

HARIJAN

16 Pages

Editor: PYARELAL

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TWO ANNAS

FOR SALE — A PACIFIER !

To satisfy a baby's greed an easy going mother gives it a pacifier to suck. This pacifier gives the child no nutrition but just the satisfaction of appearing to feed. In the same way, our *vanaspati ghee* users have got their desire to use something which appears like *ghee* and the *vanaspati* "ghee" makers satisfy such consumers' vanity by giving them something which does not provide the nutriment of *ghee* and at the same time satisfies their vanity. But while the mother does not charge the child anything for putting the pacifier in its mouth, the *vanaspati ghee* makers grow fat on the profits they earn out of their consumers. *Vanaspati ghee* is not *ghee* at all, unless it has some equivalent of the vitamin A as is contained in the dairy product. At best *vanaspati* can be termed an equivalent of indigestible vegetable oil, if it is hydrogenated to the extent sufficient to make it appear solid like *ghee*. Hydrogenation confers no special quality on pure vegetable oil other than the fact that such hydrogenated oil forms a convenient adulterant for *ghee*. What distinguishes vegetable oil from *ghee* is its animal origin and the vitamin A is more or less exclusively of animal origin. *Vanaspati* which claims to be "vitaminous", therefore, can only be vitaminized from animal sources of oil rich in vitamin A — Shark Liver oil and Cod Liver oil. In a vegetarian country like ours, where many of the consumers have an aversion to animal food other than dairy products, to sell freely *vanaspati* without disclosing the animal source of its vitamin is a fraud on the public.

Besides, at the Nutrition Conference held at Hotsprings, it was pointed out that the free use of vitamin concentrates is injurious. If, therefore, *vanaspati* is vitaminized by concentrates taken from Cod Liver oil or Shark Liver oil, such concentrates will also be injurious. Then, again, for hydrogenation a catalytic agent is necessary. The usual catalytic agent that is used is nickel, and traces of nickel have been found in hydrogenated oils and nickel not being a mineral which the human body needs may, though taken in minute quantities, prove to be poisonous in the long run. Dr. V. N. Patwardhan, Director of the Nutrition Research Institute, Coonoor, stated at the Indian Science Congress last month that his researches revealed that *vanaspati* adversely affected the growth and reproductive functions of animals.

People in different parts of the country have been used to different kinds of vegetable oils — mus-

tard, *til*, cocoanut, etc., and according to *ayurvedic* tradition, all oils are not of equal benefit to the human body. The value differs from oil to oil. For instance, the almond oil is declared to be a brain tonic and nourishing for the body while the groundnut oil, though it may have fat content, is said to be injurious for the brain. *Sarsav*, *til* and cocoanut oil are infinitely better from this point of view than groundnut oil. Most of the *vanaspati* factories use mainly groundnut oil or cotton-seed oil. These are inferior oils and therefore, even as a substitute fat from ordinary oil, the users of *vanaspati* do not get the best of vegetable oils. By legislation, which seeks to guarantee to consumers pure food products, it should be made compulsory on the part of *vanaspati* "ghee" makers to declare on their labels clearly and unmistakably, the sources from which the product is made including of course that of the vitamin.

These facts being as they are, it passes our understanding as to why *vanaspati* should be prepared unless it be to provide oils in a suitable condition for soap-making and other industrial purposes. As things are, vegetable oils pressed by *ghanies* are superior to *vanaspati* in their digestibility and purity while there is no comparison with the natural dairy *ghee* and yet capitalists are investing Rs 4 to 5 lakhs on machinery imported from abroad for exploiting the susceptibility to vanity of a small section of our population, mainly urban.

We understand about 27 new factories have been allowed by the Central Government to be started, most of them in Madras and Bombay. Is this the understanding and solicitude the Central Government has for the exploiters irrespective of the welfare of the population or is it their enthusiasm for rapid industrialization that is carrying them beyond their depth or is it a carry over of the British "Fleece India" policy, as establishing these 27 factories will mean to Great Britain a business of over a crore?

We would suggest that a government that seeks the welfare of the people would not stop short of banning this type of exploitation at the cost of the health and the sentiments of the people. In the name of industrialization the country should not be ruined, especially the constitution of a people who are already victims of malnutrition. Public opinion should be educated to deal with *vanaspati* "ghee" producers as traitors to the land and if the government reflects the popular mind, we should soon have no such fraud practised on the people.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

AN AMERICAN FRIEND'S WARNING

Senseless imitation is the bane of our people. And there is always a time-lag in the imitation. We imitate a thing after it has gone out of fashion in the West. Such is the case for instance as regards tractors and chemical manures. Advocates of mechanization and artificials would do well to take note of the danger signal hoisted by Mr. Ralph Richard Keithahn in an article contributed by him to *Rural India* of April 1943:

"Families of country-dwellers packed all their scanty belongings into some cheap lorry or large car, which threatened to fall apart at any moment, and feverishly cluttered the roads to find a chance to live. This has been a common sight in America during the last ten years. In South Dakota we saw how the great forests had been uprooted; the nutritious and drought-resisting buffalo-grass, the blessing for great droves of cattle and sheep, ploughed under that wheat might be grown on a large scale, that the farmers might make more money. More money, then a car; more money, then a radio; more money, then a tractor and more land! And the land speculators raced about wildly to entice investors to make their 'fortune' in the gold-lands of a semi-desert! There was a boom! The President cried, 'Back to Normalcy! A later President consoled the people that there would always be prosperity even though a depression already was upon the people!

"The old Jewish prophets would have called it 'God's wrath'! It was the normal processes of Nature working themselves out. With the trees gone, there was less rain. With the good grass gone, there was less fertilizer for the land, less cattle to befriend man. The dry years began to come. And the grasshoppers who also were hungry! And the winds became our enemy, not our friend! The field of corn would be in its glory. Dry weather would come. The green crops started to wither. Then the wind, blowing across the treeless land, and with the heat, cutting the very life out of crops. Soon the landscape was a desert! Then as the wind whipped across these miles of desert, the dust began to rise and rise until even the sun was darkened. Day became as night, and the dust drifted through the cracks of closed doors and windows. And when the dust did not come and pile up in banks three, four and six feet high, the grasshoppers came and devoured, as though famished, the little green they could find. The good and unknowing people stood helpless in the face of the working of God's laws. First helplessness, then hunger and then movement, back and forth through the country in these battered 'ships of the road' trying to find work and food! The days of cars and tractors and radios and money were gone. They had become slaves to a terrible exploiting system that brought destruction in its wake!! . . .

"India has learned many solid truths in its centuries of existence. Gandhiji and others have been helping us to recapture those truths in the light of the needs of today. Rural workers may do

much to guide our people in these days into a life of creative joy. But it is not the way of the exploiting West. True, we have much to learn from the West, to learn of her helpful discoveries, to learn of her mistakes. But let us not blindly follow her and bring our people and nation to temporary ruin."

V. G. D.

PLANNING WITH VILLAGE BIAS

I

INTRODUCTORY

Since the dawn of history agriculture has been the prime occupation of India and her people. Her whole life grew on agriculture. The evolution of her races, history, culture and languages can be traced to it and in terms of it. Her greatest sages and kings tilled the soil, cleared forests for agriculture and tended agricultural stocks as of routine. Agriculture was looked upon as the most honourable and respected calling and as the source of all prosperity. The tiller of the soil had a status higher than that of kings, for he was looked upon as the feeder and sustainer of millions, including kings and emperors.

Even in middle ages after the impact of Islam and during the times of the Great Moghals, the position and status of agriculture remained unaffected in the nation's economy. Hindus and Muslims lived together in villages and conducted seasonal operations on their fields by mutual exchange of aid and rotation labour. They vied with one another in their pursuit of agriculture as good neighbours and treated their village as a family unit. Agriculture was the pivot round which the entire social and economic life of the community revolved.

But the foreigner, who came to possess and rule India during the last two centuries, functioned with a vastly different motive. He had no plans to settle down and merge with the millions of this country as his numerous predecessors had done. He came, he saw and he conquered, not for glory as did the ancient conquerors, but purely for exploiting the fabulous wealth and resources of this country for the benefit of his cousins at home in cold England. The motive was grab pure and simple. He was not much interested in India's agriculture save for the raw materials she produced. His cousins at home were an industrial folk interested only in capturing foreign markets and dumping their manufactured goods on them. So his eyes were rivetted on our handicrafts and home industries which he systematically killed to further and safeguard British trade. By what cruel and unscrupulous processes he did this is now common knowledge.

Both agriculture and village industries had thus their first set-back under the British rulers. Under their blighting influence agriculture languished and our home industries withered away and disappeared. Some of the dislodged artisans sought employment in city factories to their physical and moral ruin, while the bulk of them with their families and dependents fell back on land as unskilled labour. The population, too, more than doubled during the period.

In consequence, pressure on land increased and rendered agriculture progressively uneconomic till at last it came to be regarded as on the lowest rung of the economic ladder. The impoverished cultivator sank hopelessly in debt. Chronic idleness born of stark despair seized him. Yet he had to till the soil and live on agriculture, for there was no other alternative for him in this country.

To speak of recent conditions, even during war years, the scandalous disparity between the agricultural producer's return and that of the industrial manufacturer has been manifestly patent. Under the exigencies of war the Indian cultivator was compelled to grow and sell his entire produce at prices which were in no way commensurate with his frightfully increased cost of production. He was denied a fair opportunity to sell at an equitable margin and lighten his debt, while the city manufacturer of machine-made goods profited with impunity under direct State patronage and accommodation in all directions, as well as through black-marketing. The poor agriculturist thus remained where he was — a hopeless pauper, eking out a miserable existence along with his emaciated family and starving live stock.

The remedy lies not in searching or devising substitute occupation for the Indian cultivator in cities and towns. For no other industry or industries can accommodate over 300 millions of our agricultural population. The only remedy is to overhaul agriculture in terms of the nation's prime industry and reinstate it on its old status and position. The speedy removal of century-old injustice as well as present maladjustments has to be the first concern of those who are charged today with the responsibility of planning the nation's economy afresh, keeping constantly in view the betterment of the millions.

In planning or devising a nation's economy, the main source of occupation for the bulk of its population must form the inevitable basis. Thus, for instance, it would be idle to conceive of a 'national' planning of Denmark's economy save in terms and on the basis of her dairying. Similarly no planning worthy to be called 'national' could be thought of in India without placing the country's agriculture in the forefront. Thus, the improvement of agriculture and of live stock, so long as it is indispensable to it in this country, must find priority over everything else in any scheme of "national planning" to be undertaken to ameliorate the condition of the 7,00,000 villages of India. The present note is an attempt to indicate some aspects of such planning with a village bias, with special reference to the province of Bombay.

Vapi

SWAMI ANAND

(To be continued)

THE GOSPEL OF SELFLESS ACTION
OR
THE GITA ACCORDING TO GANDHI
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STORY HOUR

(Continued from p. 487)

[IX is from Shaikh Sadi and X from W. H. Davenport Adams' *The Secret of Success* (John Hogg) —V. G. D.]

IX

A clod of clay was asked how it had come to smell so fragrantly and replied, 'The sweetness is not in myself but I have been keeping company with the rose.'

X

After the death of a merchant in Boston the following document was found in his handwriting:

'By the grace of God, I will never be worth more than 50,000 dollars. By the grace of God, I will give one-fourth of the net profits of my business to charitable uses. If I am ever worth 20,000 dollars, I will give one-half of my net profits and if I am ever worth 30,000, I will give three-fourths; and the whole after 50,000. So help me God, or give to a more faithful steward, and set me aside.'

To this covenant he adhered with the most scrupulous fidelity. He recognized that he was intended by Providence to act as its almoner and his wealth was known by the splendour of his munificence. He kept the Jain layman's *vrata* (observance) of *parigraha-parimana* (limitation of possessions) like the ten *upasakas* (disciples) of Mahavir Swami. Are there any such *shravaks* now?

ANOTHER RISING MENACE

In the rural areas milk is already in short supply. If we sincerely desire the welfare of the people, our attempt should be to find out ways and means of increasing the supply. No doubt the cities are dependent on the villages for the milk. If an organization can be brought into being whereby the cities can run their own dairies in selected rural areas and be independent of the existing supply from the villages, that in itself will alleviate the distress in the rural areas. Of course, alongside of this programme we must have the long range programme of increasing the milk productivity of the cow by selective cattle breeding.

Wherever people are in distress we always find somebody willing to take advantage of this distress. There are people willing to rifle the pockets of dead soldiers. Thus the distress of somebody presents an opportunity to some one else to take advantage of. At the present time the short supply of milk has provided a golden opportunity for the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board to carry on its destructive work. Mr. M. H. Miles, its Commissioner for India, is anxious to push forward to the villages and create the tea habit in the villages. This would imply, that by tanning the insides of the villagers and satisfying their hunger by decreasing the digestibility, we can automatically lessen their demand for milk! This is a real menace to the health of rural India. In a vegetarian country the animal protein from milk is an essential constituent of the diet. Any habit which is calculated to decrease this is harmful to the villages and is anti-social.

Papers carry advertisement "drink tea for stamina", which being lying propaganda must be stopped by the Government taking necessary steps to control the advertisements. Indian consumption of tea in 1928-9 was 48.8 million pounds and it has risen in 1945-6 to 130 million pounds. This is an increase of about 266 p. c. and yet they are carrying on a campaign of increasing tea consumption still further. Whatever may be said for tea for the well-to-do who are overfed, it is difficult to support the cause for tea in villages. The work of the Indian Tea Market Expansion Board, therefore, is a menace to the rural areas which are already starving and suffering from mal-nutrition. We trust the popular governments will do what lies in their power to prevent any irreparable damage being done by the formation of habits which will be injurious to the growth and strength of the village people.

J. C. Kumarappa

HARIJAN

January 26

1947

THE PURPOSE OF THE TOUR

(By M. K. Gandhi)

[The following address which was written out by Gandhiji in Hindustani for being read to the audience at prayer time on 6th January—it being his day of silence—has been rendered in English from its Bengali version by Shri Nirmal Kumar Bose, and published in the Bengali edition of the Harijan of the 12th instant. —Mg. Ed.]

As my weekly silence will not break before 7 p. m., I have written out my address. I pray to God, and request you all to join with me in praying that the tour which I commenced yesterday should go on uninterrupted till the end and be successful in achieving its purpose. But before praying, you should know that purpose. I have only one object in view and it is a clear one; namely, that God should purify the hearts of Hindus and Muslims, and the two communities should be free from suspicion and fear towards each other. Please join with me in this prayer and say that God is the Lord of us both and that He may give us success.

You might well ask me why it is necessary to undertake a tour for this purpose; or how can one, who is not pure in heart himself, ask others to become pure; or how can one, who himself is subject to fear, give courage to others; one, who himself moves under armed escort, call upon others to cast away their arms. All these questions are relevant and have been put to me.

My answer is that during my tour I wish to assure the villagers to the best of my capacity that I bear not the least ill-will towards any. I

can prove this only by living and moving among those, who distrust me. I admit that the third question is a little difficult for me to answer; for, I do happen to be moving under armed protection, I am surrounded by armed police and military, keenly alert to guard me from all danger. I am helpless in the matter as it is arranged by the Government which being responsible to the people feels that it is their duty to keep me guarded by the police and the military. How can I prevent them from doing so? Under the circumstances, I can declare only in words that I own no protector but God. I do not know whether you will believe my statement. God alone knows the mind of a person; and the duty of a man of God is to act as he is directed by his inner voice. I claim that I act accordingly.

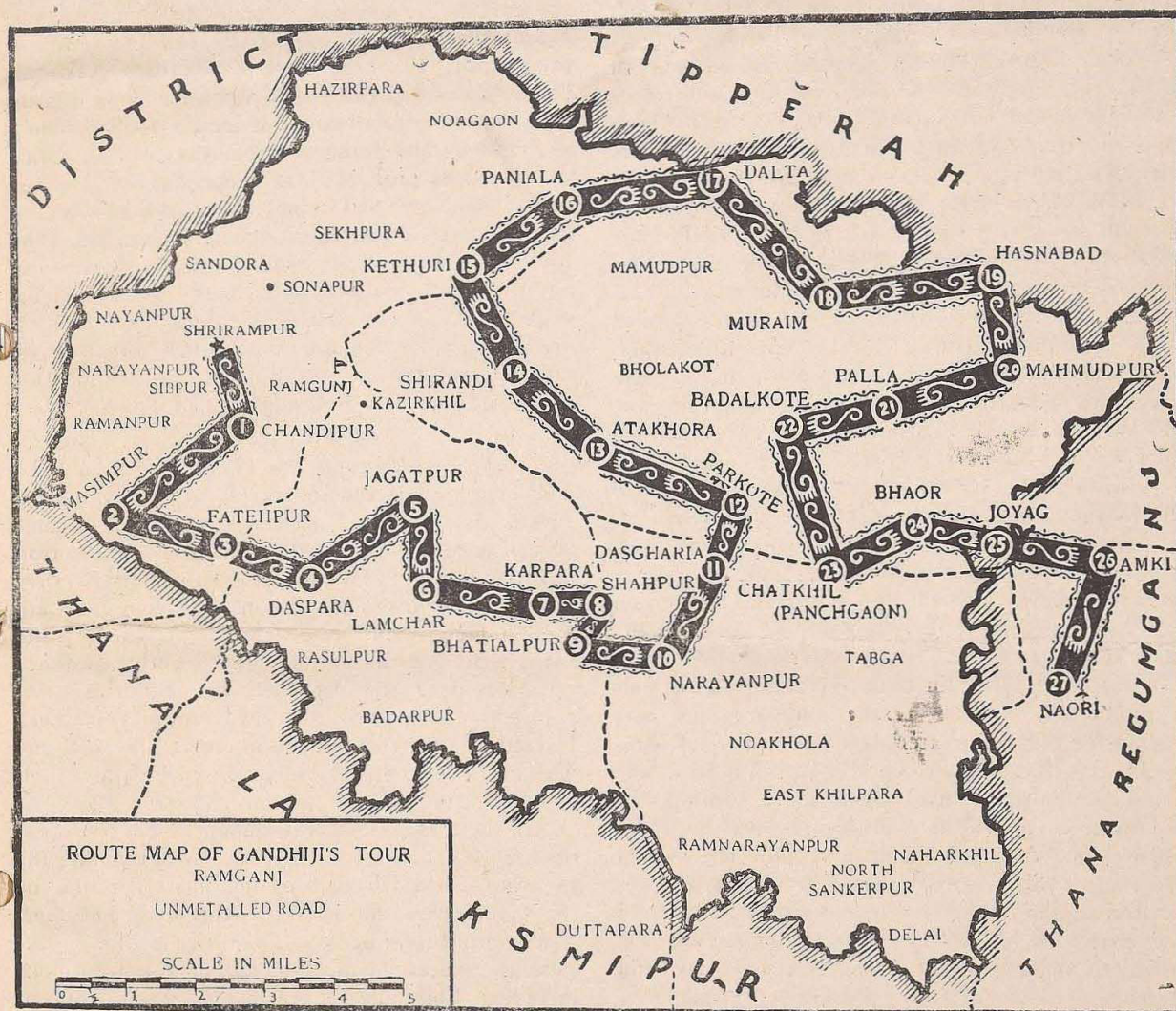
You might here ask that there was at least no reason for the Sikhs to go with me. They have not been posted by the Government. Let me inform you, first, that they have obtained the permission of the Government for going with me. They have not come here to create quarrels. In testimony, they have come without their usual *kirpans*. They have come to render service to both the communities impartially. The first lesson which the Netaji taught to the soldiers of his Indian National Army was that Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis etc., should all regard India as their common motherland, and they should all substantiate their unity by working for her jointly. The Sikhs here wish to serve both the communities under my guidance. How—on what ground,—can I send away such friends? They have been giving me valuable assistance and that not for making a public show thereof, but in a spirit of genuine service. If I refused that service, I should fall in my own estimate and prove myself a coward. I request you, too, to trust these people, regard them as your brethren and accept their services. They are capable of rendering much help and have plenty of experience of this kind of work. God has blessed them with physical strength and also faith.

If I find that what I have said about them was incorrect, they would go back. If, on the other hand, I am keeping them with an ulterior motive, it will prove to be my own ruin, besides making my experiment a failure.

The particular object lessons, which I propose to give you during my tour, are how you can keep the village water and yourself clean; what use you can properly make of the earth, which our bodies are made of; how you can obtain the life-force from the infinite sky spreading over your heads; how you can reinforce your vital-energy from the air, which surrounds you; and how you can make proper use of the sun-light. This is to say that I shall try to teach you how we can convert our impoverished country into a land of gold by making the right use of the various elements around us. I pray to God that I may succeed in serving you in the manner set forth above.

MAP

[Part of Noakhali and Tipperah Districts of East Bengal, showing the route of Gandhiji's village-to-village peace mission tour. We are indebted to the *Hindustan Standard* of Calcutta for this excellent map.]



Gandhiji is visiting the villages named serially with the date of his stay in a particular village stated against it.

1. Chandipur — 2nd to 6th January; 2. Masimpur — 7th; 3. Fatehpur — 8th; 4. Daspara — 9th; 5. Jagatpur — 10th; 6. Lamchar — 11th; 7. Karpara — 12th; 8. Shahpur — 13th; 9. Bhatialpur — 14th; 10. Narayanpur — 15th; 11. Dasgharia — 16th; 12. Par-

Kote — 17th; 13. Atakhora — 18th; 14. Shirandi — 19th; 15. Kethuri — 20th; 16. Paniala — 21st; 17. Dalta — 22nd; 18. Muraim — 23rd; 19. Hasnabad (Tipperah) — 24th; 20. Mahmudpur — 25th; 21. Palla — 26th; 22. Badalkote — 27th; 23. Chatkhil (Panchgaon) — 28th; 24. Bhaor — 29th; 25. Joyag — 30th; 26. Amki — 31st and 27. Naori — 1st. February.

OUR ECONOMIC POLICY

With the advent of the so-called popular ministries people's minds are agitated over the policies that these ministries should follow. At the moment there is a considerable amount of loose thinking in regard to the expansion of the textile mills in Madras, which brings to the fore the question of centralization in industries.

It is not generally understood that imperialism is a child of centralized industries and now in its dotage centralized industries cannot exist without the support of imperialism.

When England took to centralized methods of production, Great Britain was not an Empire. Its economic life was based on decentralized methods of production. She was a highly cultured country with a strong moral background. Even now when we think of her great contribution to the progress of man, we have to look back to the period before the Industrial Revolution. The best of her literature — Shakespeare, Milton and such like were Elizabethian; in art, men of the type of Sir Joshua Reynolds flourished prior to the nineteenth century. Sir Christopher Wren and his peers in architecture never saw a textile mill to afford them inspiration. Moral giants like Latimer who were British *satyagrahis*, who were prepared to lay down their lives for their convictions, never saw the power of the steam engine. We may say the Victorian Era was the darkest age in British History culturally, whatever its glamour may have been financially and materially. After the Industrial Revolution Great Britain gained the whole world but lost its soul. Why was this?

When Great Britain took to centralized methods of production in the textile industry and was relying for her raw materials on commercial contracts with the southern States of America, she found her position was unstable, as during the American Civil War her industries were hard hit when the American cotton could not reach Manchester. She realized that if her industries were to survive, she ought to have the production of raw materials under her direct control. So she turned to India to ensure her cotton supply and keep her markets for finished goods also under her political control. This was the birth of British Imperialism.

This arrangement was found very satisfactory for the mill-owners as they were able also to saddle several items of their cost on Indian Revenues. The cost of research incidental to the production of long staple cotton, the discriminating freight rates, the shipping policy etc., were controlled in favour of the British manufacturer. Thus their cost of production was kept low.

VIOLENCE AND ITS COST

Apart from these, in centralized industries we have shown that the control of raw materials and markets, becomes a condition precedent to the efficiency of the working of the centralized means of production. If this is granted, it means that to be able to control raw materials and markets we

must obtain political power over the producers of raw materials and consumers. Today such political power can only be obtained by violent means. To enforce this power, it requires the maintenance of the army, navy and air force. Hence a strict method of accounting would demand that the costs of the maintenance of the army, navy and air force should also be charged to the centralized methods of production. Periodically wars have to be fought — the cost of wars have to form also a part of the cost of the centralized methods of production. Hence these should be charged to the cost of production. If these logical expenses were all properly charged to the beneficiaries, we can easily see that the production by mills will become prohibitive and cannot hope to compete with decentralized production in cheapness.

In our own life time, such has been the experience of industrialization in Japan also. She finds the need to control politically Manchuria and China. These are the irritant causes of global wars today. Do we want our country also to have a share in these nefarious activities? If not, we must steer clear of centralization in the production of consumption goods for private profit.

DISHONESTY

Having decided to get the raw cotton from India and having made the Indian tax-payer pay for the researches for the Manchester mills, it became necessary to arrange for the transport of the cotton grown in India to Manchester. For this purpose, they pushed through the programme of laying out rail roads under the plea of developing the country and spent crores of rupees for this. Strictly speaking, the great need of India then was waterways for transport of goods to our own internal markets. Instead of this, the foreign interests prevailed and we have had to spend crores of rupees for their benefit.

All these expenses — the amounts spent on cotton research and the amounts spent on developing the railways — should have been legitimately borne by the Manchester mill-owner. If this had been done, it would not have been possible for the Manchester cloth to undersell hand-spun and hand-woven cloth in India. This method of paying one's cost of production through governmental aid is a means of reducing costs of production which cannot be called "efficiency" but loot. We saw that the need to keep raw materials under the control of the mill-owner leads to imperialism and the need to keep down costs and paying part of the expenses through tax money leads to dishonesty. Thus centralized methods of production lead to imperialism and exploitation.

To illustrate this: when I was visiting Palladam *firka*, I found there an enterprising individual who had set up six looms run by a crude oil engine. He had spent about Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000 on his equipment. He was able to run it for barely 18 days in the month on the yarn quota supplied from Coimbatore. He was representing his needs to me and said that if he could be supplied with

half as much yarn again, he can run his unit the whole month round and reduce his expenses to such an extent as to cut down even on the mill costs of production. His raw material, viz., warps came from Coimbatore and his finished goods were sold somewhere in the neighbourhood of Nellore. The logical course in time will be for this man to get control over his raw material producer viz., the Coimbatore mill-owners. If he can get hold of an army of *goondas* who will, at the point of the bayonet, obtain yarn that he needs, he would be able to make his mill work more "efficiently" than the large textile mills. Similarly, if he can get special low rates of transport for his goods to Nellore, he can again undersell the textile mills. This in miniature represents the position of all centralized industries. They have got to resort to imperialism and exploitation as a condition precedent to their existence.

FOOD vs. RAW MATERIAL

Again to grow raw material for mills, they have had, time and again, not only to get the agricultural colleges to do their research at public cost but also they had encroached on food lands. The present day famines are in no small measure due to such encroachments. In Malabar, while I was visiting Payanoor *firka*, people informed me that in several villages the land under paddy had been reduced by about 20% and in their place cocoanut groves have sprung up. The cocoanut groves were intended not for purposes of food but for supplying *copra* for the oil mills which, in their turn, were producing soap. Thus in effect it meant that rice lands were converted into producers of soap. Is it any wonder when such shifting of crops can take place that we should be subject to periodical famines?

In Malabar, I had also noticed children running about with brownish hair. When I inquired into the cause of this state of affairs, I was informed that formerly these children were bathed in cocoanut oil and had plenty of oil to rub on their scalps. But now the cocoanuts were selling practically at the same high prices as prevail in Madras, and, therefore, these children do not get the oil for their massage. In these ways centralized industries encroach on the primary requirements of our people, starve them and bring about ill health.

MONEY ECONOMY

With the help of the money economy, these things are done without the victims being aware of it. Money is not a safe method of valuing articles, especially of primary necessities. For instance, at Avanashi *firka* a good deal of the milk produced was being sent to Coimbatore. The value of a pound of milk is in the nutrition it affords. The milk producer, if he gives it to his child, ensures sufficient calcium to build up the child's bones, fat and other nutritious materials to build up the body. The value of the milk from the natural point of view is the same whether it is consumed by the mill-owner or the producer's child. We may even say the value of milk is greater when given to a growing child than when given to an adult. Just because the rich

mill-owner of Coimbatore is able to offer As. 8 for a pound of milk, the Avanashi producer deprives his child of this nutritious food and sends it away to Coimbatore. In so doing, he does not realize that he is in effect selling the future health of the child. Therefore, in all our considerations in regard to our rural development we have to bear in mind that neither centralized industries nor their efficiency, nor even their money values can be the sole arbiter to guide our decisions. We have to think in terms of the well-being of the people irrespective of the commercial value of the product. In some cases it may even mean that we may have to get people to do things which, at the moment, may appear against their own interests.

ACCUMULATION OF WEALTH

Centralized methods of production also tend to concentrate wealth. In a poverty-stricken country like India we do not want concentration of wealth but better distribution of wealth. Distribution of wealth is the special feature of the decentralized industries. India has tremendous amount of labour wealth. This is to be converted into actual wealth in material goods. A potter takes the clay that is available freely and converts it into consumption goods. The valueless clay should have to be converted into wealth by application of his skill and labour. This is the method that would be best suited to India.

PLACE OF CENTRALIZED INDUSTRIES

This does not mean that we should be against all centralized methods of production. Centralized methods of production under private enterprise will lead to consequences we have adumbrated above. But there are certain industries which by their nature are monopolies, such as railway transport and provision of power. These have to be done by the state on a service basis and not with a profit motive. Similarly water supply, exploitation of natural resources and other heavy industries may be undertaken by the State or under State control with centralized methods of production. But what we contend is that in consumption goods and under private ownership there should be no centralized methods of production.

The Madras Textile policy, therefore, is aimed at keeping India out of the whirlpool of imperialism. We found that within our life time even Japan was drawn into imperialism just because she took to the methods of centralized production.

THE LEAD

The contention that the other provinces are pursuing a different policy need not deter us from doing that which appears to us to be the proper one. If centralized methods of production are calculated to harm the individual development of the citizen by creating in him a blood-lust and greed, no steps taken to prevent this could be objected to. If Madras is called upon to give the lead in this regard, it would seem a great privilege which Madras should be proud of.

In following the policy that has been laid before the people they will be setting an example of

self-sufficiency based on self-respect, non-violence and honesty. This will be not only for India, but also for the whole world which is today lying devastated by the unrestricted use of centralized methods of production.

DEMOCRACY

Acharya Kripalani has pointed out in his presidential address at the Meerut Congress that pursuing centralized methods of production in the economic field ultimately leads to dictatorships and not to democracy. Training for democracy needs decentralization of production. All centralization leads to concentration of power which is inimical to democracy.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

Notes

Good and Bad News

It often falls to the lot of the *Harijan* to report simultaneously good and bad news regarding the treatment of the Harijans by non-Harijan Hindus. Today's post has brought two such letters of opposite types. The first is from the Chief Surgeon, Jodhpur. It is particularly important because it is from an Indian State in Rajputana. It says:

"On the 14th of December a dinner was arranged by the *bhangis* of the State Medical Department, Jodhpur, who invited the medical staff and some outsiders to it. About fifty men and women from the medical department and some outsiders attended. The *bhangis* who were to cook and serve took a bath with soap and water and put on fresh clean clothes before undertaking cooking. It was made clear to the *bhangis* that there was no difference between them and other human beings as God made them, that their profession was just as clean or dirty as many others including that of the surgeon and that if they made themselves clean as on this occasion after their work was over, they were as good as any other."

The second is as disgracing as the above one is good. It is from a professor of the Bengal Veterinary College, Calcutta, a B. Sc., M. R. C. V. S. (London). He needed a flat and found one "to let" at Harish Mukherji Road. After the terms were duly settled, the owner, a caste Hindu, "an ex-lawyer and educationist" suddenly asked of the Professor his caste. On knowing that the Professor belonged to a Scheduled Caste, the owner expressed his inability to rent the flat, even though "it was a separate self-contained one."

Very naturally and justifiably the Professor has written a letter to Gandhiji in bitter terms. He says:

"... For me, this means a lot. In fact, this may be the turning point of my life. I am really upset about it. After living in England for six years, this sort of thing is just a bit too hard to digest. ... Please try to understand my feelings."

The owner has unquestionably committed a grave wrong. It is acts like these that are ultimately responsible for the communal disturbances and the

disruptive political demands by all communities proudly kept out of their circle by the caste Hindus. If the owner gives himself good advice, he should invite the professor back to his flat and apologize to him for his grave error and repent for it in some practical form.

Sabarmati, 15-1-'47

A Commendable Leaflet

Maulvi Ahsanullah of Dacca has sent to Gandhiji a Bengali and an Urdu leaflet of a discourse entitled the *Gift of Holy Islam*. It is being distributed freely by the Maulvi Saheb to the public of both the communities. It is a commendable leaflet. I give below some of the points urged by him:

It exhorts Muslims of both the sexes to learn to read and write, so that they might know for themselves the teachings of Islam. The Prophet has explicitly enjoined, "It is the duty of every Musalman man and every Musalman woman to acquire learning. Take to learning, even if you are comfortably placed in life."

Islam is a religion of peace and dedication. Its five pillars are: *Kalma*, the word; *Namaz*, prayer; *Raza*, fasting; *Zakat*, alms; and *Haj*, pilgrimage. The first three are for all, the last two for those who can afford.

According to the *Quran*, the observance of the following ten rules will ensure to every observer happiness in this world and the next:

1. Morning prayer for confession of lapses;
2. Fore-noon prayer for being saved from the fire of hell.
3. After-noon prayer for freedom from debt.
4. Evening prayer for protection from enemies.
5. Night prayer for priority of hearing on the day of judgment.
6. Pursuit of commerce and vocations for earning;
7. Charity for spreading peace and harmony.
8. Ablutions and clean living for freedom from disease.
9. Pursuit of learning and culture for reputation; and
10. Prayer, service, humility and courtesy, for leadership.

The great Pir Dastagir Rehmatullah has said, "Those who wish to tread on the path of the Lord must cultivate the following ten virtues:

1. Not to swear;
2. Not to lie even in jest;
3. Not to break a promise;
4. Not to despise even the lowliest of Allah's creation; and not to harm it physically or mentally;
5. Not to curse;
6. Not to accuse a believer of hypocrisy or unbelief;
7. To keep free from all sinful acts;
8. To place no burden upon a human being;
9. To covet not another's possession;
10. To be humble.

Vapi, 11-12-'46

K. G. M.

A NEGLECTED SERVICE

The *Maharogi Seva Mandal* (Leper Service Association) has been carrying on leper service round about Wardha for the last ten years. Shri Manohar Divan has founded this service almost single-handed. He has been able to do so, because he has dedicated his life to it. He has acquired the necessary knowledge for it from a Christian Missionary Leprosy Institution.

Shri Manohar has lived with me for twenty years. He has passed through the entire Ashram discipline including cooking, scavenging, spinning, carding, weaving etc. He did all this work for years continuously, and after thus preparing himself moved from village to village in the *Wardha Taluq*, serving the villagers in various ways. During this period he came into contact with leprosy patients and was deeply moved by their miserable and neglected plight. He made up his mind to dedicate the rest of his life to their service and communicated his determination to me. I agreed that it was a much wanted service, but warned him that he might have to walk alone in his field of service. The few colleagues who worked with us were already usefully engaged in other fields, and in the present condition of our society, he could not expect to get from outside, workers prepared to do this kind of work in a spirit of service. There was also the possibility of his getting the infection himself. I also advised him to get the necessary medical knowledge for rendering the service usefully. I told him that if he resolved to dedicate his life to this cause, he must not allow himself to be drawn into other movements. But all this advice was superfluous. He had broached the subject to me after carefully searching his heart, and his mind had been already made up.

His mother was, not unnaturally, disturbed over her son's ideas. She asked me to dissuade him from this work. Were there not other good and necessary fields of service? Why should he obstinately want this one only? I said, "Suppose, Mother, you or I happen to get this infection? Should Manohar serve us or abandon us?" "Of course, in that case," she said, "he would have to serve us." "Then is not this similar to that?", I asked. "Well, that too is correct," she said, and was reconciled ever afterwards.

No doubt, he has obtained much cooperation from several people all these years. Without such cooperation, the work could not have been started at all. But (among non-Christians) he still remains a solitary life-worker in the cause.

The country has considerably changed during these ten years. The dawn of independence is already visible, and we expect the sun to rise shortly. It means that more responsibility will fall upon the servants of the people. It is estimated that the number of leprosy patients in India is about 40 lakhs, i.e. one per cent of the total population. Workers with medical knowledge must therefore think earnestly over this matter.

Till now, leprosy patients have been mostly served by Christian Missionaries only. It is true that their service loses part of its value by reason of their proselytizing activities associated with it. Nevertheless, it is an extremely valuable service, and our people have taken full advantage of it. If the zeal for conversion had not been there, they would have, perhaps, spread among the people the Christian spirit much better.

Hinduism has given us the term *bhuta-daya* (compassion for life). It has developed to the extent of vegetarianism. Compassion for life must necessarily include compassion for man. But owing to the use of a very wide term, we missed the nearer object. Christianity expressed the same sentiment by the term *humanity*. Hence, the urge to serve man is more predominant among Christians. This is how terms influence our thoughts and actions. It is not necessary to give up the wider term. But it is necessary to include in it the neglected field of the service of man. I wish to draw the attention of the workers to this field.

Pavnar, 30-12-'46

VINOBA

(Translated from the original in Marathi)

BROTHERHOOD DAY PROGRAMME IN AMERICAN SCHOOLS

The United States of America, being the meeting ground of numerous races and religions differing from one another, have a "communal unity" problem to solve which is similar to our own. Dr. Rachel DuBois an American educationist has devoted herself to the task of finding this solution for more than 20 years. In 1943 she published a book called *Get Together Americans, Friendly Approaches to Racial and Cultural Conflicts Through the Neighbourhood-Home Festival*. This is a practical guide for those working with adult groups who wish to do something about racial and religious tensions in America. Last year she published a second book entitled *Build Together Americans, Adventures in Intercultural Education for the Secondary School* (Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge).

Under the guidance of Dr. DuBois as the Director of the Service Bureau for Intercultural Education, the students of Englewood Junior High School celebrated the close of the school term with what we in India would call a communal unity programme.

As a part of the programme the students offered the following common prayer composed by two Christian pastors and a Jewish Rabbi:

"Almighty God, we who are members of different races and faiths desire together Thy Fatherhood and our kinship with one another. In our difference we find that many of our hopes, our fears, our aspirations are one. Thou art our Father and we are Thy children.

"We are heartily sorry for the mists of fear, envy, hatred, suspicion and greed which have blinded our eyes and thrust us asunder. May the light that comes from Thee scatter these mists, cleanse our hearts and give health to our spirits. Teach us to put away all bitterness and walk together in the ways of human friendship.

"Open our eyes to see that as nature abounds in variation, so differences in human beings make for richness in the common life. May we give honour where honour is due, regardless of race, colour or circumstance. Deepen our respect for unlikeness and our eagerness to understand one another. Through the deeper unities of the spirit in sympathy, insight and co-operation, may we transcend our differences. May we gladly share with one another our best gifts and together seek for a human world fashioned in good under Thy guidance. Amen."

After prayer the students sang a song ("America the Beautiful"), saluted the flag and recited the following "Civic Creed":

"God hath made of one blood all nations of men, and we are His children, brothers and sisters all.

"We are citizens of these United States, and we believe our flag stands for self-sacrifice and for the good of all the people."

"We want, therefore, to be true citizens of our great country, and to show our love for her by our work.

"Our country does not ask us to die for her welfare; she asks us to live for her, and so to live, and so to act, that her government may be pure, her officers honest, and every corner of her territory shall be a fit place to grow the best men and women who shall rule over her."

After this there was a dialogue on "What Makes an American?" and a talk on "Religious freedom and equal opportunities are American ideals".

The programme closed with a responsive reading of *The Land where Hate should Die* by Denis A. McCarthy:

Leader: "*This is the land where hate should die*"—

Response: No feuds of faith, no spleen of race,

No darkly brooding fear should try

Beneath our flag to find a place.

Lo! every people here has sent

Its sons to answer freedom's call;

Their life-blood is the strong cement

That builds and binds the Nation's wall.

Leader: "*This is the land where hate should die*"—

Response: Though dear to me my faith and shrine,

I serve my country best when I

Respect the creeds that are not mine.

He little loves his land who'd cast

Upon his neighbour's word a doubt

Or cite the wrongs of ages past

From present rights to bar him out.

Leader: "*This is the land where hate should die*"—

Response: This is the land where strife should cease,

Where foul, suspicious fear should fly

Before the light of love and peace.

Then let us purge from poisoned thought

That service to the State we give

And so be worthy as we ought

Of this great land in which we live.

V. G. D.

TEXTILE MILLS AND MADRAS GOVERNMENT POLICY

As the controversy over the subject has now developed into an organized agitation against the present Ministry, in which not only all the mill magnates and the wholesalers of their products but also some of our politicians are taking active part, I venture to place the following facts and figures before the public so that they may see for themselves how far the agitation is justified. My claim to write on the subject is that I am a spinner of 20 years standing, spinning during my off hours when I cannot do any other work and as a past-time, enough yarn to meet my annual clothing requirements of about 30 sq. yards and that I have further made a special study of the problem "*Khaddar versus mill cloth*" in all its aspects, both as an official Assistant Registrar of Co-operative Societies and as a non-official co-operator till today.

In announcing their policy, the intention of Government seems to be to make villages self-sufficient in the matter of clothing as with other primary necessities of life; and this should be quite possible. The population of our Presidency is about 50 millions. Taking the annual cloth requirements per head at 30 square yards, the yarn required—say of 20 counts which may quite do—to clothe the entire population will come to $50 \times 30 \times 4$ or 6000 million hanks or 300 million lbs, which could be spun during the course of a year by two out of five members of a family devoting daily about an hour and a half, in the aggregate, of their numerous idle moments. And all that is necessary for this is a will and determination on the part of the people. Readers might remember that these were forthcoming in abundance during the days of civil disobedience movement and boycott of foreign cloth, though they received a set-back when Congressmen who were doing propaganda work went to jail and the Government in power were believed to associate hand-spinning and Khaddar with the civil disobedience movement. It may be noted that even quite recently during the war period when all our cotton mills were engaged in production of cloths for military requirements, The All India Spinners' Association working in some centres, though under great difficulties, were able to supply to people enough cloth at prices equal to and sometimes less than mill prices. The only difficulty that has always stood in the way of the progress of Khadi is want of a suitable agency to carry on the necessary propaganda in villages, to supply to villagers at their doors the needed *charkhas* and other spinning requisites, also cotton, and to receive the yarn spun and convert it into cloth. As the present Ministry is arranging to supply this want, the Khaddar movement is bound to succeed. At any rate there is no reason for pessimism. The scheme is well worthy of being given a fair trial. It is no doubt true that the movement cannot succeed as well as it could, with power mills working by its side, as prohibition cannot succeed with toddy shops in the vicinity or hand-pounding with rice mills working close by. The only effective way of advancing the

Khaddar movement is to close the mills altogether or bring them under direct management or effective control of Government, so that they may be worked without prejudice to the Khaddar movement and to the extent absolutely necessary. Pending steps to be taken in any of these directions the Government have proposed to adopt the less drastic course limiting the further increase of existing mills and spindles therein, for which our mill magnates must thank them.

The mills naturally feel that, to the extent to which Khadi is advanced, their production and profit will be curtailed and they therefore started this agitation. The point now is how far these mills have justified their existence by way of solving either the yarn or the cloth problem of our province. Beyond filling their own coffers — a fact which will be evident from the huge sums paid to their Managing Directors by way of salary and commission, the high dividends ranging from 15 to 60 per cent uniformly paid to their share-holders and several months' bonus granted to workers — they have done precious little in the way of either supplying yarns to our hand-loom weavers or cloth to the people of the Province. There are 65 cotton mills in our Province with 15 lakhs of spindles and 6500 power looms. Taking the production of yarn per spindle per day of 2 shifts at an average of one lb., these 15 lakhs of spindles must be producing per year of about 300 working days 15×300 or 4500 lakhs or 450 millions lbs. of yarn against 300 millions required for the clothing requirements of the province. The number of handlooms in the Province is about 5 lakhs and the yarn required to keep them fully engaged for 300 days taking a daily average production of cloth per loom at 8 sq. yards, for which 32 hanks or 64/40 lb. of yarn of 20 counts are required, will come to $5 \times 300 \times 8/5$ or 2400 lakhs or 240 million lbs. It is a notorious fact that our handlooms are not able to get, even through black markets, yarns to engage them for more than a week or ten days a month, which means they get only a third of their requirements or 80 million lbs. What becomes of the 450 minus 80 or 370 millions lbs. is a mystery to be cleared. We have often heard it said that they go underground. But they cannot remain buried for long. They must have, as Dame Rumour has it, been clandestinely exported to places outside the province or elsewhere in the shape of yarn or cloth or both. The matter requires to be carefully probed into, which the Premier should immediately arrange for to justify the Government policy. If the facts and the figures and the rumour are true, there is absolutely no justification for the howl raised by the mill-owners and persons playing second fiddle to them. It is not known how these irregularities escaped the notice of the Textile Commissioner and the army of officers under him. They only go to establish beyond all doubt the shrewd observation of Mahatmaji viz.,

"Cloth famine, I know, is a mockery, for, if only the Government and the mill-owners will act honestly and intelligently, no one need go naked

for want of cloth. We have cotton enough, idle hands enough and skill enough to make cloth in our villages."

In addition to not serving the province in the direction of supplying either the required yarn or cloth, these mills are doing incalculable harm to the country by attracting from the villages, by thousands, the flower of the peasantry of able-bodied men and women to the great detriment of their health and morals and also of agriculture and congesting our towns and cities so as to affect the health of the inhabitants, by stimulating the undue increase of cotton cultivation to the prejudice of much-needed food-crops and by depriving thousands of expert fine weavers of their hereditary profession. By undue profiteering and exploitation, these mills have, in spite of their extravagant expenditure, built up during the last 5 years very large reserves; and if they want to find an out-let for them, it cannot be by way of attempting to smother a useful and beneficial cottage industry; but by starting other remunerative enterprises for the manufacture of such foreign articles as are badly needed by our country.

Madura, 4-11-'46

G. SRINIVASA RAGHAVACHARI

THE PATH OF REDEPTIVE SUFFERING

It is recorded in the earliest of the Christian Gospels that when Jesus finally decided to go up to Jerusalem to face his destiny there, he walked ahead of his disciples and that "they were amazed and they that followed were afraid" (St. Mark 10: 32). Another Gospel recording the same incident describes him as "steadfastly setting his face to go to Jerusalem" (St. Luke 9: 51). That is a picture of Jesus not commonly recalled by Christians. The favourite portraits of Jesus depict him as meek and mild, gathering little children in his arms or carrying a lamb on his shoulders. There is only one picture that I know of that does justice to this aspect of stern determination, of heroic decision, that was also characteristic of the great Saviour of Men. It is Harold Copping's famous picture of the head of Jesus in profile, strikingly similar to the face of Gurudev Tagore, but with a look of firm resolve in his eyes that reminds one of another personality in India today, treading the lonely path of redemptive suffering.

Gandhiji today, walking alone along the lanes and fields of Noakhali, is a challenge to all those who claim to live by the law of love. He is putting not only his leadership and his principles but his followers also to the supreme test. As in the case of Jesus of old, his faith will stand that test, even if it means drinking the cup of suffering to its last dregs, even if it means being lifted on a cross of shame. God respects the fixed resolve of His chosen servants to "Do or Die". The darkness that overshadows for a time even the most stout-hearted of believers shall pass, as the gloom that descended on Jesus on the cross did pass, and they shall see the end of the travail of their souls and shall be satisfied.

For

"Behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow,
Keeping watch over His own."

But the challenge is to us who have professed and called ourselves followers of this Man of God. Well might we be amazed and be afraid as we follow in the footsteps of this leader as he marches ahead. It is recorded of Jesus that when he finally embraced the cross his disciples forsook him and fled, fugitives every one of them from the way of suffering. May that not be true of us. It is now that our professions are being tested. It may have flattered our vanity to have ranged ourselves behind this great leader when he seemed to lead us to the promised land of independence. Our eyes were often too eagerly set on the prizes that were to be won when this jail-bird would have become the president or dictator of a free India, to sit then on his right hand or his left. But the question he asks, as Jesus asked of his disciples who wanted to share his glory, is "Are ye able to drink the cup that I drink of", the cup of humiliation and of apparent defeat? It is undoubtedly a bitter cup now to eschew the easy path of violence, to give up positions of prestige and power, and stand with this lonely man, making the appeal of love, in all its apparent weakness to those estranged from us. And to stand with him today does not mean rushing to Noakhali to be by his side, but to take our lives in our hands wherever we are in this land of innumerable barriers between man and man, and crossing the narrow bamboo bridges across those barriers in our own little corners. It means bridging the gulf between Hindu and Muslim, Touchable and Untouchable, Christian and non-Christian. It means for each one of us meeting our God in "the toil and sweat of our brows, where He keeps company with the poorest, the lowliest and the lost." It means sharing in the divine work of redemption of which Jesus in Palestine and Gandhiji in India today are compelling manifestations. May the following prayer be ours as we search ourselves and rededicate ourselves to his leadership:

Saviour divine,
Who perpetually for suffering humanity,
Dost bear the burden,
The dread, relentless burden of redemption,
We pray thee that we thy servants today,
May with these weak hands
Uplift a little corner of the weight which crushes thee.

Grant unto us that we may share in thy holy
mystery of pain,
Thy sacrament of agony,
Which redeemeth the world.
Give us courage of heart,
That we may drink with thee a little of thy cup,
Thy bitter cup of humiliation, of loneliness, of suffering.
Help us to see thee as thou art,

Incarnate in the starving, the disease-stricken, the
hopeless:

Give us grace in serving them to serve thee.

In our own loneliness and pain,—

If thou bestowest on us these the tokens of thy
fellowship,—

Help us to pay honestly, unstintingly and bravely
Our part of the great price,

Which of old and for ever thou, O our God,

Payest in man for man.

Shantiniketan, 8-1-'47

S. K. GEORGE

DOUBLE NEGATIVES

We were taught in our youth that under certain conditions double negatives may be used to create a positive effect. One wonders if this can be carried into finance to such an extent as to make a double loot a gift. This appears to be, however, the method of procedure suggested by His Majesty's Government for compensations being paid to the I. C. S. and I. P. S. men on the formation of an Indian National Government. The very fact that these men do not wish to serve a National Government confirms our fears that these services were not national services but British services to hold the Indian nation in subjection. Therefore, even in the first place they should have been paid out of the British Treasury and now when they are not willing to serve a popular government we are asked to pay them compensation which would amount to somewhere in the neighbourhood of 20 crores of rupees and the irony of the thing would appear to be in that even the Indian members of these services are to be compensated! Should we take it that such Indian members who leave the services and wish to be compensated will also be expected to leave our country and go and settle down in their adopted mother country — Great Britain — to which presumably they prefer to owe their allegiance?

However it may be, the financial policy is in complete alignment and keeping with the idea of rewarding Indian soldiers out of Indian assets for fighting for Great Britain and keeping India under subjection as an army of occupation.

We would suggest that if logic is to prevail, such service men who would choose not to serve a National Government should be paid what compensations that may be due to them not out of the Indian funds, but out of the British Treasury. In the same way the rewards that are given to the Indian soldiers should also be borne, if England were to be honest, out of British Treasury. It is a recognized principle that all agents should be paid for by their principals. If these service men and the Indian soldiers were agents of the British imperialism, is it too much to expect that the imperialists should bear the cost of their agents?

J. C. KUMARAPPA

SHRIRAMPUR DIARY

25-12-'46

Readings from the Bible formed a special feature of Gandhiji's prayer meeting today, the birthday of Jesus Christ. Addressing the gathering, Gandhiji said that he had begun to believe in a toleration which he would call the equality of all religions. He added that Jesus Christ might be looked upon as belonging to Christians only, but he really did not belong to any community, inasmuch as the lessons that Jesus Christ gave belonged to the whole world.

26-12-'46

In the course of his post-prayer speech Gandhiji said that he had no doubt in his mind that the British would have to quit India. But if Indians were foolish enough to quarrel among themselves, he could very well visualize the destiny of the whole country. India would probably be placed under the United Nations, which would mean not one but many masters, and, hence, goodbye to independence.

Continuing Gandhiji said that the task he had undertaken in Bengal was most serious. Here a community which was friendly to him previously had now looked upon him as its enemy. He was out to prove that he was "a real friend of the Muslims." So he had chosen for his greatest experiment a place where the Muslims were in majority.

For the fulfilment of his mission it would suffice if he toured the countryside alone and the presence of the workers from outside soliciting his advice and directions raised fresh problems for him instead of assisting him to solve the already complicated task he had undertaken. Much of the misunderstanding could be removed if those really keen on serving the people of Noakhali would directly approach the Bengal Ministers with their plan of work and obtain not only their written permission to carry on their work but also their approval of the plan.

Gandhiji gave this advice to some doctors who came from Bombay yesterday for rendering medical aid to the refugees in the affected areas. To some people who sent him letters and telegrams offering to come to Noakhali for service, Gandhiji had replied that they could serve the cause by carrying on constructive work around their own places. To those who sought directions as to how best to serve in Noakhali, Gandhiji said that he himself was groping in darkness, and therefore, a blind man could not be the best guide.

The speech was provoked by the fact that when he asked some people offering to serve in Noakhali whether they would continue to serve if necessary for a life-time even after he had left, they were reluctant to commit themselves. This reluctance led him to believe that people were anxious to come and serve in a manner which would attract his attention and that such people were not keen on service for the sake of service.

27-12-'46

Gandhiji in his address said that a friend had been telling him that his reference to "darkness" surrounding him was very confusing to many. The

friend thought that people at distance saw light shimmering through his plan, and there was enough proof that the confidence was slowly returning in that affected area.

Gandhiji said he would tell this friend and others who thought like him that they had misunderstood him to some extent. The darkness in which he was surrounded was of such a character that the like of which had never faced him before. It was indeed now a vital test that his *ahimsa* was passing through. He would not be able to say that he had come out successful until the object was reached.

It was true that the night was darkest before the dawn. He himself felt that and although friends at distance could see glimpses of the breaking dawn he himself felt that he was surrounded in complete darkness.

Gandhiji said that many years ago a friend of his used to carry Patanjali's *Yogasutra* constantly in his pocket. Although Gandhiji did not know Sanskrit yet the friend would often come to him to consult about the meaning of some of the *sutras*. In one of the *sutras* it was stated that when *ahimsa* had been fully established it would completely liquidate the forces of enmity and evil in the neighbourhood. Gandhiji felt that the stage had not been reached in the neighbourhood about him and this led him to infer that his *ahimsa* had not yet succeeded in the present test.

That was the reason why he was saying that there was still darkness all round him.

Gandhiji said that his plan was to proceed with the least number of companions on his march, and that he would prefer to stay in the houses of Muslim friends. He had reduced his needs and these could be met even by the poorest villagers. He would like to go absolutely unprotected if it was to prove that in his heart he had nothing but love and friendship for the Muslims.

28-12-'46

THE PRAYER MEETING

Addressing the prayer gathering Gandhiji said that the Congress was not a Hindu organization. It did not serve Hindu interests to the exclusion of the interests of the other communities.

Introducing the leaders to the congregation, Gandhiji said that they had come to him to discuss questions, not from the point of view of one particular community, but purely from a non-communal angle.

Addressing his prayer gathering in Chandipur Gandhiji said that his mission was for the establishment of friendship between the sister communities living here and not to organize any one community against the rest. So long the non-violence which had been practised was the non-violence of the weak but the new experiment in which he had been engaged here was the non-violence of the strong. If it were to be successful it should succeed in creating a moral atmosphere helpful to both the communities round him. Only when the Hindus and Muslims shed their fear and mutual suspicion

could real unity of heart come. There should not be any cause for hostility because their hearts were one.

Referring to the task of village reorganization Gandhiji said that East Bengal was a land of gold but unfortunately the life of the people was not as it should be. The water in the tanks was so dirty that he could not dare even wash his hands in them. The villages were also unclean! The rich were growing richer and the poor were getting poorer. That was not forced upon them by nature. That was a *satanic* state of affairs. But although the social arrangements were *satanic*, individuals were not so. Individuals should raise their organization and shape it according to new ideas of equality and comradeship.

Gandhiji continuing said that he would personally like to live for 125 years, not by the help of medicines but by natural ways, in which he would be able to serve the nation and humanity.

Concluding, Gandhiji asked all Hindus and Muslims to devote themselves to the noble task of reorganizing the village life and in improving their economic condition. Through cottage industries they would find themselves working together in the common task and unity would thereby grow among them. He exhorted the audience to carry on his eighteen-point constructive work which would spread like a life-giving influence over the entire country-side.

ADVICE TO WOMEN

Addressing a gathering of women who had assembled at the courtyard of the house where he is residing at Chandipur, Gandhiji said that women should depend on God and on their own strength and not on others. They should be more courageous and should have more confidence in their own strength. If they were afraid, they would fall easy victims to the onslaughts of the miscreants.

"Indian women are not *abalas*. They are famous for their heroic deeds of the past, which they did not achieve with the help of the sword, but of character. Even today they can help the nation in many ways. They can do some useful work by which they can not only help themselves, but also the nation as a whole, thereby taking the country nearer her goal."

Gandhiji told them that not the men of Noakhali only were responsible for all that had happened, but women too were equally responsible. He asked them all to be fearless and have faith in God like Draupadi and Sita of the past.

Gandhiji also asked them to eschew untouchability. He said that if they still went on disowning the untouchables, more sorrow was in store for them. He asked the audience to invite a Harijan every day to dine with them. If they could not do so, they could call a Harijan before taking a meal and ask him to touch the drinking water or the food. This, Gandhiji said, would go a long way to cement the gulf created between different classes of people by artificial caste barriers. Unless they did penance for their sins in that way, more calamities and more severe ones would overtake them all.

4-1-47

Gandhiji opened on Saturday morning a school at Chandirgaon, a village about one mile from

Chandipur. At the school he inquired as to what subjects were taught and especially whether any craft was taught.

Gandhiji pointed out that he would not like schools to be run on the same old lines and he advised the introduction of crafts. If the school wanted his advice, he would advise *Nayi Talim* (new education) which gives training in crafts. The aim of education should be to make the students self-supporting. Addressing the prayer meeting, Gandhiji said: "I have not come here to talk politics." His purpose, was not to reduce the influence of the Muslim League or to increase that of the Congress, but to speak to the people of the little things about their daily life, things which, if properly attended to would change the face of the land and create a heaven out of the pitiable conditions in which they were all living today. Bengal, said Gandhiji, was a land full of verdure, with plenty of water and fertile soil. Nature had showered her abundance on Bengal, but through ignorance, the people were suffering from poverty and disease. They appeared to be content with what little could be earned from betel-nut and cocoanut gardens and a little of agriculture. But with more knowledge, they could increase the productivity of the land many times and convert their villages into cleaner abodes of peace and prosperity. If all the villagers joined together, the face of the land would be changed in no time.

Referring to the evacuees, Gandhiji said that they must come back home and face all dangers and difficulties. Any one who had committed a sin should likewise make a clean confession to God, and then depend upon God for whatever he might choose to do. Truly religious men who made a confession to God did not repeat their errors.

5-1-47

Gandhiji said that it was continually being impressed upon him that his place was no longer in this province but in Bihar where infinitely worse things were alleged to have taken place. The audience should be aware, Gandhiji said, that he had all along been in correspondence with the popular Government in Bihar and all influence possible was being exercised by him over that Government from here; but he did not want to leave Noakhali because his task here was of an entirely different order. He had to prove by living among the Musalmans that he was as much their friend as of the Hindu or any other community. This could evidently not be done from a distance or by mere word of mouth.

A Bihar Minister and several responsible officials who had come to him yesterday had placed before him all the facts within their knowledge without any reservation. They had admitted that brutal things had taken place in the course of one fateful week and that they were prepared to bear all justifiable censure passed on them on that account.

They knew their duty as a responsible Government. The charge of complicity or failure in doing all that was humanly possible was denied by them

and they said they were prepared to undergo any ordeal in order to prove their innocence. They had been trying to answer the charges made by the Muslim League against them. Gandhiji said, he would like to assure the audience that he would not rest until he was satisfied personally about the Bihar case and had done all that was humanly possible.

Gandhiji thought that the attendance of both Hindus and Muslims in prayer meetings was dwindling and one day he would be left without anybody to listen to him at all. But he said that even then there would be no reason for him to give up his mission in despair. He would then roam from village to village taking his spinning wheel. With him it was an act of service to God. Such labour undertaken with an unselfish mind would speak for itself among those who were round him. A worker, he said, who travelled from village to village teaching the people how to clean their ponds effectively and teaching them other arts and crafts so as to enrich the life of the villagers, should be able to make the villagers long for his company rather than shun him.

Continuing Gandhiji said that news had just reached him that the evacuees were now returning in fair numbers and the question of rehabilitation was becoming more and more acute. His advice to the evacuees would be that they should brave all hardships and return home quickly. By means of their own labour they must determine to rebuild their ruined homes as well as their own lives. Government should extend all necessary help and they should be approached by the evacuees. He was aware of the fact that various relief organizations were prepared to help the evacuees with finance and other material assistance. But why should they undertake a task which rightly belonged to the Government set up by the people themselves? If the Government failed to extend it either quickly enough or to a satisfactory extent, then it was for them to say so and seek supplementary aid of public charities in order to rehabilitate the people.

But whatever shape these arrangements might take, the evacuees must be prepared to return home in the face of all possible dangers and difficulties.

6-1-'47

"Appeasement has become a word of bad odour. In no case can there be any appeasement at the cost of honour. Real appeasement is to shed all fear and to do what is right at any cost," said Gandhiji in reply to a question when he met members of the Chandipur-Chandirgaon Gram Seva Sangh. The question put to Gandhiji was: What should the Sangh do to appease the aggressive mentality of the majority community?

In answer to a question whether the refugees should accept monetary assistance from the Government even if it was quite insufficient for the erection of temporary shelter. Gandhiji said, "Refugees must honestly find out what they need for the least kind of temporary shelter. If their basic requirements are not covered by the proposed Government grants, they should refuse to accept them but should still

return to their homes even if it meant no cover over their heads. This has to be done in a spirit of sportsmanship."

Question: In the course of rehabilitation, should the members of the minority community be lodged together in sufficient numbers for the purpose of safety?

Answer: "Such concentration of population is an unthinkable proposition. It would imply that the whole country would be divided into hostile sections, perhaps enjoying a sort of armed peace. The manly thing to do is for every individual, of whatever sect, whether young or old, to derive protection from one's inner strength which comes from God."

Asked what arrangements for the safety of the refugees could be made in view of the fact that miscreants were moving freely in the affected areas, Gandhiji said: "No place in the world to-day is free from miscreants. So villagers should fall back on their own strength for protection. The strength which will give them lasting protection is the strength of the heart." For those who accepted God as their protector, what did it matter if miscreants roamed about? People should do what was right for them and leave the rest to God.

HOW TO EARN A LIVING

Question: If Government and private relief is stopped, what work can we give to the refugees so that they can earn their daily bread?

Answer: "Although personally I should be tempted to suggest handspinning as a universal occupation, I would not necessarily do so in the present case. Instead, I would suggest that the workers should find out on the basis of detailed local enquiries what occupation could be undertaken in each village. And when such information is available, I would love to give advice in greater detail. It is certain that the work must be done in cooperation."

7-1-'47

Gandhiji's 'one night one village tour' commenced on Tuesday morning (7th January), when he left Chandipur for village Masimpur about two miles from there.

"During my journey I will eat whatever I get, and am even prepared to go without milk", said Gandhiji to one interviewer.

Gandhiji is prepared to live any kind of rough life during his "pilgrimage". He will dispense with all kinds of secretarial work during his "one village one day" journey. He would not have any interviewers during his journey. He will spend most of his time in meeting Hindus and Muslims, visiting houses destroyed and gathering social and economic facts about the villagers. Wherever he goes he would ask all to live in peace and fear none in this world except God. He would ask them to reorganize and spend their time in village reconstruction and constructive work. During his journey he will meet deputations of Muslims, Hindus and women separately.

During his journey Gandhiji will have very few bags with him. His narrow blanket bed and a few of his other necessities of daily life, his box charkha will be with him and also a few of his favourite books

including the Gita, the Koran and the Bible. His only walk-hour companion is his walking stick.

In this way Gandhiji will walk down from village to village every day without spending more than one night in one village.

Addressing a meeting of the Masimpur—Keroa Gram Seva Sangh soon after his arrival at Masimpur, Gandhiji said that people should try to purify themselves and not indulge in outward show.

Replying to a question regarding the wearing of the sacred thread—which the questioner said the Arya Samaj wanted every Hindu to wear—Gandhiji said that anyone who liked might wear the sacred thread, but there should not be any movement or propaganda in this behalf. No good would be done by wearing the sacred thread alone as it could not remove the defects of the Hindu religion.

Gandhiji referred to the protection given to him by the Government, and said: "The police and military are going about for my protection, but I do not like such protection." The Government, however, thought that it was their duty to afford him such protection. To that he had nothing to say. The Government were doing what they thought was their duty.

Gandhiji said that some Sikhs were also going about with him. People may ask why so? But these Sikhs had come not at his call. They came with the Government's permission. They had come for work towards unity between the Hindus and the Muslims. These Sikhs had disarmed themselves. They had given up their *kirpans* and were *working on principles of ahimsa to serve the Hindus and the Muslims*. They were friends, said Gandhiji, and he would not like to deprive himself of such friends.

8-1-'47

When he reached Fatehpur in the morning, Gandhiji said, he had been surrounded by affection all round, and among the messages received were also some from sisters. They wanted to present him with sweets specially prepared by them, but Gandhiji had replied that he was hungering not for sweets for the tongue but for sweets for the heart. He was grateful for the accommodation offered by the village, that was all that he needed. Gandhiji did not want to be a burden on any village through which he was passing. His own food was carried along with him while the expenses of the whole party had already been defrayed by loving friends.

Gandhiji continued, some Muslim friends had asked him why a feeling of estrangement was growing between the two communities in spite of the able leadership around, more specially in the Congress and the League. Gandhiji had confessed that it was indeed true that the people in general always followed the lead which came from above.

Therefore, it was not enough that leadership was able but it was necessary that there was accurate knowledge of the wants of the people. For himself he was only trying to depend wholly upon God and work at the task which came naturally before him. He commended the same course to everyone.

TO GANDHIJI'S CORRESPONDENTS

Prof. Nirmal Bose, Gandhiji's Bengali interpreter in a statement to the Press says, "Although of late Gandhiji has been commencing his work at 2 a. m., he is unable to cope with the work before him."

"He has, from today, (12th January) reverted to three o'clock standard time. Gandhiji feels he must resolutely refuse to tackle all-India correspondence and refrain from sending messages to men and institutions. Gandhiji proposes to confine his activities solely to Noakhali and kindred disturbed areas. He says that if he emerges safely from the ordeal, he will gladly resume his other activities. I would appeal to everyone to cooperate with Gandhiji in his present endeavour."

Again on the 17th January, the A. P. I. correspondent reports:

During the first seven days of his pilgrimage Gandhiji had to work for about 20 hours daily in order to dispose of his heavy correspondence and other writing work which had accumulated. Every day he used to go to bed just at 10 and wake up very early at 2 in the morning and work until 5 a. m. under the dim light of his lantern.

Working in this way for about 20 hours a day Gandhiji has disposed of his pending work and he wants now to have a little rest.

Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose repeats his appeal that people would do a great service if they practically stopped writing to Gandhiji during his pilgrimage. He has now no time to look into each and every correspondence, unless it is of a very important nature.

This is not the first time that such appeal has been issued. Yet, we regret that we receive every day correspondence re-directed from his camp to Sevagram, and from there to us. We must respectfully inform the correspondents that we do not forward any correspondence whatsoever to him, but dispose it off ourselves according to our own discretion. The public is requested scrupulously to refrain from sending letters to him, and allow him to concentrate all his energy on the great peace mission which he has undertaken.

Sabarmati, 21-1-'47

K. G. M.
N. P.

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