

HARIJAN

16 Pages

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TWO ANNAS

WEEKLY LETTER

HOPES AND FEARS

After a brief rest Gandhiji returned from Mussooree by motor at past midnight on Saturday last, very much refreshed, to resume his interrupted labours. Hopes have alternated with fears in the breasts of the people during the days that have followed. Speaking to expectant gatherings at the evening prayer, day after day since his arrival, he has been counselling faith and patience. Just as a cook never puts before the guests things that were half cooked, even so he could not speak on unfinished subjects. It was strange that they could not settle among themselves their own quarrels. But if they were strong enough, they would not blame the rulers for the mishap. It was better to blame themselves than the rulers. Further elaborating the idea in his Hindustani written message on his silence day he remarked: "So long as we believe that all is from God, we should have no cause for perturbation. The only condition is that whatever we do, we should do with God as witness. It is He who makes the world go and we only reap the consequences of our actions. Therefore, ours is only to obey His law and then be indifferent as to the result."

The three parties concerned, he resumed on the next day, were striving to prevent a breakdown. "People must not, therefore, lose hope. The reputation of the Cabinet Mission is at stake. They cannot afford a breakdown. And there ought to be no breakdown on the side of the Congress and the League either, if the goal of all is the same, as it is claimed that it is, namely, independence of India." He, therefore, pleaded for patience. "It is easy to destroy, but to build is a slow and laborious process. The independence of 400 millions is no mango trick." The Congress Working Committee was still labouring away in order to avoid a breakdown. If, however, in spite of their best efforts, a breakdown did occur in the end, said Gandhiji, he would ask them to accept it as God's will in a proper spirit of resignation without perturbation or despondency, if they had a living faith in God.

ROCKS AHEAD

His optimism and faith were, however, soon put to a severe test. "A nameless fear has seized me that all is not well," he remarked in the course of a casual talk with a friend. "As a result, I feel paralysed. But I will not corrupt your mind by communicating my unsupported suspicions to you." The declaration of the Europeans that they were

going to exercise their right to take part in constitution-making — a right which is not theirs at all — was the first warning signal of the rocks ahead.

Gandhiji has dealt with the question at length elsewhere in these columns. The Constituent Assembly has to be formed by the elected members of the Provincial Legislatures. The Government of India Act of 1935 has given a number of seats in the legislatures to Europeans. For instance, in Bengal alone there is a solid block of 25 Europeans. In Assam there are 9. Quite a number of them are multi-millionaires or their representatives. They are foreigners, members of the ruling race. As such they can have no place in the Constituent Assembly as candidates, nor can they as voters return members. The Cabinet plan has said clearly that Indians are to form India's constitution.

Lawyer friends had told Gandhiji that if the matter were taken to a law court the verdict would surely be against the Europeans. But from the papers he had gathered that they intended to exercise the right, which they thought, they had. Till now they had used their vote to uphold the British power and acted as a wedge between the Hindus and the Mussalmans. He appealed to them, therefore, apart from the question of legalities, to abstain from interference. No Congressman would wish to drag them to the law court. They should recognize the signs of the time and make a voluntary declaration that the newspaper report was wrong and that they had no wish to interfere in the affairs of Indians which ought to be settled by Indians themselves and that they would not exercise their votes for the selection of candidates for the Constituent Assembly, nor would they stand as candidates. They should no longer impose themselves upon India. Whatever they might have done in the past, they should alleviate communal bitterness, not accentuate it. They should wish India to win her freedom as early as possible. Such a statement would be graceful for the Europeans.

It was up to the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy, concluded Gandhiji, to see that this foreign element was not used to affect the elections in any way whatsoever.

THE CHILD IS DYING

The I. N. A. people discovered for themselves that under conditions of independence brought face to face with the realities, they thought and acted altogether differently from the way, which they had been taught, was inherent in Indian character. The communal problem was completely liquidated

in the I. N. A. ranks. The vain labours of the Cabinet Mission have proved the converse. They have been working away from morn till night at bringing the Muslim League and the Congress together. But they are attempting what may be considered to be well-nigh impossible. "I have often written that true Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be expected while the third party is there," remarked Gandhiji in one of his after-prayer discourses. "The slaves and their masters are both in an unnatural state. They cannot think and act naturally."

He likened the Cabinet Mission to a mother who saw that her child was dying. "Still she does not give up hope. She keeps on trying the prescriptions of *vaidyas* or *hakims* till the last moment." Similarly, the Mission did not wish to give up striving.

"They are trying to bring the Congress and the League together. They went to Maulana Saheb, they went to Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah, they are striving with the Europeans to do the right thing. The Europeans have said they are going to exercise their right, which is not theirs at all. But if the Congress and the League appealed to them they might consider their request." "Let it be understood," continued Gandhiji, "there is no question of going to them with the beggar's bowl. They have no place in the Constituent Assembly according to the legal interpretation of the Cabinet Mission's Paper."

"To enslave another country is unnatural," he concluded. "Merely by making a pious resolve you will not get off India's back. Corresponding action is required. They are striving and there is no reason for India to doubt their *bona fides*. Their task is difficult." The Congress, the League and the British were all labouring under unnatural conditions.

THE VICEREGAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The Viceregal announcement that invitations had been sent to fourteen individuals by their names to help H. E. the Viceroy to form his cabinet was made on the 16th. Having failed in their attempt to bring the two major parties together, the Mission had to devise some way of removing the deadlock. H. E. the Viceroy's statement was the result. Their failure was nothing to be surprised at. "What is surprising is that instead of following the democratic procedure of inviting the one or the other party to form a national government, the Viceroy and the Cabinet Mission have decided to impose a government of their choice on the country. The result may well be an incompatible and explosive mixture. There are, however, two ways of looking at a picture. You can look upon it from the bright side or you can look upon it from the dark." Gandhiji has declared that he believes in looking at the bright side and has invited others to do likewise. "Thus regarded, what appear to be blemishes in the Viceregal statement, would be seen to be really its beauty." It might however be, commented Gandhiji in the course of his after-

prayer address on the day the statement was published, that there was no bright side. Then the Mission would stand exposed. They would lose nothing by trusting. He had suggested to the Working Committee some tests by which the Statement might be tested. He held the view firmly that fulfilment of those conditions was essential for Congress acceptance. But he could not say whether they would be agreeable to either party. It was, therefore, very difficult to say with certainty what the Congress Working Committee would decide. One thing, however, he could say without hesitation. At no stage had the Congress showed any dilatoriness. It was a democratic organization and could not carry things by an executive fiat like the Viceroy for instance. It could proceed only by consulting and satisfying even the weakest minority whom it claimed to represent. "You should bear with the Mission too," he pleaded. "They have inherited the traditions of Imperialism which they cannot outgrow all at once. And poor India has to suffer. We must not blame them, however, for not throwing it overboard overnight. Let us trust their *bona fides*. Let us not act upon mere suspicion. But let us all join in the prayer that God may bless all the parties with wisdom and cleanness of heart."

THE CRITERIA

While this is being written the Congress Working Committee is still busy examining the tests suggested by Gandhiji. Congress has always claimed to be a national organization. It can not barter for any tactical consideration its right and duty to represent all communities and classes without committing political suicide. That right is based on service. Similarly, it cannot let down for political gain its tried and faithful friends. Such opportunism would sap its moral being and inevitably prove fatal. Did not Yudhishtira refuse to enter heaven without his faithful dog? To gain the world at the cost of losing one's soul is a bad bargain.

Whilst these are matters necessarily for the Working Committee to consider, Gandhiji has been telling his audiences what their duty is in this hour. As a firm believer in the utility of community prayer, he has been making them sing *Ramadhun* in the mass. But were they following Rama in their daily lives? To repeat *Ramanama* and to follow the way of Ravana in actual practice is worse than useless. It is sheer hypocrisy. One might deceive oneself or the world but one cannot deceive the Almighty. "Today, in the West, people talk of Christ but it is really the Anti-Christ that rules their lives. Similarly, there are people who talk of Islam but really follow the way of Satan. It is a deplorable state of affairs. We are afraid of people professing religions other than our own. We think they will crush us, forgetting that no one can crush us if we have made God our refuge. The hymn that has just been sung describes how God has redeemed sinners. How much more, then, would He do for His devotees? But they must be devotees of God in the true sense of the term." If people followed the way of God, continued Gandhiji, there would

not be all that corruption and profiteering that we see in the world. The rich were becoming richer and the poor poorer. Hunger, nakedness and death stared one in the face. These were not the marks of the Kingdom of God but that of Satan, Ravana or the Anti-Christ. They could not expect to bring the reign of God on earth by merely repeating His name with the lips. Their conduct must conform to His ways instead of Satan's.

New Delhi, 16-6-'46

PYARELAL

FAMINE NOTES

MORE ABOUT MANGO KERNEL

Dr. Gopichand Bhargava has sent a copy of an article 'Mango Kernels as Food' from the 'Indian Farming Journal' for December 1942. It runs:

"The practice of using mango kernels for food is common among the inhabitants of the Kond Hills, Ganjam Agency. It is also to be found in certain other parts of India, but it does not appear to be widespread. Probably the people were at first driven to it by economic necessity . . . But all classes including those who have plenty of other food, enjoy this addition to their daily food during the season."

The article concludes:

"Though mango kernel is not to be recommended as a staple diet as used for some months each year by the poorest Konds, yet there is no reason why people should not eke out their supplies of rice with it. The mangoes used are of the wild country variety to be found everywhere in India. Nothing more is required than saving the stones and washing the pounded kernels until the astringent taste is removed."

FOR THE ATTENTION OF GOVERNMENT

A correspondent from Chittoor writes to Gandhiji in a letter:

"The rate of interest charged by the Government on loans granted to the agriculturists under the Land Improvements Loans Act and the Agricultural Improvements Loans Act is at present $5\frac{1}{2}\%$ whereas the Government is able to get money in the open market from 2 to $2\frac{3}{4}\%$ of interest. This is a central subject. The Government of India can give all necessary loans free of interest or at least at $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ of interest."

Mussooree, 7-6-'46

FALLOW AND CULTIVABLE LANDS

Shri V. N. Khanolkar from Bombay writes:

"British India agricultural statistics 1941-42, published by the Government of India (1945) gives sufficient food for thought to our Ministers who are trying their best to resolve the acute food problem."

"The position as it stands today is not likely to have undergone a big change on account of the Grow More Food campaign and the figures quoted below may be taken as sufficiently representing the present state of affairs in the country."

"The total area left fallow during the year is 4,71,50,000 acres, while the net area actually sown is 21,32,90,000 acres. The percentage of the fallow area to the net area sown in British India is 22% while the corresponding percentage for the various provinces are:

Ajmer Merwara	65%	Delhi	9%
Assam	30%	Madras	31%
Bengal	18%	N. W. F. P.	19%
Bihar	38%	Orissa	30%
Bombay	17%	Punjab	11%
C. P. & Berar	14%	Sind	111%
Coorg	100%	United Provinces	8%

"Experts opine that given manure and water in sufficient quantities, there is no necessity of lands being kept fallow. The figures of the United Provinces prove this."

"We also find the following interesting figures in the column 'cultivable area':

Bengal	8,62,788	acres
Bombay	2,07,301	"
C. P. & Berar	51,94,728	"
Punjab	42,32,286	"
Total	1,04,97,103	acres

"Sir Vijayaraghavacharya in 'Law and Its Problems' says:

"The balance of 87 million acres is classed in the official statistics as 'uncultivated area.' This area is what is usually referred to in discussions about food supplies and agricultural colonization as land available for expansion of agriculture. No systematic investigation has been made into the nature of this area with a view to ascertain how much of it could be cultivated with a reasonable capital expenditure. Calculations made by Provincial Governments have indicated that 10 million acres of this area are definitely known to be cultivable' (page 4).

"Besides the above the following items in the report will make interesting reading:

1.	area under jute and other fibres	29,52,000	acres
2.	" tea and coffee	8,41,000	"
3.	" tobacco	11,96,000	"
4.	" opium	18,000	"
5.	" other narcotic drugs	1,94,000	"

Total 52,01,000 "

"A big portion of the jute is exported to foreign lands. The owners of tea estates have kept, as reserves, thousands of acres of good land for future expansion. In view of the acute food shortage land under 3, 4 and 5 should be converted into food crops land."

Here is a thing for the popular ministries to take up at once. They need not wait for the establishment of a national government at the Centre.

New Delhi, 15-6-'46

PYARELAL

HARIJAN

June 23

1946

THE EUROPEAN VOTE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

No less a person than the President of the European Association has exhibited the lion's paw. That seems to be the naked truth. That the Europeans will neither vote nor offer themselves for election should be a certainty, if a Constituent Assembly worthy of the name is at all to be formed. The British power in India has four arms—the official military, the official civil, the unofficial civil and the unofficial military. So when the ruling class speaks of the unofficial European as not being under their control, it is nonsense. The official exists for the unofficial. The former would have no work if the latter did not exist. The British gunboat came in the wake of British commerce. The whole of India is an occupied country. We have to examine in this light the exploits of the European President. In the intoxication of power he does not seem to have taken the trouble to ascertain whether the State Paper has provided for the legal power for his community to vote or be voted for in the proposed Constituent Assembly. For his and his constituents' edification I have secured the opinion from the leader of the Bar in Delhi. It will be found in these columns.

Did the President condescend to inquire of the Mission what his moral and legal position was? Or, did he hold them cheap because he represented the real Imperialism which the Cabinet Mission and the Viceroy representing British Labour were struggling to discard?

It is the straw which shows the way the wind is blowing.

This unseasonable performance of the European Association is to my mind the greatest disturbing factor to shake the faith in the reality of the Mission's work. Has the Mission come before its time? Will the gun-protected Europeans of India silence their guns and stake their fortunes Andrews-like, purely on the good will of the masses of India? Or, do they expect in their generation to continue the imposition of foreign rule on India?

How can they say, they 'are not intransigent'? The Statement reeks of intransigence. They have a loaded communal franchise, glaringly in Bengal and Assam. What right had they to be in the Assemblies at all? What part have they played in the two Assemblies save to embarrass the people of Bengal and Assam by dividing the communities? This 'load' was not imposed upon them. It would have redounded to their honour if they had repudiated it. Instead, they welcomed the 'white man's burden'. And even now, at the hour of the dawn, they would graciously contribute to constitution-making!!! Not everyone who says 'I am not intransigent' is really so; he only is who says

nothing but lets his deeds eloquently speak for themselves.

They have been made to look so foolish in their latest statement as to say that they would refrain from voting for themselves but would use their vote for electing their henchmen wearing the Indian skin! They would, if they could, repeat the trick which has enabled them, a handful, to strangle the dumb millions of India. How long will this agony last! Do the Mission propose to bolster up this unholy ambition and yet expect to put to sea the frail barque of their Constituent Assembly? Indians cannot perform the obvious duty of the Mission for them.

New Delhi, 17-6-'46

LEGAL OPINION ON THE EUROPEAN VOTE

Gandhiji has received the following legal opinion on the question of the right claimed by the Europeans to take part in the making of the future constitution of India, as adumbrated in the State Paper of May 16, 1946:

"Referring to the Statement of the British Cabinet Ministers' paper issued on 16th May, 1946, I have been asked my opinion on the following question:

'Whether the Europeans (who are foreigners and non-nationals) are entitled to

(a) vote at the election of

or (b) be candidates for the election of members for the proposed Constituent Assembly.'

"The question seems to me to refer to the Constitution-making body for the time being set up to frame the future Indian Constitution.

"My reply briefly is as under:

"1. Para 3 lays down that immediate arrangements be made whereby *INDIANS may decide the future constitution of India*. In other words the Constitution-making body is to consist of Indians only.

"2. Para 16 says: 'The object is to set in motion the machinery whereby a constitution can be settled by *INDIANS for INDIANS*.'

"3. Para 18 says: 'The only practicable alternative is to utilize the recently elected Provincial Legislative Assemblies as the *elective bodies to decide a new constitution structure*.'

"4. Para 18 further provides that for this purpose it is sufficient to recognize only three main communities in India, i. e. General, Muslims and Sikhs. For other smaller communities provision is made in para 20.

"5. In para 19, table of representation is given and the only point for decision is whether foreigners and non-nationals have any right to vote at the election or stand as candidates.

"I am of opinion that paras 18 and 19 are subject to the statements as to formation of Constituent Assembly made in paras 3 and 16 which give the right of making the constitution to *INDIANS* alone and not to those who are not Indians."

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MUCH IN LITTLE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"In Mr. Mahadev Desai's book on the Travancore Temple Entry Proclamation, I find your speeches made in several places in Travancore. You have spoken of the Ishopanishad and said that if the first verse alone survived and all the rest of the Hindu Scriptures were destroyed, it would alone save religion from extinction. Perhaps, you know that that verse was a turning point in the life of Devendranath Tagore, the Poet's father. Young Devendranath was in a mood of great depression when his father died leaving the family estate highly encumbered. One day while in this mood a piece of printed paper was wafted by a passing breeze to where he was sitting. He picked it up. It was in Sanskrit which he had not learnt then. He took it to the family *pandit* who read it out. It was the first verse of the Ishopanishad. 'Nectar poured into my soul,' says the Maharshi in his autobiography.

"The phrase about enjoying by renunciation puzzled me for long. One day (or night to be correct) it flashed on me that the phrase but expressed a daily experience. What greater enjoyment is there than renouncing something one values to one — person or cause — which one holds dear."

The above letter from Shri K. Natarajan was received by me about three months ago. I had hoped to deal with it in these columns much earlier but could not. Nothing, however, is lost, for the subject matter of the letter is an evergreen. I try to the utmost of my ability to live the meaning that, in my ungrammatical way, I have ascribed to the *shloka*. Not being a reader of books, I never knew the instance that Shri Natarajan quotes from Maharshi Devendra's life. It fortifies my belief that the first *mantra* of Ishopanishad is all that undiluted Hinduism — in other words, for me, religion — can have to give. The recitation of the 18 chapters of the Gita is finished in one week at the morning prayer and so it has gone on now for some years from week to week. The Gita is a commentary on the first verse of the Ishopanishad. And I feel, not without diffidence, that the interpretation that flashed on Shri Natarajan's mind reveals but the partial truth. As I understand it, his interpretation is only the well-worn doctrine of self-sacrifice which is undoubtedly a common enough experience. Take only one instance. Many a mother sacrifices all for her children. But the *mantra* referred to here was not revealed to confirm the truth of that practice, well known even during the remote times when it is said to have been given. To live up, to that verse means the new birth enunciated in the New Testament or *Brahma Samarpana* (dedication to God) as taught in Hinduism. The verse, therefore, seems to me to mean only one thing. Recognize that everything you fancy you have is God's and from God and take only what you really need for life. In other words, in the language of the Gita it teaches the doctrine of uttermost detachment. Then only is life worth living.

New Delhi,

13-6-'46

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

LOOTING

Q. A correspondent writes:

"Supposing that in a Government or private godown food grains are being allowed to rot while people are starving because none are available in the market, what are workers to do? Would it be permissible to resort to something in the nature of your Dharasana salt raid in order to save the people? Otherwise, what alternative is there to either looting or dying like dumb cattle, of both of which you disapprove?"

A. It should be common cause that looting in itself can never do any good. Wherever it is claimed to have done so, the good consisted only in drawing the attention of the authority to a crying want. The way of voluntary fasting that I have suggested is the most efficient because it is good in itself and good also as an effective demonstration. It is good in itself because the people who voluntarily fast exhibit strength of will which saves them from the pangs of hunger and wakes up public conscience as also that of the authority, assuming that the latter can have any conscience at all.

So far as the Dharasana salt raid is concerned, apart from the fact that there were, according to my conception of it, several mistakes made, it was a perfect thing of its kind and a heroic struggle in which the sufferings undergone were bravely borne. But the distinction between it and loot should be clearly borne in mind. The Dharasana Salt Works were conceived to be national property. The intention there was not to seize the property by force. The fight was to assert the right of the nation to the possession of all salt yielded by land or sea in India. If the raid had succeeded, that is to say, if the Government had yielded, they would have done so to the nation's sufferings which the raid and the like involved. And, as a matter of fact, the sum total of the sufferings undergone by the people on a nation-wide scale did result in what is known as the Irwin-Gandhi Pact. Thus it will be seen that between the loot that the correspondent has in mind and the Dharasana Raid there is no analogy whatsoever.

13-6-'46

BHANGI STRIKES

Q. The same writer, who has asked the question about the propriety of looting, asks also what the poor sweeper is to do when everything else fails. He indignantly asks:

"Is the *bhangi* to continue his service on starvation wages, living in dirt and squalor?"

A. The question is appropriate. I claim that in such cases the proper remedy is not a strike but a notice to the public in general and the employing corporation in particular that the *bhangis* must give up the sweeping service which consigns those reserved for

that service to a life of starvation and all it means. There is a wide distinction between a strike and an entire discontinuation (not suspension) of service. A strike is a temporary measure in expectation of relief. Discontinuance is giving up of a particular job because there is no expectation of relief. Proper discontinuance presupposes fair notice on the one hand and prospect of better wages and freedom from squalor and dirt on the other. This will wake up society from its disgraceful slumber resulting in a proper scavenging of the overgrowth that has smothered public conscience. At a stroke the *bhangis* will raise scavenging to a fine art and give it the status it should have had long ago.

UNLAWFUL PEEP BEYOND

- Q. "Ah, Christ that it were possible
 "For one short hour to see
 "The souls we loved, that they might tell us
 "What and where they be."

What would you say?

A. The poet expresses in the above the cry of many an anguished heart. Nevertheless the truly detached mind does not care to know the beyond. In other words, it is wrong to have the desire. Therefore, the following from the well known hymn of Cardinal Newman represents the reality:

"I do not ask to see the distant scene
 "One step enough for me."

New Delhi, 15-6-'46

WORKING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

Resolution on South African Passive Resistance Movement passed by the Congress Working Committee on June 15, 1946:

The Congress Working Committee note with satisfaction not unmixed with concern that Indians in South Africa have started the campaign of civil disobedience as a protest against the recently passed legislation by the South African Union Parliament imposing disabilities upon them. The Congress Working Committee are of opinion that the campaign carries in it the seeds of success in so far as the honour of Indians is concerned as distinguished from the loss of material prospects.

The Committee expect that having begun the struggle the resisters will carry it to the end without yielding. The Committee assure the resisters of full sympathy in their brave struggle and hope that those who are not themselves resisters will not on any account succumb to the temptations contained in the legislation itself and such small concessions that may be held out by the Union Government. The inferior status assigned to the Indians by the Act can be wiped out only by its complete abrogation. The Committee hope and expect that while the Government of India remains in the British Power, His Excellency the Viceroy will use his influence openly on behalf of the brave resisters and thus secure for them the sympathy of the world in this noble struggle for the rights of man.

DEVELOPMENT OF DUAL-PURPOSE CATTLE IN INDIA

The term dual-purpose, in its general sense, means the breeds which from their point of view, can serve two distinct purposes. In India, the breeds of cattle, the male of which are suitable for draught and female for milk, are known as the dual-purpose types.

There has, of course, been a great deal of controversy going on among livestock breeders regarding the advisability of attempting to develop dual-purpose type of cattle in India. This question has been engaging the active attention of the breeders and those interested in the amelioration of our cattle but it was brought to the forefront by the publication of the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture in 1928. Since then two definite schools of thought have been evolved. In order, therefore, to view the whole question in its correct perspective, it will be more helpful to briefly repeat here the points of view of both the sides.

Those who hold that the cattle in India should be developed for specific purposes and not on dual-purpose lines contend that:

1. Indian cattle, as a whole, have been bred from times immemorial, for special purposes. As a general rule, the fastest and best working breeds of cattle are not good milkers and high milk yield is not compatible with capacity for fast work. Thus the two factors of milk and draught do not go hand in hand.

2. In dual-purpose cattle advance in either direction has periodically to be checked by the necessity to consider the other factor. Therefore, there must always be a tendency for both qualities of milk and draught to remain at a comparatively low level. In any attempt to develop dual-purpose type, sacrifice of one factor to develop the other will reduce the standard of our cattle to mediocre sorts of animals and thus either quality at its best will be inadequately represented. In order, therefore, to evolve cattle with a high standard of excellence it will be necessary to develop cattle for special purpose alone.

3. From breeding point of view progress in the production of highly efficient draught or dairy type of cattle would be much faster if only one factor was to be aimed at. Genetically, it is very difficult to breed successfully for a combination of two or more characters at one time, even when the characters are not mutually antagonistic. Simplification of characters in breeding has always resulted in more certain and quicker fixation of desired characters. Without concentration on one main factor, sustained advance to a high standard is not possible.

4. In India, the primary need is bullock for draught and in attempting to secure more milk from the draught cattle there is a danger that the qualities, which in the past, have commended them as work animals may be lost.

5. Countries which aim at nothing better than dual-purpose type cannot hope to compete with countries in which strict specialization is insisted on

and therefore any such step which will adversely affect the standard of special purpose breeds should be avoided.

On the other hand, the case of those, who are in favour of the development of Indian cattle on dual-purpose lines, may be summarized as below :

1. In India the number of cattle is already so large that any attempt at segregation of utility points may result in breeding of still larger numbers. Thus a cultivator will have to maintain different animals for different purposes, one animal for production of males suitable for draught and the other to meet his milk requirements. This will necessarily mean keeping of large number of cattle than the land can economically maintain.

2. The Indian cultivator is so poor that he cannot afford to maintain larger heads of cattle. What he needs is a type of cow capable of producing a fairly strong male suitable for farming operations on his land and supplying, in addition, reasonable quantity of milk for the requirements of his family. Thus, it should be one animal which should serve both the purposes.

3. With all the cattle, on the average, half the calves born will be males and of those a very small proportion will be fit as stud bulls. If different breeds are kept for different purposes the male calves of the milk types will not be comparatively useful as at present is the case with our best dairy types such as Sahiwal and Red Sindhis, whereas in the case of dual-purpose breeds the male can be reared for draught. Thus, in India, where both draught and milk factors are essential, the dual-purpose stock for ordinary cultivator is more economical than that bred for specific purposes.

A cursory glance at the above points of view will be sufficient to show that, as in many other such controversies, there is a great deal of truth on both the sides. These are, in fact, two sides of the same picture. For me it is very difficult to visualize a flourishing cattle industry in any country, without special breeds for specific purposes and dual-purpose breeds existing side by side.

Great Britain, on the whole, is an industrial country, yet we find some of the most special type breeds as well as dual-purpose types in that country. All such types exist side by side and flourish. They have some of the finest breeds of cattle for special purposes and still by far the most numerous breeds are those which show dual-purpose characteristics such as Short Horns, Dexter and Red Polls.

In India, the combination of milk and draught qualities does not present the same difficulty. Both these types are spare of muscles and body-fat, and the food they consume and digest is mostly returned in the form of milk or work. Mr. William Smith has even gone so far as to say : " You cannot possibly produce the very best class of draught bullock out of anything but a really good milking cow. The ability to produce milk is the strongest proof of maternity and the more efficient and perfect the dam, the more vigorous and healthy the offspring." This, of course,

is to be followed with a bit of caution. From my personal observations, I feel that we can safely develop a reasonable amount of milk into some of our draught breeds without damage to their work qualities, but, there is a limit in each breed, beyond which we cannot develop a particular character without adversely affecting the other. Thus, as a general rule, to be followed in the production of draught cattle, the Royal Commission on Agriculture has opined that 'milking qualities should be encouraged only in so far as these are entirely consistent with the maintenance of the essential qualities which good draught cattle must possess.' This can, of course, be easily attained by proper selection of strains suitable for each tract from among the existing breeds.

In India we have some of the best known draught breeds such as Hissar, Amrit Mahal, Kangayam, Nagore and Bhagnari, while Sahiwal and Red Sindhis are the best milk types. The work so far done on these milk breeds has clearly shown that high yielding strains of indigenous dairy breeds can be produced in a comparatively few years which can compete favourably with any best known dairy breeds in the world. The achievements of Pusa and Ferozepur Sahiwal herds are too well known to be detailed here. Then we have also dual-purpose breeds, such as Hariana, Tharparkar and Gir. Recent work on Hariana has shown that although basically a draught breed, it possesses special milking potentialities. On the other hand, although individual cows of Gir breed are capable of giving 'high milk yields yet the bullocks are powerful and strong workers. Gir bullocks may not be as agile and quick as Hariana, and Hariana cows may not be as good yielders as Girs, but both possess a combination of characteristics, which are really suitable to the requirements of an average cultivator. Such animals have definite economic value and they will be the most popular in those tracts where they can thrive. Thus, in my opinion, in India, as in all other cattle breeding countries, there is enough room for the development of distinct types as well as dual-purpose cattle. Special types are recommended for those tracts where natural facilities of food and grazing exist for the development of those specific purpose cattle, while for the average cultivator who is too poor to maintain such specialized strains on account of his limited resources and shortage of feed, the dual-purpose animals are most suitable.

Before concluding, I must, however, draw the attention of the readers to the fact that there are large numbers of cattle in India, which are not only poor yielders but their bullocks are also of poor quality. Here, no mistake should be made on that account. Such breeds are not dual-purpose and therefore, while planning for cattle development distinction should always be made between dual-purpose breeds and no-purpose breeds. Such animals need special attention and all possible measures should be taken to grade them up by use of improved stud bulls.

(SIR) DATAR SINGH

A VISIT TO NAGTHAT

Shri Dharmadev Shastri has been working among the tribes of Jaunsar and Bawer for sometime. He was keen that Gandhiji himself or, if that was not possible, some members of his party should go and see his work. Gandhiji's choice fell on me as a doctor, and as secretary and convener of the Advisory Medical Board of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust.

THE TREK

So I with Abha Gandhi started for Nagthat. Shastriji was our guide. We began motoring at 6 a. m. on the 3rd. One girl and two youngmen, friends of Shastriji, joined us at Dehra Dun. We reached Sahiya at 10 a. m. By 10.30 we were trekking up the mountain path leading to Nagthat. Shastriji had arranged for two hill ponies, one *dandi* and two coolies, and we rode or walked by turns, except Shastriji and a companion of his, Shri Sevak Singhji, who walked all the distance.

It was a hard climb. There was a narrow path with mountains on one side and a deep ravine on the other. The least carelessness might have sent one rolling down hundreds of feet into the ravine below. At several places one felt giddy looking down into the valley. So we walked with our eyes fixed on the path before us. At one place the road was broken. We crossed it with the help of the coolies and Shri Sevak Singhji. They knew no fear and no fatigue. On the way we saw Amla and Tons, the two tributaries of the Jumna, and the Jumna itself from different places.

A LAND OF STRANGE CUSTOMS

Jaunsar and Bawer is a semi excluded area of about 500 square miles. There are 450 villages situated on the hill-tops and communications are most difficult. The population is 56,000. It is included in British India and is surrounded by the Indian States of Tehri, Nahan, Jubbal, etc. on three sides. The main occupation of the people, one might say their only occupation, is agriculture. They grow potatoes, ginger, maize, wheat and a cereal known as *Mandwa*. In Bawer opium is also produced. Agriculture in the hills means hard labour. The land available for agriculture is limited and they say that this is the most important reason for the system of polyandry that prevails in these parts. It is said that all the brothers in a family have one wife between them. Thus there is no need to divide up the property and there is an automatic check on the increase of population.

TRAFFIC IN WOMEN

The system has its evil effects which outweigh the little good, if any, that it may do. Venereal disease is rampant. There is a surplus of women and this has resulted in an ugly traffic. Unscrupulous men from the plains have started the trade and hundreds of girls are being exported every year. Reformers are not likely to succeed in persuading the people to give up the system of polyandry unless perhaps their economic system is changed. As it is, a large number of husbands is considered to be a

mark of honour. In one village we stopped to have a drink of water. A newly married girl gave us water. We asked her how many husbands she had. "Two," her mother replied half apologetically, "but she has five fathers-in-law." There was a note of pride and self-satisfaction as she mentioned the number of fathers-in-law.

There is a vast field for cottage industries in this area and Shastriji is trying to develop the industry of wool spinning.

PROUD OF THEIR CULTURE

There are no facilities for education or medical relief for these people. But they are very proud of their culture which, they say, they have inherited from the Pandavas. Several relics are said to have been found from the time of the Pandavas. There is a place called Lakhamandal where an attempt was made to burn the Pandavas in a wooden palace impregnated with lac. In this place there is an underground passage several miles long. It was by this passage that the Pandavas are supposed to have escaped. On digging the ground here hundreds of images can be found even today.

On the top of the hill we were shown remnants of a castle which was said to be Viratgarh, the castle of King Virata, where the Pandavas took shelter during their exile.

VIRTUAL SERFS

Four classes inhabit this area—Brahmins, Rajputs, Bajgis and Koltas. The last two are Harijans. A system of semi-slavery is prevalent. A Brahmin or a Rajput might lend 25 or 30 rupees to a Kolta at the time of his marriage or some such occasion. As a result the latter and his whole family become the serfs of the man who lends the money. The owner is responsible for feeding them and they have to do what he asks them to do. Such is the poverty and backwardness of the Koltas that several of them are happy in their slavery because they are thereby sure of getting their food. The traffic in women is mostly confined to the Koltas.

DRINK EVIL

The drink evil is very prevalent. There are no excise laws in this area and men and women have practically all taken to drinking. Shri Mahavir Tyagi told us how he and Dr. Katju once went to Jaunsar-Bawer and lectured about prohibition. At the end of the lecture they asked them to raise their hands and support a resolution against the drink evil. Not one hand was raised. Then they asked those who had come after a drink to raise their hands. All the hands went up and they gaily made the admission that they had all had liquor.

NAGTHAT

We reached Nagthat at 6 o'clock in the evening. It is a beautiful spot. It is 16 miles from Chakota and 22 miles from Mussooree. From the top of the hill the Jumna is seen flowing across the plains. The scenery and the peaceful environment affect the mind profoundly. Shastriji was offered free land here by a local landlord. The Police Commissioner threatened him with dire consequences. But the man said he could not go back upon his word.

Shastriji has built a few huts there, started a school and a hospital in memory of Kasturba. The place where the Ashram is situated is surrounded by 54 villages, the nearest being one mile away. The hospital is at present an out-door dispensary in charge of a homoeopathic lady doctor who has also had some training in midwifery. She comes from Nepal and is quite at home in the hills. Besides attending to the patients at the dispensary she goes touring from village to village and gives whatever medical relief she can.

PLIGHT OF WOMEN

The condition of the women is most unsatisfactory. Besides having to undergo the unnatural strain of having several husbands, they have to attend to work in the fields as well as to their household duties. Any man who wants a permanent servant buys a wife for a hundred rupees or so, and if he does not like her, later on he just turns her out and brings another. There are no midwives, trained or untrained. Neighbours attend on each other's delivery. Having no idea of *sepsis* and *asepsis*, the result is that one child sterility is common. There is need for a well-equipped hospital here with a qualified doctor in charge so that surgical cases and cases of abnormal midwifery can also be dealt with.

SCHOOL

Besides the school at Nagthat, Shastriji has also started schools in Bagi, Kirtool and Bhangar. These schools are not run on the lines of basic education, though spinning forms part of the curriculum.

THE RETURN JOURNEY

Several patients had collected to see me and I was examining them till 9 o'clock at night. While going up also patients had collected at several villages on the way. I gave a list to the lady doctor and asked her to send them medicines. Early next morning patients started coming before 5 a. m. It was with the utmost difficulty that I disposed them off by 7 a. m. and we started on our journey back. I was told that I had seen patients from a few nearby villages only. If I stayed there for a day or so, they would come from distant villages also. It just demonstrated the crying need for medical relief in the area.

A PHILANTHROPIST DOCTOR

One of the patients was suffering from bleeding piles and had become very anaemic. I advised him to go to hospital for operation. He agreed. I asked him if he knew of any hospital. "Yes, I will go to Dr. Joshi at Delhi," he said. Dr. Joshi had come to a neighbouring State sometime ago. A great philanthropist that he is, he saw several poor people besides attending to the rich patients who had called him. Three of them who needed institutional treatment, he had brought back to Delhi with him. He met all their expenses of travelling and treatment from his own pocket. When he sent them back finally he paid their return fare and gave them necessary instructions and letters of introduction so that those who needed it could continue the treatment. The result was that the poor villagers had come to look upon him as their

friend. So the only place this patient could think of going to was Dr. Joshi's clinic at Delhi. How nice it would be if there were a few more Joshis among us doctors!

On our way back Shastriji took us to Kalsi where he has started Asoka Ashram near the stone pillar bearing Emperor Asoka's edict describing his conquest of Kalinga. He was so disgusted with the bloodshed which made victory worse than defeat, says the edict, that he disbanded his armies and took the vow of *ahimsa*. Subsequently, the whole of India including Afghanistan came under his banner voluntarily.

ASOKA ASHRAM, KALSI

Kalsi Ashram is situated in a picturesque spot, with the hills on one side and jungle on the other. It is situated on the banks of the river Jumna close to the edict mentioned above. Shastriji aims at developing this place into a training centre for village industries. At present wool industry is the only one that is being worked. I was told that it enabled the villagers to earn from 1 to 1½ rupees per day easily without leaving their homes. Asoka Ashram was started on the 10th of July 1942. Shastriji was arrested on the 9th of August and released after a year and a half. After his release he went back to that place and has been trying to develop the work that he had started. His services are highly appreciated by the villagers. He has dedicated his whole life to their service.

Mussooree, 6-6-'46

S. N.

BHANGI PROBLEM IN NEW DELHI

[When the rest of Gandhiji's party went up to Simla with him, Shri Dev Prakash Nayyar of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, who had come to spend his summer vacation with him, stayed behind. Gandhiji had left the decision entirely to him, but he could not make up his mind. So at Gandhiji's suggestion he decided to toss for it. The toss went against Simla. That settled it for him. To make the best use of what he felt was a God-given opportunity, he began frequently visiting the Sweepers' Colony at Reading Road. Later he was joined by his doctor sister, who had come on a brief holiday from Bettiah in Bihar. The following is a condensed summary of the note which he has prepared on the conditions in the Sweepers' Colony. PYARELAL]

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

In New Delhi there are six main sweepers' colonies, comprising nearly 325 houses. In all of these except the Reading Road *Basti*, the Harijans live side by side with the other castes.

All the families are in the Municipal employ. Most of them are employed as ordinary *mehtars*. Their pay is Rs. 13/- *per mensem*. Their work is to sweep the roads, clean the public latrines etc. The lorry '*beldars*', i. e. those who load the refuse lorries are paid Rs. 15/- per month.

Very few women are employed. There is a curious reason for it. They are paid at the same rate as men, but because of the rules governing female labour, it proves much dearer. Hence the Municipality, as it is

said, has stopped further employment of women. Their present number is nearly 40 as against 600 men employed.

The result is that women have to find employment in private quarters, where they are paid from 8 as. to Re. 1/- a month per house. In bungalows, however, they may get as much as Rs. 5/- per month, but generally bungalows have whole-time sweepers. On the whole the average monthly income of a sweeper woman varies from Rs. 5/- to Rs. 12/-.

The average family may be taken to consist of husband, wife and 4 children. Their earnings may be represented as follows:

Father Rs. 13/- (pay) plus Rs. 16	
Dearness Allowance	Rs. 29/-
Mother	" 7/-
1 Child	" 5/-
Total Rs. 41/-	

The income per head in a family thus works out to 4 as. a day. This is, however, the average. Quite a large number get less and live on the starvation line. In the case of one family with 8 children I found that the father got Rs. 13/- (these days Rs. 29/- including D. A.) and the wife Rs. 6/-. Thus 10 people have to live on Rs. 19/- (at present Rs. 35/-) per month. This gives 1 anna per head per day in normal times and in these days nearly 2 as. And this after eight hours of exacting work!

Some of the families are better off. Their income goes up to as much as Rs. 200/- per month. But their number is too few to need mention. The cause of their better position is that some of the members have found employment as *chaprasis* in Government offices.

GENERAL CONDITIONS OF LIVING

In the Reading Road *Basti* there are 100 houses and 25 temporary huts to house a population of nearly 800. No wonder the general conditions of living are abominable. Each family is allotted a quarter consisting of one room 10'x13'. But as there are not enough quarters, many tenements have to be shared by two or more families. The rest of the population is housed in temporary straw huts. Then each house has on an average to accommodate 7 people. In summer people can sleep outside, but in winter they have all to huddle together in one little room — mother, father, children and members of another family besides sometimes. The door is generally closed for fear of cold, the only means of ventilation being a small aperture near the roof. The houses are kept very dirty, the clothes are dirtier still and smelling. Even the bodies are filthy.

The arrangement for latrines and bath rooms is inadequate. There are only 13 latrines and 4 bathrooms for a population of nearly 800. Naturally, very often, people ease themselves outside the latrines, which makes the place terribly filthy. The automatic flush very often remains unattended and the cemented floors are broken. Only a day or two before Gandhiji went to stay there were they put in order. There is no arrangement for medical relief and there is a wide incidence of diseases attendant on dirt, poverty and squalor.

MEDICAL SURVEY

On the 11th evening, accompanied by Dev Prakash Nayyar, I went and carried out what may be called a

preliminary medical survey of the Bhangi Colony. 23 patients came and were diagnosed for sores, eye and ear troubles. There were some cases too of rheumatism, bronchitis, diarrhoea etc. Some other cases of a more complicated nature were directed to the Lady Hardinge and the Irwin Hospitals for further diagnosis.

The above analysis does not include all the patients at the Bhangi Colony. But still it can be taken as an indication of the state of health in the Colony. The general health of the Colony must be very poor, considering that at a moment's notice about 30 patients came. We knew how unwilling the poor ignorant people generally are to face the doctor. It will further be seen that most of the diseases need only cleanliness and hygienic living to disappear. What is needed is not so much medicine as education in health and hygiene and an improvement in their sanitary and economic conditions. Obviously, so long as the average income of a *bhangi* remains 4 annas a day, he cannot be expected to spend any money on soap etc.

GRIEVANCES AND DEMANDS

The following are their principal grievances and demands:

1. *Social disabilities*, i. e. the treatment meted out to them by fellow passengers in public vehicles and by their colleagues in Government offices where they are employed.

2. *Economic disabilities*. Their requirement as lorry drivers and *chaprasis* has provoked opposition from both Hindus and Muslims in those services and unless the officer-in-charge happens to be a strong man they have to pay the price. Another form of discrimination which is felt strongly by *mehtars* especially is that while hitherto promotions to the rank of a *daroga* were according to seniority, this time, it is alleged, because all on the seniority list are *bhangis*, it has been decided to recruit non-*bhangis* from outside for the post.

3. Another demand is that they should be given land for building purposes round the Valmiki Mandir either free or on lease or even on purchase. They are prepared to abide by all the conditions that the Municipality may lay down regarding the types of houses etc. that may be built on it. It is a very legitimate demand and one strongly hopes that it will be met.

SOCIAL WORK AMONGST THEM

Hardly any social work has been done amongst them. Many people representing various institutions came, but went back after a short while. Naturally, the Harijans feel disappointed. But still I feel that they would welcome anyone who would take real interest in them. So far as educational activity is concerned, it should be remembered that no education, unless it is closely related to their lives and holds out the prospect of ameliorating their economic condition, is likely to appeal to them.

Though naturally they are chiefly interested in the betterment of their economic condition, they keenly feel their social disabilities. The slight improvement that has been effected has by rousing their consciousness

made them feel their inferior status in society all the more keenly.

The majority of them are illiterate. Previously two schools—one night school and one day school—were being run in the Valmiki Mandir. They were closed when finally it was decided to get Harijan children admitted to the ordinary schools.

SPINNING AS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Spinning has many uses. Not the least interesting is its use as occupational therapy. An illustration of it is provided by a correspondent who is himself a patient and is undergoing treatment for spine trouble in the orthopaedic ward of the Government Hospital at Madura. He writes :

"During the National Week, even though confined to bed, I started spinning on a *takli* for sacrifice. It attracted two more patients and we span by turns on the two *taklis* that we had amongst us. Last year too, while I was in an Ayurvedic Ashram undergoing treatment, I did the same thing during the National Week and the Gandhi Jayanti week, when patients, *sadhus* and some inmates of the Ashram totalling about 17, most of them with improvised *taklis*, joined in the *yagna*. The yarn thus spun we sent as contribution to the Kasturba Fund. Encouraged by that experience, when I found this time that more and more patients were drawn to spinning by our example, I started improvising *taklis* from bamboo and earthen pot shreds. In the first week of May 1946, about a dozen bed-patients with fractured legs and spines were able to turn out amongst themselves half a dozen hanks. By the end of the second week the total number of *taklis* plying rose to thirty and the hanks spun during the two weeks totalled 24. These I sent to the A. I. S. A. as membership fee for four of us selected in order of their amount of spinning.

"This is a Government hospital with a total strength of 800 patients out of which in my ward there are about 70. Mine is the orthopaedic ward where fractures, tuberculosis of the bone etc. are treated, and patients have to be in bed for months, even years. Among the present spinners one-third are young kids. It has been found that apart from other things spinning has a definite therapeutic value. It keeps the patients agreeably occupied and makes them forget their pain and worries. I take care to see that in their enthusiasm they do not overwork. A patient from the eye ward has recently joined us."

The correspondent ends by asking as to whether it is desirable to encourage this kind of activity in a hospital and what is the best way of utilizing the yarn.

The use of occupational therapy as an aid to healing has come to be widely recognized by the medical profession in the West and constitutes a regular feature of treatment in some hospitals, particularly in America. In India, however, it has not yet been adopted. It ought to be encouraged

by hospital authorities and promoted by philanthropic societies interested in the welfare of patients. These can collaborate by providing cotton, implements of spinning, *tunai* etc. and means for technical instruction. The yarn produced can go into the charity box of the hospital to be utilized either for purchasing certified Khadi for hospital linen or, if it is in sufficient quantity, it can be woven into cloth for hospital use. If the patients succeed in communicating their enthusiasm to their attendants and relatives also, they will have the satisfaction that their period of convalescence was not altogether wasted, but was fully utilized for rendering a valuable piece of national service.

Mussooree,
7-6-'46

PYARELAL

A COMMENDABLE EXAMPLE

A group of earnest youngmen, mostly from Kerala, employed in various offices in Bombay, banded themselves together and started a Gram Seva Samiti in the month of July 1945, with the object of working out a plan to carry on village uplift work. To start with, they had only 7 members. They have now 15 members on the rolls paying a monthly subscription of Rs. 10/- each out of savings from their meagre salaries.

To organize their work they sent one of themselves, Shri K. Kumaran, for training in village industries. After completing his training in October 1945, he started an experimental centre at Perur in South Malabar. A small house was lent free of charge by a kind and generous woman of the village and was used to start a village reconstruction centre with the opening of a spinning class. Gradually a reading room and library, Hindustani classes, free dispensary and a weaving centre and Khadi Bhandar were set up. The following is a summary of the report of their various activities :

"Spinning classes are conducted from 9.30 to 4.30 p. m. with an interval of one hour. Instruction is imparted in carding also and the students are required to spin on self-made slivers only. Each class is held for a period of nearly 1½ months, by which time students become expert spinners.

"Three such classes were conducted consisting of altogether thirty students and the fourth class is being conducted now with ten students.

"The carding implements and *charkhas* supplied to the students during their study course are allowed to be taken along with them at the termination of the classes. They are required to bring in their weekly production of yarn and out of the corresponding price 1/3rd is apportioned towards cost of implements, 1/3rd towards Khadi cloth supplied to them—it is our desire that at least every spinner should use khaddar only—and the balance is given to them in cash and/or cotton. Thus, in the course of a few months, the students can own, without any investment, the necessary carding and spinning implements, besides a good quantity of Khadi cloth for their use and in the long run can make their families also self-sufficient in regard to clothing; on the other hand this procedure entails no recurring investment on the part of the Samiti.

"Up till now the Samiti has produced more than forty spinners and the average weekly production is 150 hanks."

A weaving centre was also started in the month of March 1946, with a view to making the village self-sufficient in regard to clothing. An expert weaver, trained in the well known Khadi production centre—Gandhinagar, Tirupur, was put in charge.

"We have also opened a Khadi Bhandar in order to supply cloth to the spinners and to popularize the use of Khadi amongst the villagers, and we are now actually unable to meet the minimum demands.

"A Hindustani class was started with the assistance of a local Hindi Pandit and regular classes are conducted. Twentyone students appeared from our centre for the recent Nayi Hindustani examinations and all of them came out successful. We are at present coaching twenty students for the ensuing "Madhyama" examinations of the Hindustani Prachar Sabha, Madras.

"The reading room is now getting three dailies, ten weeklies and two monthlies. Most of the papers and magazines are supplied free of charge by the managements concerned. Besides, we are also circulating the "Gramasevakan"—a manuscript monthly of our own. The library consists of a fairly good collection of political and economic literature—Anglo-Vernacular.

"Within a radius of seven miles of Perur Village, there is no hospital at all—not to speak of a free one. So we have opened a free dispensary also. From an average daily attendance of 3 to 5 in the beginning, the number of such attendance has risen to 50-60. We have at our disposal the services of a Homoeopathic doctor.

"In view of the increasing attendance at the dispensary, it is our intention to augment the equipment of the dispensary and to engage one more physician.

"The spinning classes, Hindustani classes, free dispensary, etc. are open to everybody, irrespective of caste or creed and it is noteworthy that the majority of patients at our dispensary is from among the Harijan and Muslim population.

During the short period of our existence, we have received by way of donation about Rs. 1400/- in cash and for the construction of a building to house our growing centre, materials worth about Rs. 400/- have been received from the villagers.

"The activities of the institution are carried on by four wholetime workers (who are maintained by the members' subscription) and three part-time workers."

The quick response which the effort has evoked shows that the harvest is plentiful; only the labourers are few.

Mussooree, 30-5-'46

PYARELAL

PALM GUR INDUSTRY

[The following is condensed from a letter on the Palm Gur industry by Shri Gajanan Naik. He pleads for due consideration of and an unbiased approach to the salient features of this important village industry.]

It is :

1. A POTENTIAL SOURCE OF NATIONAL FOOD ECONOMY. It would release 40 lakhs of acres of fertile land, now occupied by sugar cane, for producing cereals.

2. A REAL AID TO PROHIBITION. It will greatly minimize the problem of unemployment, for tappers, through the rational use of palm trees.

3. A SOCIALISTIC MEASURE. It is not like the sugar cane industry, benefiting only a few. It is a real village industry which, if properly organized, will have far-reaching beneficial effect on the villagers.

The following measures may be promptly taken by the Provincial Governments:

1. EXCISE EXEMPTION.

(a) Free tapping of all sugar-yielding palms must be permitted. The industry cannot progress unless free access to raw material is extended to the tappers. Production, possession, sale and transport of palm gur should also be allowed on the same basis as cane gur.

(b) PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT.

Tappers must not be harassed by the Excise and Police staff engaged for checking misuse.

2. SUPPLY OF RAW MATERIAL.

(a) To fell a tappable palm tree by whomsoever owned should be a cognizable offence.

(b) Trees owned by Government should be leased on a nominal rent for gur or sugar making. Rent charged by other owners should be controlled. Leasing should be obligatory on owners unless they themselves are using the trees for manufacture of gur.

(c) And exhaustive survey of sugar-yielding palm trees should be made in order to ascertain potential production and gauge to what extent there is need of planting new trees.

(d) Scientific cultivation of sugar palms should be included in planning schemes.

3. TECHNICAL AID.

(a) Adequate arrangements should be made for training all villagers desirous of learning the manufacturing process. Suitable literature in the local languages as well as facilities for practical lessons in the art in vocational schools should be provided.

(b) All the necessary apparatus for manufacture should be made available at controlled rates.

(c) Free supply of light fuel under proper supervision should be allowed from Government forests.

4. MARKETING FACILITIES.

(a) Palm gur Producers' Co-operatives should be set up so as to avoid the middleman.

(b) Transport facilities should be provided.

(c) Government institutions such as hospitals, jails etc. should give preference to the use of palm gur and palm sugar.

5. POTENTIAL SOURCE OF FOOD ECONOMY.

Government-owned waste land unsuited for agriculture should be utilized for the cultivation of palm trees so that in time cane sugar may be supplanted by palm sugar. Private owners of land may be subsidized for the same purpose.

By M. K. Gandhi

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HALLUCINATION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

We are afflicted by many superstitions, obsessions and hallucinations. They are entirely the creation of the mind, but so long as they are not exorcized they continue to afflict us. We may take for a snake a piece of rope and dislocate our wrist in striking at it. Similarly, we may take a non-poisonous snake for a poisonous one and lose a friend by ignorantly destroying it. Who has not heard stories of people mistaking a respectable citizen for a thief and killing him in a paroxysm of fear? Instances of Harijans being foolishly held responsible for the outbreak of plague in villages and being lynched for it are unfortunately not uncommon. In the same way, I would regard it as the height of superstitious ignorance for educated people or students to refuse admission in hostels to Harijans. In this connection I would particularly invite the attention of all students and superintendents of hostels to the leaflet issued over the signatures of Shris Parikshitlal Majmudar and Hemantkumar Nilkanth for their careful perusal, reflection and action. In that leaflet they seem to have made an exception in the case of hostels which are specially reserved for certain castes and sub-castes. In my opinion, even in these hostels Harijans ought to be freely admitted if only to prove that those castes or sub-castes have banished untouchability from their minds for good.

New Delhi, 15-6-'46

(From *Harijanbandhu*)

THE NIGHTMARE

An English friend posed to Gandhiji, during his stay at Mussooree, the question whether the very frightfulness of the atom bomb would not force non-violence on the world. If all nations were armed with the atom bomb they would refrain from using it as it would mean absolute destruction for all concerned. Gandhiji was of the opinion that it would not. "The violent man's eyes would be lit up with the prospect of the much greater amount of destruction and death which he could now wreak."

The fact is that the race for atomic secrets, instead of culminating in the abolition of violence, threatens to usher in the reign of an unprecedented frightfulness and extinction of individual freedom long before the first atom bomb has fallen on its target. *One World or None* (McGrew and Hill), "a report on the full meaning of the atomic bomb by 17 scientists (including five nobel prize winners), generals and pundits," gives a calm hair-raising warning of the swiftly approaching disaster. After describing the incredible destructiveness of the newer type of atomic bombs that have been "investigated in a preliminary way" and their almost "measly" cost, General Arnold observes: "Destruction by air power has become too cheap and easy . . . The existence of civilization (is) subject to the good will and good sense of the men who control air power." Physicist Louis N. Ridenour, rader expert, explains how even the most elaborate

precautions cannot keep a good proportion of the bombs from hitting their targets. "And just a few bombs will be enough." "Atomic saboteurs may sow the U. S. with hidden volcanoes," writes Physicist Edward U. Condon, "waiting to erupt on a chosen Pearl Harbour day. . . . A target to be safe must be surrounded by a sanitary area at least a mile in radius. Twenty thousand tons of TNT can be kept under the counter of a candy store."

"To guard against such sabotage," proceeds Mr. Condon, "the U. S. would have to turn itself into a police state tighter than any in history." In a summing-up chapter, Dr. Harold C. Urey further expatiates on this aspect of the atomic race. "Long before the bombs begin to fall, the U. S. people will have lost their liberties under a rigid military dictatorship. Atomic generals, conferring in blackest secrecy, will dominate the homes and industries of the nation. Secret police will pry into every cranny, hunting for spies and saboteurs. The same trend will occur in all countries of the world, and, the end will be deadly fear everywhere."

The only solution according to these scientists is a "world government strong enough to make war impossible." "The problem has brought us to one of the great crises of history. The arms race must be stopped. There is not much time."

New Delhi, 17-6-'46

PYARELAL

[P. S. Since the above was written has come the appeal of M. Frederick Joliot Curie, Head of the French representatives on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission that scientists should strike on further Atomic research if the Governments of the world do not reach a control agreement. "If no agreement is reached . . .", he said, "We scientists should feel called upon to discontinue our research in this field, to refuse to become a party to the prostitution of science."]

Love of Truth

[Shri V. G. Desai has written about the love of truth in India in a Gujarati article in *Harijanbandhu*. The concluding portion of his article is reproduced below.

PYARELAL]

"Mendarwala Purushottam Mavani sued Darbarshri Valabhai for Rs. 4400. Valabhai said that he would accept the arbitration of Damodar Mavani, the father of Purushottam. Damodarbhai went to the court and said that so far as he knew Purushottam had given Darbar Rs. 2000 only. So Valabhai paid the full amount of Rs. 4400/- to Purushottam.

"In Jetpur there was a dispute between Hindus and Mussalmans in connection with land near the trough in a public square. The Hindus said: "We will accept the award of the two memans Daud Bega who was 95 years old and Aba Abu." The two gentlemen said that the land belonged to the Hindus. Thus on the land won by the Hindus in this way a *sadhu's* hut stands to this day."

IN PRAISE OF HALVES

A bill has been introduced in the Central Legislative Assembly to introduce the decimal system of coinage in our country.

In the view of this University this would be a retrograde measure. The Indian Systems of coinage and weights and measures are scientific and uniform and all are generally based on the sub-division of the unit into 16 parts. This makes the calculation of prices and fares automatic and easy and the application of the decimal system to coinage alone would, to say the least, be premature. One could understand the introduction of the decimal system of coinage along with the use of the metric system of weights and measures, but to have only decimal coinage is bound to cause considerable annoyance and inconvenience to the general public. The convenience of the present system will immediately be observed by a perusal of the following:

1. Rupee = 2 half rupees = 4 quarter rupees = 8 two anna bits = 16 one anna pieces.
2. Seer = 2 half seers = 4 quarter seers = 8 *ollocks* = 16 *chhataks*.
3. Yard = 2 cubits = 4 spans = 8 first measures = 16 *girahs*.
4. Mile = 2 half miles = 4 quarter miles = 8 furlongs.

With the present system the calculation of prices is automatic, and no calculations are required, but with the introduction of the decimal system of coinage only, the calculation of prices, when *chhataks* or *girahs* only are purchased would present considerable difficulty to the uneducated public and I am sure the new coinage will never be popular.

In this connection I would like to mention that I have just received from America a copy of a journal called *School Science and Mathematics*, and I quote for your information the following paragraphs taken from it:

"Halves are the easiest fractions of things as everyone knows. Quarters are only halves of halves and eighths only halves of quarters. This halving process may be repeated indefinitely.

"The remedy for troubles with fractions is to use halves exclusively in measures and money, and write them in the number language or scale of eight.

"The present condition in the use of halves is somewhat like thinking in one's native language (halves) but writing in a foreign language (decimals and the metric system).

"Others propose that we learn and use the foreign metric system with its tenths, hundredths, etc. It is not a question of learning a foreign language. It is a question of altering our physical make-up, which will not be done. It is common knowledge that our minds and bodies avoid the metric divisions of material things as far as possible."

In fact American educationists are now thinking of having octonary numeration, octimal arithmetic as well as octic arithmetic weights and measures, and it seems to me it would be a very retrograde step on our part to adopt the decimal system, when the advanced thinkers of other parts of the world are planning to replace it by a more natural and scientific system.

SHRI RANG BIHARILAL
Pro Vice-Chancellor
Benares Hindu University

SOME MUSSOOREE REMINISCENCES

During his ten days' stay at Mussooree, Gandhiji took holiday which in his parlance simply means respite from public engagements and interviews. In this he did not altogether succeed. A few foreign correspondents sought him out in his seclusion and were able to have talks with him on matters of common interest, politics being, of course, excluded. Gandhiji saw them during his morning walks.

BRAKE UPON PROGRESS?

"Your Khadi, handicrafts and rural economy programme will have a great appeal for an agricultural country, as for instance, the Balkans," said one of them. "But to many of us, as indeed to many of your countrymen, it appears as a brake on progress. Most people think planning and industrialism on a wide scale to be necessary."

"How does my programme interfere with the progress of India?" Gandhiji asked in reply. "India is mainly rural, consisting of 700,000 villages."

The visitor shifted his ground. He argued that this was unfair to the cities. "What about the big cities like Bombay and Calcutta?" he asked.

"On the contrary, the boot is on the other leg," replied Gandhiji. "I regard the growth of cities as an evil thing, unfortunate for mankind and the world, unfortunate for England and certainly unfortunate for India. The British have exploited India through its cities. The latter have exploited the villages. The blood of the villages is the cement with which the edifice of the cities is built. I want the blood that is today inflating the arteries of the cities to run once again in the blood vessels of the villages."

UNDOING THE WRONG

The friend, however, was not satisfied. "The initial mistake having been made," he argued, "you do not mean to suggest that all those steps should inexorably be retraced even though it might involve pulling down what has already been built."

"Why not?" replied Gandhiji. "Once we discover that a mistake has been made, the only course open to us is to recognize our error, retrace our steps and begin anew."

"Somehow, the belief prevails in the modern world," persisted the friend, "that retracing one's steps in this respect would be incompatible with progress."

"What do you do when a ship loses her course on the sea?" asked Gandhiji in return. "She does not continue to follow the wrong course. She at once retraces her course and then starts afresh. How often must have Columbus done that or else he would have remained a derelict all the time."

"Does that mean that you would depopulate the cities and send all the city folk back to the villages?" asked the friend.

"I would not do that. All I want is that they should re-adjust their lives so as to cease to sponge upon the poor village folk and make to the latter what reparation is possible even at this late hour by helping to resuscitate their ruined economy."

"IF I WERE A DICTATOR"

"What would you do if you were made a dictator of India for one day?" asked the friend next, changing the topic.

"I would not accept it in the first place," replied Gandhiji, "but if I did become a dictator for one day I would spend it in cleaning the stables of the Viceroy's House that the hovels of the Harijans in Delhi are. It is disgraceful that under the very nose of the Viceroy such poverty and squalor should exist as there is in the Harijan quarters. And why does the Viceroy need such a big house? If I had my way I would turn it into a hospital." And he gave the instance of President Kreuger whose residence was not even as good as Birlaji's 'Hermitage' in which he was staying.

"Well, sir," remarked the friend continuing the theme. "Suppose they continue your dictatorship for the second day?"

"The second day," replied Gandhiji amidst laughter, "would be a prolongation of the first."

They next talked of several other things—the national language of India, the place of English, the administrative problems that would face an independent India, the future of Indo-British trade relations. They then came to non-violence.

"What will be the relations of India with Russia for instance?" asked the friend. "What, if Russia were to attack India?"

"Under my dictatorship Russia would find its occupation gone. It will not find it profitable to stay on, even if it came. But, of course, it is too rich a dream to be realized in a day."

SENDING STUDENTS TO ENGLAND

"The best men in the old generation," the friend proceeded to ask "had their education in England—you for instance. Would you have India, when she becomes independent, send her sons there for study as before?"

"No, not just now," replied Gandhiji. "I would advise her to send them there only after, say 40 years."

"It means," observed the friend, "depriving two generations of the benefits of contact with the West."

That brought Gandhiji to his pet theme of living up to 125 years.

"Why two generations?" he asked. "40 years or even 60 is not too much even in an individual's life. If there is right living we need not grow old at 60 as unfortunately many do in this country. I repeat that they should go there only after they have reached maturity. Because, it is only when they have learnt to understand the good that is in their own culture that they will be able to truly appreciate and assimilate the best that England or America has to give them. Imagine a boy of seventeen, like myself, going to England—he will simply be submerged."

"Then we may expect you in England some time," queried the friend.

"Oh, yes, you may," replied Gandhiji amid general laughter.

TRUTH OR AHIMSA?

"You have brought us to the threshold of independence, Gandhiji," remarked another privileged friend who had a talk with him of an evening, "and we cannot feel too grateful for it. You will, of course, give entire credit for it to *ahimsa*—that being your pet child. But we feel that we have derived more strength from Truth than your *Ahimsa*."

"You are wrong in thinking," replied Gandhiji, "that in my partiality for *ahimsa* I have given to truth the second place. You are equally wrong in thinking that the country has derived more strength from truth than from *ahimsa*. On the contrary, I am firmly convinced that whatever progress the country has made, is due to its adoption of *ahimsa* as its method of struggle."

"I mean the country has not understood your *ahimsa* but it understood truth and that has filled it with strength," rejoined the friend.

"It is just the contrary," replied Gandhiji. "There is so much of untruth in the country. I feel suffocated sometimes. I am convinced therefore, that it must be the practice of *ahimsa* alone, however faulty, that has brought us so far."

"Moreover, I have not given truth the second place as you seem to think," he continued and described how at a meeting at Geneva he had flabbergasted everybody by remarking that whereas he used to say that God is Truth, he had since come to hold that Truth is God.

"Nevertheless, your emphasis is always on *ahimsa*. You have made propagation of non-violence the mission of your life," argued the friend, still unwilling to concede the point.

"There again you are wrong," replied Gandhiji. "*Ahimsa* is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing truth in human relationships except through the practice of *ahimsa*. A steadfast pursuit of *ahimsa* is inevitably bound to truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by *ahimsa*. Truth came naturally to me. *Ahimsa* I acquired after a struggle. But *ahimsa* being the means we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is *ahimsa*, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end."

New Delhi, 17-6-'46

PYARELAL

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J. DESAI

WHAT HAS THE CONGRESS DONE ?

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A Harijan from Gujarat writes:

"The elections have made it clear that only two parties count in India today, the Muslim League and the Congress. The elections have also shown that most of the Harijans are with the Congress. The Ambedkarites have won very few seats. What is the place of Congress Harijans in the Congress? Why are not Harijan candidates made to stand for election to the various committees of the Congress? When they do stand, why are caste Hindus allowed to oppose them? Is it right to keep Harijans out on the plea that the caste Hindus are more capable? The Congress has been working for the Harijans for a long time. Why has it not yet succeeded in educating them sufficiently and making them capable?"

There is ignorance and sting in this letter. They are excusable. We should understand the spirit behind it. The very fact that the Congress has won so many Harijan seats shows that it must have served them to win their confidence. They form an indivisible part of Hindu religion and Hindu society. If this part breaks or leaves the Hindu religion or Hindu society, the latter would perish. What the writer wants to say is that the caste Hindus have not done their duty towards the Harijans to the extent that they should have. If the caste Hindus would become *bhangis* of their own free will, the distinction between Harijans and caste Hindus would automatically disappear. There are various divisions amongst the Harijans too. They should all go. All should be of one caste, that is the *bhangi*. A *bhangi* is the servant of the whole of humanity, not only of the Hindus. When we become *bhangis* of this description all divisions would disappear. Who can be master where all are servants?

But today it is a mere dream, it is an objective. But no society can exist on mere dreams or objectives. It must be solid work. The Congress makes no distinctions of caste and creed. It must pull up those who are down in the dumps and those who are up in the air must come down. Thus the golden mean would be found. People cannot live in the bowels of the earth or in the sky. They all must live on the fair earth. Equality of all is the Congress pledge. Congress has not fulfilled it as yet. The columns of the 'Harijan' show that so long as it is not fulfilled the Harijans would have every cause to complain.

To the correspondent I would say this. To whom does he owe the ability to write this letter in a good hand? Which organization has done more for the Harijans than the Congress? It is true that the Congress has not done all it should. Much remains. Equally true is the fact that none has done as much as the Congress. Therefore, the Harijans must be patient. There is no doubt that there is a limit to one's patience. But the limit has not been reached.

New Delhi, 15-6-'46

(From *Harijanbandhu*)

ANIMAL SACRIFICE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A correspondent writes:

"The Harijans of Mysore regularly offer animal sacrifice in the temples there. In the Krishnarajanager Taluka, pilgrimages to chosen areas take place annually for this purpose. One such took place from January 3rd to 25th this year, in which three or four goats were sacrificed daily.

"Another takes place every Saturday in the month of Shravan. In this not only Harijans but priests, the self-styled custodians of the Hindu religion, also take part. The participants indulge in drink too on these occasions.

"The most painful thing is that beef is eaten. It is a matter of utmost shame, too, for every Hindu that the killing of the animals takes place right in front of the temple—the house of God."

If what the writer says is true, it is indeed, in one sense, a matter of shame for every Hindu. But no sin can be wiped out by mere condemnation by word of mouth. Nor does the guilt of the whole body absolve the individual from his duty. Therefore, in my opinion, the responsibility of working for the reform rests, in the first instance, on the correspondent, secondly on the people of the place where the animal sacrifices are held, then on the Ruler of the State and his people and after them in turn on Karnatak, Madras Presidency and the whole of India. Only if all, in their respective places, take up the work systematically—and systematic work can only succeed if run on the basis of non-violence—can the evil that has been handed down through the ages be wiped out of existence.

Therefore, it is the correspondent who must make the beginning. I have written enough previously as to how the work of reform should be undertaken.

New Delhi, 15-6-'46

(From *Harijansevak*)

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