenged in a court of law. Otherwise, the charge had no meaning. If they did not wish to recognize the courts as he did in 1920 and later, then the talk of illegality should cease. He would plead with the League that they should go into the Assembly and state their case and influence the proceedings. But if they did not, he would advise them to test the sincerity of the Assembly and see how it dealt with the Muslim problem. It was due to themselves and the rest of the country unless they wanted to rely upon the law of the sword which he was sure they did not wish to do. Then the League had said that the Assembly represented only the Caste Hindus. Surely there were in the Assembly the Scheduled Classes, the Christians, the Parsis, the Anglo-Indians and all those who considered themselves sons of India. Then Doctor Ambedkar was good enough to attend the Assembly, not to mention the other large number of the Scheduled Classes. The Sikhs too were still there. It was open to the League to put up their fight within the Assembly.

As to the British Government who, as the League contended, should dismiss the Assembly, he entertained the hope, though he admitted it was somewhat shaken, that they would honestly carry to the end the voluntary Document. He submitted that the British Government was bound to act according to the State Paper even if a few

Provinces chose to establish their independence in accordance with the Paper. He hoped that the British would not forfeit all credit for honest dealing with India.

Gandhiji concluded by saying that whilst he felt obliged to refer to League politics, he warned the audience against inferring that the Hindus and the Muslims were to regard one another as enemies. The League has made no such announcement. Let the political quarrel be confined to the politicians at the top. It would be a disaster if the quarrel permeated in the villages. The way to Indian independence lay not through the sword but through mutual friendship and adjustment. He was in Noakhali to show what real Pakistan could mean. Bengal was the one province in India where it could be demonstrated. Bengal had produced talented Hindus and talented Muslims. Bengal had contributed largely to the national struggle. It was in the fitness of things that Bengal should now show how the Muslims and the Hindus could live together as friends and brothers. Then there would be no reason for Bengal to remain a deficit province. It ought to be a province of plenty.

4-2-'47

The prayer meeting was held by special invitation in the *badi* of Salimulla Saheb who is reported to be the chief Muslim in Sadhurkhal. He had given his assurance that there would be no objection to the *Ramadhun* being recited with the clapping of hands.

At the time of Gandhiji's speech some Muslim friends wished to read an address in Bengali which Gandhiji said might be read if it pleased the friends. It referred to the music before mosques, cow-slaughter etc. Gandhiji said he was not concerned with these questions. They were questions of law. He wanted to capture their hearts and see them welded into one. If that was attained, everything else would right itself. If their hearts were not united, nothing could be right. Their unfortunate lot would then be slavery. He asked them to accept the slavery of the one Omnipotent God no matter by what name they addressed Him. Then they would bend the knee to no man or men. It was ignorance to say that he coupled Rama, a mere man, with God. He had repeatedly made it clear that his Rama was the same as God. His Rama was before, is present now and would be for all time. He was Unborn and Uncreated. Therefore, let them tolerate and respect the different faiths. He was himself an iconoclast but he had equal regard for the so-called idolaters. Those who worshipped idols also worshipped the same God who was everywhere, even in a clod of earth, even in a nail that was pared off. He had Muslim friends whose names were Rahim, Rahman, Karim. Would he therefore join on to the name of God when he addressed them as Rahim, Karim, or Rahman?

Let them beware of the thought that all was well in Noakhali or the neighbouring parts. If the

reports he received were at all true, things had not quite settled down. He did not refer to these things or the destruction that had been wrought because he did not wish to excite passion. He did not believe in retaliation. He had lived with Pathans. Badshah Khan, being tired of retaliation which had descended from generation to generation, had learnt the virtue of non-violence. He did not claim perfection for him. He could be angered. But he did claim for his friend the wisdom that dictated to him restraint on one's love of vengeance. He wanted the same thing in Noakhali. Unless they sincerely believed that without real peace between the communities there was neither Pakistan nor Hindustan, slavery was their lot.

He had a visit from four young Muslim friends who deplored the fact that he had not corrected the exaggeration about the number of murders in Noakhali and the adjacent parts. He had not done so because he did not wish to bring out all he had seen. But if it at all mended matters he was free to declare that he had found no evidence to support the figure of a thousand. The figure was certainly much smaller. He was also free to admit that the murders in number and brutalities in Bihar eclipsed those in Noakhali. But that admission must not mean a call for him to go to Bihar. He did not know that he could render any greater service by going to Bihar than from here. He would not be worth anything if without conviction he went there at the bidding of anybody. He would need no prompting, immediately he felt that his place was more in Bihar than in Noakhali. He was where he thought he could render the greatest service to both the communities.

The Most Effective Remedy

Gandhiji holds that our Constructive Programme is the most effective remedy for communal unity and other problems of our country. In a letter written from Kazirkhil (Noakhali District) to Prof. J. C. Kumarappa, Gandhiji says:

"The work I am doing here is the most difficult of all I have hitherto undertaken and I know that those who are working for the country take an effective part in the work here if they do their best in their respective spheres. The village work that has been your lot can contribute probably the most to the fruition of what is being done here. At the same time I know that it is the most uphill work as I find walking from village to village and putting before them sanitation, the spinning wheel, weaving and the craft peculiar to the particular village."

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