

HARIJAN

12 Pages

Editor: PYARELAL

VOL. XI, No. 23

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, JULY 6, 1947

TWO ANNAS

RIGHTS OR DUTIES ?

[The following is from Gandhiji's post-prayer speeches on the 28th and 29th June. —S. N.]

"I want to deal with one great evil that is afflicting society today. The capitalist and the zamindar talk of their rights, the labourer on the other hand of his, the prince of his divine right to rule, the ryot of his to resist it. If all simply insist on rights and no duties, there will be utter confusion and chaos.

"If instead of insisting on rights everyone does his duty, there will immediately be the rule of order established among mankind. There is no such thing as the divine right of kings to rule and the humble duty of the ryots to pay respectful obedience to their masters. Whilst it is true that these hereditary inequalities must go as being injurious to the well-being of society, the unabashed assertion of rights of the hitherto down-trodden millions is equally injurious, if not more so to the same well-being. The latter behaviour is probably calculated to injure the millions rather than the few claimants of divine or other rights. They could but die a brave or cowardly death but those few dead would not bring in the orderly life of blissful contentment. It is, therefore, necessary to understand the correlation of rights and duties. I venture to suggest that rights that do not flow directly from duty well performed are not worth having. They will be usurpations sooner discarded the better. A wretched parent who claims obedience from his children without first doing his duty by them excites nothing but contempt. It is distortion of religious precept for a dissolute husband to expect compliance in every respect from his dutiful wife. But the children who flout their parent who is ever ready to do his duty towards them would be considered ungrateful and would harm themselves more than their parent. The same can be said about husband and wife. If you apply this simple and universal rule to employers and labourers, landlords and tenants, the princes and their subjects or the Hindus and the Muslims, you will find that the happiest relations can be established in all walks of life without creating disturbance in and dislocation of life and business which you see in India as in the other parts of the world. What I call the law of *satyagraha* is to be deduced from an appreciation of duties and rights flowing therefrom."

Taking the relations between the Hindus and the Muslims for his illustration, Gandhiji, resuming his remarks on rights and duties, said on the 29th June:

"What is the duty of the Hindu towards his Muslim neighbour? His duty is to befriend him as man, to share his joys and sorrows and help him in distress. He will then have the right to expect similar treatment from his Muslim neighbour and will probably get the expected response. Supposing the Hindus are in a majority in a village with a sprinkling of Muslims in their midst, the duty of the majority towards the few Muslim neighbours is increased manifold, so much so that the few will not feel that their religion makes any difference in the behaviour of the Hindus towards them. The Hindus will *then* earn the right, *not* before, that the Muslims will be natural friends with them and in times of danger both the communities will act as one man. But suppose that the few Muslims do not reciprocate the correct behaviour of the many Hindus and show fight in every action, it will be a sign of unmanliness. What is then the duty of the many Hindus? Certainly not to overpower them by the brute strength of the many; that will be usurpation of an unearned right. Their duty will be to check their unmanly behaviour as they would that of their blood brothers. It is unnecessary for me to dilate further upon the illustration. I will close it by saying that the application will be exactly the same if the position is reversed. From what I have said it is easy enough to extend the application with profit to the whole of the present state which has become baffling because people do not apply in practice the doctrine of deriving every right from a prior duty well performed.

"The same rule applies to the Princes and the ryots. The former's duty is to act as true servants of the people. They will rule not by right granted by some outside authority, never by the right of the sword. They will rule by right of service, of greater wisdom. They will then have the right to collect taxes voluntarily paid and expect certain services equally voluntarily rendered, not for themselves but for the sake of the people under their care. If they fail to perform this simple and primary duty, the ryots not only owe no return duty but the duty devolves on them of resisting the princely usurpation. It may be otherwise said that the ryots earn the right of resisting the usurpation or misrule. But the resistance will become a crime against man in terms of duty if it takes the form of murder, rapine and plunder. Force that performance of duty naturally generates is the non-violent and invincible force that *satyagraha* brings into being."

WEEKLY LETTER

TREAT THE DISEASE

It was with a heavy heart that the Congress agreed to the vivisection of India. They could not afford to see the country bleed to death. They had never wished to coerce any unit to remain in the Indian Union against its wishes. The public charged them with bending before brute force. They refuted the charge. They had bowed before the force of circumstances and swallowed the bitter pill in the interests of the country. And yet the violence continues. Early this week 100 houses were reported to have been burnt in one day in Lahore. The houses in Lahore are not huts. They are big mansions. News of stabbings and bomb explosions continue to pour in from Lahore, Amritsar and Calcutta. Rumour says that the leaders are unable to check the roused ruffian element of the public. Referring to this on the 24th, Gandhiji said in his prayer meeting that he was told, with what truth he did not know, that the parties were fairly matched and were bent on fighting it out. What the 'it' was he did not know. "Is the suicidal strife to continue, Pakistan or no Pakistan? Why cannot the combatants honestly come together and decide to stop arson and murder? Must we look to the ruling race to suppress the riots? The end of alien rule is imminent. Would to God our people stop this savagery and show mankind the better and the braver way!"

On the following day the newspapers reported that the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim leaders of Lahore had issued a joint peace appeal and they were determined to put down violence. A Muslim Leaguer was reported to have said that they could not allow Lahore, the flower of Pakistan, to be reduced to ashes. There had been reports that appeals had been made to the Viceroy to put Lahore under martial law. Poor Punjab! It has not forgotten the horrors of the days of the last martial law in 1919. Was it to be a victim to it again? And that too at the request of the people?

Congratulating the leaders on their humanitarian and national move Gandhiji said that it was any day much superior to martial law. "It is an effective substitute for martial law which deals with the symptoms but not with the disease itself. The parties, if they bring about peace, will be dealing with the disease."

LESSON OF AFFLICTION

Speaking to a deputation of sixteen representatives of the refugees from the N. W. F. P. and the Punjab at Haradwar, Gandhiji said that it was useless and depressing to recount the story of the horrors they had gone through. "But every affliction has its own rich lesson to teach if we would learn it. I hear many of those who were well-to-do in the past are idling away their time in playing cards and even gambling. Some are reported to be buying property or resorting to other methods of making money. I call it criminal misbehaviour. If I was given the rare opportunity of making

common cause with poor fellow refugees, I would share with them my talents and such riches as I had brought with me. All of you should make a cooperative effort so that wherever you go ultimately you lead a better and corporate life as a result of the life lived in Haradwar. Haradwar is considered to be a holy place. I do not think it is holy, but you can make it so by your correct behaviour."

PUT YOUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER

There was a newspaper report that the British Parliament would make two nations of India by passing a bill about the division of India in the Parliament with great pomp and show. It hurt Gandhiji. What was there to gloat over the tragedy? Was this to be a parting shot of the British?

"If the major partner is true to his salt," Gandhiji said in a written message on Monday, "the foreshadowed wisdom can be confounded not in the shape of avoiding partition however distasteful it might be, but by right behaviour on the part of the major partner by always acting as one nation, by refusing to treat the Muslim minorities as aliens in their own home."

"This means a revolutionary reform in the religion of the major partner. Let us not shut our eyes to the plain fact. The untouchables, the scheduled classes are the target because they are the weakest point of Hinduism. One reads reports of Muslim League speakers holding forth that the scheduled classes in Pakistan can have separate electorates. Is that to be a call for joining Islam of the Pakistan type? I do not wish to recall the tales of forcible conversions. But having heard so much from their own mouths, I shudder to contemplate the worst. What is the answer to this fear or threat? Undoubtedly there should be no untouchability whatsoever in Hinduism, no scheduled classes, therefore, in India, no caste divisions whatsoever in the eye of the law. Hindus are all one, no high or low. All the neglected classes such as the scheduled classes, the so-called aboriginal classes should receive special treatment in the matter of education, housing etc. On the electoral role they will be one. This must never mean a worse state than the present but better in every way. Will Hinduism come up to the high level or will it court extinction by hugging infamous superstitions and aping bad manners?"

IS GANDHIJI PARTIAL?

Of late 95% of the letters in Gandhiji's post are full of abuse. The Muslims look upon him as their arch-enemy and the Hindus accuse him of partiality for the Muslims. His advice to the Hindus to be honourable and just to the Muslims in the Union of India, irrespective of what was done in Pakistan, was also looked upon in that light. He did not plead guilty to the charge. Every person as every institution, above all every religion, was to be judged not by the amount of atrocities or the wrong committed by them but by their right conduct. Who would dare say that what he had

suggested was less than right? That the Hindus of larger Hindustan could not or would not do the right was another question. So much the worse for those who did not do the right no matter whether they were Hindus, Muslims or any other. The law was no respecter of persons. Only for the occasion his remarks were addressed to the Hindus. For, it was they who by their action were to prove or disprove the two nations theory. In this connection he could not help saying that his advice was meant for brave, unselfish and godly people. Persons and people lost by their own mistakes, never by those of others. Their own sad history was filled with illustrations of how through personal greed, selfishness and cowardice they had lost their liberty.

STANDING ON ONE'S OWN FEET

A correspondent had asked Gandhiji as to how, having depended on British troops for over a century, India could all of a sudden do without them. Gandhiji's reply was: "Another way of putting the same question would be 'Are you not unfit for Swaraj?'" He answered the question many years ago. He would give the same answer today. He had not the shadow of a doubt that India would, when the British troops were really withdrawn, feel that a great load had been lifted off her back. No doubt they would feel a little awkward for a day in this time of internal strife and mutual distrust, not always ill-based. But they would feel even as a man feels when he is removed from a stuffy room. This he said not merely from the standpoint of non-violence but even from that of violence. They had to get out of helpless dependence and learn even to fight to the finish among themselves. It was a terrible lesson to go through. But it was any day better than the present helplessness. He was quite sure that the present Hindu-Muslim enmity was a base manufacture which was destined to die of inanition. The pity undoubtedly was that the disease had invaded the intelligentsia. It did not become respectable on that account. It made the intelligentsia disresponsible. Some of them would live to see the dawn of sanity when they would laugh at their own folly. He only hoped that the British would, upto the last moment, resist the temptation to stay in India for the sake of giving India peace. He wished he could convince them that they never gave India the blessings of peace. It was, as Lord Halifax when he was Viceroy as Lord Irwin had said on a memorable occasion, "the peace of the grave."

FRAGRANCE OF NON-VIOLENCE

Another question was: "Does not your non-violence stink in your nostrils?" Gandhiji made bold to say that the fragrance of non-violence to him was never sweeter than when it was today amidst the stink of violence of the most cowardly type that was being displayed in the cities of India such as Lahore, Amritsar and other places. He was sorry to say that he was ashamed of his countrymen, be they Hindu or Muslim. Neither became his enemy

because either chose to call himself so. He was aware that Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah had rendered a disservice to Islam by calling Hindus or better still the Caste Hindus 'our enemies'. He would plead with the so-called Caste Hindus not to wear the cap but unselfishly and bravely prove themselves friends of every Indian because they loved India. There was grave danger of insanity proving infective. Pakistan was there. Why would the Qaid-e-Azam not be happy now that he had got it? Or had the poison gone too deep to be brought under control? Was it a variety of, and that worse than, the atom bomb? Let those who had eyes, see the thing and avoid it well before India was caught in the poisonous coil.

WORSHIP OF MATTER

Another correspondent asked Gandhiji how India was to deal with the disease that had seized the world viz., the worship of matter in the place of the spirit. He was afraid that India itself was not free from it. The question was put to him because of his vaunted spirituality. Though he admitted India's complicity in the crime of denial of ethical values over the material, he lived in the hope that India would be true to her heritage.

FRIENDSHIP WITH BRITAIN

Yet another asked whether he contemplated any kind of friendship or relation with England when India ceased to be a dominion after it had its own constitution.

Gandhiji replied that he contemplated the closest friendship with England. He was, therefore, most anxious that during this pregnant period the Viceroy and his English advisers and the Englishmen in India did nothing that was not strictly right. Most correct dealings with India as a whole would leave no bitter memory behind.

New Delhi, 29-6-'47

S. N.

Cattle Breeding

Speaking at Coimbatore, Sir Datar Singh made a strong appeal to private individuals to undertake dairy farming. This is all very well, but where are the animals? Sir Datar Singh knows better than anybody else the havoc caused by the military demand in the last few years. If the country is to tackle its food problem by sound agriculture, we must concentrate on producing good animals both for draught and for milk yield. It would be a short range policy to meet the immediate need with crossbred animals. What we want to do is to breed up the local types to supply our requirements. This work of selective breeding calls for a long range Government policy to conduct efficient cattle breeding farms. The policy pursued by the Government has ruined the cattle wealth of the country. We hope our Swaraj Government will give this item a leading place in its development programme.

J. C. K.

HARIJAN

July 6

1947

A PERPLEXITY

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"I have developed a curious mentality about the relations between men and women. I believe in certain checks upon these. Yet my condition is very like that of a man suspended in mid-air. I often feel that if these relations were more natural than they are, probably there would be less sinfulness. Yet something within me tells me that every touch, be it ever so superficial, is bound to lead to the eruption of animal passion. When one examines the court cases here even about brother and sister or even father and daughter, the beginning seems to have been quite innocent. In my opinion the glow of mere touch drags down inside of a month, even a week, one who is not endowed with extra purity. A good man may take even ten years but he is sure to go down the incline of vice. There is a constant conflict between the habit which we have inherited and the study of modernist books. The question often arises—can society altogether abjure contact between the sexes? I have not been able to come to a decision. Such in short is my sorry plight."

This is the usual state of many youths and young women. There is only one way for such young people. They have to avoid all contact of the opposite sex. The checks and restraints described in our books were the result of experience gained during those times. They were, no doubt, necessary for the writers and their readers. Today every aspirant has to pick out from them the necessary items and add new ones which experience may make necessary. If we draw a circle round the goal to be reached, we shall find many ways leading to the goal, each one according to his needs.

An aspirant who may not know his own mind will certainly fail if he blindly copies another.

Having said so much by way of caution, I must add that to find the true way to *brahmacharya* through a study of court cases and erotic literature is as fruitless as the effort to find the proverbial flower in the heavens above. The true way is not to be found in English law courts or in the novels. They have their use in their limited field, but they are of no use to the aspirant after *brahmacharya*. English men and women who tread the difficult path are not afflicted by the imaginings of the correspondent quoted above. Those whom I have in mind have their God enthroned in their hearts. They are neither self-deceived nor would they deceive others. To them their sisters and mothers are ever thus and for them all women are in the place of sisters and mothers. It never occurs to them that every contact with them is sinful or that it is fraught with danger. They see in all women the

same God they see in themselves. It will betray lack of humility to say that such specimens do not exist because we have not come across them. Lack of belief in the possibility would also amount to lowering the standard of *brahmacharya*. There is as much error in saying that there is no God because we have not seen Him face to face or because we have not met men who have had that experience, as there is in rejecting the possibilities of *brahmacharya* because our own evidence is to the contrary.

(Translated from the original in Gujarati)

New Delhi, 29-6-'47

WORTHY HIRE

A long overdue reform is suggested by the Varadachari Pay Commission. As a general proposition they fix a ceiling of Rs. 2,000 and a minima of Rs. 55 for salaries to be paid to public servants.

India is on the threshold of independence and this question of pay of Government servants has always been a sore point. Under the foreign patronage many extraneous considerations went into the making up of the amount. To the foreigner the pay had to compensate for his serving away from "home" and had to take into consideration that his family have to move about and be split up to educate the children. So even with very high amounts offered it was really difficult to secure the best. Besides we had to compete with a high-price-level country where alternative employment could easily outbid a low-price-level country.

In the higher posts the element of public spirit and a desire to serve one's own country may well be expected to keep the level of salary down. But this was absent in the equation with the foreigner. As any differentiation between the foreign and Indian recruits was construed to be invidious our own men also came to draw these huge salaries, totally out of keeping with the income of the tax-payer.

Now all this has to change to fit into an India with its natural cultural background. Ours is not a purely material-centred economy nor are our wants in our country such as to call for a high level of private expenditure. We do not want mercenaries nor do we need to pay "annuity" and compensation type of salaries based on the present value of future interests nor even bribe-proof emoluments.

Our tradition honours men who work for a cause and not for wealth. Under these circumstances, once the foreign example is off the field, it ought not to be difficult to find men and women who will realize their ambition in service. Such men cannot be secured by the offer of pure material advantages.

We must realize that the whole outlook of the service will change with the advent of patriotism. When the day of freedom dawns, we hope this spread and range between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 55 will close up and that public service will attract men and women of ideals imbued with the desire to serve those in need. Such will deem it a form of cannibalism to live on the taxes extracted from the indigent citizen. We trust that day is not far off.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

A THOUGHTFUL SUGGESTION

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's far-sighted decision to stick to the original nomenclature of 'Union of Indian Republics' with a view to emphasizing the Congress stand that there has been no change of outlook as far as they are concerned, may serve as a useful pointer to the *ad hoc* Committee for the National Flag, recently appointed by Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Constituent Assembly. If the Congress ideology has remained unchanged, a flag which has represented that ideology and for which many shed their blood so that the honour of the national flag may be maintained, need not undergo any radical change except on grounds of technical details of flag-making.

Originally, the flag had three horizontal strips of white, green and red in that order, starting from the top, with the figure of the *charkha* superimposed. At later stages, the red strip was replaced by the orange (to recognize the sacrifices of the saffron-clad *desh-sevikas*, as some thought) and the order was changed to orange, white and green, with the *charkha* in the centre.

One of the basic principles of flag-making is that it must be distinct against the background of the sky, and for this reason, a white strip at any extremity has to be ruled out of the question. The original flag with a white strip at the top and flying on the mast of, say, a battleship, would appear against the background of the sky as a flag with only two strips of green and red, the white strip being swallowed up by the sky. The white strip, if it is to remain, and I shall show presently why it should remain, must necessarily be in the centre with two distinct colours coming above and below it.

The second principle is that the colours must be as distinct as possible and must not be capable of running into too many shades. The present orange colour, from this point of view is not an improvement on the old red. Not infrequently we come across flags with orange colours which may be anything from yellow, saffron, and pink to *bhagwa* of the *sadhu's kafni*. The red strip of the original flag was definitely better from this point of view.

Adoption of the original red might also effect a compromise with workers who have a partiality to that colour. A symbol of revolution, the red need not necessarily indicate a bloody revolution; it may very well stand for the non-violent revolution that we have witnessed in India.

If the saffron was introduced to recognize the sacrifices of the *desh-sevikas*, (and I am told, this was not the case), would not 'white', the symbol of purity, better suit Indian womanhood? Would it not also depict them as 'Sisters of Mercy' which in reality they are? Replacement of the orange need not therefore worry the *desh-sevikas*.

A third principle which is equally important if the flag is to have a wide popular appeal is that the details of design must not be too complicated and over-decorative so as to make it almost impossible for a man in the street to design a national flag of his own; 'Tiger's head', for example, would not do.

From this point of view, we should try and see if the present *charkha* cannot be replaced by something that symbolizes the *charkha*. The *charkha* must of course be maintained, but only in a symbol form. The present figure of the *charkha* creates following difficulties of flag-making:

(i) The design is not very easy to draw;

(ii) it is not symmetrical; and

(iii) if the obverse of the flag shows the *charkha* with the wheel towards the mast and the spindle towards the end with its point facing towards one (I am thinking of the position when the flag is flying to the left of the mast), then the reverse must show the same *charkha* but the point of the spindle facing away from one. Few understand this important point and we come across ridiculous figures of the *charkha* with the wheel towards the left and the spindle pointing towards one on the right!

The simple wheel, I submit, could still symbolize the *charkha*, making it easier to draw, symmetrical in design, and without creating confusion with the obverse and the reverse sides of the flag.

The wheel which was the earliest and most vital discovery of human beings has been the substratum of all civilizations, and it would particularly symbolize an agricultural community such as the Indian; it would, therefore, represent the *kisan* and the *kisan* movement too.

At the same time, the wheel may indicate industry and commerce without necessarily implying mechanization or the capitalist system.

The wheel may further symbolize *kranti* by being the wheel of revolution and may be acceptable to parties which prefer to call themselves 'revolutionary'.

And finally, the wheel might also include the Buddhist concept of *dharmachakra* (adopted by Emperor Ashoka) or the balance-wheel of religion that sustains society. The spiritual basis of Indian civilization might thus be made pronounced in our national symbol which will carry the message of peace and non-violence to the whole world.

To conclude, our flag may have three strips of red, white and green (of the mother earth and her children the tillers) with a wheel with eight spokes superimposed in any suitable colour.

S. D. KALELKAR

[As the originator of the first design, I should say that the three strips were to represent all the communities and the *charkha* was the symbol of non-violence.

— M. K. G.]

New Delhi, 29-6-'47

THE NATION'S VOICE

(Second Edition)

[Being a collection of Gandhiji's speeches in England and Sjt. Mahadev Desai's account of the sojourn—September to December 1931]

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Price Rs. Three

Postage etc. As. Seven

SOME VALUABLE HINTS

Sometimes, it is easier to win freedom than to retain it. The Congress has won freedom for India. The next three years will show whether the Congress is able to preserve this dearly won freedom for this country. To preserve this freedom, the Congress will have to change its tactics. So far it was good tactics to issue statements, make speeches and make the biggest noise. The new situation requires silent planning, discipline and the strictest control over speeches, statements and irresponsible loose talk. General impression is that Congressmen in office talk much as before. The late Lord Willingdon used to say that "the successful politician should keep his mouth shut and bowls open." Our politicians, especially those holding office should keep their mouths as also their bowls shut. Behind loose, irresponsible talk, there can be no planning, there are no contacts and there are no consultations with non-Congress experts. It is not too late even now to put the house in order and be prepared to face all eventualities. The energy of non-Congress experts should be harnessed.

Transfer of power was the first objective of the Congress. That objective is being achieved by August 15. The Congress, thereafter, must consolidate its gains, ease up the rapidly deteriorating economic situation in the country and build her defences. The neck-breaking speed of constitution-making must be slowed down.

The Congress should set up a number of committees of experts, one on the defence of India, the second on economic planning, the third on the industrial planning and the fourth on the secretariat planning. All-out efforts should be made to speed up production. Instead of 'Industrialize or Perish' the slogan should be "Produce or Perish." Ever since the present Government has taken office, production in all forms has declined. Then again, immediate efforts should be made to stabilize the wage structure of this country. That alone would bring industrial peace and speed up production. The Departments of Commerce and Finance have planned a new import policy for India. That policy is bound to increase inflation and lead to all the evil consequences following inflation. The Economic planning should carefully formulate the import and export policy for this country.

There is much talk of industrialization. The talkers are deceiving themselves and deceiving the country. Firstly, no capital goods are available in Europe and America to make industrialization possible. Secondly, in this country itself, cement, bricks, iron, steel and timber are in short supplies. Even if there are capital goods available, there is not enough building material to erect factories, plants and machinery. Lastly, movement of goods by railways has steadily gone down. Nothing appears to move.

The Government of India's secretariat has become unwieldy and unsuitable for speedy transaction of work. A thorough reorganization is urgently called

for. The Congress Ministers should have the guts to 'retrench' the superfluous staff.

The nation must falsify Mr. Churchill's vicious prophecy:

"They are making arrangements that the greatest betrayal shall be followed by the greatest ramp. Nepotism, back-scratching, graft and corruption in every form will be the handmaidens of a Brahmin domination."

ANONYMOUS

[The writer is a student of the country's politics. I am not *au fait* with the Congress work. Therefore I have no right to pronounce any opinion on the foregoing hints which should, therefore, be taken for what they are worth. — M. K. G.]

New Delhi, 29-6-'47

GLEANINGS FROM BUDDHISM

Three issues of a Buddhist quarterly magazine called *Buddhist China* published in Chinese and English have been sent to Gandhiji by the editors. The following are gleanings from these magazines:

Lord Buddha has said:

"By ourselves is evil done,
"By ourselves we pain endure.
"By ourselves we cease from ill,
"By ourselves become we pure.
"No one saves us but ourselves,
"No one can and no one may;
"We ourselves must walk the path,
"Buddhas merely teach the way."

The same thought is summed up in one line in the *Gita*:

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ।

Man himself is his own enemy or his own friend.

Buddha preached the necessity of balancing of moral faculties such as faith, energy, attentiveness, concentration and intelligence. Explaining this the commentator Ven. Nyanatiloka Maha Tehra says:

"A person with strong faith and weak intelligence believes blindly, a person with great intelligence and weak faith inclines to cunning. Where there is equilibrium of both the faculties, however, one has faith only in true things."

"A person with strong concentration and little energy is overpowered by indolence, and a person with great energy and weak concentration tends to restlessness. On the equability of both faculties depends 'attainment of concentration.' Attentiveness, however, should be strong everywhere. Attentiveness was called 'ever wanted' by the Blessed One."

Lord Buddha was a great opponent of blind faith. He taught:

"Do not believe anything on mere hearsay. Do not believe in traditions merely because they are old and have been handed down for many generations and in many places. Do not believe anything on account of rumours or because people talk a great deal about it. Do not believe anything merely because presumption is in its favour."

"Do not accept my doctrine out of reverence, but first try it as gold is tried by fire."

The theory of trusteeship and the teaching of the first verse of the *Ishopanishad* are also reflected in the teaching of the Great Master:

"It is not wealth or ownership that enslaves man to *tanha* (misery) but the cleaving and attachment to wealth and power. He who does not cleave to wealth and power, but uses them rightly will be a blessing unto his fellow beings."

The four vices described by the Master are killing, stealing, unchastity and falsehood. Commenting on killing Ven. Paravahera V. Tehra says:

"The killing of any living creature sets up atmospheric and ethereal reactions which depress the atmosphere and tend to submerge the finer instincts of those whom it surrounds."

How much damage the killing of thousands upon thousands in the senseless war of communal hatred must have done to the soul of India?

The theory of non-violence finds an echo in the following words of Lord Buddha:

"Not he who in the battlefield
Defends one hundred thousand men,
But he, who conquers his own self,
He is the greatest conqueror."

New Delhi, 28-6-'47

S. N.

AN OPEN CONFESSION

An English sister writes thus to Gandhiji:

"I feel terribly ashamed, sad and distressed, and the more you say that India must look to her own faults and not blame Britain the worse I feel. I think I understand what you mean and why you speak thus and how determined you are to bring India through this crisis with the least bloodshed, the least bitterness and in the finest spirit possible. But I cannot escape the condemnation of my own conscience. We British have done so much to bring India to this spiritual tragedy. It may be that in the situation the present plan is the best that could be produced; it may be that India should never have allowed herself to get into the present conditions, but ultimately, surely, the blame should be laid well and truly at our door — for the past policies, the communal electorates, all the divisive influences, the way we have let things drift and have hung on to India till the situation was so overripe that human beings themselves began to go rotten morally and spiritually. Even now I am not satisfied that we are playing straight — at best we are still on the plane of political chess. How can I help being sad and ashamed? There is no sense of atonement whatever over here. The general reaction is that Britain has done a grand job in India and has brought her work to a grand finale. Still the same old blindness to our share in bringing India to a point where her people — or leaders anyhow — seek divisions on a basis of man's different approaches to God. Till the last we have held India, even while that fateful choice was made — acceptance of division rather than continuation of the upheavals and frustrations. Why didn't we hand over to the established government (we had ourselves established it) and go, leaving India really free to make decisions?

What freedom of choice is there when the jailer opens only one door? To reiterate that it would have been better to go out through the other door, when that door — of Hindu-Muslim understanding — has been more firmly barred through the decades is a mockery. You have often said that at least as much damage was done to the jailer as to the prisoner, to the wielder of power as to the one held bound. It is all too true. I used to hope that when the day of India's freedom finally came it would be a glorious day of spiritual victory for both. It may yet be that for India. But there is little sign of it for Britain. It is very hard for the inheritors of Empire to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Shall we ever be shorn of our pride, our superiority and our dominating ways? Shall we ever stop 'talking down' to those who in reality are our superiors, though we are too blind to see it? India suffers, but to some purpose. Britain temporarily manages to escape her share of the suffering, but to what purpose? We've been through a second world war and have suffered in that way it is true. But have we learnt anything worth while? Not very much. We turn again to the old policies that brought so much misery before. And here in India we had our chance — and have missed it. Or so I think. Poor Britain! We may be fairly clever, adepts at political expediency, charming and affable, delightful folk when that is our policy. But we seem to be spiritually dead. Yet deep within us are glorious qualities in which you for one have always believed and have tried to draw from us. You are still doing it, aren't you? Applying your non-violence in tremendous generosity of spirit. Why does it not evoke an answering response? The hang-over of our superiority is deep in us — even in our interpretation of Christ's teaching. Would that the "non-violent" committees could be roused to a sense of urgency for the application of positive non-violence, here and now, to a counterpart of what you are doing over there. "The non-violent man must first reduce himself to zero." That's very hard for us Britishers, hard for everyone but particularly for us. We've been top-dogs for so long. People can see the tragedy of India. The tragedy of Britain is hidden — but it is there."

Only the other day Gandhiji said to a young American: "An open confession is good for the soul." The foregoing should provide food for thought for Britons. That they are leaving a divided India as a result to a large extent of the seeds of dissension sown by them over a long period, is surely no cause for rejoicing. For those millions who have dreamed and worked and suffered for a United India the impending secession of some parts of the country from the mother's lap has taken all the gilt off the ginger bread. Nevertheless, as Gandhiji has been saying again and again recently, it is up to the inhabitants of the Indian Union to prove the evil of division by their right action. May they have the moral strength to rise to those heights!

New Delhi, 25-6-'47

A. K.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

A Muslim friend has written an article on the essential teachings of both Hinduism and Islam in the matter of all men being sons of the same Father in heaven. The extracts taken from some of the Hindu Scriptures and the *Quran Sharif* are worth treasuring in these sad days of communal strife.

In the *Bhagwad Gita* we read the following striking verses:

"He who regards impartially lovers, friends and foes, strangers, neutrals, foreigners and relatives — also the righteous and the unrighteous — he excelleth."

"Having an eye to the welfare of the world also, thou shouldest perform action."

"I, O conqueror of sleep, am the Self, seated in the heart of all beings."

In the *Manu Smriti* we find the following:

"He who befriendeth all creatures, his name is Brahman."

"He who thus seeth the Self in all beings, by his own self, he realizes the equality of all, and attaineth to the supreme state of Brahman."

In the *Katha Upanishad* we come across the following:

"Thus one universal inner Self of all beings becometh one separate individual Self for each form."

Again in the *Isha Upanishad*:

"He who seeth all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings — he hateth no more."

In the *Shantiparva* of the *Mahabharata* the following verse is most significant:

"He who is the friend of all beings, he who is intent on the welfare of all in act and thought and speech — he only knoweth religion."

And in the *Vishnu Purana*:

"Knowing the Supreme to be in all beings, the wise extend love to all creatures undeviatingly." Turning to the *Quran Sharif* the Prophet Mohammad said:

"No man is a true believer unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself."

"He who is not affectionate to God's creatures and to his own children, God will not be affectionate to him."

"Who is the most favoured of God? He from whom the greatest good cometh to His creatures."

"The best of man is he from whom good accrue to humanity. All God's creatures are his family and he is the most beloved of God who trieth to do most good to God's creatures."

"Feed the hungry and visit the sick and free the captive if he be unjustly confined. Assist any person oppressed, whether he be Muslim or non-Muslim; God enjoins you to treat women well, for they are your mothers, daughters and aunts."

"Do you love your Creator? Love your fellow men first."

When on his last pilgrimage, he said:

"Remember you are all brothers. All men are equal in the eyes of God. And your lives and your properties are all sacred; in no case should you attack each other's life and property. Today I trample under my feet all distinctions of caste, colour and nationality. All men are sons of Adam; and Adam was of dust."

The great Khalifa Omar renewed his charter in the following words:

"I will make no invidious distinction between the red and the black, between Arabs and non-Arabs and will follow the foot-steps of the Holy Prophet."

Another friend has sent quotations from the Book of Proverbs. They too are apposite at a time when the shedding of blood and loot and arson are rife:

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."

"If they say, 'Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause:

"Let us swallow them up alive as the grave:

"We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil: Cast in thy lot among us, let us all have our purse."

"My son, walk not thou in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path:

"For their feet run to evil and make haste to shed blood."

"And they lay wait for their own blood; they lurk privily for their own lives."

"Devise not evil against thy neighbour; seeing he dwelleth securely by thee."

The wise King saw the folly of the madness which must lead in the long run to self-destruction for the evil-doer. He was right too when he said:

"Wisdom is the principal thing: therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding."

When will we see the incredible folly of our ways?

New Delhi, 24-6-'47

A. K.

The Cloth Shortage Problem

The most common argument advanced by the supporters of the textile industry is that the country is experiencing a great shortage in cotton goods and the quickest way of meeting this deficiency is by resorting to mill production. Sir John Greaves, who was detailed out to look after the British imports of textile machinery into India, states that the execution of India's existing orders for textile machinery would take seven years more. Even then production can take place only after the installation of the plant and machinery which will take another year or two. In the case of Khadi, production begins when a person picks up the *takli*. Hence, anyone, not concerned with vested interests, can see that the quickest solution of the cloth problem is to take to *khadi* production. Will our Provincial Governments understand or are the vested interests blindfolding them?

J. C. K.

CONTENTS		PAGE
RIGHTS OR DUTIES?	... M. K. GANDHI	217
WEEKLY LETTER	... S. N.	218
A PERPLEXITY	... M. K. GANDHI	220
WORTHY HIRE	... J. C. KUMARAPPA	220
A THOUGHTFUL SUGGESTION	S. D. KALELKAR	221
SOME VALUABLE HINTS	... ANONYMOUS	222
GLEANINGS FROM BUDDHISM	S. N.	222
AN OPEN CONFESSION	... A. K.	223
THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN	... A. K.	224
ENGLISH INTO HINDUSTANI		
— INSTALMENT — XXIII		225
NOTES:		
CATTLE BREEDING	... J. C. K.	219
THE CLOTH SHORTAGE		
PROBLEM	... J. C. K.	224