

HARIJAN

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

NARROW PROVINCIALISM

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other prominent leaders have drawn public attention to the spirit of narrow provincialism, which for some years past has been developing in our country.

I have watched this development since at least 1933, and later, as President of the Gandhi Seva Sangh, had frequent opportunities of studying it closely. At the Conference of the Sangh held at Delang (Orissa) in 1938, at my suggestion supported by Gandhiji, this question was discussed at some length. Shri Rajendraprasad, Dr. Prafulla Ghosh and Shri Shankarrao Deo participated in the discussion, and the Conference adopted the following resolution :

"The Conference regretfully notices the spread of the evil of narrow provincialism in the country. The Conference is of opinion that in provincial questions the duty of the members of the Sangh is similar to that in communal questions; namely, of promoting friendliness among people of different provinces and languages. In the opinion of this Conference India is one, and every Indian has full rights of citizenship in whatever province he might choose to live. He cannot be deprived of these rights or discriminated against on the ground that he or his ancestors had immigrated from another province. At the same time it is the duty of the immigrants to identify themselves completely with the life and people of the adopted province, share their joys and sorrows, and contribute to the advancement of the interests and happiness of that province in the same way as the people of that province."

Personally I have always doubted the wisdom of the Karachi resolution in respect of the formation of linguistic provinces and the so-called linguistic rights of "minorities". It is one thing to bring together, as far as practicable, all people speaking the same language under the same administrative unit, and quite another to insist that there should be no multi-lingual provinces. The former recommends itself as convenient both to the people and the administrative machinery. The insistence on the second will not always be so, and will lead to fissiparous tendencies. It is not always impossible or inconvenient to have multi-lingual provinces, without prejudice to the claims of its principal language. Who knows that in a zeal for "one province, one language", the protagonists may not go to the length of solving the difficulties of implementing it by compelling transfer of populations? When an evil is in the air, it will catch any.

The right of a section of the people to have their particular language or script officially recognized must also be interpreted in a broad manner. Teaching through the mother-tongue is a sound proposition educationally. But can I insist, living as I do in Wardha, that the State should provide for the training of my children through Gujarati? I am definite that the State cannot recognize such a right. On the contrary, it can insist that whether my children learn Gujarati or no, they must learn Marathi, which is the language of this province. The State may not forbid my teaching Gujarati also to my children, but it cannot undertake to teach Gujarati; far less to give them all their education through it. Rather, the State has a right to expect, may even insist, that a permanent immigrant shall within, say, twenty years adopt the local language as his own.

Wardha, 10-4-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

BLOOD-STAINED CLOTHES

An old gentleman, who occasionally exchanged letters with Gandhiji for more than twenty years last, in the course of a long letter to me writes :

"Is it true that the blood-stained clothes of Gandhiji are going to be preserved in a museum? If so, may I ask what is it that is intended to be preserved? Love? or Hate!

"Beware lest blind devotion might lead us into grave error. Will his life-long work be rendered nought by his own children — his followers?

"We must be extremely discreet in showing our adoration for and keeping alive the memory of that votary of truth and non-violence. Let us not do anything which might become a producer of evil in the future."

I am in agreement with the above criticism. Personally I do not feel much interested in merely preserving things used by Gandhiji. But I am aware that there are several close associates of Gandhiji who think differently and I must respect their opinion, in the same way as I do mine. Nevertheless, I am of opinion that even if Gandhiji's last clothes are to be preserved, they should be washed and cleared of blood-stains.

I hope the Mahatma Gandhi Relics Preservation Committee will consider this matter carefully.

11-4-'48

P. S. Before sending this to the Press, I showed it to Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar. He says that he could justify both the views. While it was not proper that memories of hatred should be preserved, personally the sight of blood-stained clothes would

raise no feeling of hatred against the murderer in his own mind. He would rather be inspired with feelings of gratitude towards Gandhiji, and to imitate him in banishing fear from the heart.

Though Hindu sentiment considered blood-stained clothes to be impure, yet he would not mind in preserving them in a soiled condition in a museum. The future generations will be set athinking on looking at them and have feelings of respect for Gandhiji.

On the one hand he felt that such material aids to arouse noble sentiments were not worthy of encouragement; on the other he thought that there was nothing wrong in making use of them.

Shri Kakasaheb's mind is divided. He does not claim that the sight of these clothes would raise sentiments of love towards the murderer. It cannot be denied that it is capable of raising those of hatred — as indeed, even without the sight of the clothes the mere knowledge that he was a Brahman became a producer of hate not only against the assassin but towards the whole community to which he belonged.

My mind is not divided. But, in my humble opinion, when one's mind is divided between two views, the right course to follow is that which is incapable of creating evil.

Wardha, 12-4-'48 K. G. MASHRUWALA

Excessive Prices

I am receiving complaints particularly from Gujarat that merchants in general and even agriculturists to a certain extent do not respond well to the removal of controls. They have raised the prices excessively, with the result that the middle and lower classes find it very difficult to obtain their food supplies. Rationing having gone, they are unable to get even the few ounces which they could obtain under the controls. From times immemorial, it has been one of the recognized duties of a *Mahajan* (that is, Association of Merchants and Agriculturists) to see that food became available to every citizen at a fair price. At one time the *Mahajans* were the *de facto* and popular Government of a village or a town because they faithfully attended to this duty. Dereliction in the performance of this duty made them weak and brought about their ultimate suppression by the State. If they wanted to regain their prestige and importance they should realize the importance of looking to the welfare of the common man.

There are also complaints about the agency system for the distribution of kerosene. It appears that the kerosene market has become the monopoly of a few agents, with the result that a good deal of black-marketing is going on in its sale. I hope the authorities and institutions concerned will look into the matter and set it right.

Wardha, 12-4-'48

K. G. M.

METHOD OF VOTING

[This article was written in August, 1946. A few friends had seen it, and one of them had even taken a copy of it for publication; but, to the best of my belief, it was not so done. Last week some friends entered into a discussion about election-methods with Dr. Rajendraprasad, during his stay at Wardha. I was present and took part in the discussion on the lines explained below and later requested Shri Rajendrababu to peruse this article. After reading it, he desired me to publish it in the *Harijan* as being timely, since the subject might come up for discussion in the Constituent Assembly in a short time. Hence its appearance here.

The article was written in the setting of the old regime, and so old party names have been made use of. Some of those parties might disappear now. But that does not make any difference in the main principles discussed. The reader will therefore, kindly take these names as of no greater significance than as if I had simply said X, Y, Z. 13-4-'48 — K. G. M.]

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At some stage the method of casting votes is bound to come up for consideration before the Constituent Assembly. At present, the system of elections runs on the following lines in India. The electors are divided into separate constituencies of single or multiple seats. In the single seat constituencies, each voter has only one vote which he has to cast in favour of one or another of the candidates duly nominated. In the multiple seat constituencies, there is in several provinces the system of what is called "cumulative voting". That is to say, each voter has as many votes as the number of seats assigned to that constituency, with liberty to give thereof as many votes as he liked to any single candidate. It is said that this system enables minorities or smaller groups to obtain representation in the elected bodies. In addition to this, the system of "single transferable vote" has also been advocated and practised on a small scale. In large-scale elections, it is not yet looked upon with favour, being too complicated both for casting and counting the votes.

But whatever be the actual method of casting the vote, and whether the election is direct or indirect and on a franchise universal or restricted, under the system of party politics none of the above methods of casting the vote allows the voter a fair opportunity of selecting his candidate. That work is done by a few individuals beforehand. Out of several applicants, they select one person per seat to stand up as a candidate and the voter is called upon either to accept that candidate as their representative or to reject the party itself. If a voter feels, for instance, that he wants to vote for Congress but that the High or Low or whatever other Command that set up A instead of B for his constituency, made a wrong selection, he has no remedy. Either he must condone the mistake or, if he feels very strongly about it, refrain from voting altogether, or worse still, vote against the

Congress. His regard for the Congress would not permit him to do the last; and if there is a keen contest, he would be pressed by friends not to refrain from voting. But whether he ultimately votes for B or votes against the Congress or simply refrains from voting, it is clear that he would not be quite happy about the affair. What he desired was to have the freedom to choose not only his party but also a candidate of his own choice from the party.

The present system of registering votes does not allow him to do this. Though the party system has become a vital institution of the modern State, still it is not yet a legally recognized institution. The counting officer has to regard each candidate as not affiliated to any party. This fiction compels the parties to set up machinery for selecting the candidates, running the elections, finding funds for them and to do much of the work, which should have been left to voters and candidates. It gives rise to formation of groups within the party for the purpose of securing power not to the party, but to themselves, with all the malpractices and intrigues accompanying it.

It is possible to prevent this evil by according legal recognition to the party system. A candidate filling his nomination paper should be asked to state the party (if any) to which he belongs and wants to represent, with a certificate of a proper officer of that party that he is duly qualified according to the rules of the party to offer himself on its behalf. There might be other candidates also seeking to represent the same party in the same constituency, similarly certified. The voter will vote for his own man, but his vote would also indicate the party he voted for. His vote would, therefore, go to the party as well. His particular candidate might fail, but the vote cast by him would not go in vain. It would be counted in the votes given to the party.

This will be clear by an illustration. Suppose there is a single seat constituency of about 10,000 voters. There are three candidates A, B and C desiring to represent the Congress; two — X and Y — for the Hindu Mahasabha; and one P an Independent. The votes are registered as below :

Congress	H. Mahasabha	Independent
A 1500	X 1600	P 3500
B 1200	Y 400	
C 700		
3400	2000	
Total votes cast 8900		

Here, on any counting there is no doubt that the voters have selected the Independent man P. Now, let us forget P and his votes, and consider the case as if only the Congress and the Mahasabha were in the field and only 5400 voters took part in the elections as detailed above. Individually X has secured more votes than A; but his party has got only 2000 votes as against the Congress, which got 3400. The constituency must be deemed, therefore, to have voted for the Congress and A, the first man thereof, should be regarded as elected.

This method would almost entirely eliminate the work of selecting suitable candidates. All that the parties would have to do would be to lay down conditions for granting certificates to prevent bogus persons from exploiting it. The rule regarding forfeiture of deposit in case of ignominious failure would be a sufficient check against too many candidates seeking elections. But even the votes of candidates who lose their deposits would not have been cast in vain, so far as the party was concerned. (In the above illustration, both C and Y lose their deposits, without injuring their parties.)

In my next article I shall show how this method would work in a multiple seat constituency.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

VINOBA IN KURUKSHETRA

Shri Vinoba gave a talk at the Kurukshetra camp on 8th April, 1948. Before addressing the meeting he had moved round the camp both in company of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as well as later on alone. He said that he had visited them and taken their *darshan* (look) as a devotee would take the *darshan* of God. Kurukshetra, was a holy place from immemorial times. It was a place where the Lord had given his message of the *Bhagavadgita* to Arjuna. One of the things on which *Gita* laid stress was that a person who ate without doing any work committed a sin. It was necessary, therefore, that one who ate should perform some work. The people there had been taking free rations for months. Perhaps in the beginning there was no other alternative. But if the same system continued, it would not benefit either the giver or the receiver. The people had been taking ready-made flour. He would advise them to take corn instead of flour and turn it into flour themselves. Thereby they could get fresh flour and the public money would also be saved. Fresh hand-ground flour was healthier than mill-made old flour. At Gurgaon he saw a woman or two grinding flour and he was glad to notice it. He spoke about it to the women there and the women demanded as many as one hundred grinding stones. They should begin grinding corn at Kurukshetra also.

He had also visited, he said, the industrial department at Kurukshetra. He saw one *ghani* (oil-press) working. Even if not more than one *tola* of oil was consumed per head, one *ghani* could at the most provide oil for 2,000 people. But the population of Kurukshetra was about two lakhs and so there was scope for not less than one hundred *ghanis*. Under these circumstances one *ghani* became simply a spectacular thing.

People, he continued, had shown him their torn clothes. He asked them if they would be willing to spin. If they were prepared to spin they could get their own clothes. In that way if people began to produce their own daily needs, the burden on the Government would be considerably diminished. The country would not be able to bear the burden of providing food and other necessities to thousands of people without their doing anything to produce them. It was necessary, therefore, for them to be prepared to do any work which was necessary for the maintenance of life.

HARIJAN

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1948

SECOND BIRTH OF THE A. I. S. A.

The A. I. S. A. has recently passed the following resolution :

"The Charkha Sangh felt that the condition, (in the proposed new constitution of the Indian National Congress) that a candidate for a Congress *Panchayat* must be a habitual wearer of *khadi*, was a great step in the advance of the *khadi* movement. In order, therefore, to make *khadi* obtainable with less difficulty, the Charkha Sangh decided to remove the yarn condition imposed upon certified Khadi Bhandars. The remaining conditions being meant for ensuring purity of *khadi* and non-exploitation of labour would remain. Having done this the A. I. S. A. would hereafter devote all its attention upon self-sufficiency work. That is to say, it will not engage itself in the production and sale of *khadi*, as such. If for some time it was necessary to facilitate self-spinners to obtain their supplementary *khadi* necessities, it would try to meet their demand. It would take some time for the Charkha Sangh to make these changes. In the meanwhile whatever *khadi* was sold by the Charkha Sangh would be sold on the yarn condition as before."

This resolution will be reckoned as marking a new phase in the history of the A. I. S. A. It relieves the Sangh of its work of the production and sale of *khadi* as a business. The Sangh will hereafter concentrate itself on what was its original and main object, namely popularizing the production of *khadi* for self-sufficiency. Exigencies of the times had compelled it to organize its commercial side. This gave some relief to the poor. It also created a sentiment in favour of *khadi*. But it was not sufficient for the founding of a non-violent society. This latter required the Sangh to take a stand against the prevailing currents by insisting that "he who spins must wear (*khadi*) and he who wears must spin (the yarn)." The yarn condition was imposed as the first step towards the goal. Nevertheless, the Association continued to produce and sell *khadi* for the market. Now, this resolution will relieve it of this activity. It will take some months to completely wind up the commercial department, but that is only a matter of time.

The business side of *khadi* will now be a concern of local organizations. The A. I. S. A. will seek to control them to the extent of seeing that they do not exploit the consumer by taking high profits or the labourer by paying low wages or cheating both in other ways. For this purpose the issue of the A. I. S. A. certificates to *khadi* business concerns will continue as before.

It may be asked, now that the yarn condition is removed why should the A. I. S. A. seek to control the business at all? The answer is that the

yarn condition has been removed for the convenience of Congressmen, while the control is sought to be retained for protecting the goodwill of *khadi*. *Khadi* produced by exploiting labour is not *khadi* in the sense in which a Congressman is expected to recognize it. For him it is stained *khadi*. It is also necessary to see that the article put forth in the market as *khadi* is not adulterated with mill yarn. Certification by the A. I. S. A. is needed for both these purposes.

Congressmen will now be put on test. The Congress requires several conditions to be fulfilled by a Congressman desiring to stand as a candidate for a Congress *Panchayat*. For instance, he must be a habitual wearer of *khadi* and a teetotaler. That is, the wearer of mill cloth and a drinker are alike in the eyes of the Congress. It means that just as the stopping of the drink evil is a part of the Congress programme, so too is the stopping of the mill cloth. If this is a correct interpretation, it is the duty of every friend of the Congress to encourage *khadi* in every manner. That is, he must spin himself and if it is insufficient for his clothing requirements he must purchase only certified *khadi*. It is the duty of the Socialist and other "progressive" parties also to accept the *khadi* programme and thus give a practical demonstration of their dislike for capitalism, if they wish well of the masses and love the country's charkha flag.

VINOBA

(Translated from the original article in *Hindustani in the Khadi Jagat of April, 1948.*)

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN THE STATE

This question is likely to come up for discussion before the Constituent Assembly, when it settles the Constitution of India. The Draft Committee's propositions on the subject are as follows:

21. No person may be compelled to pay any taxes, the proceeds of which are specifically appropriated in payment of expenses for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination.

22. (1) No religious instruction shall be provided by the State in any educational institution wholly maintained out of State funds:

Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to an educational institution which is administered by the State but has been established under any endowment or trust which requires that religious instruction shall be imparted in such institution.

(2) No person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds shall be required to take part in any religious instruction that may be imparted in such institution or to attend any religious worship that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto unless such person, or if such person is a minor his guardian, has given his consent thereto.

(3) Nothing in this article shall prevent any community or denomination from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomi-

nation in an educational institution outside its working hours.

The articles, as drafted are in my opinion unsatisfactory. It will be noticed that Article 21 does not prohibit expenditure of taxes for the promotion and maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination. It prohibits simply imposition of a tax specifically for that purpose.

Then, as regards Article 22, it bans religious instruction completely only in institutions wholly maintained out of State funds. But, the word 'wholly' is capable of very wide interpretation. An institution depending on private funds only to the extent of a few rupees per annum cannot be regarded as wholly maintained from State funds; and it would have the right to impart 'religious instruction', whatever that term might mean. So in spite of the Article, it will allow a Minister for Education who wants religious instruction to be imparted in all educational institutions, to so manage that within his State there is no institution which is wholly maintained by the State. The Proviso makes this clearer still. It enables the State to manage educational institutions burdened with the condition that religious instruction shall be imparted in them.

Thus while there is an appearance of providing education without religious instruction, there is the facility of imparting it in every institution. If not providing religious instruction is a 'freedom', the left hand takes away what the right hand appears to give.

But, I am one of those who do not subscribe to merely so-called secular instruction. I believe not only that religious instruction should be given in educational institutions, but that the entire atmosphere of the school should be religious and moral, and that instruction in no subject should be devoid of a moral and religious approach to it. And yet I am entirely at one with those, who do not want the educational institutions of India to be so many centres of religious dogmas and sects.

To explain this, it is necessary to say what I mean by religious instruction. This phrase, be it noted, is not explained in the Draft Code. If the language used in Article 21 is to be a guide to the expression, it would seem that what is meant by "religious instruction" is "instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination".

But I urge that it is possible to give religious instruction and to have sound religious atmosphere pervading all the activities of the institution, without making it "instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination", and I would say that every State institution must provide it. What has been a curse to the modern world is that on the one hand, there is want of pure religious instruction (or rather there is provision for definitely irreligious education) and on the other, there is freedom to impart traditional, unprogressive and reactionary instruction in particular religions or religious denominations. If we wish to raise the moral level of the people it is necessary to give the growing generation definitely religious atmosphere on the one hand, and to discourage sectarianism on the other.

In order to provide this and to bring out my meaning more clearly I would suggest the recasting of the Arts. 21 and 22 as follows:

Art. 21. No part of the State funds shall be spent or specifically appropriated for the promotion or maintenance of any particular religion or religious denomination, and no person shall be compelled to pay any taxes therefor.

Art. 22. (1) No instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination shall be provided by the State in any educational institution wholly or partly maintained out of State funds, and the State shall not accept any responsibility for administering an educational institution established under any endowment or trust which requires the imparting of instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination.

In case of any such responsibility in existence before the date of this constitution the State shall take steps to hand over administration of any such institution to a proper body.

Provided that nothing in this clause shall apply to imparting general religious instruction, which is free from or not confined to any particular religion or religious denomination, in any educational institution wholly or partly maintained out of State funds or administered by the State under any endowment or trust, whether or not such endowment or trust requires that such general religious instruction should be imparted in such institution or even if it requires that instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination shall be imparted in it.

(2) It shall not be compulsory for any person attending any educational institution recognized by the State or receiving aid out of State funds to take part in the instruction or to receive instruction in any particular religion or religious denomination, or attend any religious worship of any particular religion or religious denomination, that may be conducted in such institution or in any premises attached thereto. (I believe that even a minor may not be compelled even with the consent of his guardian to do these things.)

(3) Subject to the aforesaid, nothing in this article shall prevent any community or denomination from providing religious instruction for pupils of that community or denomination in an educational institution outside its working hours.

Before closing the article, let me add a few words in respect of articles 19 and 23, which relate to the same subject.

Art. 19 (1) reads as follows:

Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

Explanation—The wearing and carrying of kirpans shall be deemed to be included in the profession of the Sikh religion.

I suggest that in lieu of the explanation, the following words should be added in the main clause after the word "religion", namely

and to carry any badge, symbol, mark or other thing on or about their persons as a sign of their religion. Art. 23 runs as follows:

23. (1) Any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script and culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same.

(2) No minority whether based on religion, community or language shall be discriminated against in regard to the admission of any person belonging to such minority into any educational institution maintained by the State.

(3) (a) All minorities whether based on religion, community or language shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

(b) The State shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion, community or language.

I suggest for consideration the following provisions to this Article:

To Cls. (1) and (2): Provided that the State may require the knowledge or study of any particular language or script as a necessary condition for admission in any educational institution maintained or recognized by the state.

To Cl. (3): Provided that the State may require the imparting of instruction of any particular language or script to every person taking instruction in any such educational institution, whether it receives State aid or not.

Wardha, 14-4-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

VINOBA AT RAJGHAT—III*

Shri Vinoba said that evening was looked upon as a holy time for prayers, because it marked the end of the day and also of a unit of measurement of life. It gives particular peace of mind and stimulates noble sentiments if it is devoted to worship and prayer. He urged upon the audience to attend the prayers regularly and to bring their friends and relatives also with them. It was like a public festival in which every one should be invited to participate.

They were passing through what was called a National Week. It was a Week for rendering service to the nation. It started twenty-nine years ago when several young men who were present there were not even born. The commencement of the observance of the Week marked the birth of new life in the Indian nation and so it had been observed ever since.

This year they were to devote the Week for collecting the Gandhi Memorial fund. It was good to contribute even money, because even monetary contribution demanded self-sacrifice. But it should be remembered that money was not the main thing in service. It was capable of even corrupting service. That was the reason why one had to be very careful in the proper collection and disbursement of money. What was needed for service was not money so much as the giving up of one's narrow outlook and of identifying oneself with the people.

* A summary of the sermon delivered by Shri Vinoba to the public prayer meeting at Rajghat on Friday, the 9th April.

There was a story in the *Upanishads*. The sage Yajñawalkya had two wives. The one was an ordinary woman attached to the things of this world. The other Maitreyi was wise and discriminating. After some years of worldly life Yajñawalkya decided to renounce the world. He summoned his two wives and told them that he was about to relinquish the world and, therefore, would like to divide his property between them. Thereupon, Maitreyi asked him whether she could get immortal life with the money which he wanted to give her. Yajñawalkya replied that there was no hope of that through wealth. Wealth could give only such pleasures of life as rich men enjoyed, i. e. mortal joy. If she wanted immortal joy, she must seek the realm of the spirit by renouncement and service of the world and by identifying herself with the entire creation.

The Congress claimed that it wanted to establish the government of the people. If they wanted a government of the people and to serve them, they must understand the needs of the people and be one with them. A hero could be worshipped only through heroism. Similarly, the poor could be served only by voluntarily accepting poverty. The National Week should, therefore, be utilized for dedicating one's money for the service of the people.

Shri Vinoba then related what he saw at the Kurukshetra Refugee Camp which he had visited the previous day in company with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Kurukshetra was a holy place of pilgrimage from immemorial times and was associated with the sacred memory of the *Bhagavadgita*. In outward appearance it was just a place like any other place. There were few trees here and there and a vast plain. But its associations with the *Gita* raised ennobling sentiments. However, the present condition of Kurukshetra was not in consonance with the teachings of the *Gita*. The *Gita* taught that no person had a right to eat his food without performing work. It was work which purified man's life and led him to non-violence. But he saw that the people at Kurukshetra were getting free rations for several months past. Shri Vinoba thought that if it was difficult for all to get work, they could at least make their own flour if they were provided with *chakkis* (grinding-stones). He wondered why they were given ready-made flour. But such a simple thing did not occur to the organizers, because the *chakki* had disappeared from the life of the organizers themselves. It was difficult for men to think outside their own grooves of life. That was why he said that one must accept poverty to serve the poor. Tulsidas had said in one of his *bhajans* (devotional songs):

नाथ गरीब-निवाज है, मैं गरीब न गरीबी ।

(The Lord is the Protector of the poor, but I have not made myself poor; how shall I get His protection!)

Let us therefore, he said, take a vow of poverty during the Week. That meant that they should do "bread-labour" during that Week. The abandonment of bread-labour was the cause of imperialism and other orders founded on exploitation. If they wanted to end these systems, they could do it only by accepting voluntary poverty for themselves. If they had no grinding-stones in their homes, they should get them.

As the easiest form of "bread-labour" Gandhiji had put forth the *charkha*, which could be plied equally by a child and an aged one. It was a symbol of one's attempt to identify oneself with the poor. Necessarily, it would not be proper simply to spin yarn and lead the rest of their lives in the same manner as before. It must mark the beginning of a labourer's life,—a scavenger's life which creates and cleans. Some such things should be begun during the Week. Like Tulsidas they should all anxiously yearn to become poor so that they might become worthy of God's protection.

NOTES

Ahimsa Week

Professor W. S. Fernando, Principal, Universal College, Panadura, Ceylon, has issued an appeal from which the following is taken :

"Life is the most precious gift of all and we have no right to cut short the life of any being large or small. It is our duty to alleviate the sufferings of both man and animal. Having witnessed the innumerable sufferings caused by the wars, pestilences and earthquakes during the past few years, the whole world is anxious to see a period of relief and happiness free from communal, religious and political strife. Therefore, let us make an honest effort to bring happiness to all mankind and to dumb creatures.

"We wish to bring to your notice that the *Ahimsa* Movement organized by us on a minute scale in 1925 has made gradual progress during the last twentythree years, showing tangible results last year.

"We request all to co-operate with us in observing the *Ahimsa* Week, which falls in the first week of May every year. The following three precepts have to be observed during the week :

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

"The co-operation of priests and teachers of all religions and associations is earnestly invited to make this humane Movement a success."

I commend the appeal to all whose daily life gives them scope to observe the three abstinences. The third item demands attention of even those who are strict vegetarians and do not kill even insects.

Having regard to the widespread poison of communalism prevailing in the country, and the possibility of making even an appeal like this an excuse for creating serious disturbances, I do not recommend a demonstration and planned propaganda of this Movement. The idea is good and can be more firmly popularized by the individual observance and efforts of those to whom it appeals.

Wardha, 15-4-'48

The Yarn Condition

The yarn condition imposed by the A. I. S. A. for the purchase of *khadi* has been raised. Congressmen will have now no externally imposed impediment in purchasing *khadi* from certified Bhandars without plying the *charkha*. It is quite a different

thing that, in practice, most Congressmen will find it impossible to provide themselves with genuine *khadi* unless they are prepared to spin themselves or get spinning done under their own eyes. This follows from the proposed Constitution of the Congress which provides that for the Primary Congress *Panchayats* there shall be one candidate for every 500 inhabitants. This, if fully implemented, will need at least 6 lakhs of candidates for a population of 30 crores, even if there were no contested elections anywhere and Pakistan is omitted. This would mean a demand for workers only of not less than 1.5 crore yards of *khadi* at the modest rate of 25 yards per head. This demand itself is one which, under the prevailing conditions, cannot be met immediately unless a considerable part of the candidates practise self-help.

I do hope that the Congress will insist that all *khadi* should be purchased from certified institutions only. The A. I. S. A. has decided that it will no longer engage itself in the *khadi* business, i. e. getting *khadi* produced by spinners working for wages only. Its certificates, therefore, will be issued for the sole purpose of assuring the purchaser that to the best of its belief the certified institution deals in genuine *khadi* and does not carry on its work in an exploiting manner. The necessity for imposing such conditions follows from the proposed object of the Congress.

Wardha, 8-4-'48

Harijan-Brahman Marriage

The marriage of Shrimati G. Manorama, with Shri R. Arjuna Rao, which was celebrated at Sevagram on the 13th March last in the presence of Shri Thakkarbapa and other leaders ought to have received earlier notice in these columns. I regret it could not be so done. The bride is the eldest daughter of Prof. G. Ramachandra Rao of Krishna District in Andhra and a Brahman according to traditional social grouping. The bridegroom is a youth of the so-called Harijan group, also of the same district. Prof. Ramachandra Rao is a well-known Harijan worker and a teacher, if not almost a guardian of the bridegroom.

At one of the Harijan Workers' Conferences held at Sevagram in 1945-6, Gandhiji expressed the opinion that a whole-hogger Harijan worker must be prepared to give his daughter in marriage to a Harijan. Shortly after this, when Gandhiji was on a visit to Madras, Prof. Ramachandra Rao, with the consent of his daughter, proposed this betrothal. Gandhiji suggested that as the parties were still too young to be married, Shri Arjuna Rao should be trained at Sevagram for a couple of years, and Shrimati Manorama should receive training at a Kasturba Centre. This was agreed to.

The period of training being over, this marriage had been awaiting Gandhiji's convenience for being celebrated in his presence. Gandhiji had proposed April of this year for the marriage, and it would have been performed at any place convenient to him. But as this was no longer possible,

the occasion of the Constructive Workers' Conference was taken advantage of to perform the function.

Shrimati and Prof. Ramachandra Rao and Shrimati Manorama (the bride) have set a very great example of concordance between theory and practice. I hope a time will soon come, when such marriages will be so frequent that they will not remain a subject of special notice. As it is, the marriage must be taken note of by all who believe in the principles of the Sarvodaya Samaj.

Wardha, 14-4-'48

'Harijan' Editions

I wish that readers of the *Harijan* as also publishers of translations in Indian languages should look, if they can, into the Gujarati and Hindustani editions also, along with the English. All of them will more often than not contain some independent article which is not translated in any other. Even when the articles are on the same subject they must not be surprised to find that the way of presentment in the Indian languages is different from that in English. Publishers of translations would do well to translate them from Hindustani or Gujarati, whenever the Indian language article does not appear as a translation of its English counter-part.

Wardha, 13-4-'48

K. G. M.

THREE PUZZLES

[The following is a free translation of a part of the initial speech made by Shri Vinoba on 13-3-'48 in the open session of the Sevagram Conference — Ed.]

My first puzzle has been already referred to by the President (Dr. Rajendraprasad) in his opening address. How is it that this great country of ours fell so unimaginably low as soon as it had gained its independence? Some seek to explain away the fact by saying that it has so happened in other parts of the world also, and that it is a consequence of the great World War. But the explanation is not sufficient, because our claim is that the means which we employed for achieving our independence were different from those adopted by other countries; and that though the execution of our special means was weak, still it had brought us success. The world too has accepted our claim, and so it is all the more puzzling that we have fallen so low and so suddenly. I have been seeking the correct explanation but have not succeeded in doing it. If we know the causes we can think of the remedy.

The second problem which puzzles me is the growth of provincialism. Throughout the Sanskrit literature that I have read, wherever there is an expression of the patriotic sentiment, the idea expressed is, दुर्लभं भारते जन्म — *durlabham Bharate janma* (to be born in India is rare good fortune). Nowhere has it been said that it is a good fortune to be born in Bengal, or Maharashtra, or Gujarat, or any other province. This literature belongs to a period when there were no such modern means of transport and communication as railways, post offices etc.

Even at that ancient period, the people believed India to be one and considered that to be born in it was rare good fortune. We had all worked together for freeing that great country, the people of every province co-operating in doing so. How is it then, now that we have achieved our independence, provincialism has become and is becoming so strong every day, and how can it be prevented? For, if we cannot control it, it will create the same dangers, that the Hindu-Muslim discord has done.

The third great question relates to the purity of means. I have been long thinking whether it is ever possible that in a great country like India we can have only one ideology accepted by all. And if it is inevitable that there will be different groups subscribing to different ideologies and ways of thinking, then is it not absolutely necessary that all such groups should agree at least on one point, namely that in the propagation of their ideas they will not make use of untruthful or violent means? During his whole life Bapu endeavoured to teach us that our aims will be as our means are. That is to say, an aim cannot remain pure and lofty if its means are not so. If, therefore, a group claims that its aim is lofty and noble, the means must also be so selected. Just let us consider the assassination of Gandhiji. There is a big group behind the assassination. It planned the murder, made preparations for celebrating it as soon as committed, and the plans were so secretly laid that we did not know anything about it. Now if we do not accept the necessity of adopting pure means for achieving an object would not such a group be entitled to our praise? If it is allowed that any means might be employed to achieve one's end, who can unquestionably decide whether a particular aim is proper or improper, since every one considers his own aim to be right? If, however, we could agree not to employ untruthful or violent means for achieving our different aims, we shall all have combined to create a strong united and moral front. Let us for the time being put aside all ideas of new planning, new order, etc., and resolve that whatever our new plans and ideal orders be, they will be implemented through good means only. All those can be our co-workers, who agree on this.

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