

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XV. No. 16

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1951

TWO ANNAS

OUR FOOD PROBLEM

To The Editor, Harijan

Dear Sir,

I have read with profit and joy your thoughtful and realistic article on "Our Food Problem". Our Food Problem is a very old one, but it has become menacingly acute since the second global war for three reasons: (1) the rapid and unhealthy centralization created by the British Raj for its own benefit to drain easily our agricultural resources; (2) the creation thereby of huge urban centres of vast populations, either not directly employed in agriculture or wholly clerical or parasitical, but with a much higher scale of wages as against unskilled agricultural labour! Finger dexterity has killed the prestige, power and beneficence of manual labour — that is the gift of industrial science to modern life, in any case, in our country; (3) The rapid promotion under British Raj of exports of commercial crops, especially oil-seeds, to the detriment of our rural welfare and ignoring local needs. If I am asked to prefer between starvation and minimum clothing, I would prefer minimum clothing. Our commercial crops grown at the sacrifice of our food-grains are sent out to get the sterling and dollar required for motor cars and aeroplanes and luxury articles. Since we don't manufacture them ourselves, we are not entitled to enjoy them *in the face of the starvation of the millions*.

Our food problem is the most complicated of our major problems and without solving it permanently, through increased local production throughout the country, none of our problems can be solved and we are bound to die as a nation, with a white cap on our head and Gandhiji on our lips and a heart with black-marketing pulse-beats for selfish gains.

Our food problem may be solved only if there is a vital change in our ideals and mode of government. We may not have so many aeroplanes and motor-cars whether produced and built in India or elsewhere, but we may have well-nourished and well-built human bodies! Contiguous villages should be grouped together into a rural unit and invested with an effective and virile local administration under the charge

of an executive rural officer, helped by a *panchayat*. This rural unit should be blessed with seven institutions: (1) the Basic School, (2) the Industrial section, (3) the Dairy, (4) the Agricultural Farm, (5) a Health and Sanitation Home, more preventive than curative, (6) a multi-purpose Co-operative Society, and (7) a *Panchayat* under the control and guidance of a Rural Officer. It should be more or less on the lines indicated by me in my book, *My Ashram Plan for Rural Uplift*. There must be active and complete co-ordination among the seven institutions under the rural officer. This may seem on paper a huge affair to the urban-spectacled reader but it is easily and completely workable with a readjustment of our Union and State Budgets on healthy lines. The States are powerless today to initiate and organize on the higher scale any reform because of the paralysis inflicted on the village governments by the British Raj. Food must be made the major objective at least for five years of this rural unit. I am confident that self-sufficiency for the country is possible even without the help of the Damodar Valley (Project), which when achieved may well be utilized for making us prosperous. As it is, we may even fail to carry out that programme.

Then, the present system of controls, a British legacy in war-crisis, *should go* and a new system of controls on a general scale suited to our temperament, character, culture and civic evolution should be planned not by our members of Parliament but by people identified with villagers.

Our infant republic will achieve nothing but chaos till we learn to concentrate on our many *home* problems, administratively and with vision. The importance given to foreign affairs and news is disproportionately great, and is even ruinous. For, foreign policy is the father of the atom bomb and global wars. For, explosiveness is inherent when you gaze on with coveting eyes, lured by the movements and "achievements" of your neighbour, forgetting your own duty to your home and self. Then war is always in the air.

Shevatarayana Ashram,
Kaveripattanam

K. S. VENKATARAMANI

BASIC EDUCATION *

He who holds very radical and comprehensive views about life and has a desire to know things as they are and has the capacity to pursue his ideal cannot but have a definite philosophy of education. Gandhiji was such a man, though he did not express his educational philosophy in the particular jargon of the educationist or the psychologist. There is, in fact, no difference between true education and the *sādhana* (self-discipline) one practises to attain the goal of one's life. The question is one of making school training a part of *sādhana* or education for life. Gandhiji had been making experiments in this direction throughout his long and eventful life. His experiments with truth by which name he preferred to call his autobiography were, in a sense, experiments in education for life.

Gandhiji has written profusely on topics pertaining to education. His speeches and writings addressed to the student world in general on the various aspects of student life have already been published in the volume *To the Students*.†

What is known as basic education or *nai talim* was formally placed before the country by Gandhiji in 1937, after the establishment of responsible government in the provinces. As a result of this political reform, the Congress had come into power in eight out of the eleven provinces in the country. For Gandhiji this was not altogether a new idea, just conceived. The beginnings of this system can be seen in the education which he tried to impart to his wards on the Tolstoy Farm in South Africa, in the Satyagraha Ashram at Sabarmati, and also in some measure in the institutions of national education founded under his inspiration and guidance in and after 1920. Whatever differences there were in the latter were of the nature of consequential changes needed by the surrounding environment and immediate objective. In 1920, the immediate objective was the attainment of Swaraj—freedom from foreign yoke—through an intensive programme of non-co-operation with official education. In 1937, it was the consolidation of the newly-won, though partial, freedom.

Gandhiji was perfectly aware of the difficulties that beset the path of the new education. Every revolutionary measure has to face these difficulties. They arise from the hold which the old traditional order has on the people's mind, and the values and interests rooted in it. Speaking to the Ministers of the various provinces Gandhiji said,

"I know your difficulties. It is not easy for those who have been brought up in the old tradition to break away from it at a stroke. If I were in the Minister's chair, I would issue broad instructions that hereafter all educational activity of the Government should be on basic-education lines. . . . If your inspectors and other officers of the Education Department have no faith in it or if they are unwilling loyally to work out the new policy, I would give them the choice to resign. But I do not think that it would be necessary if the Ministers knew their jobs and put their shoulders to the wheel. Merely issuing orders would not do the trick."

But a greater difficulty faces us now in regard to the fundamental idea behind the scheme. It is, how shall we teach the craft and impart knowledge through it? Craft, besides being a means, is an end also; and it should, therefore, be taught systematically and thoroughly as an end. Then alone can it show its potentialities as a means of education. The old system has an abhorrence for body-labour; the sense of high and low has entered into it. Consequently, it became difficult to carry on craft-teaching in accordance with the desired end; on the other hand, it developed queer forms under the educational *pandits* who wanted to use it as a means only. It was linked with the activity school and the project methods. But even with this, actual education did not improve. Craft began to be taught as a laboratory experiment followed by some informative talk on it and a course of book learning. Again a routine course of studies must needs be finished, and consequently craft was subjected to cuts. It is noteworthy that Gandhiji has nowhere used the word *correlation*; he always insisted on education through a craft and if that is done with understanding, the curriculum that will emerge out of it will be the true and natural curriculum. In the present system the curriculum does not occupy this place. It fixes a particular course of studies for a year and believes that the meaning of the Wardha system is to carry it out by correlating it to the craft. Moreover, the old conception of education is still there. A study of Gandhiji's writings on this subject will be very stimulating and helpful in correcting these ideas. According to Gandhiji, the Wardha scheme was not a mere method of education. It was more than that. It was a way through education to solve the nation-wide problems of the country. Hence it was that Gandhiji called it his best gift to the country.

The national system of education of every country grows on a particular kind of faith, outlook on life, and aims and ideals in conformity with them. Its educational system takes shape according to these. The prevalent system took its shape after the aims and ideals propounded by Macaulay. The purpose then was to cater to

* Taken from the introduction to the collection of Gandhiji's Gujarati writings on Basic Education. Its English counterpart is lately published under the title *Basic Education* by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Price Re 1-8-0. Postage etc. 4 As.

† Published by the Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad. Price Rs 3-8-0. Postage etc. 10 As.

the needs of our British rulers at that time. It was never intended to serve national interests. That age is now past. With the advent of Swaraj and democracy, a corresponding change must take place in every institution, including education. Macaulay is now antiquated and obsolete. But somehow its form still persists and many see the safety of their interests in it. In short, our educational system is like a body from which the soul has flitted away. Basic education was conceived by Gandhiji to infuse life into the body. It was due to his genius that a new system came into being just at the proper time.

As stated above, the Wardha scheme is not merely a new system or method in primary education. Through it has been laid before the country the national programme of reconstruction of the whole education. Only if we take it up from the start may we find the necessary atmosphere and a way in due course. It was for this reason that primary or basic education was considered first and in detail. Even when Gandhiji put forward his proposal to bring about a revolution in the matter of education he had done so without losing sight of the whole education. He had divided education in two parts:

(1) Universal education that can be had by all the nationals in a country. This was called Basic education.

(2) Higher or special education.

Of the two, the first, i.e. primary education, according to Gandhiji should extend at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the Matriculation standard less English and plus a substantial skill in craft. This education should be the charge of the State, which should impart it in such a way that it would develop the mind and character of the student and make him self-dependent.

The other type or higher or special education Gandhiji would like to leave to private enterprise. The University people were very much disturbed at this suggestion of his. All the same it was an organic part of Gandhiji's whole view of education. And looking to the present condition of education in India the so-called higher education has become so top-heavy that no solution of our educational problem is possible without effecting radical changes in it. The place of English in Gandhiji's scheme, his thoughts regarding the foundation of new universities, his emphasis on the mother-tongue as the natural medium of instruction, self-help and body-labour and national language all these touch the so-called higher education and are an essential part of it.

Gandhiji did give a full outline of his education in 1937 as is clear from the following:

"My propositions refer both to primary education and college education; but you have to address yourselves to a consideration of primary education. I have included secondary in primary education because primary education is the only education so-

called that is available to a small fraction of the people in our villages. . . . the moment that primary question is solved, the secondary one of college education would also be solved."

The work begun in 1937 was almost closed when the Congress Ministries resigned in 1939. But when the time came for its resumption after the Quit India campaign in 1945 and onwards Gandhiji chalked out the outline of the education of the whole man, from his conception to the grave, placing Basic education in the centre as the sun in the solar system. If we could really give that place to Basic education, he said, it would help solve many other problems before the country. Having given his last message thus he departed.

M. P. DESAI

(Translated from Gujarati)

MESSAGE FROM THE KODAIKANAL INTERNATIONAL PEACE SEMINAR

A group of young men and women—students, leaders and others—engaged in public service, coming from many parts of India and America, Denmark, Canada, China and Great Britain, representing such Indian cultural groups as Tamilnad, Andhra, Malabar, Mysore, Bengal, and the Punjab, met together at the Kodaikanal Ashram from the 7th to the 26th April and then at Gandhi Gram, Ambathurai, S.I.R. for three days for the purpose of sharing in one of the International Peace Seminars promoted by the American Friends' Service Committee.

We are all grateful for this opportunity, for as we have grappled with the various problems of community life, and have come to know one another more deeply, we have learnt much, not only that there can be a deep basis of fellowship beyond the religious and national barriers, but that the very differences that each brings into the group contribute to the richness of the fellowship. We have become convinced of the rightness of this basis of relationship and during our discussions and study together we have tried to discover how this can be applied to the world situation where divisions are becoming more emphasized and where differences of nationality and ideology are made the causes of tension and strife.

Our life together has taught us the value of patience, for not all grow into true understanding at the same pace nor do all have the same sense of calling to witness and service; but with the approach which recognizes that to the human family all convictions sincerely held are of value, there need not be tension or violence.

We have found it of great value to include in our studies not only questions of economics, sociology and philosophy concerning the world in which we live, but also the actual problems of the life of the villager in India. This not only focusses our attention on certain aspects of service in which the need is so great, but brings to us new insight into the nature of society and the conditions in which mankind may grow into an integral life. This, in turn, helps us to see new hope for the building up of a new world in which peace and harmony may prevail, and in which man may share the good life.

We are grateful to the American Friends' Service Committee for initiating this programme of seminars, and we commend to students, professors and youth leaders in South India, the technique which is adopted in these seminars in the hope that they will carry on experiments in their particular areas. Having learnt of the experience and success of the Folk High School movement in Denmark, we have faith that the development of the seminar movement in India may bring new inspiration and new vision to the people.

RALPH R. KEITHAHN

HARIJAN

June 16

1951

THE PRINCIPLES OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRY

The reader will have noticed that in his reply (*Harijan*, 9-6-'51) to Shri H. K. Mahtab's article on the Handloom Problem Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju has used considerable restraint. Shri Mahtab's logic, I am afraid, is more likely to confound the reader than help him think about the problem more clearly. Maybe, he himself is not clear; for some of the arguments advanced by him go to show that either the Government or he or both have no clear idea as to whom out of the various rivals in textiles they should choose or give priority; and hence the only policy they pursue is to try to placate the one who makes the greatest noise at a given moment. One can understand a government not believing in handicrafts at all on the ground that since the invention of the power-driven machinery, all handicrafts must be wound up as uneconomical, and the artisans occupied in them asked to find other jobs. Government might give them some doles now and then, but they must not expect to get the raw material for their handicraft if that raw material is required for a power industry. But Shri Mahtab is not prepared to say this and wants to shift the responsibility of finding sufficient raw material for them upon the A.I.S.A. And he finds fault with it for not doing so. But he does not seem to be conscious of the self-contradiction in the first and the last paragraphs of his article. For, in the first paragraph he asserts that since the time of Gandhiji, who held "that unless there was (universal) hand-spinning on a large-scale, the problem of the handloom would not be solved," the situation has so much changed that the problem of the handloom can be solved even without widespread hand-spinning." If so, how does the alleged failure of the A.I.S.A. to extend hand-spinning come in the way of solving the problem of the handloom weavers? Rather he should have advised the trustees of the A.I.S.A. to wind it up and create a new organization for spreading a big net of spinning mills. If he had said this he would have been consistent and earned high tributes from some of our pro-industrialist organs like, say, the *Mail of Madras*, which are keenly opposed to the *Khadi* scheme. But the concrete suggestion which he has made at the end is: "individuals and private organizations should come forward and take up the production of yarn by hand-spinning and bring about a regional self-sufficiency, so far as supply of cloth is concerned. This is the *effective solution of all the problems*, which I have hinted above"!

Shri Mahtab refers to the change of circumstances as a result of the Partition. But whatever these might be, they do not affect the following propositions:

- (1) that only hand-spinning will solve the problem of large-scale unemployment, by providing partial employment to the masses and full employment to handloom weavers;
 - (2) if power-loom, whether centralized or decentralized is prohibited, and mechanization is confined to spinning, it may be possible to find employment for the handloom weaver; but the problem of the partial unemployment of the masses will remain unsolved;
 - (3) that neither hand-spinning nor handloom weaving can succeed if either of them has to face the competition of the mill-industry;
 - (4) that hence, the mill-industry should either entirely stop, or it should be co-ordinated with the *khadi* industry, and its scope should be limited to fabrics made for export or to such cloth for special purposes as cannot be made on the handloom;
 - (5) that nothing is costlier to the nation than having to keep its hands idle, while its mouths which are constantly multiplying have to be fed;
 - (6) that humanly speaking, there appears to be no prospect of finding sufficient employment for crores of our people, if articles are produced as much as possible by power-driven machine; and large numbers of men and cattle must be systematically killed off annually so that mechanization might prosper and the standard of living of the survivors might rise;
 - (7) that the killing would require the employment of one or more of the following violent means: starvation, execution of the indigent, forced expulsions, compulsory sterilization, killings on the ground of race, religion, ism etc., conquests of territories for colonization, total wars;
 - (8) that if this is to be avoided the responsibility to find full employment for one's nationals must be regarded by every government as more important than increasing the volume of foreign trade, and encouraging luxurious living in the name of raising the standard of living;
 - (9) that the test of cheapness is not the difference between the so-called money prices of mill-cloth, handloom cloth or *khadi*-cloth, (or mechanically produced and hand-made goods) but the total national difference between the heat calories consumed by the people and those returned by them in the form of produced articles.
- These propositions are good now as they were before Independence and Partition. They are matters about which the Government has to make up its mind. The question is whether

Shri Mahtab has his faith in power-spindles and power-looms or *charkhas* and handlooms. If he has it in the latter, as a duly empowered minister of the Central Government he should be able to do much more than what he would be able to do as a Secretary of the A.I.S.A. If he has in the former (i.e. has greater faith in power-spindles and power-looms), how does he expect the A.I.S.A. to successfully carry out the policy of *khadi* in the face of an actually hostile industrial policy of his own? The A.I.S.A. would be simply wasting the public money which Government wanted to throw away for just playing with *khadi*, village industries etc.

Wardha, 21-5-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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

XI

March 30th, Ramayampeth (Twenty-third Halt, 17 miles)

Before arriving at Ramayampeth, Vinobaji had halted at Bhiknoor for half an hour. He had walked in the morning while in fever and now began to perspire freely. This brought down the temperature a little. But he felt very weak. Every step was an effort. Usually he is a fast walker, and a walk of twenty miles does not fatigue him much. So we all requested him to break the journey at Bhiknoor, but he firmly declined. "God is a witness to all our resolves—change in a resolve causes inconvenience to many. Decision once taken has got to be fulfilled. This march is a nature cure. It will eliminate the fever." It was vain to argue any more. We prayed and hoped that God Who gives strength to the lame to climb a mountain, will protect him. So we took our breakfast at Bhiknoor, while Vinoba addressed a few words to the people who had gathered to listen to him. In his brief speech he congratulated the people for possessing a good and able worker in Shri Narayan Reddi and hoped that he would be inspired to establish *Ramajaya* in that village and the people would extend to him the necessary co-operation.

The Drink Habit

The village was very clean and Shri Narayan Reddi was much loved by the people. Yet most of them were addicted to drinking. Vinoba referred to this, and asked them to put a stop to the habit of *shindi*, the sales of which went up to thousands of rupees. It made them dull. It was against religion and it was the duty of the good people in the village to educate the public and put a stop to the evil.

Narayan Reddi

Shri Narayan Reddi had been a victim of the Razakar atrocities. In an attack upon his life, he had lost two of his fingers, and his jaw had become disfigured by cuts on both the sides. Marks of wounds could be seen on the head and shoulders also. His offence was service of Harijans and sympathy with the Congress. The Razakars had left him only when they thought he was dead. His modesty and sacrifice had won for him the affection of the public. He pledged himself to carry on *Sarvodaya* work in his village hereafter.

We left Bhiknoor for Ramayampeth. We were still two and a half miles away, when to our surprise we saw that out of a population of 4,000, about a thousand had come to greet Vinoba with garlands in their hands and singing *Ramadhun*. It was already eleven and by the time we reached our destination it was already twelve. Vinoba had perspired sufficiently and so he bathed and slept.

In his post-prayer speech Vinoba spoke to the people about his fever. He was not sure, he said, whether we would be able to finish the seventeen-mile journey of that day. But in God's name they started and by His grace had arrived there. He assured them that he was free from suffering.

Power of God

And narrating his experience about the strength that is in the name of the Lord, he said:

"Divine power is inexhaustible. You can draw as much from it as you like. It has not happened till now that one has asked of it and not got it. But asking is an art. You must know how to establish contact with the Lord. To establish such contact is the very aim of human life. Don't we see that the life of the farmer is full of such contacts? If it rains, he is grateful to the Lord. If it does not, it is God alone that he remembers. That is why the farmer's life is the purest of all lives. In spite of the hardest of labour that he puts in, he is never proud that the crops were due to his efforts. For him it is but the Lord's grace. At every step he feels so grateful about Him."

Waste and Abuse

And then giving the outlook to understand the gifts bestowed by the Lord, Vinobaji said:

"We see these *shindi* trees all around us. These are God-given gifts, but we have abused them. The land which we could utilize for grain, is under sugar-cane cultivation, and the trees which could supply us *gur*, are misused for *shindi* drink, thus killing both soul and body."

He gave also other illustrations of how we abused God's gifts or made no use of them. For instance, growing tobacco for the greed of money was abuse of land: not growing any cotton at all, but rearing all sugar-cane instead, fell in the same category. Not making use of night-soil was an instance of wasting wealth. He wanted the people to understand that all these could be utilized for human welfare and should not therefore be abused. *Sarvodaya* was not possible unless they worked for it. If they asked for it without making any effort, God would simply be laughing at them. For certainly He did not create them to make them unhappy; but if they quarrelled among themselves, He could not help them. Gandhiji used to take the name of *Ishwara* (God). With *Ishwara* he associated the name of Allah also. Both are synonymous. But the Hindus resented this. That is how men quarrelled among themselves, in the name of God Himself. No *Sarvodaya* could come under such circumstances. They must all feel like children of the same father and love one another.

In India, Vinoba said, people complained of the growth of population. But if they could only properly utilize the gifts bestowed upon them by the Lord, India had sufficient resources even in the present, for a peaceful and prosperous life. Instead of emphasizing self-restraint, people calculated in terms of the number of children. Without self-restraint mutual affection was an impossibility. That child alone is legitimate (*धर्मसंतति*) which is the result of self-restraint. Such a child would be a devotee of the Lord. It would not be a burden to mother earth, for it was not the number that was burdensome to her, but the evils of men. "Let us conquer our passions. Let us learn to make the best of the God-given gifts. Let us cultivate affection for each other. Let us remember Him in happiness as well as in sorrows, and last but not the least, let us join every action of ours with Him. It is only then that *Sarvodaya* will bear fruit; and nothing but *Sarvodaya* will bear fruit."

Discussions

After prayer, Congress workers sought clarification of their doubts in their day-to-day work. Nizamabad was self-sufficient in food. Due to the canals from the Nizamnagar, it had been turned from dry land into a wet one. The paddy farms presented a delightful sight. It was all

green right up to the horizon. The production had increased immensely. But in Medak (the district we entered that day), as in other places of water scarcity, the food problem had to be faced. There were a few tanks but they had their limitations. Ration shops were very few, and the workers had also complaints against the Government staff. The hailstorm also had aggravated the situation. Both the crops had failed. And levy and revenue had got to be paid. "Should we not resist oppression in Swaraj?" one of them asked. "You should," came the reply. "But who can do it? He alone is qualified to offer resistance, who is engaged in the service of the people. Congressmen are more busy with their elections than with service. Whatever service they render is not without some ulterior motive. The Christian missionaries serve the depressed classes, but in their heart of hearts they hope to be able to convert at least a few some day or another. Their service also is not uninterested. Congressmen do not accept co-operation if it comes from the Socialists, because it would add to the prestige of the latter, and may ultimately affect the elections. This is said to have happened in Bihar, at the time of the Gandhi Memorial Fund. So, people have to be convinced about our bonafides. They must feel that nothing but service is our motive. Such Congress workers are very few. People are addicted to the drink evil. Have Congressmen persuaded even five persons to give up drink? Christian missionaries have flourished in this area. Why could they not find any footing in Marathwada? They could not, because people here are backward and neglected. Institutions, such as the Charkha Sangh, the Harijan Sevak Sangh and the Talimi Sangh have flourished under Gandhiji's guidance. How many Congressmen take interest in these institutions? They think that it is not their work, but of other people."

Q.: Is not the Parliamentary programme equally essential for the country? Won't you call it service, if Congressmen contribute their energy in that field?

Vinoba: That means you want to do parliamentary work. That is exactly what I said. You have then no reason to complain if the people and the Government both look upon you with an eye of suspicion. Don't you yourself doubt the bonafides of others when they enter that field?

Q.: What should then be done with the Congress organization?

Vinoba: It should engage itself in the work of service. Are not the soldiers employed on farms, when there is no possibility of immediate war? And what real work have Congressmen to do at present? Enrolment of members, who could pay one rupee towards membership, maintaining registers, organizing elections, and carrying on correspondence? Was that all? And look to their way of work under the clause of effective membership, hundreds of defective members were also enrolled. Is there any place left for the poor in the Congress after the assumption of power by it? And what a sharp practice in enrolling, and in distributing membership forms and delaying the distribution. Is it all service?

Q.: What then must we do, Vinobaji? You must tell us. Shall we leave the Congress? This thought at times dominates our mind.

Vinoba: Do not leave the Congress. It is a great organization with a bright past. Its defect is that its members have no programme before them. Let them accept a programme and engage themselves in it without delay. The Government of Madras and Bombay have introduced Prohibition. Why should not Congressmen take up that programme and make it a success? It is understandable that the circulars coming from the head-office to the subordinate committees make no mention of any constructive programme. How is it possible to maintain its prestige without service? You have been exploiting old prestige but that won't help you long.

The workers listened with rapt attention. Nobody had spoken to them so candidly.

Some of the workers had come under Marxian influence and they also wanted their doubts on that subject to be cleared.

Q.: If a Marxist takes to violence, does he err?

Vinoba: Marx would not do that if he were in India. He was an intelligent man. When you have your own Government, a lot of energy will have to be diverted to controlling the violent and unsocial elements in the country. That will leave no time for service. And the Marxists who want to serve will get no opportunity to do so. Owing to lack of service and due to their violent activities, not only will they not succeed in the elections, they may not even get a chance to contest the elections. And for power you have got to contest and win the elections. Is it not?

Q.: Do you think that the Communist movement can be brought under control by the present policy of the Government? The Government has been trying for the last five years to bring the Communist situation under control; but neither the Communist propaganda nor the repression has decreased.

Vinoba: But it is not only the Communists that are involved in these activities. Dacoits and *goondas* have also filtered in. The people are increasingly annoyed with this latter element. And with the people annoyed and exasperated by dacoities, the Communists are finished. When Communists and dacoits follow the same programme of loot and arson, the awe of the dacoits will increase, and that of the Communists will decrease, and one fine morning the Communists will find themselves totally eliminated.

Q.: The present situation is like this: The landlord harasses the tenant. For years a case drags on in courts. The tenant cannot compete with the landlord. So, in order to free himself from the tyranny of the tenant, he takes shelter with the Communists. What is to be done under such circumstances?

Vinoba: Another and right path must be shown, namely, the path of constant service, and Satyagraha when necessary. But you must remember that a Satyagrahi before wielding the weapon makes every one fearless about him. Gandhiji could inspire all because every one had that confidence in him. He who has such clear vision can alone wield that weapon.

At night before going to sleep I saw that a batch of armed constables was posted at the gate of our residence. They had come under instructions from the D.S.P. I requested him to remove the guard at once. The D.S.P. felt embarrassed by our refusal to accept their protection, but removed the guard at my request. I could not consult Vinobaji as he was asleep but I knew that he who had completely surrendered himself to the Lord, needed no protection; for, to him every being was but the Lord incarnate.

D. M.

Shivarampalli Report

The Hindi Report of the Proceedings of the Sarvodaya Sammelan at Shivarampalli is now available from the Secretary, Sarva-Seva Sangh, Sevagram, for Re 1. It has also been published in the May number of the Hindi *Sarvodaya*.

Wardha, 5-6 '51

K. G. M.

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PANNAI ASHRAM

Although the cultivator is the basic producer of wealth, especially of the kind most of us need,—raw materials for food, clothing and shelter,—yet we know he is always poor and neglected. What is this phenomenon due to? Who robs him of his due? Or is he inefficient? Or is it the fault of the land? These and other questions have been answered times without number in innumerable ways. But they have mostly been dealt with by academicians. We need to tackle the problem directly by living on the land and by eliminating extraneous disturbing factors so as to be sure of the purity of the details sought.

For this purpose the Pannai Ashram has been formed by the Akhil Bharat Sarva-Seva Sangh. It was inaugurated by Acharya J. B. Kripalani on the 18th May, 1951, at Seldoh. It will work under my direction. "Pannai" is from Tamil, and means "farming".

Seldoh, the village where the Ashram is located, is an ordinary small village with a population of about 700 persons. It is 28 miles from Nagpur and 20 miles from Wardha. It is the last village in Wardha district on the Wardha-Nagpur Road. The nearest railway station, Sindi on the G. I. P. Railway, is about 4 miles away. It is served with a weekly mail from the Sindi post office. It has an elementary school run by the Janapad Sabha. There are about 60 children on the register.

The village has about 2,000 acres under cultivation. Being at the foot of the Satpuda Range there is an ample supply of water and plenty of vegetation. The land is naturally undulating.

With all this the village is poor and dilapidated, though it lays proud claims to close associations with Raja Raghuji Bhonsle in whose time it seems to have enjoyed its heydays.

The population depends mainly on agriculture, all the occupations having died out in course of time. There are still about 40 houses of *telis* but there are no *ghanis* working. There is a sprinkling of Gond families.

The main crops are *juvar* and cotton. The latter being a money crop.

The cattle are also in an equally pitiable condition.

Within a five-mile radius there are about four more villages much in the same condition.

The Ashram proposes to take up balanced cultivation as its central activity along with the usual agro-industries to support its members. Its life will be dovetailed into that of the village and it will seek their full co-operation in rural reconstruction work. There is need for a *Bal Mandir*, a Basic School, a Dispensary and an organization for the rural welfare work. The villagers are willing to render their share of help in all these activities.

The Ashram will consist of (1) members, (2) associates and (3) companions.

1. The members will be whole-time workers carrying out any duties assigned to them.

They will get the materials needed for a balanced diet, (they may have their own cooking), raw cotton needed for their clothing and house accommodation. They will be given a small cash allowance. Their children will attend the Basic School. They will partake in all Ashram activities.

2. Associates will be such of the villagers who wish to take part in our programme other than the one connected with our cultivation. They will be part-time honorary workers.

3. Companions will be those who come to us from outside the village to share our life for a period of two years or more to observe and study our programme by actively taking full share in it during the period of their stay. They will be given their balanced diet, cotton for their clothing and shelter but no money allowance. In effect, they will function as temporary members.

It is hoped that the Ashram will get into full swing after the monsoon. In the meanwhile those who are interested in this new experiment and would like to join it are invited to get into touch with the writer at Maganvadi, Wardha.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

REPEATED VACCINATIONS AND INOCULATIONS

I protest against the decision on January 17 of the Bombay Municipal Standing Committee on the suggestion of the Health Officer to revaccinate every three years Municipal school children for small-pox and inoculate them for typhoid fever every year. It is a great pity that no member of the Bombay Municipal Standing Committee had the knowledge or the courage to ask the Health Officer how it is that millions of British children who have never been vaccinated at all during the last forty years are free from small-pox. It is said that permission of the children's parents will be taken. But the story will be different in practice. When persuasion fails, pressure will surely be exercised on the poor ignorant parents of Municipal school children. But the very idea of repeated vaccination is outrageous. The health of children cannot be guarded by injection of poisonous vaccine. The proper thing is to feed the poor children well and educate them on clean living from Mahatma Gandhi's excellent book *Key to Health* and *Guide to Health*.^{*} Cleanliness alone has abolished plague, small-pox, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, cholera, diphtheria in England and U.S.A. One often reads in letters, in newspapers from indignant correspondents who bitterly complain that streets in which they live in Bombay are extremely filthy and unclean. Measures should therefore be taken by the Health Officer and Health Minister to clean these filthy and unclean streets instead of resorting to vaccination and inoculation. Mexico, Italy, Japan and

^{*} *Guide to Health*, the older book, was withdrawn from circulation long ago. It was replaced by the later *Key to Health*, which is the last book written by Gandhiji. Published by the Navajivan Press; price 12 As. with postage.

Portugal which are poverty-stricken and insanitary countries and in which vaccination and revaccination are compulsory every three years suffer from frequent terrible epidemics of smallpox. I, therefore, request the Congress party in the Bombay Municipal Corporation not to approve the Health Officer's plan to revaccinate Municipal school children every three years when the matter comes up before the Corporation.

SORABJI R. MISTRI

(Note: I am in agreement with the writer's view against vaccination. But unless the affected people are prepared to put in their effort, no reform is possible. It is not difficult to resist vaccination if the parents of the children do not want it. But if they are willing to submit, who can help them? What is necessary for Anti-Vaccination Associations etc. is to educate public opinion, to make parents write to the authorities that they do not wish to have their children vaccinated or inoculated, and to take steps against officers, if their written notice is ignored. The Associations must also organize at the same time movements for proper removal of filth and dirt from homes, streets etc. The nation cannot escape the punishment of epidemics or in the alternative a milder, injurious and less effective punishment of vaccination, and inoculation, if it does not lead a clean sanitary life, and is not able to take a nourishing balanced diet. It must be realized that no government, no Municipality can maintain ideal cleanliness and sanitary conditions, unless the people co-operate with them in the work. This we do not. Hence the authorities are constrained to adopt the crude and swift measures of vaccination, inoculation etc.

Wardha, 30-1-'51

K. G. M.)

THE USES OF MANGO KERNEL

Inquiries have been made about the manner in which mango kernel may be used for food and other purposes. Shrimati Lilavati Munshi has sent me a fairly exhaustive report prepared by the Division of Chemistry of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi, dealing with the subject. Further investigations are in progress at the Mysore Technological Research Institute also. I regret want of space prevents me from giving Shrimati Munshi's note an early publication, and delayed publication might not be of use during this season. I hope Shrimati Munshi will see to it that it is made available to the public through other channels. In the meanwhile it may be sufficient for the ordinary citizen to know that

(i) It is not suggested that people should take to eating mango kernel to the exclusion of other cereals. It is not a substitute for cereals, but when the latter are not available in sufficient quantity, the diet can be supplemented by mango kernel.

(ii) The easiest way of using it appears to be to beat the kernel into small grains and boil it with rice or grind it to flour and mix it with other flour for preparing *chapattis* etc. Raw kernel has a somewhat astringent taste, and may not be relished by or agree with sensitive people. But if the kernel is beaten into small grains and washed with water and slightly boiled and a part of the water is removed, the astringent taste and the tannin materials would be removed and the difficulty of tolerating it would disappear.

A more perfect way is "to soak the whole kernel overnight in water and then to grind it to a paste, which is to be washed until the astringent taste is removed. The washed material is finally dried and used as flour." (Shrimati Munshi's note). This would be very nearly making it into *maida* (white flour), and could be used in the same way as other *maida*.

(iii) Mango kernel contains more fat, and calcium, phosphate and other minerals, and has a higher calorific value than other cereals. Some of these will be lost in washings; but if it is used in the raw state, it would be a good corrective to deficiencies in the normal diet. Indeed, it is believed that the evil effects of mango pulp are removed by the kernel.

The conclusion I arrive at is that it may be safely used along with other cereals to supplement the latter. Even as it is, however large its heaps might appear during the season, it is surely not enough for being used as a cereal by itself for a long period.

(iv) As an animal feed, it takes two or three weeks before cattle begin to relish it, but their effect on their health is reported to be satisfactory. "During the observation period of three months the animals gained an average of 33 lb. in weight and also developed a healthy appearance and fine condition." (ibid).

If normal cereals are available in sufficient quantities, mango kernel would be better employed for preparing starch, oils and for commercial and medicinal purposes. In any case, it is an article of value, and must not be thrown away. It is capable of becoming the raw material for a small seasonal 'cottage' industry both in towns and villages.

Wardha, 5-6-'51

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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