

HARIJAN

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

HINDU PANI AND MUSLIM PANI

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A stranger travelling in Indian trains may well have a painful shock when he hears at railway stations for the first time in his life ridiculous sounds about *pani*, tea and the like being either Hindu or Muslim. It would be repulsive now that the Government at the Centre is wholly national and a well-known Indian in the person of Asaf Ali Saheb is in charge of Transport and Railways. It is to be hoped that we shall soon have the last of the shame that is peculiarly Indian. Let no one imagine that Railways being under a Muslim, Hindus may not get justice. In the Central and Provincial Governments, there is or should be no Hindu, Muslim or any other communal distinctions. All are Indians. Religion is a personal matter. Moreover, the members of the Cabinet have set up a wholesome convention that they should always meet at the end of the day's work and take stock of what each member has done. It is team work in which the members are jointly and severally responsible for one another's work. It is not open to any member to say that a particular thing is not his work because it is no part of his portfolio. We have a right therefore to assume that this unholy practice of having separate everything for every community at railway stations will go. Scrupulous cleanliness is a desideratum for all. If taps are used for all liquids there need be no compunction felt by the most orthodox about helping themselves. A fastidious person may keep his own *lota* and cup and receive his milk, tea, coffee or water through a tap. In this there is no interference with religion. No one is compelled to buy anything at railway stations. As a matter of fact many orthodox persons fast for water and food during travel. Thanks we still breathe the same air, walk on the same mother earth.

All communal cries at least at railway stations should be unlawful.

As I have often said in these columns trains and steamers are the best media for the practical education of the millions of travellers in spotless cleanliness, hygiene, sanitation and camaraderie between the different communities of India. Let us hope that the Cabinet will have the courage to act up to their convictions and may confidently expect the hearty co-operation of the Railway staff and the public in making this much needed reform a thorough success.

New Delhi, 12-10-'46

DR. LOHIA AGAIN

(By M. K. Gandhi)

Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's letter to the Chief Judge of the Goa High Court deserves more than passing attention. I copy it below from the daily press :

"At the time of my arrest, I had not, so far as I know, violated any Goan law. I may have been intent on doing so but that is irrelevant. The police officer at Collem walked into my compartment, asked me no questions and put me straightaway under arrest. International law, as it stands today, probably empowers the Portuguese Government to arrest and deport anyone whom they consider an undesirable alien but they are surely not empowered to hold him in prison unless he has actually violated some law. The Portuguese Government have in the past declared me as alien and taken up their stand on a provision in International Law with regard to me. They owe me an apology and damages for illegal imprisonment or else they must give up their attempt to apply International Law as between Goa and the rest of Hindustan. Furthermore, between September 29 and October 2, they kept me in a cell, which has probably as much ventilation as just keeps a man alive. They owe me an added apology and damages for this kind of treatment.

"I continue to be held in solitary confinement, although under better conditions and I am not taken out of my cell except for bath and I am held incommunicable. These add to the illegality of my imprisonment."

Let no one laugh at Dr. Lohia's presumption in asking for damages. If he had power behind him, the Goan authorities would quickly apologize and offer to pay damages. It is not an unusual thing for big powers to ask for damages and obtain them for injury or insult done even to insignificant subjects. Dr. Lohia is not a little man. Well, India has a National Government. I am sure they are as sensitive as any can be. I should not be surprised if they have lodged their protest and asked the Goa Government to mend their manners. Anyway, let the force of public opinion be behind the National Government and the injured Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia. The injury done to him is injury done to our countrymen in Goa and through them to the whole of India.

New Delhi, 13-10-'46

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY OF INDIA

The following points worthy of serious consideration, most of which have not already been printed in these columns, are taken from Mr. Pepperall's report last year on the dairy industry of India.

The vastness of the problem will be evident from the following figures :

Number of producers of milk in both village and urban areas is 210 and 1.8 lakhs respectively.

Milch cattle in India are one third of the world total (219 million).

Similarly, the consumer population is 400 million.

Mr. Pepperall recognizes at the outset that the question of the cow must be looked at from the point of view of village India. The requirements for India are different from Europe inasmuch as, for example, the cow must continue to be a dual purpose animal.

I. In the matter of *milk production* his conclusions are :

(a) the buffalo must be considered complementary to and not as a substitute for the cow upon whom falls the double duty of producing males for draught work as well as milk,

(b) the increase of milk must come from the better management of indigenous stock rather than by importing foreign bulls. Cross breeding with the latter has not been justified by experience. Dr. Pepperall commends the results achieved at Sevagram with the Gaolao breed. He also recommends more use of bulls bred in Government farms. Bulls must be of selected breeds and placed under competent control as far as care and use of them are concerned,

(c) on the assumption that existing village conditions will prevail with minor modifications for at least the next decade and bullocks will be required for irrigation, agriculture, transport purposes etc., the cow must continue to be a dual purpose animal.

II. Great stress is laid on *proper feeding*. Dr. Pepperall says: "Accepted standards of animal nutrition would place the bulk of India's dairy cattle in the category of acute malnutrition."

(a) The proper feeding of cattle is a science in which villagers should be educated.

(b) *Berssem* possesses great advantages over *Lucerne* grass and enough attention has not been paid to its potentialities.

(c) Fodder grown on pasture land should be cut rather than allow daily peregrination of cattle over a comparatively small area which involves much waste. When green fodder is available, oil cake, cotton seeds and other concentrates should be used sparingly.

(d) Concentrates may not be sold and a ban on export of all such needs rigid enforcement.

III. Animal management is not given due attention.

(a) "Whilst the position of actual milking animals is rarely satisfactory, the situation of dry stock is one of absolute neglect." The remedy lies in increase of grazing areas and the ban on export of cattle food. Economic means will, however, have to be found to enable owners of cattle to buy the additional food supply. Much loss of milk accrues

by the practice of preventing animals from getting in calf for a long period.

(b) Mr. Pepperall refutes the Indian claim from experience in other countries that calves cannot be weaned within a day or two after birth. As other suitable foods are available for calf-rearing, endeavours should be made to encourage the practice of early weaning.

(c) The producer of milk must get a satisfactory price for his produce. At the moment there are the widest fluctuations in price varying from Rs. 10 to Rs. 30 per maund. This must be remedied in order to inspire general confidence.

IV. *Methods of production* imply clean, airy sheds with impervious floors combined with hygienic methods of drawing, storing and handling milk. Mr. Pepperall was rightly appalled at "the squalor, filth, ignorance and indifference towards hygienic principles and revolting personal habits, allied to official apathy". Apart from no proper housing, the animals have no pure water supply provided for them. Their surroundings are horribly insanitary; the milk is brought to market in open galvanized cans; the milk market is crowded with people chewing betel nut, smoking, chewing and spitting. Milk is tested by the prospective buyer dipping his hand in it to judge the amount of fat (or added water). This applies to many large cities which were visited by Mr. Pepperall as also villages. There is no understanding of the fact that milk is a highly valuable food, subject to easy contamination. It is just as any other merchandise. Small wonder then that an official report on a test of milk in Bombay shows a bacteria count of 36 millions per c. c. These pages of the report make sad reading.

V. *Adulteration* needs no comment. It is a universal evil and needs drastic remedies. It goes hand in hand with corruption. Adulteration also bans 'pasteurization' which would enable milk to be transported some distance without injury. Since milk cannot be kept more than 5 to 6 hours in its raw state, it has to be disposed of with the minimum of delay. Suitable areas within transportable distance from cities should be explored for milk production on a large scale and a special rail service may be provided.

VI. With the exception of military dairy farms and some concerns such as that of Dayalbag and probably a few private-owned ones, dairies do not really exist in India. They should come into being. All the simpler items of equipment can easily be produced in the country.

Mr. Pepperall condemns the expansion of the military dairy farms at the expense of civilian supplies. Their activities should be fitted into a general food policy for the country.

VII. He considers that *manufacture of milk* products such as evaporated and powdered milk should be undertaken in remote rural areas. "Large irrigation projects in the Punjab and Sind Provinces represent the best location for manufacture because of the intensive cultivation and density of milk production which would result." He is wholly against the export of cattle from the Punjab. He

advocates the stimulation of manufacture of ghee in villages as a village industry and holds it wrong to deliver milk to distant centres for manufacture and thereby deprive the rural population of valuable by-products and further lower their nutritional standards. Mr. Pepperall does not, however, advocate the manufacture of butter in India as the milk thus utilized is required for liquid consumption. Cheese and butter should be imported from Australia and New Zealand.

VIII. Mr. Pepperall is in favour of *Standardization of milk* but only by responsible organizations.

IX. He advocates *cheap milk schemes* and would place the question of cost as secondary when the health and well-being of the population is a consideration. "The present cattle population, if properly fed, should be capable of providing the whole community with a daily supply of milk on the basis of 1 lb. for each nursing mother and child and 8 oz. for adults."

X. Regarding *price of milk* no uniformity exists. It is worthy of note that the retail price of milk in Bombay and Calcutta is exactly double that of England. He recommends a fixed price for the producer which need not necessarily be high, so long as it is assured and the lowest price that can be arranged for consumers.

XI. In the matter of *subsidies*, Mr. Pepperall suggests financial assistance on a large scale but in the shape of loans.

XII. Finally he stands for *research* which has been sadly neglected in India. In this sphere he would give priority to "immediate investigation into the causes of and a search for a remedy for the loss of stamina of cattle maintained in wet areas" as also to scientific study in the matter of "manufacture from some indigenous raw material of a suitable and cheap milk container to replace the imported bottle".

The result of Mr. Pepperall's investigations reveal :

- (a) stock in a state of semi-starvation,
- (b) animal management very poor,
- (c) milk production steadily decreasing,
- (d) producers mostly illiterate, indebted and poverty-stricken,
- (e) price of milk the highest in the world,
- (f) average income amongst the lowest in the world,
- (g) widespread adulteration of milk,
- (h) total ignorance of sanitation and complete indifference to hygienic standards,
- (i) corruption and a low standard of integrity, generally speaking,
- (j) apathy of the general public,
- (k) serious neglect of their duties by the public bodies, and
- (l) dairy equipment almost non-existent.

The definite and urgent need for a milk policy has been clearly demonstrated. It is up to the Governments, both Central and Provincial, to take up the matter at once if the health of the population and the cattle wealth of an agricultural country are not further to deteriorate.

New Delhi 4-10-'46

A. K.

HOW TO MAKE THE WHEEL GO

Certain things catch the fancy of the public from time to time and become the rage. This is as applicable to the spinning wheel as to many other things. It has been sold by the lakh. But where are these *charkhas* today? Why are they not plying? That is the question we have to ask ourselves. How to make the *charkha* go is the problem. It will be a good plan to examine the main causes of why spinning has not become universal and examine the remedies for removing the apathy.

1. The *charkhas* that are for sale are not always in good working order.
2. When they go wrong there is no one to put them right.
3. After selling the *charkha* the seller loses all contact with the buyer.
4. Good slivers are not available.
5. There is no arrangement for weaving of yarn given in.

The above defects naturally damp the enthusiasm of the spinners. How can they be remedied?

1. Every sales depot should be able either to put right any defect in a spinner's *charkha* or replace it with a new one. Charges should be maintained at a minimum. At the same time every spinner should be enabled to acquire the knowledge of putting his own spinning wheel in order.
2. The *bhandar* should register in its books the name and address of every buyer.
3. A printed leaflet of instructions as to how and where to remedy defects should accompany every wheel sold.
4. Reduction in price should be made if there is any defect discovered in the *charkha* sold. Such repairs should be done without charge. Often it would be wise to give a new *charkha* for a damaged one brought to a *bhandar*.
5. *Tunai* should be taught. The sale of ready-made slivers should be stopped. Instead, cotton with the seed should be sold.

6. So long as a loom does not ply in every home the *bhandar* must be able to arrange for weaving yarn brought to it.

The upshot of it all is that *Khadi Bhandars* must give up being sales depots and instead become workshops having true servants of the nation.

KANU GANDHI

[Shri Kanu Gandhi's note is worth study. It should be borne in mind that the *charkha* is not like either the small or large machines of the West. There crores of watches are produced in a few special places. They are sold all over the world. The same tale applies to the sewing machine. These things are symbols of one civilization. The *charkha* represents the opposite. We do not want to universalize the *charkha* through mass production in one place. Our ideal is to make the *charkha* and all its accessories in the locality where the spinners live. Therein lies the value of the spinning wheel. Anything that goes wrong with it should be put right on the spot and the spinners should be taught how

to do so. To teach them is the duty of the Charkha Sangh. Unless we proceed in this manner Khadi will not be able to replace mill cloth. M. K. G.]
New Delhi, 12-10-'46

(From the original in *Hindustani*)

HARIJAN

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1946

REAL INDIA

(By M. K. Gandhi)

If my frequent wanderings throughout India of the villages have not deceived me, it can be confidently asserted that the 700,000 villages get and want no police protection. The solitary Patel to a village is a terrorist lording it over the villages and is designed for helping the petty revenue collector to collect revenue due to the *Ma-Bap*. I am not aware of the policeman having aided the villagers in protecting their goods or cattle against depredations of man and beast. The Police Patel is not to be blamed for what he is. He has been chosen for his task which he does well. He has not been taught to regard himself as the servant of the people. He represents his master the Viceroy. The change at the top has not yet permeated the most distant village. How can it? It has not come from the bottom. The Viceroy still retains legal and military powers to remove and even to imprison his ministers. The latter have no power, legal or other, to imprison the Viceroy. Even the Civil Service is still under his control. It is not suggested that the Viceroy does not mean to shed all power nor that he does not wish the most distant village to realize that he is determined under instructions from Whitehall to shed every vestige of British control in the quickest time possible.

The relevance of all this writing is for showing that we do not yet learn from the village in which India lives that every Indian, man or woman, is his or her own policeman. This he or she can only do when neither harbours mischief against his or her neighbour, no matter what religion he professes or denies. If unfortunately the politically minded will not or cannot go as far as suggested here, he must at least shed all fear and resolutely deny himself all protection whether from the military or the police. I am positive that India will not come into her own unless every home becomes its own castle not in the sense of the ages known as dark but in the very ancient true sense that everyone has learnt the art of dying without ill will, or even wishing that since he cannot someone else will do away with the would-be assassin. How nice, therefore it would be if every one of us had this lesson burnt into us. There is much proof in support of the lesson, if we will take the trouble to examine the proof.

New Delhi, 12-10-'46

FIFTH FREEDOM

To four freedoms, promulgated by President Roosevelt during the World War II, the Rt. Hon'ble J. H. Hofmeyer, in his address as the Chancellor at the Graduation Ceremony of the University of Witwatersrand added a fifth, viz., freedom from racial and colour prejudice. Said the Rt. Hon'ble Hofmeyer:

"It is a mockery for us to talk of ourselves as a free people, to acclaim ourselves as the inheritors of a tradition of freedom, while we are as a nation to so large an extent the slaves of prejudice, while we allow our sense of dislike of the colour of some of our fellow South Africans to stand in the way of dealing fairly with them, while we let ourselves become the victims of the anti-Semitic doctrines which were a most important part of the Nazi ideology that we have fought to destroy. By way of illustration of what prejudice means in South Africa, I cannot do better than refer to the growing tendency to describe as a Communist — and therefore one who should be condemned by bell, book and candle — anyone who asks for fair play for all races, or who suggests that non-Europeans really should be treated as the equals of Europeans before the law.

"The plain truth, whether we like it or not, is that the dominant mentality of South Africa is a *Herrenvolk* mentality — the essential feature of our race problems is to be found in that fact. The true solution of those problems must be sought in the changing of that mentality. Ten years ago it was announced with a great flourish of trumpets that we had found a solution of our native problem — but there was no change of our *Herrenvolk* mentality. I said then, in an address delivered at this University, that it was futile to make such a claim. Today there are few people who would not agree that I was right. At this time when we are dealing with the Indian problem, though we may be able to settle certain aspects of it, it would be just as futile to claim that we can solve it, while in relation to it also that mentality continues to prevail to so great an extent as is obviously the case today.

"Freedom from prejudice — that is not the least of the freedom for which we must fight. We are paying a heavy price for our sub-servience to it today. *Part of that price is material — undoubtedly we are the poorer as a nation because of our unwillingness to make full use of all our human resources. Part of it is being paid in the form of loss of international esteem and goodwill. We cannot hide our prejudices away in a cupboard from inspection by others.* More and more the searchlight of the nations is being directed at us. More and more South Africa is suffering because its policies and dominant attitudes of mind do not measure up to what are coming to be accepted internationally as standards of values. But our chief loss is moral loss.

"As long as we continue to apply a dual standard in South Africa, to determine our attitude towards, and our relationships with, European and non-European on different ethical bases, to assign to Christian doctrine a significance which varies

with the colour of men's skins, we shall suffer as a nation from what Plato would have called the lie in the soul—and the curse of the Iscariot may yet be our fate for our betrayal of the Christian doctrine which we profess!"

He ended with the exhortation: "May you be prepared to say with Thomas Jefferson: 'I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man'."

One only hopes these sentiments will not be forgotten by the speaker and his Chief General Smuts when the case of Indians in South Africa comes up before the U. N. O.

New Delhi, 13-10-'46

PYARELAL

WEEKLY LETTER

STATE OWNERSHIP V. CONTROL

The annual meeting of the A. I. S. A. which was held on the 8th, 9th and 10th inst. at Harijan Colony, Kingsway, brought home the fact that with the advent of the National Government several things that were so far regarded from a theoretical plane have entered the realm of practical possibility. About 80 members participated in the proceedings. One of the questions discussed was about the exclusion of mill cloth from certain areas and laying an embargo on the erection of new textile mills in order that mill cloth should not compete with and kill Khadi. Gandhiji had suggested that in certain areas where the people are prepared to try out the experiment of self-sufficiency in cloth, the Government should prohibit the entry of mill cloth. He had also advised the Provincial Governments that if they were serious about making Khadi universal, they should not erect new textile mills nor permit them to be erected. They could not spend crores on new mills and yet expect the villagers to take their Khadi schemes seriously. The villager was a shrewd person. He would at once begin to suspect their *bona fides*, if they talked to him of self-sufficiency in cloth and at the same time allowed new textile mills in their province.

A member suggested that the A. I. S. A. might pass a resolution requesting the Government to nationalize all new textile mills and the existing ones also as soon as practicable. Gandhiji demurring to the suggestion explained that they could not ask the Government to nationalize new textile mills when they were telling them that Khadi and the erection of new mills could not go together. Shri T. Prakasam the Premier of Madras had already made an announcement to the effect that no new textile mills would be erected in the Madras Presidency. They might ask for the nationalization of the existing mills but he himself preferred putting them under strict State control to taking charge of and running them as a State concern. As a believer in non-violence he believed in trusteeship. He wanted a peaceful conversion of mill owners, so that the mill owners and their employees would all come under social control voluntarily. That meant that though, for instance, X might continue to be the legal owner, he would only take such commission out of the profits for himself as was

warranted by his services and sanctioned by the people. The real owners would be the labourers in the mills. In one of the Tata concerns the labourers were reported to have become profit-sharers. Shri J. R. D. Tata's speech in that connection was worthy of perusal. He (Gandhiji) considered such solution to be the best. Several mill-owners had assured him that they were ready to co-operate in any such scheme, if required, and would prevent further expansion of their textile mills. He deprecated the idea of joint control of the mill industry by the Government, the A. I. S. A. and the mill owners. "Our job is not to run mills but to ply the little wheel by the hand. Why should we spend time in discussing a thing which lies outside our sphere of action. I would not shed a single tear if all the mills were to close. If mills flourish, Khadi must die. It might still function as a supplementary occupation for the relief of the poor. But for that you do not need a big organization like the Charkha Sangh." He would, he concluded, be perfectly satisfied if the State exercised control over the textile mills in consultation with them and so far as possible according to their advice.

QUESTION OF SUBSIDY

The question of giving subsidy to Khadi also came up for discussion. The weaving of hand-spun yarn is becoming more and more difficult. The handloom weavers prefer to weave mill yarn. The weaving charges are so high as to render even self-sufficiency Khadi too expensive. "Would it not be advisable," asked Shri Jajaji, "to ask the Government to give those who spin for themselves a subsidy so as to reduce the charges of weaving for self-spinners?" Gandhiji's reply was that they should not ask for subsidy but ask the Government to help in supplying cotton, the necessary implements and the services of teachers and technical experts to those who would take to spinning for their own cloth requirements. He did not want to have it said that the Charkha Sangh was cashing its influence to make the Government squander money on the whims of cranks and faddists. He wanted no favour for the Charkha Sangh which must stand or fall on its merits. He wanted everybody to feel that nothing had been given, at the instance of the Charkha Sangh, which had not been paid back tenfold.

NO COMPULSION

Another member suggested that the weavers should be required to weave a certain amount of hand-spun yarn and unless they did that the quota of mill yarn should not be given to them. Any kind of compulsion, replied Gandhiji, would only create a revulsion against Khadi. It would then cease to be 'the livery of freedom'. "The spirit of independence is in the air. The weaver might well refuse to be compelled."

"There is control in everything—food, cloth, etc.," argued Jajaji. Why cannot joint control be introduced with regard to weavers?"

"I do not like the idea," replied Gandhiji. "We do not use compulsion with regard to spinners,

We cannot use it for weavers. Let us go to the root of the difficulty. Our initial mistake was that we took to spinning, but neglected weaving. If we had adopted universal weaving along with spinning, all these difficulties would not have arisen. The remedy is to improve the yarn so that the weavers have as little difficulty in weaving as possible. We should reason with the weavers and explain to them that dependence on mill yarn must kill their avocation in the end. Mill owners are no philanthropists. They would draw the noose tight round the handloom weaver's neck the moment they come within effective range of competition with mill cloth.

"If we have faith in the *charkha*, we must forge ahead undismayed by these temporary bottlenecks. The number of handlooms weaving hand-spun will increase in due course. We have got enough artisans and indigenous skill in our country to produce all the cloth that we require for ourselves."

SNAIL'S PACE?

Jajuji: "This means that the work must go on as before at snail's pace. Our scheme of making 4 lakhs of people self-sufficient in cloth in a short time in this way will not succeed."

Gandhiji: "If it does not, the fault will be ours."

Jajuji: "That is right in the ultimate sense. But circumstances also count."

Gandhiji: "It is man's privilege to overcome adverse circumstances. Is not conquest of nature the slogan of the age we are living in? If circumstances alone had counted, Germany and Japan would have won the war. Let us in this respect take a leaf out of the book of the English people who do not know what it is to admit defeat. We have to cultivate austerity and penance in our life. There is nothing that the power of penance cannot achieve."

UNCERTIFIED KHADI V. MILL CLOTH

"You have taught us to be straight and above board in everything," asked another member. "Is it not dishonest to wear uncertified Khadi and be known as a Khadiwala when one does not fulfil the conditions of wearing Khadi? Is it not better to be honest and use mill cloth instead?"

Gandhiji replied that he did not approve of uncertified Khadi, but he was of opinion that Khadi, so long as it was genuine stuff, was preferable to mill cloth. All uncertified Khadi was not dishonest. For instance, people who spin for themselves or their family and have their yarn woven do not use certified Khadi. Yet such Khadi is of the highest merit. Certified Khadi carries the guarantee that the rules of the A. I. S. A. have been observed, as for instance paying to the spinners a certain minimum wage. Khadi, even when the spinners were not paid the standard A. I. S. A. wage, was preferable to mill cloth. The higher wages paid to labourers in the spinning mills were more apparent than real. Mill cloth was $2\frac{1}{2}$ times cheaper than Khadi today. Experts had told him that if the mill industry did not receive special privileges and concessions in several ways, which it today enjoyed,

mill cloth would not sell cheaper than Khadi. For instance, we provide cheap transport facilities to the mills to enable raw materials and mass produced finished goods to be taken from one place to another. Again, enormous sums have been spent on growing long-staple cotton or on starting technical institutes and on research work. No one had bothered to do anything for any of the seven lakhs of India's villages. So the mills were today actually being subsidized in some shape or other. "Remove all that and then see whether mill cloth is cheaper than Khadi."

He could not possibly encourage uncertified Khadi, continued Gandhiji, but mill cloth should be absolutely taboo. "A day might come when the A. I. S. A. might stop issuing certificates. Anybody would then be free to sell Khadi. That would be inevitable when Khadi becomes universal. The Charkha Sangh will then function as the custodian of the ethics and the general policy of Khadi. Its business activities will cease. People must become honest by habit and insist upon meticulous honesty on the part of the producers of and dealers in Khadi so that only genuine stuff is sold and bought.

"I have called Khadi and the *charkha* the symbols of non-violence. But it is said there is dishonesty even in certified *bhandars*. I wish it were not so. But there is no denying the fact that it is true of some.

"I have objected to the term vegetable ghee because it is not ghee. It should be labelled as vegetable oil. Similarly, I cannot tolerate that cloth which is not Khadi, i. e. is not hand-spun and hand-woven, should pass as such. The ultimate remedy lies in the buyer's hands. "Buyer beware" is a sound legal maxim for all to remember."

A HARD TESTING GROUND

In one of his public addresses, Gandhiji once described public life of his conception as a testing ground and probation for the cultivation of the highest spiritual qualities in man. How hard a testing ground it can prove was brought home to him and us all the other day when in the course of his delicate mission during the week he found himself nodding. His nod consisted in being over-hasty, in reading a paragraph hurriedly though there was no occasion for hurry. He fancied it was alright when it was not. Luckily the mistake was detected in time and no harm came out of it. But it shook him to his depths. It was the first experience of its kind in his long life, he remarked. Was it a sign of creeping senility in his 78th year? Then he had no business to be in public life. He arraigned himself before the tribunal of his conscience and accused himself of gross negligence "which is criminal in a public man." Not satisfied with it he made a confession of his error before the evening prayer gathering when he explained to them the anatomy of his error through a befittingly high-powered lens.

IMPORTANCE OF CONFESSION

"I have ever followed the maxim," he began, "that one should not let the sun to go down upon one's error without confessing it. No mortal is proof against error. Danger consists in concealing one's

error, in adding untruth to it in order to gloss it over. When a boil becomes septic you press out the poison and it subsides. But should the poison spread inwards, it would spell certain death. Years ago, in Sabarmati Ashram, we had several cases of small-pox. All those in which the eruption came out escaped. But in one case it did not come out, the whole body became red and inflamed and the poor patient died. Even so it is with error and sin. To confess an error or sin as soon as it is discovered is to purge it out."

According to his life's practice, proceeded Gandhiji, as soon as he had discovered his mistake in the present case he had admitted it to his friends. But he could not rest till he had blazoned it to the whole world by speaking to them. "Friends may say that it was no sin but mere oversight—a trivial mistake. I draw no distinction between error and sin. If a man commits a *bona fide* mistake and confesses it with a contrite heart before his Maker, the merciful Maker sterilizes it of all harm. Throughout my long life I do not remember a single instance of anybody having suffered harm as a result of my *bona fide* mistakes."

"What penance shall I make for it?" asked Gandhiji of himself and replied: "To resolve never to let it happen again. This is the only way to really expiate for an error."

DEATH-BED REPENTANCE

"There is a saying in English that there is none so fallen but can redeem himself, if only he has the will. We have the promise that no matter how far gone in sin the sinner may be, God will forgive him, if he confesses his sin and repents of it even with his last breath. I believe in future life and in the continuity of *Karma* through successive births. What we sow here we must reap elsewhere—there is no escape. But if one repents, even on one's death-bed the repentance will burn away sin and sterilize it of consequences. Pray for me, therefore, that I may never commit such a mistake again in my life."

He ended by expressing the hope that they would all learn a lesson from his example and never be hasty or careless in their actions. Whilst the confession had relieved his mind of a burden, it had badly shaken his confidence in his ability to live up to 125 years and it might be a long time before his self-confidence would return. As an aid to introspection and in order to conserve his energy he has since taken to indefinite silence for all normal purposes and breaks it only to address the evening prayer gatherings or whenever it may be necessary for his present mission to Delhi.

HIS SILENT PRAYER

What fills the depth of his silence? A fleeting glimpse was afforded today when he scribbled out a short Monday message to be read out at the evening prayer gathering. "Man should earnestly desire the well-being of all God's creation and pray that he may have the strength to do so. In desiring the well-being of all, lies his own welfare; he who desires only his own or his community's welfare is selfish and it can never be well with him." Gandhiji

said that it is essential for man to discriminate between what he may consider to be good and what is really good for him.

PLENTIFUL HARVEST

If the results of Shri Kanu Gandhi's third spinning class which concluded after six days on Saturday last is an indication, the harvest is verily plentiful, the lack is only one of labourers.

22 women and 28 men attended as it was decided not to admit a larger number. The speciality about the examination this time was that entrants came from two other classes that were held in other places. One of these was for Harijan women, twenty of whom attended. Seven of these went in for the examination. 12 women were taught in another centre, 3 of whom came for the examination which was conducted for 1½ hours and included all the processes up to spinning. The results were as follows:

22 persons span over 50 rounds including all the processes, 9 span over 80 rounds, 4 span over 100 rounds. The count was from 12 to 30.

Among those who took the full course were Mr. Norman Cliff of the News Chronicle, London, and Mr. Andrew Freeman of the New York Post. Both of them resolutely learnt to squat on the ground and to draw a fairly even thread from slivers of their own making. Both of them have purchased *charkhas* and hope to keep up their spinning.

No more classes will be held in the Bhangi Colony. But some of those who have learnt the art are opening classes in their own localities. The District Committee of Ward No. 9 is opening a Charkha Club and a class from the 16th October.

New Delhi, 15-10-'46

PYARELAL

Notes

English-Hindustani Dictionary

A friend asked me the other day as to why the above-named glossary does not appear in the *Harijan Sevak*. I told him it appeared only in the *Harijan* and he was very disappointed. I explained to him that it was meant for the English-knowing public and, therefore, was not published in either the Gujarati or Hindustani editions. But anyone who wished to, could buy the glossary page by remitting postage stamps worth one and a half annas. They could buy the back numbers too.

New Delhi, 12-10-'46

M. K. G.

(From the original in *Hindustani*)

Wrong

A correspondent from Madras writes that Congressmen in many places collected funds for Gandhi Jayanti celebrations. People subscribed largely. But the accounts of the money collected have not been audited and the public are not aware how the money has been spent.

If this is true, it is wholly wrong. Money given for charity belongs to the public. Gandhiji has again and again said that such money is a public trust. It should be carefully guarded and spent for the public good. It goes without saying that accounts of every pie should be kept.

New Delhi, 11-10-'46

A. K.

(From the original in *Hindustani*)

QUESTION BOX

(By M. K. Gandhi)

ONENESS OF COSTUME A CURE?

Q. "In these last four weeks, I have seen so much bloodshed and firing that it has left a bitter taste in my mouth. Every day since the riots started, I have been on duty as a magistrate trying to maintain the peace. Now, more than ever before, I am convinced of the necessity that we should insist on every Indian wearing the same nationalist dress—as you remember I had broached the subject before but at the time you had not approved of the idea. Why is it that none of the stabbings have been of people wearing a shirt and pant? This should be conclusive proof that the dress causes the difference in religion to be accentuated. Your reply to this through the *Harijan* for others like me who think that communal riots would disappear within a short time on our wearing the same kind of dress would be most appreciated."

A. I publish this as from a well-versed, well-meaning friend. These three qualities combined do not necessarily make for clearness of thought. What is wanted is not oneness of costume but oneness of hearts. We have only to look at Europe to demonstrate the emptiness of the idea that oneness of costume will enable us to get out of the mess we are in. Ill will is like an ill wind. It must go and be replaced by the fresh and bracing wind of good will.

THE SMOKING EVIL

Q. While you have all along written very strongly in favour of prohibition, you have not spoken either often enough or with equal emphasis in the matter of smoking. This evil is increasing with alarming rapidity and even children are increasingly getting addicted to it. The crores that are literally burnt by smoking could be so well utilized in wise ways in our poor land.

A. The taunt is true but not new. The reason for want of equal emphasis is to be sought in the fact that smoking has attained alarming respectability. When a vice reaches that state it becomes difficult to eradicate. This admission does not mean that we should not agitate for abatement of the nuisance. How to do so and when is the question. I am sorry to have to confess my inability to answer it.

THE CURSE OF DOWRY

Q. The demand for dowries in the marriage market is growing. None is immune from this injustice. The richer the parent of the prospective bridegroom, the heavier is the demand of the dowry. The problem, now is such that many marriageable girls cannot be married and the state of their parents can better be imagined than described. Popular Governments should help to check the evil through the law.

A. It is a curious phenomenon the questioner notices. Education not only does not improve the situation but makes it worse. The affected class has to wake up before the curse destroys the class which in its terrible weakness shamelessly betakes

to it. Let them ceaselessly and restlessly agitate. I know no other way.

WHY THIS SECRECY?

Q. Can you say why, when mutual slaughter between brother and brother is going on, the names of the respective communities should be withheld?

A. I confess that the question has often occurred to me. There seems to me to be no reason for this hush hush policy save that it is a legacy from the autocracy which, let us hope, the national Governments have displaced. Those who ought not to know, know who stabs whom. And those who should know are kept in the dark. I am sure there are many Hindus and Muslims and even members of other communities taking pride in being Indians first and last without ceasing to be devoted followers of their own religions and who love to do their best to dissuade blind fanatics from making mischief. I know many such. They have no means of ascertaining facts except through the press. Let darkness be exposed to light. It will be dispelled quicker.

New Delhi, 12-10-'46

DEADLY EMBRACE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

In Bombay a Hindu gave shelter to a Muslim friend the other day. This infuriated a Hindu mob who demanded the head of the Muslim friend. The Hindu would not surrender his friend. So both went down literally in deadly embrace. This was how it was described to me authentically. Nor is this the first instance of chivalry in the midst of frenzy. During the recent blood bath in Calcutta, stories of Muslims having, at the peril of their lives, sheltered their Hindu friends and *vice versa* were recorded. Mankind would die if there were no exhibition any time and anywhere of the divine in man.

Shri Balasaheb Kher, the Premier of Bombay, has described in glowing terms the instance of two youths rushing to still the wrath of a Muslim mob and meeting what they knew was certain death. They met Death as their true friend. Let no scoffer deny the inestimable value of such sacrifice—sacred deed. It would be mock sacrifice, if every such act ended in success, so-called. The certain moral is that, if such instances are sufficiently multiplied, the senseless slaughter on either side in the name of religion will stop. One indispensable condition is that there should be no hypocrisy, no mock heroism. Let us appear as we are.

New Delhi, 15-10-'46

CONTENTS		PAGE
HINDU PANI AND MUSLIM PANI	M. K. GANDHI	361
DR. LOHIA AGAIN	... M. K. GANDHI	361
THE DAIRY INDUSTRY OF INDIA	A. K.	362
HOW TO MAKE THE WHEEL GO ...	KANU GANDHI	363
REAL INDIA	... M. K. GANDHI	364
FIFTH FREEDOM	... PYARELAL	364
WEEKLY LETTER	... PYARELAL	365
QUESTION BOX	... M. K. GANDHI	368
DEADLY EMBRACE	... M. K. GANDHI	368
NOTES:		
ENGLISH-HINDUSTANI DICTIONARY	M. K. G.	367
WRONG	... A. K.	367