

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

ON WAY TO SHIVARAMPALLI (A DIARY OF VINOBA'S ITINERARY)

III

[Note: Vinoba's prayer-speeches, in course of his journey on foot to Shivarampalli to attend the Sarvodaya Sammelan, have been already reported in part by D.D. As the reporting is being handled now by D.M., a part of this article is by way of a supplementary note of the journey covered by the first two articles. —Ed.]

Power of Love

Vinobaji had been staying at Sevagram for a week. He visits the Ashram now and then and stays there for at least a week once in a year. He chose this time, as it was also the occasion for the Seventh Session of the Talimi Sangh Conference. Delegates from distant places, including members of the Sarvodaya Samaj, had come for the session. They naturally wanted to know whether Vinobaji was going to attend the Hyderabad Session of the Sarvodaya Samaj. He could not attend the Angul session. Hence this anxious inquiry. On Vinoba's replying in the negative, there was a general feeling of disappointment and, particularly, Shri Ramakrishna Dhoot and other workers of Hyderabad felt unhappy.

But they did not give up their efforts. On the 6th March, there was a meeting of the Sarva Seva Sangh at Sevagram. They almost unanimously pressed him to change his decision of not going to Shivarampalli. Vinoba could not resist the pressure of love and yielded.

All were extremely pleased. But when, in his post-prayer speech, Vinoba announced that he would go all the way on foot, some of the friends anxiously said that they would not have pressed him, if they knew that he would take such a serious decision. They were afraid that his health might not stand the strain.

"You should never think of persuading me to give up my decision. Rather, you should help me in chalking out the further programme. We should not think of exceptional circumstances at the outset. Resolves once taken should not be broken. It neither gives power to the will nor to our intelligence."

Vinobaji was scheduled to leave Sevagram the next morning for Paramdham. Students and workers gathered early in the morning at Bapu's *Akhari Niwas* (Last Residence), where Vinobaji was lodged. The students sang सुनेरी मेने निबलके बल राम। (Rama is the strength of the weak. So I have heard). Vinobaji expressed his gratitude for the inmates' gathering at that early hour to bless him on his new mission. "The song that you have sung just now has given me immense strength. As is evident from the song, Soordas, the author, had only heard that Rama was the strength of the weak. I have known it, seen it, experienced it. I would, therefore, on the basis of my experience, sing देखेरी मेने (So I have seen). I am weak from the very start. But your love has always given me strength. You have showered again that love on me today. I am thankful to you for that. I pray to God, for the success of your work."

And their work meant the work of *Nai Talim*, the life-work of Shri Ashadevi and Aryanayakam. Making reference to them, he continued: "I have great respect and love for both of them, since the very beginning. I wish to express it today publicly. The way they have devoted themselves to the cause of the *Nai Talim* is a dedication of its own kind. I wish them every success in their cause, which is equally mine. They have received my whole-hearted co-operation till now and they will have it in future as and when they want it."

Touching scenes were witnessed at the parting. Every one was visibly moved and Vinobaji was not an exception. Instead of going straight to Paunur, Vinobaji went via Wardha, saw Shri Kishorilal Mashruwala, Jajuji and other friends at Bajajwadi. He also visited Mahilashram and Gopuri, where the workers took necessary instructions. It seemed as if it were he was going on a very long tour.

His post-prayer speech the same evening at the Paunur Ashram has already appeared in the columns of *Harijan* (March 24, '51)

March 8, Valgaon (First Halt—13 miles from Paramdham).

Exactly at 5 a.m. Vinobaji left his ashram, Paramdham. Friends knew that he was going to visit the Laxminarayan temple on the way. They had gathered there. *Ramadhun* and *Vaishnava Jana* were sung. Quite unexpectedly Smt. Janakidevi Bajaj rose to speak. There was a combination of affection, humour and pathos in her words: "After the deaths of Jammalalji and Bapuji we had begun to look to Vinobaji for solace, but he is going on a foot-march and nobody knows when he would return. Is he fit for such a pilgrimage? His duodenal ulcer is not yet cured. But the *Sarvodaya* people say that their session needs his presence—as if it were, he was the bridegroom, and the marriage could not take place without him! Let us hope he returns soon and looks after his institutions and his workers!" Vinobaji made a short reply. He hinted that he might go further South from Hyderabad. They should therefore make the best use of the moment that was at their disposal. He did not know when he would return. That meeting might prove their last meeting even.

To the citizens of Wardha, he reminded of their responsibility. Jammalalji's name was associated with Wardha,—Jammalalji who was so dear to Gandhiji, and who contributed so immensely in converting Wardha into a laboratory of nation-building activities. There was another reason why Wardha people should realize their responsibility. The system of education which Gandhiji had given them had been called Sevagram method by the framers. But that name did not thrive and the world recognized it as the *Wardha Scheme*. What an honour to Wardha, and what a great inspiration these two noble names! Lot of work could be done. Let them preserve their inheritance.

Bhadant Anand Kausalyayan was also present. He supported Vinobaji's resolve not to use any conveyance. Finding me by his side, he said that he wanted to be an

eye-witness to the augury of this foot journey. His few words meant so much.

We reached Vaigaon at 11 a.m., meeting an ailing friend on the way at Selukate. (Vinoba's speech at Vaigaon has been reported already).

March 9, Ralegaon (Dt. Yeotmal) — (Second Halt, 17 miles).

Vinobaji reached Ralegaon at 12 noon, crossing the Wardha river, and visiting Giroll, Ambora, Khargaon Poti and other villages on the way. At Giroll, the population had decreased, 130 families having left the village. At Poti too many people had left the village, and the population did not show any increase in the new census. And at Ralegaon too, we were told that the population was the same as in 1941. Vinobaji was seen grieved. "Let us treat the labourers with affection. Then only they will not leave their homes!" At one village, he advised them to conduct daily prayer. At another he wanted them to take to *khadi* and to make the best use of their refuse. In this way, accepting their reception, and speaking a few words of consolation to them, he marched on. Evidently they were eager to listen to him. (The speech at Ralegaon has been reported earlier).

March 10, Sakhi Krishnapur (Third Halt—14 miles).

At about 5 a.m. we started for Sakhi Krishnapur from Ralegaon. Such a name for a village is common in Bihar and Orissa and is probably given to commemorate the visit of a saint such as Chaitanya. It is worthwhile to ascertain how this particular place obtained its name. Such names provide a clue to know the past history of cultural intercourse. We left the *pacca* road, for a *kachha* one; then through a forest, which grew from thick to thicker, and thicker still. The tall trees, the red lustre of the *palash* flowers, the dry leaves fallen and scattered all over, covering even the foot tracks, provided inspiration to Vinoba to recall to memory verses from Moropant's *Mahabharata*, and the *Upanishadas*. It was a pleasure to walk with Vinoba through the forest.

Thirty-five miles away from railway line and about five from a motor road, the village Sakhi has a population of only 184 people. Every one including the children was present. Men and women from the surrounding villages had also come,—about 500 in all—eager to listen to the message of *Sarvodaya*. "The roads and the rail will come to you sooner or later, but do not allow your industries to go out. The roads will bring flour-mills and oil-mills, but you must refuse to fall a prey to them. Wherever they have gone they have destroyed the local industries. I know there was no flour-mill in my village in my childhood, and people rose early, worked at the hand *chakki*, and were healthy and happy. But now they rise late and have given up grinding their corn." The people were listening with pin-drop silence. This was the first meeting of its kind in the village, for who cares to go to these places in the interior.

It was the time for questions, and a friend asked: "The Kachhis and the Seths (Marwadis) get good crops, but we do not get much. Why should they not give us some occupation, some industries so that we may also earn our bread?" Vinoba replied with a series of counter-questions: "You have so many clothes on your body. Did you make them? Do not you grow cotton in your fields? Why should you then purchase cloth at all? Why do you part with gold to obtain brass? Can there be a greater folly? Did our ancestors go naked? You have lost all that industry. You won't gin your cotton, you don't want to card it, you would not spin, nor weave. Where would the industries come from? How much do you spend for your cloth?" "Twenty-five rupees," came a reply. "Twenty-five! I thought you did not spend more than ten or twelve rupees each. Now just calculate how much it comes to per village per year. Besides, you have to pay more, because you purchase cloth in the black market."

Showing the cloth that he himself had put on, Vinobaji said, "This has been prepared at the Ashram. All processes from cotton-growing to cloth-weaving have been

done at the Ashram. I have not inquired into the price of mill-cloth for the last fifteen years, for I had not to purchase it. Why do you want to purchase then? Look at your women. All the saris that they are wearing have been purchased. We might as well sell our children and purchase better ones! How do you expect to become happy, with the village industries completely destroyed? Gandhiji repeatedly told us these things; but you won't listen. You will do so only when you will find yourselves completely helpless. Thank God, the flour-mill has not yet entered this village. But if you start selling away your wheat and purchasing *chapatis* instead, and then ask for occupation and industries, what can the Kachhis or the Marwadis or, for that matter, the Government do? What new industries would they devise for you? You produce *till*, but purchase the oil. You grow the jute, but purchase the ropes. Cotton is abundantly grown in your fields, but you purchase the cloth. What a tragedy!"

Many were the questions asked and answered. People listened with all attention. They opened out their hearts. They felt they must with a view to express their hardships. A friend said, "We had tried to dig a well in our village. There is much scarcity of water here. The work of the well is yet unfinished. We require Government help." "Let one of you go to Wardha and see what the young friends who have just left their colleges are doing there. They have hoes in their hands and they have successfully dug a well. Strength lies in your hands. My boys produce their vegetables, their cloth, their fruits. Don't the village children require these things? But either you do not grow these things or if you grow them you sell them away to the towns. Don't you know what Krishna had to do to prevent the cowherds of Vrindavan from selling away their butter in Mathura? He gathered his companions and looted the gopis. The village children will also have to protest likewise against your sales."

And a sister rose to say: "There is no school here for the education of the children." Immediately came the reply: "If your boys go to school, they will one after another run away to Yeotmal or Amraoti." Obviously Vinoba did not mean that children should remain ignorant. Let the educated few in the village make up their mind to train others and let the number be thus multiplied. Within ten years the whole village would be educated without the help of the Government, who cannot afford to open new schools without imposing new taxes. Why should the villagers pay taxes for an education which exploits them and depletes their villages?

March 11, Runza (11 miles).

From Sakhi, the party started with the singing of *Ramadhun*. Village leaders accompanied us for more than a mile. We left for Runza, halting for a while at Mahoda on the way. The people of Mahoda were present at the prayer meeting last evening. They invited us for the breakfast. Breakfast in a village on the way has become a part of the programme. It enables us to make one more contact. *Jawar roties*, and *besan* (gram flour) with a little *gur*, form our breakfast. People surrounded us at the place where we stopped. One of the visitors named Sarode introduced himself to Vinobaji. He was a regular spinner, wore *khadi* and followed Gandhian ideology through *Sarvodaya* and *Harijan*. He had been present at the prayer meeting last evening and had followed us to Runza. He is doing good village-service at his village, a few miles from Runza. He had been keenly following our experiment of eliminating money. "Such individuals are our strength," Vinobaji told me. "Your name is Sarode. Let it be 'Sarvodaya' henceforth," he said to the new friend.

At Runza, a Muslim *kisan* played the host. He was out of the station, but his friend had no hesitation in receiving us in his house during his absence. He got a word of our arrival and came soon after we had reached his house. He could speak only Marathi and did not know even the *Sure-Fatiha*. He did not know Urdu at all. The utensils in his house were all of the Maharashtra

style, and his name was inscribed on them in the *Balbodh* script. A few Marathi magazines lay on his shelf.

Five to six o'clock in the evening is usually the time for interviews. A local teacher came with his tale of sorrow. He gets Rs 30 p.m., with a dearness allowance of Rs 18. "Life is impossible with such low remuneration," he said. He was not wrong. But the villagers whom he served did not earn more. The Government were not prepared to do anything. What was the remedy? "Let one acre of land be allotted to every school," Vinobaji began, "one-fourth acre for the teacher, the rest for the school. All should till the whole piece. The teacher, in his one-fourth part will grow also cotton necessary for the cloth. Suppose it is a family of five. It will need one hundred yards of cloth, i.e. 100 lb. of unginned cotton. Three *vighas* of land will be necessary for it. The remaining seven *vighas* will yield vegetables, which will save a lot of money which otherwise would have been required for purchasing them. The yarn produced should be preferably woven by the teacher himself but the Government may give a grant for that. The students will grow fruits and fresh vegetables for their consumption besides their own cotton. The whole atmosphere and outlook will be changed. In any case the scheme will at once raise their present standard of living and will create living interest in education. Let those concerned ponder over the suggestion which is no less urgent from the teachers' point of view."

On the prayer ground, in the evening, arrangements were made to seat Vinobaji on a wooden platform, but none—not even a carpet—was provided for the public to squat upon. Nor had the ground been sprinkled with water. Vinobaji, instead of occupying the seat, started his prayer in the standing position, as he usually does at Paramdham. Eknath sang, 'God behind me, God in front of me, God at home, God outside too,' was chosen. To the children, who stood in front of him, he said that when they and he were all made in the image of God, it was not possible for him to sit on a specially prepared seat in the absence of any arrangements for them. In his speech, he dealt with the subject of management of meetings. Thus the prayers have indeed become a class of social education for the public. He explains with demonstrations how to sit erect, without bending their backs; he asks them to observe complete silence for two minutes and to think of the all-pervading 'Rama'. He teaches a verse from the *Gita* or some song from his selections which remains as a treasured memory with the children of the village. It is a seed of knowledge which is sown. It will sprout in some of them, even if not in every one.

D. M.

Pearl Buck Warns

Principal S. N. Agarwal reports in his book *The Two Worlds*, the following criticism made by Pearl Buck, the Noble Prize Novelist, in the course of a discussion on Indian affairs with him:

"May I say a word about your own country? I sincerely feel that your Congress Government should learn a timely lesson from the tragic failure of Chiang Kai-shek in China. Your leaders must live a very simple and honest life and should maintain living contact with the masses. People should feel all the time that something good is being done to them by their leaders and the Government. And good to the people must be done quickly; delay would be highly dangerous. Indian leaders cannot afford to forget that time is of the essence."

S. K. M.

SARVODAYA

Its Principles and Programme

Pages iv + 61 Price Re 1/- Postage etc. 3 as
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YARN FOR HAND-LOOMS

Lakhs of hand-loom weavers in the State of Madras are out of employment for want of yarn. There is great distress in the weaver centres, and suicides and deaths due to starvation are reported. Their organizations are leading deputations, staging demonstrations and organizing what they think to be 'Satyagraha'. The officials feel confused, and when vague promises of help and sympathetic treatment do not succeed in dispersing them, they call in the police to handle the situation.

In one district head-quarter town a cash dole of Rs 2-8-0 a week for a weaver family was given for two weeks and then stopped. Other centres, equally precarious, cry hoarse for twenty lb. of yarn a month for a loom or a sufficient cash-dole relief till a regular supply of yarn is given. This is a strange predicament for all concerned. Honest workers have to starve and sit idle for want of the raw material. The Government will have to spend crores in distributing sufficient cash doles for *lakhs* and *lakhs* of weavers.

Normally only a portion of the mill-spun yarn is released to the weavers to be woven on hand-looms, for the mechanized textile industry will gain more by weaving its own yarn than by releasing it to the hand weavers. Due to shortage of cotton they spin less, perhaps sufficient only for their looms. Nor can foreign yarn be imported cheap and easily to help the weavers. Mechanized production has so far strangled many cottage industries, and it is surprising how hand-weaving has so far managed to survive. If the weavers have to depend on mill-spun yarn, they may not get it, and the weavers will have to quit their trade and go the way the other cottage workmen have gone! But they are so numerous, that their quitting their trade will create greater confusion than now.

The only way out is for the weavers to change over to hand-spun yarn, and for the nation to spin all the yarn on the *charkha*. Gandhiji foresaw all this trouble and gave us the gospel of the *charkha* so far back as a generation ago. We do not take him seriously and the unnatural way we are going is leading us to trouble and confusion. There is Mahatma's solution of the problem—well worked out—but shall we accept it?

N. S. SIVASUBRAMANIAN

A Day Book of Thoughts from Mahatma Gandhi

—Edited by K. T. Narasinha Char, and published by Macmillan and Co. Ltd. Price Rs 4-8-0.

This is a small and handy book, elegantly printed, with a few pithy quotations from Gandhiji's writing under each date. Evidently it is a book designed to be presented to friends, particularly of distant lands as a Christmas or New Year gift or as a birthday or marriage present. It contains 8 good illustrations and a foreword by Rashtrapati Rajendraprasad.

Wardha, 14-3-51

K. G. M.

HARIJAN

April 7

1951

CO-ORDINATION OF HANDICRAFTS AND MECHANIZED INDUSTRIES

IV

Consequences and Implications

The consequences of such a policy might be summed up as follows:

(1) it will give an unprecedented impetus to *khadi* production, and spread of basic education;

(2) it will remove the obstacle to the consumption of *khadi* and the temptation to avoid the observance of the rule of habitual *khadi* dress;

(3) it will give employment to every one who needs it; and since the spinning wage will be, I presume, slightly lower than that of labour in other occupations in the vicinity, it will not create dearth of labour for other purposes. It will be a secondary and leisure-time employment in the true sense of the word;

(4) it will enable the export of mill cloth to be carried on without creating scarcity of cloth at home;

(5) by the time India begins to lose her export trade of cloth—a not unlikely position as her present customers begin to industrialize themselves, or better equipped nations begin to compete with her—the large-scale and concentrated factories of India will themselves have entered upon the process of decentralization and division into small-scale industries. The *charkha*, also, is likely to take a different shape in the village home. So, on both a short and a long-range view, this policy will be advantageous to the nation.

The principle illustrated by *khadi* would be applicable also to several other village industries, which involve a competition between great quantities of mechanized production with a small number of workers on the one side, and small quantities of manual production with a large number of workers on the other; e.g. oil-mills and *ghanis*, *vanaspati* and oil and *ghee*, mill-paper and hand-made paper, sugar and *gur* of cane and palms etc. The problem of animal transport would also have to be dealt with on the same considerations, but, perhaps, in a different mode of implementation. In most cases a small raise in the price of factory products would enable the sale of manual products at cheap rates supporting thereby millions of workers who are otherwise displaced. Besides, it will always be an insurance against any breakdown of the factory system. Further, wherever there is field for the export trade of Indian goods, in the same way as for mill-cloth,—it would be possible to carry it on without creating a scarcity at home.

Of course, the policy involves the understanding, acceptance and declaration of the following basic principles by the State:

(1) that villages must become centres of industrial activity also, and not be reduced merely to habitations of agriculturists and agricultural labourers or gatherers of forest-produce;

(2) that, hence, basic education, i.e. education based on a productive handicraft, is the national system of education for India;

(3) that the State looks upon *khadi* and village industries and occupations as of vital importance for the growth and prosperity of the villages;

(4) that it is necessary to maintain them also as second and alternative lines of defence and preservation of the nation;

(5) that, hence, it is desirable that villages should make use of *khadi* and village-made products to the utmost extent, and it is not in their interest to look to mill-cloth for their normal clothing requirements; similarly with regard to some of the basic necessities of life, such as oil, dehusked rice, etc.

(6) that, hence, it is the duty of the State to spread as rapidly and extensively as possible the knowledge of spinning, weaving and other ancillary processes of *khadi* manufacture among the villagers, and of improved methods of essential village industries; and hence, lastly,

(7) that the State must endeavour to remove the competition between mechanized products and hand-made products, by subsidizing the latter so that they could be sold at less than or at the same price as the former.

Let economists consider these suggestions. They are applicable *mutatis mutandis* to other countries as well, including the most mechanized U. S. A. and Europe.

Wardha, 1-3-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

ASSAM EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND

(From 26-3-'51 to 31-3-'51)

Name and Place	Rs as ps
Shri N. M. Bhagvagar, Bhagva	10 0 0
Shri A. B. Shah, Angas	2 0 0
Sum already acknowledged	29,187 14 3
Grand Total Rs	29,199 14 3

Note: Out of the above sum, Rs 24,163-3-0, received upto 25-11-'50, were sent to the Governor of Assam by cheque through the late Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on 28-11-'50. The remaining balance of Rs 5,036-11-3 (received since then) has now been sent to the Governor of Assam. With this number we are closing the columns of the *Harijan* for this fund. Any moneys received hereafter for this fund will, of course, be forwarded to the Governor of Assam as before, but without acknowledgement in the *Harijan*.

JIVANJI D. DESAI

MISGIVINGS CONFIRMED

I

Dr. S. S. Bhatnagar having seen my note in *Harijan* of December 16, 1950, entitled "Mis-applied Science", has written to me enclosing the following note in reply, for publication and a brochure for my perusal on the subject of the Central Food Technological Research Institute at Mysore.

"The criticism of the functions of the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore, by Shrimati Mirabehn is based on an incorrect appreciation of the functions of the institute and does not do it justice. Calling it "Mis-applied Science", has added insult to injury.

"Increasing production of food and its better procurement are the responsibility of the Ministries of Agriculture and Food and I have no doubt they are doing all they can to meet the needs of the situation. The activities of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research are confined to *industrial research and assisting industry* to improve its production technique. India imported nearly 100 crore rupees worth of food grains last year and including other food material the transactions at home and abroad by the trade involve an annual turn-over of Rs 225 to 240 crores. It is to cater to the needs of this industry that the Central Food Technological Institute, Mysore, has been brought into being with a view to reducing imports from abroad and improving the Indian industry, thereby incidentally stimulating exports also of such material in which there is a surplus. (All italics mine)

"Considerable emphasis has been laid in the criticism on the reference to assistance to industries for manufacture of breakfast cereal foods etc.; this is solely based on a misapprehension. The fact is that appreciable quantities of these food materials are imported and consumed by a section of the public. The assistance to this industry envisaged is with a view to curtailing these imports and establishing indigenous industries to meet the requirements rather than to attempt to popularize their use by the general public. The main functions of the institute relate to improved methods of storage of food material with a view to saving large quantities at present destroyed by pests and rodents; prevention of spoilage; reclamation and utilization of partially affected material; improvements in food engineering to obtain better yields in processes like milling, parboiling, etc.; processing of foodstuffs with a view to improve their keeping qualities and conservation of food material from decay and destruction by dehydration and other methods of preservations; treatment of coarse foods to improve their digestibility and general food value and elimination of harmful and unpalatable ingredients; study of new and hitherto unfamiliar sources of food materials and their processing to render them more wholesome and acceptable.

"Investigations into some of these aspects are of considerable value in making more food available and by devoting concentrated attention to some of these, the Institute at Mysore will be playing as important a part in the solution of the food problem as production and procurement of increased quantities by the Ministries of Food and Agriculture. The nutritional aspects of food and making good the deficiency is another activity that will be a distinct service to the poor whose diet is generally lacking in many essential constituents. In fact, it is the poor who will ultimately reap a greater benefit from the activities of the institute than the rich, for these will be instrumental in making available food in larger quantities, better in every respect, more easily

digested and more nutritious than what the poor have, for a long time, been accustomed too. The result will be that the poor will be able to lead a longer and healthier life and will be able to resist disease to a greater extent than at present.

"Ordinarily I would not have taken notice of this criticism but having known Shrimati Mira for a number of years, I feel that I should explain the correct position to her so that she should have no misgivings about the importance of the institute and its functions in ameliorating the conditions of the poor, a subject which she has so much at heart."

I appreciate his response, and I have looked through the brochure, reading all the marked passages and many others as well.

The Doctor hopes my "misgivings" will be removed, but I am very sorry to say they are not; on the contrary they are painfully confirmed. I shall explain this briefly next week.

MIRA

NOTES

Drink for the Country?

'Do for the country', 'Die for the country', used hitherto to be the appeal of leaders to their people, in times of national calamity. Gandhiji's last injunction had been 'Do or Die', and when the adversity to the nation was thickest he exemplified it by doing and dying for it.

There is no doubt that we are in extremely straitened circumstances at present. But in a frantic attempt to get revenue, the new slogan seems to have changed into 'Drink for the Country'! M.P. has been followed by U.P. in the appointment of a Prohibition Enquiry Committee. Orissa's Chief Minister has apologized for not proceeding with Prohibition. Bihar follows it, and the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee has obliged its State by issuing a directive that no Congressman should take part in Prohibition propaganda, except with the permission of the Provincial Congress Committee! A Congressman must be a teetotaler under the Congress Constitution, but he would become liable to disciplinary action if he tried to make others also teetotalers, without the permission of his superiors! Can there be a greater self-condemnation of the Congress and Congress Governments, and clearer hint to the prohibitionists of Bihar to leave the Congress? It now remains for a big industrialist to found a 'Best Wine Factory' in India, and have it opened by a Minister! The event may take place at any time.

Wardha, 28-3-'51

Police Shootings

Two *habeas corpus* petitions brought to light that two detenues, P. Rangachari and Vadera Rajareddy, alleged to be Communists, were shot down by the Police of Hyderabad, — the first in October 1949, and the second it is not yet known when. No information of the shootings seems to have been communicated even to the relations of the deceased, and if no proceedings under the *habeas corpus* had been instituted on their behalf, the fact and manner of their death would never have been known. Even now

no details are known, and the Hyderabad High Court has asked for the details about only the second victim.

I repeat that since the Governments have been already invested with wide powers of detention and believe in the use of force for maintenance of law and order and all that, the officers responsible for suppressing the facts in the above cases might also be taken in detention, until they prove that they merited indemnification, and in case of their failure to do so be awarded a proper sentence. If Home Ministers do not do it or are themselves responsible for it, the High Court should have the power to do so, as the matters have come to its notice in the course of proceedings before it. The law of evidence regarding burden of proof might be suitably changed for this purpose.

Wardha, 27-3-51

Free 'Harijan'

I have received two or three small donations for the free supply of *Harijan* to deserving readers, and they will be acted upon. There is a suggestion that these donations should be preferably utilized for sending free *Harijan* to approved institutions in the U. S. A. and Europe. While a donation ear-marked for such purpose would be so used, carrying on a propaganda abroad by this method does not make a great appeal to me. The only proper method to propagate *Harijan* is to work out the principles and programmes advocated by it. If *Harijan* can become the organ of an activity rather than a mere preacher of principles, it would be demanded by the people themselves. When Gandhiji was at work, *Harijan* rose to several thousand copies, but dwindled when the work slackened. It is my own limitations that prevent it from being in high demand.

Even then, such donations are always welcome. But they should help those, who are eager to read it but cannot afford to purchase it. Whether such readers are in or outside India is not of great consequence, but since the condition and necessities of our workers here, are better known to us than of those working abroad, the former should get the preference. When a donor definitely knows a foreign reader, who takes great interest in *Sarvodaya* but cannot pay for *Harijan*, he may certainly recommend him.

It should be remembered that the annual subscription for foreign countries is Rs 8, or 14s., or \$2.

Wardha, 28-3-51

K. G. M.

Garbage-heap Learning

Prohibition is beyond doubt a great blessing to the poor masses. Both in Bombay and Madras the State Governments have taken enormous strides in that direction. But some of our top-leaders, caught in the meshes of money, and with their vision blurred with its glare feel otherwise; they advocate a go-slow policy. Some of our learned countrymen also see in Prohibition some harm to the country!

Ramakrishna Paramahansa once felt that he should have some learning. Anon he went to the Mother Kali and prayed: "Why do you keep this child of yours an idiot? Grant me, some learning."

The Mother appeared to him in a dream and said: "Look yonder, do you see that heap of garbage? There is plenty of learning there. Sit there and have as much of it as you wish."

Ramakrishna said, "I have no more any longing for learning. I shall have nothing to do with the learning on the garbage-heap. I am content to be an idiot."

Paunar, 22-12-'50

VINOBA

(Translated from Marathi)

Ahimsa Week (27th Year)

The *Ahimsa* Movement organized by me on a small scale in 1925 has made gradual progress during the last 26 years.

The prime object of this humanitarian movement is to alleviate the sufferings not only of human beings but also of lower animals, and to bring utmost happiness to all beings. If we wish to see World Peace, we should all join hands in observing the *Ahimsa* Week, which will make us feel that we are all brothers, to whatever country we may belong.

At the request of Miss Margaret E. Ford, Hon. Secretary, World League Against Vivisection, London, we celebrated the World Animal Day during the last three years and at our request meat-stalls were closed at 8, 15 and 18 places in Ceylon respectively.

As this movement is universal and is neither political nor sectarian, we request all to co-operate with us in observing the *Ahimsa* Week, which falls in the first week of May every year. The following three precepts have to be observed during the week:

1. To abstain from killing.
2. To take only vegetarian diet.
3. To give rest to animals from 11-30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and to abstain from travelling in vehicles drawn by animals during that time.

W. S. FERNANDO,
Principal,
Universal College,
Panadura (Ceylon)

"Boimondau" — An Experiment in "All Things Common"

It is recorded in the New Testament that among the disciples of Jesus, who shared the experience of a new life of inner peace and joy in his spirit, "no man considered anything that he had to be his own, but they had all things common". The impulse to share material possessions was a natural outcome of a new insight into the meaning of human friendship and brotherhood.

The book *All Things Common* by Claire Huchet Bishop, published last year in the United States, describes how groups of men and women in several countries of Western Europe have begun to experiment, chiefly since 1945, in the

search for a life of more satisfying human relationships, with radical changes in the economic organization of their work. Farmers, artisans, industrial workers hold their land, buildings, tools and equipment in common, abolishing the distinction between employer and employed, not for the sake of an abstract economic theory, but as a means to, and an expression of, a better and fuller human life.

The whole book is of very great interest to all workers for *Sarvodaya* and all who are concerned with the welfare of the Indian people. It is however not readily available in India, and is expensive.

The Hindustani Talimi Sangh has obtained permission to reprint two chapters from this book for sale in India. This reprint is now available under the title of *Boimondau: a French Community of Work* at the price of Re 1-8-0 a copy. Orders may be placed with the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram.

M. S.

THAKKAR BAPA'S CARE OF PUBLIC FUNDS

Eloquent tributes have been paid to the life and work of Thakkar Bapa by all those who have had the good fortune of coming into contact with him. I had the privilege of being the auditor of some of his institutions. During the whole of the period, he never asked me, even indirectly, to make a favourable report or to minimize any defect or mistakes. On the contrary, he always welcomed fair and honest criticism to set matters right, wherever things appeared to go wrong. Whenever necessary he would allot special time to me to discuss my report para by para, or rather sentence by sentence, and would invite the staff concerned to explain every objection and to consider each suggestion. He would not feel at rest till he satisfied me and his own conscience, which was, of course, more exacting than any outside agency.

His integrity, complete dedication to the cause, strict sense of discipline, anxiety to look into every possible detail relating to the management and finance was an object lesson to all those who had the privilege of working with and under him. Going to the premises of the Harijan Sewak Sangh meant more than a visit to any temple; to remain in his presence was like sitting at the feet of a practical savant and to have any discussions with him was like drinking the nectar of his wisdom. I have yet to find a person with greater zeal, integrity and complete identity with his 'neglected' children, a person, who would see that every pie of the institution was well conserved and spent and every interest duly safeguarded. In several institutions and bodies, the conduct of office-bearers is not found to be as transparently clean and honest as the public is entitled to expect. In several instances, unfortunately, the workers are criminally negligent towards their sacred trusts, exploit their positions and even abuse their powers and privileges for selfish ends. And as the office-bearers, so their subordinates; because corruption percolates from the top. If officers are dishonest, the staff cannot be otherwise.

The highest tribute that any one can offer and the deepest comfort that we can provide to his saintly soul is to follow him in our words and deeds and to continue his life's mission in ever increasing measure and with such transparent sincerity as was fully exemplified in his life and activities.

Delhi

JAGADISHPRASAD

COCA-COLA MAD

The Mayor of Bombay is reported to have declared that "the whole of America has virtually gone Coca-Cola mad", and that any talk about this beverage being injurious to health was either interested propaganda or idle talk. He has also certified that the industry is in the best economic interests of the country.

In consideration of this valuable service of the Mayor, or, to put it euphemistically, "in commemoration of this happy event", the Management of the Pure Drinks Limited (the manufacturers of Coca-Cola) have decided to make the invaluable award of "five scholarships to deserving orphans for their basic education. These scholarships would be associated with the name of the Mayor." (*Free Press Bulletin*, 22nd March, '51).

I do not know the nature of the basic education suggested above. It might as well be centred round the Coca-Cola industry itself.

So the appearances are that this has been the performance of a contract. The Mayor promised to execute a publicizing job, and the Company paid for it in the shape of five scholarships associated with his name. The amount of the scholarships has not been published. But, what does it matter, even if each scholarship is worth Rs 200 per month? The factory would be able to produce 75,000 bottles per day on machines which will fill 350 bottles a minute. Even if the net profit after deducting all taxes was only a rupee per 200 bottles, it would amount to Rs 375 per day, or Rs 9,000 for a month of 24 working days. Rs 1,000 a month (the value of five scholarships at the supposed figure) is only about 11 per cent commission. Even if this transaction was executed by the Mayor as a piece of business, and if these are the only advantages secured, I think, he should have insisted on better terms.

It is fortunate that the Mayor does not claim to have given the high certificate to the drink on his own authority. He has given his opinion as a piece of logical inference. If it had been injurious, he argued, U.S.A. would not have allowed it there. But it has. So it could not be injurious there. No reason had been advanced to show that the same should not hold good for India. So it could not be injurious to India. So runs his argument. If you say that France has banned it on ground of health, it is an idle talk, or an interested propaganda. You are out of court.

We are in a miserable condition indeed, as if, out for bringing about a complete moral and economic destruction of the people!

Wardha, 27-3-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE INCOME FROM DRINK

Section 47 of the Constitution of India lays down that

"The State shall regard the raising of the level of nutrition and the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties and, in particular, the State shall endeavour to bring about prohibition of the consumption, except for medicinal purposes, of intoxicating drinks and of drugs which are injurious to health."

And yet we find that excepting Bombay and Madras all the other States are careless, hesitant and disagreeable in the matter of the execution of this directive. The reason is quite clear: It is the greed for the income of crores of rupees from drink. It was due to this very reason that the British, during their regime, were unwilling to prohibit the use of liquor, even incurring popular displeasure. The Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji fought for and kept this issue to the forefront. But now when one sees the same greed persisting even after the advent of Swaraj one is filled with sorrow.

Immediately on taking office the Congress Ministries in the provinces began to tackle this problem. The question of foregoing the drink revenue did not present an insurmountable difficulty then; because the Governments were ready to keep their promises in the matter of prohibition to the people. The main thing was how to divorce the educational budget from the drink revenue, a misalliance that was brought about by the British Government of those days. Under the dyarchy established by the Mont-Ford Reforms of 1919-20 the portfolios of education and excise were entrusted to ministers responsible to the people; and the education minister was authorized by the astute British statesmen to spend whatever he could get out of drink on the education of the people, thus imposing, from their point of view, a necessary and automatic check on that activity and on the popular ministers along with it.

Gandhiji cut the Gordian knot of this misalliance and made education and prohibition independent of each other and placed them before the country as two separate social activities. Out of this was born the revolutionary scheme of Basic Education with its hall-mark, "earn as you learn"; and the Governments levied the Income and Sales taxes to make good the deficit due to prohibition. Thus education and prohibition were separated for good. This radical change in the British policy was the first great victory for prohibition.

The Congress again came to power in 1946, bringing independence in its wake within a year. The new Constitution of India was framed and began to function. There was no difficulty now in undertaking the work of prohibition. Of course the new situation had its new difficulties and problems to solve. But that should not make

us hesitate to take up the constructive work of prohibition. But we are hesitant; and the greed for the income is the cause for it. The Government think that they have to undertake and carry out many big works of national reconstruction. But since money is scarce, why not wait a little before we forgo such an important source of revenue? This is the main thing; and many sophistical and specious arguments are proffered to hide the real issue. But the main cause behind all this is, as we have said above, greed for the income from drink. That means, our Governments also, like their foreign predecessors, have been caught in the meshes of greed, with this difference, if at all there be any, that we do not now seek the drink revenue to meet our educational budget, but want it as a source of income by itself. But this is immaterial. We are clearly trying to secure money for a similar constructive activity by administering poison to the people. This does not behove us. This reminds me of what Pandit Jawaharlal said a year or two ago in connection with making an income out of salt. He said the very idea does not become us; it is a question of our national sentiment. It should be so with drink also. Liquor cannot be an article for sale and income; it is so undesirable that it is fit only to be prohibited. If at all it has any medicinal use it may be allowed to be used within clearly specified limits by those who want to use it.

Fortunately for us, the Bombay Government has very rightly adopted the policy of and rigorously introduced prohibition in the State. The above criticism does not therefore apply to it. But some of the subjects in that State now and again criticize that policy. That again is due to the fear of losing the drink revenue. The greed and self-interest of these people like those of the Government are mainly responsible for it.

We will discuss these in a subsequent issue.

(Translated from Gujarati)

M. P. DESAI

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