

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XII. No. 24

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, AUGUST 15, 1948

TWO ANNAS

## NON-EDIBLE OILS OF INDIA

### OIL CONSUMPTION IN SOAPS

Our annual consumption of soap in the Indian Union may be taken at 30 crore pounds of soap at a lb per head. After making due allowance for fillers like silicate etc. this quantity would consume roughly 75000 tons of oils. At present edible oils like cocoanut and groundnut oils are mainly used for this with some addition of *mahuwa*, castor oil, tallow and *rosin*.

### NON-EDIBLE OILS

There is a great shortage of edible oils in our country. The total oil and resources available for edible purposes provide approximately half an ounce per day per person as against two ounces as per nutritional minimum requirements. It will be a big contribution, therefore, towards relieving this oil shortage if the edible oils used in soaps and other industries can be released and replaced by non-edible oils. In India we have a number of trees like *neem*, *karanj*, *kusum*, *sal*, *plam* and others which yield oil-bearing seeds. Unfortunately, there is practically no information regarding the quantity of oil seeds available from these trees nor regarding the quantities crushed. But it is certain that only a negligible proportion of this source is tapped at present. If full use is made of these non-edible oils they will contribute not less than one third of the quantity of oils used in soaps at present, i. e. about 25000 tons of oil per year.

### THE PROBLEM

Excepting a few big concerns like the Calcutta Chemicals, the Godrej, the Kerala Soap Institute, the Limda Soap Works of Calicut which consume certain quantities of neem oil, there is little demand for non-edible oils. The reasons may be that (1) these trees are scattered and their seeds ripen in the rainy season, thus presenting the problem of seed collection; (2) most of these non-edible oils are unsaturated and possess bad odour and do not make good soaps if used in their raw form; and (3) most of the soaperies are ill-equipped for processing these oils.

### REMEDIES

If the non-edible oils are to be utilized, the problem will have to be solved on all the three fronts. Proper collection of seeds will have to be organized with initial subsidy from the State, if necessary. The drawbacks of the oils will have to

be removed by refining and hydrogenating them. Treating the oils thus is not only necessary but also advantageous, because it will raise the proportion of non-edible oils used in soaps up to 75% from 25% that can be used if they are not treated; it will tremendously improve the quality of soap by reducing its rapid wearing; and, the cost of treating these oils will be more than met by the high prices that they will fetch. These non-edible oils are generally available cheaper by about 5 to 6 rupees a tin of 35 lbs. than groundnut and cocoanut oils at the present market rates. Refining and hydrogenating will raise the cost from 17½ rupees to about Rs. 23 but these can easily be sold to the soap industries at Rs. 28 per tin.

Once the Government decides the line of action, it will be easy to commence work. The refining and hydrogenating factories in the Indian Union converted roughly about one lakh tons of edible oils into hydrogenated oils for civilian purposes in 1946. Their function in this direction is, to say the least, of a doubtful nature, but they can be switched on to the treatment of non-edible oils with greater advantage both to themselves and to the nation. Even on a rough estimate, they can fully engage one-fourth of the refining and hydrogenating factories working in the Indian Union in 1946. It is well to remember that these factories refined and hydrogenated edible oils not only for edible purposes but also for industrial uses such as manufacture of good quality soaps, glycerine, certain pharmaceutical preparations and a number of other articles. There is an increasing demand for hydrogenated oils from the soaperies, because such oils make for quality soaps. These factories can certainly supply this much felt need. Only they have to take to non-edible oils in place of edible ones.

Lastly to make sure of the use of the non-edible oils in the manufacture of soaps, the distribution of caustic soda should be regulated. It will have to be made compulsory for soap factories to utilize certain proportion of non-edible oils in their soaps. This compulsion will, of course, be necessary only till these oils are not refined and hydrogenated. Once they are so treated, they will create a natural demand for themselves.

### OIL CAKES

There is another point of view from which this question has to be examined. The utilization of non-edible oils will automatically supply oil cakes



which can be used as fertilizers. Taking on an average 30% oil extracted out of these oil seeds, the 25,000 tons of oil will produce roughly 80,000 tons of oil cakes. Some of these oil cakes like that of *neem* seeds have been experimented upon and found very useful as manures as will be clear from the following extracts of a report from the Director of Indian Agricultural Research Institute, New Delhi. He says:

"From the experiments carried out with *neem* oil-cake at this institute with Pusa soil it was found that nearly 60% of the added nitrogen was nitrified in 8 weeks against 70% of the nitrogen of castor, *sarsaon* and groundnut cakes. It has been found to possess protective effects against white ants.

"As regards actual manurial value, some experiments were carried out in the U. P. where *neem* trees abound. On crops like sugarcane, paddy, cotton, potatoes, etc. it has shown good effect as will be seen from the following data:

Experimental Station	Crop	Increase over no Manure	Comparative Effect of Castor Cake	Doses
Pratabgarh	Sugarcane	136.4%	99.5%	With doses of 16000 lbs. of cakes
Gorakhpur	Sugarcane	10.8% 18.1%	20.8% 17.7%	105 lbs. N.
Pratabgarh	Paddy	10.1%		75 lbs. of cake
Aligarh	Cotton	15.4%		100 lbs. N.
Kanpur	Potato	154.9%		200 lbs. N.

JHAVERBHAI PATEL

### Hindustani Examinations

Hindustani examinations in 116 centres of Gujarat and Kathiawad will take place on August 21 and 22, 1948. In all the four examinations 5754 examinees will appear. This is an increase of 1504 over the number appeared in the last examination held in February 1948. Last year, 9015 examinees appeared in these examinations, while this year the number goes up to 10004.

Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad, 3-8-48  
GIRI RAJ KISHORE  
Secretary, Examinations  
Gujarat Hindustani Prachar Samiti

### SELECTIONS FROM GANDHI

By Nirmal Kumar Bose

With a Foreword by Gandhiji

Price Rs. Four Postage etc. As. Ten

### THE NATION'S VOICE

(Second Edition)

[Being a collection of Gandhiji's speeches in England and Sjt. Mahadev Desai's account of the sojourn — September to December 1931]

Edited by

C. Rajagopalachar and J. C. Kumarappa

Price Rs. Three Postage etc. As. Ten

NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE  
Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

## ASHRAM OBSERVANCES IN ACTION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

II

AHIMSA OR LOVE

(concluded)

*Ahimsa* as regards sub-human life is from the Ashram point of view an important aspect but still only one aspect of this comprehensive principle. Our dealings with our fellow-men are still more important than that. The commonest form of human intercourse is either violent or non-violent. Fortunately for humanity non-violence pervades human life and is observed by men without special effort. If we did not bear with one another, mankind would have been destroyed long ago. *Ahimsa* would thus appear to be the law of life, but we are not thus far entitled to any credit for observing it.

Whenever there is a clash of ephemeral interests men tend deliberately to resort to violence. But with a deliberate observance of non-violence a person experiences a second birth or 'conversion'. We in the Ashram are out to observe *ahimsa* intelligently. In so doing we meet with numerous obstacles, disappointments and trials of faith. We may not be satisfied with observing *ahimsa* in deed only. Not to think badly of any one, not to wish ill to him though we have suffered at his hands, not to hurt him even in thought, — this is an uphill task, but therein lies the acid test of our *ahimsa*.

Thieves have visited the Ashram from outside, and there have been thieves in the Ashram itself. But we do not believe in inflicting punishment on them. We do not inform the police; we put up with the losses as best we may. This rule has been infringed at times. A thief was once caught red-handed by day. The Ashramite who caught him bound him with a rope and treated him contemptuously. I was in the Ashram at the time. I went to the thief, rebuked him and set him free. But as a matter of fact *ahimsa* demands from us something more than this. We must find out and apply methods which would put a stop to thieving altogether. For one thing we must diminish the number of our 'possessions' so as not to tempt others. Secondly we must bring about a reformation in the surrounding villages. And thirdly the Ashram ministry should be extended in scope so that the bad as well as the good would learn to look upon the settlement as their own.

We thus find that it is impossible for a man with 'possessions' to observe *ahimsa* even in the gross meaning of that term. A man of property must adopt measures for its security involving the punishment of whoever tries to steal it. Only he can observe *ahimsa* who holds nothing as his own and works away in a spirit of total detachment. If there are many such individuals and organizations in society, violence will not be much in evidence. As gunpowder has a large place in a society based on violence and a soldier who can handle it with skill becomes entitled to honour and rewards, even so in a non-violent society self-suffering and self-control are its 'munitions of war', and persons



endowed with these qualities are its natural protectors. The world at large has not still accepted *ahimsa* in this sense. India has accepted it more or less but not in a comprehensive manner. The Ashram holds that *ahimsa* should be universal in scope, and that society can be built up on the foundations of *ahimsa*. It conducts experiments with this end in view, but these have not been very successful. I have been unable to cite in this chapter much that would hearten the votary of *ahimsa*. This does not apply of course to *ahimsa* as applied to politics, to which I propose to devote a separate \* chapter.

(To be continued)

### NEMESIS OF NEPOTISM

Some time ago two scholars, in China, were overheard talking in this strain:

"Why does every one who becomes an official turn out to be such a bad man?" asked one of the other.

The other answered, "Oh! it is not that; you have your facts upside down. Anybody in China who is already rotten, will turn out to be a successful official."

I was reminded of this the other day when I heard a number of selfless social workers discussing the curse of corruption which has assumed, unfortunately, the magnitude of a major malady since the fateful 15th August, 1947.

The causes of the 'curse', in question, are many. But I am concerned at the moment with only one of these, namely, Nepotism. When those in office, big or small, confer appointments and other favours on their relatives and friends not on the sole consideration of strict justice to, or intrinsic merit of, the beneficiaries, but as if the latter were their grandsons or nephews, (which the word "nepotism" derivatively signifies), a double derogation of the divine is committed, that is, of the virtuous and the worthwhile,—inasmuch as Merit is ignored and Demerit is encouraged.

Now, when virtue,—using the term in its broadest sense—is dishonoured Nemesis sets in and without fail, sooner or later, overtakes him, who provokes her righteous wrath. Apart, however, from the retribution, which may be meted but eventually to the individual concerned, there is a collateral devaluation and degradation of those values and verities which constitute the crux and core of civilization.

And, pray, why this murder of Merit? So that the "murderers" may gather more and more of *mere things*,—the tinsels and trinkets of the world? Indeed, as the author of *No Retreat from Reason* says:

"The rescue of political, of social, of spiritual values, crushed by the weight of things, is becoming the crucial issue of the will to survive."

Truth to tell, the tragedy of the modern age is due to the fact, to quote again the above author, that we have "substituted for an interest in the

salvation of our souls, faith in the beneficence of material gain."

However, was it not to make us conscious of this consuming disease of the twentieth century that Gandhiji came and lived among us? Did he, then, labour and teach in vain? If so, then, we shall have killed him not with three but with three hundred million bullets.

G. M.

### "THE SUPER BOMB"

A Globe news message tells us that in America they have discovered a new Atomic Super Bomb, a thousand times as violent as the Atom Bomb. This is prepared not from uranium but from heavy hydrogen.

While the common people everywhere are anxiously awaiting for the return of peace, the authorities in power in many nations are planning large-scale destruction. The lessons of the last two wars appear to have been lost as far as this section of humanity is concerned. We are told that Russia is persistently strengthening its armed forces and having big air parades to demonstrate their might. Marshal Stalin's son, Major General Vassili Stalin, is holding a demonstration to show the possibilities of jet plane aerial battle and according to Reuter's report, the Russians are gloating over their achievements as compared to the preparation of the Allies.

This state of affairs does not begin and end with Europe. Even our poor country has to spend what little wealth it produces in carrying out an ambitious programme to build up the Royal Indian Air Force, the objective being to make it the most powerful air force in the East. The Government of India are hoping that within about 20 months the Indian Air Force will have 4 more fighter squadrons including a Bomber squadron and a jet squadron along with the latest types of jet air-craft. More than the expenses involved, what is perturbing is the mentality behind this programme. It shows that our leaders are pinning their faith to armed forces in spite of the disastrous experience of Japan so near us.

In building up our Navy we have to look to the scrap heap of other Naval powers. We are picking the cast off clothing and over size boots while the other nations are building more modern types of battleships. We provide them market for their second-hand goods! Recently, the Royal Indian Navy took over H. M. S. "Achilles" and Lord Mountbatten hoped that we would buy a couple of Air-craft carriers and cruisers. These are ways of Great Britain settling her accounts with us and coaching us up to take up her discarded arms at fabulous prices.

With the attainment of freedom we had hoped that our leaders will show the world that India believes that violence never settles the dispute but understanding and friendliness will always call for mutual goodwill. Therefore, it is time that people took a genuine interest in the affairs of the State and acted as a check in the all-out violent programme that is before our country.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

\* This chapter was never written. — V. G. D.



# HARIJAN

August 15

1948

## AUGUST FIFTEENTH

The twin brothers — Hind and Pakistan — complete their first year today. In keeping with the general condition of life and health of children in India, the first year has been precarious to the life and health of both. Both have passed through severest crises, and one cannot still confidently say that they have safely passed the period over. One does not know what the next few years are likely to bring. The fact that the adversities through which the country has passed and is still likely to pass are more man-made than nature-inflicted and brought about by every type of inhuman conduct imaginable adds to the regret. In this beautiful country of ours, so richly endowed with gifts of nature, man alone has been vile and the enemy of his own kind and of everything divine and noble in him. It takes nature thousands of years to produce a man, who attains during the span of his life, as near an approach to Divinity as one can conceive in a mortal being. A kind Providence produced one such among us in our own time. But folly persuaded us to believe that his very divinity was injurious to our social and political ideals, and, if allowed to live longer, the further development of the Divine in him would be a great calamity upon our nation. And so we killed him with our own hands. This event too took place in the first year of these twins.

The two children — India and Pakistan — have been continuously ill, unhappy and naughty. All these heart-rending circumstances depress several of us and incline them towards pessimism. I have received letters on the occasion of the first birthday. They read more like letters of condolence and self-pity rather than cheer and faith. While I sympathize with this lamentation, I do not wish to encourage it. You do not see even a young widowed mother mourning the birth or birthday of her child, even though the child has not kept good health during the year and has, in addition, lost its father. No man wants to look sad on one's birthday, simply because one has not kept well and is still on the sick-bed, and has also suffered heavily during the preceding year. There is something in the phenomenon of birth itself, which one associates with its date, and which, in spite of all the adversities of the preceding year, fills one with the hope of a better life in the future.

The instinct to feel cheerful on one's birthday is not meaningless. The birth of a life is the birth of a fresh hope of achieving something. The birthday reinforces that hope. Life and hope are inseparable from each other. Even a person who has completed a hundred years and is lying helpless in the bed and is not conscious of desires remain-

ing unrealized, on the date of his birth cheers up a little, if for no other reason than that of having succeeded in living upto an old age. He may have been happy or unhappy during his life, and may have even often wished to be relieved of life, still there is an inner urge to feel grateful for having been gifted with longevity. And this manifests itself in a strong or weak manner on the birthday. There is, perhaps, an unconscious faith that his mere existence is a boon.

So let us cheer up on this important day of our national life. Let us not look at the world from that side only which is gloomy with dark clouds, but also in the direction from which they disappear.

Like Rama and Bharat, both born almost on the same day, the people of Hind and Pakistan are and ought to be like one soul in two bodies. The accident of having two bodies has brought about their nursing by two different mothers, who are jealous of each other. Consequently the twins have not been as happy as they should have been during the year. Even Rama and Bharat had to pass a period of fourteen unhappy years. The period saw the death of the father, the abduction of Sita and a perilous war with Ravana. Similarly, it may be that bad times are still in store for us. But that should not allow us to lose hope. Like Rama and Bharat we must resolve to valiantly fight every evil both outside of us as well as inside our own selves, remembering that the true way of fighting evil is not the employment of greater evil but of greater good. We may or may not succeed in removing evil from the world. But let us resolve, as Gandhiji did, that it shall not be said of us that we gave up resistance to evil in despair, and knelt down before it. Let us not give up the hope that the people of the two Dominions some day will get over all these evils, and enjoy healthy, vigorous and peaceful life, and live with the same concord as Rama and Bharat. May God's grace descend upon us.

New Delhi, 1-8-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### The National Anthem

I had refrained from entering into the controversy between *Vande Mataram* and *Jana-gana-mana*, which seems to be going on for some time. A fair correspondent desires me to express my opinion. She herself has pleaded for the second and advanced several reasons in support of her choice.

The fact is that in matters like these, the opinion is formed first and reasons come in later. And the opinion is not formed on grounds of reason, but by the appeal it makes to one's ears and heart. So I do not wish to put forth any grounds.

All I shall say is that while I like *Vande Mataram*, I like *Jana-gana-mana* better. But I would abide by the decision of the Central Government whatever it is, and accept it with all my heart.

New Delhi, 4-8-'48

K. G. M.



## VEGETABLE GHEE

I have received some correspondence blaming me for not having stressed the point of vegetable ghee ever since my taking over charge of *Harijan*. That is true. Perhaps I can give a very long list of subjects on which Gandhiji wrote, but I have not. Simply because I have accepted the burden of *Harijan*, I cannot replace Gandhiji. But one of the reasons for not referring to the question of vegetable ghee was that so far there was nothing extra which I could add to what Gandhiji himself had said or done in the matter. However, I may inform the readers that the Go-seva Sangh, Wardha, has not at all slept over the matter. It has been energetically pursuing it and pressing it upon the authorities.

To me, the question is important on moral grounds, before which those pertaining to health and economics become subordinate. The vegetable ghee has its economic importance more for its capacity of being adulterated with genuine ghee than other factors. This has corrupted and has been corrupting the morals of the villagers as well as the traders. The number of people who prefer the vegetable ghee as such are few. They, too, have taken to it because they realized that even when they went in for the purchase of pure ghee, the substance they got was more or less Vanaspati mixed with a little genuine ghee and charged at a price greater than that of the Vanaspati. A great majority of people still try to buy ghee and pay for it a price which is much higher than that of the Vanaspati, but get a substance adulterated with Vanaspati. Even peasants have learnt the trick of mixing it with butter with the result that even when you purchase butter you purchase along with it the Vanaspati. Thus Vanaspati is a substance which directly promotes dishonesty. Even if there were no other ground for stopping the manufacture of this product, this should be regarded as a sufficient one.

The problem of cattle-breeding has become more difficult on account of this substance. The genuine ghee producer not being able to get adequate price for ghee neglects his cattle and both the health and the quality of milk are getting deteriorated. Just as bad coins drive out good ones, the Vanaspati will in the long run drive out ghee from the market. Thus it is an issue which is independent of the opinion of technical experts on the nutritional value of the Vanaspati or hardened oil. I feel that the issue is being unnecessarily confounded by bringing in the question of nutrition. Nutritional research may be important for determining the relative values of butter, ghee, unrefined oil and refined oil. Hydrogenated oil stands differently.

It is contended by some that the city consumer demands Vanaspati instead of the refined oil, because of the appearance of the former in a granular form. Without eating ghee itself he is able to obtain the satisfaction of taking something like it. He wants to persuade himself into believing that he is using ghee. If there are such people

indeed, a proper thing is to make them realize their mistake and train them correctly instead of catering to them a thing which is not to their benefit. Those who cannot afford to consume genuine ghee because of its expensiveness should take oil in the form of oil itself and not in the form of a substance which looks like ghee but is even perhaps inferior to oil. Even as we may not allow opium trade, we must not allow the trade of edible hydrogenated oils.

I also draw the reader's attention to Shri Jhaverbhai Patel's article on "Non-edible Oils of India" published elsewhere in this issue, as indirectly bearing on this subject.

New Delhi, 3-8-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

## ISM, INTEGRITY AND CHARACTER

[It is a coincidence that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has expressed views similar to those set forth in the course of the main article of the last issue, in his speech at Madras, while unveiling Shri Rajaji's portrait at the Legislative Assembly Chamber, on July 24th, 1948. — K. G. M.]

"While I was young I used to attach a great deal of importance to what may be called various 'isms', policies, etc. Of course, I still attach importance to them because they represent a certain objective, a certain approach and a certain method of work. I still attach importance to them, though relatively, in a lesser degree now than previously. Why? Because I have come to feel more and more that the primary thing I should seek in an individual is not so much, what creed he possesses, his religion, politics or economics, important though they be. The primary thing in an individual is his integrity. If he is not a person of integrity, then it does not do very much good, even though he possesses high ideals, from a political or an economic point of view.

"I valued integrity. But, somehow, I felt that the expression of a certain policy was more important. But my later experience came to show that the expression of mere policy could not be taken for granted. Indeed, much of the high ideals put forward by persons were often exploited for base purposes. Apart from deliberate exploitation of these purposes unconsciously many of our people thought that they have done their duty to the country by merely giving expression to certain noble sentiments and then possibly indulging in anything but noble activities. So, I have come to value much more the integrity of the individual than merely his expression of certain political or economic policy, although, of course, in dealing with national and international matters, one cannot just go merely on the basis of integrity, important as it is. Integrity is a basic thing out of which policy may grow; but integrity is not policy.

"There is another aspect I must speak about. Every country, normally speaking, has a certain individuality and genius of its own. How is the greatness of a country measured? Not by its riches, nor by its material possessions. In India what is valued, respected and honoured, is obviously not material possessions, or persons with high decorations



and titles. Even though we may have *Rajas*, *Maharajas* and *Nawabs*, Highnesses and Exalted Highnesses, they are really not thought of much by the common man. Title or no title; riches or otherwise, these make no difference to the ordinary individual. Possessions do not appeal to an Indian mind, though, of course, many people bow down before money and power. Essentially, the thing India has honoured in the past and even today honours, is wisdom and learning. More even than that, India honours a certain spirit of service. That is the fundamental thing that has always been placed first in the Indian mind, not in every individual mind but the group or the national mind, if I may say so. So, we honour tremendously a man like Mahatma Gandhi for, what I may call, the opposite of possessions, titles, etc. Likewise, we honour Rajaji for his spirit of individuality, service and sacrifice. Rajaji represents fundamentally the highest type of the mind of India." JAWAHARLAL NEHRU  
(From the Hindu of 25-7-'48)

### "THE MODERN DEBTOR"

It had all along been accepted in the past that the man who pays the piper calls the tune. The creditor usually dictated terms to the debtor. India has attained independence but has not increased her bargaining capacity. She is the acknowledged creditor of Great Britain for about 1200 crores after making all manner of unilateral deduction from her credits. A delegation led by our Finance Minister went to London to settle the terms of agreement regarding the settlement of Sterling Balances. The outcome of it is that Great Britain whose income is over £ 800 million has successfully pleaded that it is impossible for her to pay, in the near future, the amount that she owes to India which is less than 1/6th of her annual income. In ordinary life we would consider it absurd for a man who earns Rs. 8,000 a year to plead that it is beyond his capacity to pay off a debt of Rs. 1200. Yet our debtor has successfully convinced our representatives that the situation calls for a very long term settlement!

After the devastation brought in India by the British and American forces using India as their base for Asia in the last war, our rural parts require a considerable amount to be spent on development. The credits were obtained by England taking by political power commodities from India for war use. Now they plead their inability to return the amount in a reasonably short time. We require a great deal of capital to develop our rural areas. Erosion has to be stopped. Irrigation works have to be developed and canals have to be built. These are all items on which the recovered amount of Sterling Balances should be spent but it would seem as though interested parties are anxious to lay their hands on this wealth so that their own programme of industrialization may be stepped up. Our negotiators have been more than anxious to obtain capital goods for industrialists of India. When we

look at this question it would seem wrong to obtain these Sterling Balances and use them for the benefit of the industrialists while leaving the countryside, which built up the credits, to suffer for lack of materials. We had suggested previously also that this money when recovered should be utilized for the purpose of betterment of the village people. We cannot take the money that belongs to one section of the population and give it to the other section. But unfortunately industrialists in our country are almost as powerful as the industrialists abroad, and therefore they are influencing the Government to agree to financial terms which would certainly be detrimental to the interests of the rural population.

We trust that as and when the money is realized, the Government will see its way to spending it in rural area for the benefit of the people.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

### SHRI VINOBA AT AJMER-VI-VII

14-5-1948

The *dargah* of Hazrat Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti at Ajmer is regarded as the greatest *dargah* in India. It is known in short as the *Dargah Sharif* (the holy shrine) of Khwaja Pir. For the last eight centuries, an annual *urs* is held at this place for nine days, commencing from the 1st day of *Rajab*. The special feature of this *dargah* is that it is visited not only by Muslims but also by Hindus. Guru Nanak had also come here and prayed in it. During these 800 years, Ajmer has been ruled by Rajputs, Marathas and other non-Muslim kings, but every ruler took care to protect and maintain the *dargah* with due respect.

Owing to the recent communal disturbances several Muslims of Ajmer have migrated to Pakistan. Gandhiji was anxious that *urs* of *Dargah Sharif* should be held as usual this year also without any obstacle. He had therefore promised to visit the *urs* when it came. But God willed it otherwise and took Gandhiji in His own care.

Several Muslims of Ajmer requested Shri Vinoba to visit the *dargah* in lieu of Gandhiji. Shri Vinoba consented and reached Ajmer on the 9th May, i. e. a day previous to the commencement of the period of pilgrimage.

While the pilgrimage lasts, Friday naturally witnesses the largest prayer gathering. On Friday, (14th May) Shri Vinoba reached the *dargah* at 1. 30 p. m. sharp. The prayer was about to begin. After the customary *khutbah* and *namaz* (praise and prayer of the Lord) were over, Shri Vinoba was requested to address the audience. The calm and serene atmosphere which prevailed in the gathering during the prayers had deeply moved Shri Vinoba and when he is so moved it becomes almost impossible for him to speak. His voice failed him and tears began to roll down his eyes. He spoke for about 15 minutes with great difficulty.

The scene that followed Shri Vinoba's sermon will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Shri Vinoba was seated on a high dais. Hundreds of Muslims, children, young and old, went up to Shri Vinoba to kiss his palm and apply it to their eyes. This was called *mujafa*. They did it with such feelings of love and respect that every spectator was moved to the extreme. There were tears in the eyes of several Muslims. It reminded old Muslim workers of the days between 1919 and 1921 when Gandhiji had attended



this *urs* for three years consecutively, and addressed the audience from the very place on which Shri Vinoba was then seated. They offered *mujafa* to Shri Vinoba in the same manner as to Bapu.

The presence of Shri Vinoba and his speeches in Ajmer had considerable effect on the minds of the Hindus and Muslims and it was felt that the atmosphere of Ajmer had considerably improved by his visit.

1

## FAITH AND APOLOGY

(Post-Namaz Speech At 2. 30 P. M.)

In his post-namaz speech Shri Vinoba expressed his happiness to be among them. They knew that Gandhiji had promised to attend the pilgrimage but God had willed it otherwise. As the *Quran* had said, "It happens what God chooses. He alone knows when and how a person would die." Shri Vinoba was not there as proxy for Mahatmaji. It was impossible for him to do what Gandhiji could have done. God had not given him that capacity. All that he could do was to express his feeling of kind regards for them. They had been told that he was at Ajmer on Gandhiji's mission. No doubt he wished so, but God alone knew whether he could do it. He did not believe himself to be anything more than an humble servant of God (*khudai khidmatgar*). But no sooner had Shri Vinoba said thus, he corrected himself by saying that that too was, perhaps, a figure of speech, for to speak accurately, God did not need anybody's services. He was *gani* (most independent). In the name of service the so-called servant simply served himself. It was not possible for man's speech to speak about God in an exact manner. As the *Quran* said, if all the oceans became ink and all the trees provided pens, even then it would not be possible to give the full and correct description of God. There was a similar verse in Sanskrit also. But still, man tried to do it and got self-satisfaction by making an honest effort to do so. But after making all attempts he was forced to wind up with: *Allah ho Akbar! Allah ho Akbar!* (Thou art great, Thou art greatest of all.) Language could not proceed further.

It was said that man must believe in God. But what was the meaning of believing? Anyone might say that he believed in God. But it was one thing to say and quite another to do it;—and so when one said that he believed in God, he must prove it. What was the proof of belief? It was that the believer must do good deeds, serve the poor and liquidate his egotism. Then only could he say that he believed in God. Mere assertions had no value.

The *Quran* further said that the fruit of evil deeds was evil and of good deeds good. If one did not witness the truth of this statement during his lifetime he would do it afterwards. There was no escape from it. The life was a test. God had granted life to man in order to test his faith. If he passed the test during the short span of his life, he was a true believer.

The people of India had during the last few months done grossly evil things. The Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs—all were guilty. It was no use attempting to apportion the percentage of blame among them. The proper thing was humbly and sincerely to pray to God saying, "Thou art our Help and our Light, forgive us our trespasses." If God were to apply strict tests, as he had every right and authority to do, he could punish those who had trespassed. But where was the man who could pass a test if God applied it strictly? So man's ultimate resort was to ask humbly for forgiveness. Shri Vinoba said, he therefore, prayed to God humbly on

behalf of all the Indians—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others, to grant them pardon for what they had done.

Concluding, he said, he would not be able to speak further even if he tried to. This country belonged to all. All the communities were born in the dust of this land and would again return to it. They must therefore love one another, have room for one another in their hearts and live like brothers. He was anxious to see a day dawning over India when all the people of India belonging to every religion, men as well as women, congregating together to offer their prayers to God. It was not customary in India for women to join with men in their prayers. But customs were changeable and could be changed in order that they might advance further. For they must reach a stage when at the time of standing in the presence of the Maker, they forgot all differences whatsoever, whether of caste, creed, race or sex. He who had consciousness of distinctions even at the time of prayer could not be said to be standing in God's presence. Surely the star did not shed its separate light in the presence of the sun. In the same way every individual must merge himself in God. For, He alone is real, everything else being evanescent.

2

## NAMES AND FORMS OF GOD

The same evening, Shri Vinoba held the usual Ashram prayers at 6. 30 p. m. at the *Dargah Sharif* and again addressed the people who had gathered there. He said that it was a matter of regret that though the Hindu and the Muslim lived together in India for about a thousand years, one did not know the distinctive features of the other's religion. Only some saints like Kabir and Nanak did so.

The principal feature of Islam was that it declared the unity of God unequivocally. They called it *tawhid* meaning unity. This constant and unequivocal declaration kept the minds clear. Hinduism also believed in the unity of God, but it was usual in Hinduism for people to pray to God in different names. God had innumerable principles and the principle which a devotee wanted to develop for himself, he attributed to God through a special name, and worshipped Him in a special manner. If, for instance, a devotee wanted to develop the principle of kindness in himself, he thought of God as an embodiment of Kindness and Mercy and Compassion. He who wanted to be truthful, attributed Truth as His fundamental principle. Worship also thus took different forms. This led to misunderstandings at times. There was a reference to such misunderstandings in the *Quran* also. Somebody asked the Prophet how it was that sometimes He called the Deity as *Allah*, and sometimes as *Rahm*. Did the Prophet worship different deities? The Prophet replied that *Allah* and *Rahim* were one. They had just heard the psalm, which said that *Rahim Kare Rahiman* (He who acts kindly is Kindness itself). Hindus had imagined various concrete forms for personifying the different principles attributed to God. People must have often seen in the papers published for masses and the labouring classes, that information of events was often conveyed through appropriate pictures instead of language. In the same way images were metaphorical representations of God's attributes. The Hindus had developed a technique of worship through such images. It made things easier for them although it was also capable of creating false notions. To avoid the latter, Islam unequivocally rejected pictorial representations and emphasized His unity. This was a very important contribution, a



good clearance for which the world must be thankful to Islam. It was necessary to get beyond the pictorial representations, and believe that there was only one and the same God who dwelt in the heart of every one.

15-5-48

3

### NO PRIVATE VIOLENCE

This was Shri Vinoba's last post-prayer sermon at Ajmer. After having stayed for a week, he was leaving Ajmer that night. He was happy to stay with the people. They had treated him as one of themselves. Everyone vied in showing their love towards him, for which he felt very very thankful to them. He referred to the meetings at the *Dargah Sharif* of the previous day and was glad to note that a happy change in the atmosphere had come over Ajmer. The usual Ashram prayers were held at the *dargah*. The Sanskrit verses were recited and all listened to them with due devotion and respect. It was indeed the grace of God and the martyrdom of Bapu that brought this about. It was most necessary to preserve the good atmosphere which had been created. Shri Vinoba repeated what he had said before that Ajmer was from ancient times the place where various religions met together. It was an important central place of Hindus, Muslims, Jains and Arya Samajists. That could not be a mere accident. He was reminded of the Pushkar Kshetra nearby, which was dedicated to Brahma. They knew that Brahma was represented as having four faces in the four directions. He looked at the world from every side and also made his face visible from all sides.

Shri Vinoba said that the tragic events which had taken place towards the end of the last year should now be forgotten and be relegated to history. They must now again spread the message of love which was more permanent.

India was a very great country. Men from all parts of the world had at some time or other made it their home. It was almost a federation of all the nations of the world. A country of that type had a heavy responsibility upon it. Gandhiji had given them the message of non-violence. It was the message of India herself. Gandhiji was only an instrument for delivering it. In a country as big as a continent and inhabited by countless social groups human life and liberty could stay and thrive only through non-violence, that is to say, by abjurement of violence from every department of life. But he did not want to stress that point at that meeting. He wanted to speak about non-violence only in a limited manner. He wanted them to consider how the people could remain free in a country inhabited by different communities. The only way was to give the power of punishment to the ruling authority and to be non-violent in one's own person. If that was not done and people used violence against one another and took the law into their own hands, it would be impossible to have an orderly Government in the country. It was therefore necessary that individuals must accept the law of non-violence in their own behaviour.

A time must come when the power of punishment even of the Government must become worthless for want of an opportunity to use it. If the people were fully disciplined in their internal organizations and life, Government would not need its power of punishment and they would attain the stage known as ideal anarchy. The intervening stage between ideal anarchy and private vengeance was the delegation of the power of punishment to the State. That was the way to proceed from violence towards non-violence. If India took to this road, it would also solve the world problems, because India was a small world by herself. In the pictorial representation of God it was usual among Hindus to give a weapon into one of the hands of the deity. It meant that God alone was entitled to use a weapon. If India could reach that stage it would achieve what no other country had achieved. But even if they could not do that, they could at least delegate the use of weapon to the State and themselves become votaries of non-violence. That was the way to bring peace and unity in the country. It would reduce the possibility of aggression from outside. Armies would have no work and it would be possible to employ the soldiers in producing food. That was the ideal to which they had to reach.

It was an ideal which was worthy of every aspiring young heart. There was a great responsibility upon the younger generation. India had obtained her independence through non-violence. There had been battles of freedom in other countries also. But no country had accepted non-violence as a technique for winning independence. The eyes of the world were now rivetted upon India to see how India developed this unique weapon of theirs in future. Young men of India must realize that they did not need to learn their sociology from the West. In the matter of sociology, the countries of the West were yet infants. India was experienced and aged. It had a wide and liberal science of social order. It had to be developed further and perfected so that it could become a guide to other nations also. They must not imitate the insanity which had been prevailing in the West. If they did so, they would always be slaves of the West and lose their own originality. The young men must therefore develop the strength of non-violence. They must study the bases of Indian civilization. They must realize that all the thought-currents from the times of the Vedas till the present led them stage by stage towards non-violence. No country had such rich inheritance as India. It was the responsibility of young India to preserve that inheritance and increase it.

D. D.

CONTENTS	PAGE
NON-EDIBLE OILS OF INDIA	JHAVERBHAI PATEL 201
ASHRAM OBSERVANCES IN ACTION	... M. K. GANDHI 202
NEMESIS OF NEPOTISM	... G. M. 203
"THE SUPER BOMB"	... J. C. KUMARAPPA 203
AUGUST FIFTEENTH	K. G. MASHRUWALA 204
VEGETABLE GHEE	K. G. MASHRUWALA 205
ISM, INTEGRITY AND CHARACTER	JAWAHARLAL NEHRU 205
"THE MODERN DEBTOR"	... J. C. KUMARAPPA 206
SHRI VINOBA AT AJMER - VI-VII	... D. D. 206
NOTES :	
HINDUSTANI EXAMINATIONS	... GIRI RAJ KISHORE 202
THE NATIONAL ANTHEM	... K. G. M. 204