

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

VIOLENCE v. NON-VIOLENCE

It was at this stage that Gandhiji came with his programme of non-violent resistance. He had already made successful experiments with it in South Africa. But it was a strange weapon even for India. Many of the old leaders of the Congress party, and Mr. Jinnah was one of them, thought it to be extremely ridiculous. The upper and middle classes, especially those who had received Western education, never took to it very kindly. The young university student was often openly contemptuous and placed more reliance on bombs and guns. But the rank and file of the nationalist movement took up Gandhiji's programme with enthusiasm. With an unerring instinct they saw in it a way out of the terrible morass they were in. It heartened them greatly to know that their resistance to imperialism need not cease because they had no howitzers or bomber planes, and as they practised it they discovered that in non-violent resistance they had a more powerful weapon than all the guns and bombs they had ever possessed.

The rest of the story is well-known, but I want to stress a few points. In the first place it was no easy success. Failures came again and again. But we noticed one great difference. The failure of a non-violent movement was not followed by that demoralization which inevitably came after the failure of previous violent upheavals. I know it from personal experience. My mother was an ardent follower of Gandhiji, but in my school days I did not think much of non-violence. I joined the local revolutionary organization whose programme was to carry on much the same terroristic activities with guns and bombs as the Irish did in the Sinn Fein days. Our organization had more heroic and noble young men than I have met anywhere else and some of their acts of self-sacrifice will not be easily surpassed in my country. But I realized as time passed that our efforts were not leading us anywhere. Our exploits were heroic but produced very little result. Moreover, after every failure we receded into greater and greater moral depression. By contrast, the women who worked with my mother were producing more positive results by their non-violent efforts. Even when they were faced with failure they experienced no feelings of frustration. My experience was that, while violence was more spectacular, non-violence produced more permanent

results. It was this hard experience which made me change my views.

Secondly, the non-violent movement created a spirit of resistance in the country which was unique. Previously it was assumed that any resistance was impossible unless you had arms. But now people learned that they could resist all sorts of oppression by sheer moral force. Wherever there was oppression or tyranny — by feudal landlords against tenants, bigoted priests against untouchables, haughty planters against coolies, greedy factory managers against labourers, spontaneous non-violent resistance was often organized by the local people themselves without waiting for somebody outside to give them the lead. This was by itself a great achievement. The common man in India had regained self-confidence and learned to assert his rights.

Thirdly, all section of the community, even the poorest of the poor and the weakest of the weak, now found it possible to play an effective role in the national struggle. So long, as the national resistance was based on violence, it was only the young men who could hope to take any effective part. But in the non-violent movement a most glorious part was played by women and old men and even children. In fact nothing has done more to emancipate the Indian woman and give her self-confidence and strength than this non-violent resistance. Through non-violence the weakest has found an effective means of offering resistance which in itself is no mean gain.

Fourthly, it lifted the struggle between the Indian and the British to a higher moral plain and in that process ennobled both. Formerly the Indian considered the British officer as a haughty tyrant whom it was expedient for him to obey ordinarily, but whom he hated from his heart and would even kill if he could. The British officer felt that he was sitting on a volcano and his own safety demanded that he must keep down the rebellious Indians with the utmost severity. Gandhiji taught Indians to make a distinction between the British imperialism and the British nation, and to hate the policy, but not the person. The British officer in his turn found it necessary to change his entire outlook. He no longer did what he considered his administrative duties with gusto and self-justification but with increasing distaste. His conscience no longer supported him in his task of keeping

down Indians. A British officer whom I met shortly before leaving India is a typical example. He told me that he had killed many Germans in the first world war and several Afridi rebels on India's North-West frontier. But he never felt any compunction. It was a fair fight and in any case they would have killed him unless he had killed them. But sometime back he had to order his men to disperse a group of non-violent resisters and they had killed two men in the process. Since then he had never been able to get over it. He felt like a murderer of innocent men. It always haunted him like an evil nightmare. Apparently non-violent resistance had successfully undermined the moral defences of this hard-bitten officer. And there were many like him. This has been one of the greatest achievements of our non-violent struggle. It has induced more heart-searching on both sides and it has lifted both sides to a nobler plain. That is why you find that today when India is declaring her independence there is greater fellow-feeling between Indians and the British than ever before. Compare this with the moment when America or Ireland achieved independence.

You should not imagine, however, that our problems will be automatically solved with the attainment of independence. On the contrary, our most difficult problems will now really begin. For two hundred years all healthy development was stunted in India. All sorts of medieval institutions and reactionary forces which have been swept away in other countries during the last two centuries have been carefully preserved in India under the protective wings of Pax Britannica. The economic condition of the country has gone from bad to worse. Now when the common man in India is, at last, waking up from his long slumber, he demands quick and drastic reforms, and there is bound to be a lot of trouble. Moreover, there are many people in India who do not want a peaceful solution, who do not believe in non-violence and who are only too willing to fish in troubled waters. There are feudal elements who dream of getting back their medieval authority. There are capitalists who will ape, if they can, all the obnoxious characters of American big business. There are ambitious labour- and peasant leaders who dream of being dictators, following the models set up in the West. We shall have to carry on our struggle against these and many other difficulties. You will hear of more and more troubles in India during the next ten or twenty years. The period of transition will not be easy. But I have one confidence. The common man in India has at least learned to resist injustice — even against hopeless odds — with moral force. The technique of non-violent resistance has taken deep roots in the country, and ultimately it is sure to triumph over all forces of violence and disorder much in the same way that it triumphed over imperialism.

I give you one instance of how deep these roots really are. Two important political parties

in India opposed to the Congress at first began by expressing their contempt for non-violence and openly avowing violence. But now even they have found it expedient to exhort their followers to try non-violent resistance. I do not know how far they are really sincere. But I do hope that the terrible counter-violence which the recent violent actions of some of their supporters have provoked has at last made them recognize the wisdom of Gandhiji's teaching.

It is not an easy lesson to learn — especially for the impatient, ambitious and power-loving creature that man is. But I believe that all the parties in India will soon learn, as I have personally, that non-violent resistance produces a much better result and much less reaction in the long run and that moral influence gives one a much greater authority than power can ever do.

SAMAR RAJAN SEN

(From the pamphlet *INDIA GETS HER FREEDOM* published by Peace News Ltd., 3 Blackstock Road London, N. 4)

THE HUMANITY OF GANDHIJI

Such men as Gandhiji are all too rare in this world so torn by violence, so replete with the forces of hate. They are not popular with the militarists and industrialists — their philosophy rings too true — and its ring sounds the death knell of many worldly ambitions. As the sun entering our rooms brings to view the cobwebs and the dust accumulated during the night, so the rising of such a soul as Gandhiji in our midst, casts an all-revealing light into the dark corners of our lives, and those of us who have cobwebs and dust to hide, shun that Light. We draw the blinds and close the shutters till our room is too dark for shadows.

Yet it is perhaps for these more than for any others that Gandhiji has his message — I say "has", not "had", for the Spirit of Gandhiji is not dead — cannot be killed. Indeed, he may wield a greater and wider influence today than he could have wielded while he still walked among us. We shall not be astonished to see the great work for which he lived and to which he dedicated his life: the inner unification as well as the spiritual liberty of India realized as a reaction to this foul assassination.

In this loss, India is not alone. Spokes in the Great Wheel of Life, races and nations of men radiating from the common Centre, touch at various points the rim of existence — some aspiring upward, some down-cast, gazing on the ground; some looking eagerly to the future, others dreaming of the past — each of us have our turn as the Wheel revolves — yet are we One in that Centre where blazes the Light of inspiration for those who can bear its light. It is the One Flame, the One Centre from which all lovers and saviours of humanity have drawn their strength and their courage — their vision of selfless service.

If we find it difficult to enter the mind of Gandhiji, consecrated as it was to meditation on *ahimsa*, on *satyagraha*, on *shanti* as ways of service, how much

more difficult shall we find it to enter into that depraved consciousness of his murderer, to see through his distorted vision and to think with him that the mighty forces set in motion by Gandhiji could be halted by a shot? Yet in a sense we must try. It was one of Gandhiji's most outstanding characteristics that he could enter the thought of his adversary and love him as a fellowman, be his nature never so base, be his ideals never so foreign from his own. When, some ten days before he was assassinated, an attempt had been made on his life with a bomb at the prayer meeting, Gandhiji disowned the praises bestowed on him for his calm indifference, saying that he had thought the explosion part of some military practice. And he added, says the report in the *Harijan* (1st February, 1948, p. 11) that "he would deserve a certificate only if he fell as a result of such an explosion and yet retained a smile on his face and no malice against the doer." From such compassion sprang his compassionate understanding of the sinner. Prophetic words! Before he fell back unconscious, Gandhiji offered the blessing of his *darshan* to his murderer as with pressed palms he murmured *Rama, Rama*. This act alone is sufficient to show the depth of his meditation at the time of death. Where our thought is, there are we. And Gandhiji was turned within seeking his God — perhaps that assassin but opened a hitherto closed door. Who will say? Speculation leads us nowhere, but knowledge of that Great Man and his ways may lend us consolation. Great as is the physical crime, it becomes microscopic when contrasted with the magnitude of the spiritual blunder. For the murderer it amounts to spiritual suicide — for the murdered, may it not have come as a release?

We fear our spiritual leaders — we always have. Their ideals stagger us, their hearts are too pure, their self-discipline too unbending. Their very *lives* condemn us. And we, sensing our own inferiority, shrink, coward-like, away. When their Light grows too intense, we seek to put out that Light — we think to extinguish it by murder. We forget that there are Fires which burn the brighter as the fuel of calumny is thrown on them. When the Soul is set free, that Fire glows with an all-consuming, blinding Light as the sun released from the monsoon's dark embrace.

Gandhiji amar ho gaye (Gandhiji has attained immortality), shouted the crowds as the leaping flames reduced that frail body to ashes. From his funeral pyre have arisen such flames as will one day reduce to ashes too the very hatred and fear which led to his taking off. Careless of her saints and *sannyasis*, India takes them for granted — they *seem* so plentiful. And because the demand for the ideal man is so great, India is crowded with pseudo-spiritual men who live on the credulity of those who do not discriminate. One meets them at every turning of the road. Yet even these charlatans serve their purpose: they bespeak the hidden reality as a drop of water proves the possibility of shoreless seas, or as the rush light whispers of that miracle of miracles, the rising of the morning sun. As in a forest one tree towers high above the rest and in reaching to the light, braves the fury of the storm, so from time to time arises a Gandhi who

scorns the baseness of the coward's non-resistance and who risks rather to perish in a righteous war than to live secure in the craven's peace.

We shout *Gandhijiki Jai!* We don *khaddar*. We think the clothes have made the man; we think that words can take the place of action. But to practise the doctrine of *ahimsa*, to live the life of a *satyagrahi* — those are the prerequisites of those of us who would call Gandhiji their leader. For, following in the footsteps of his illustrious predecessors, Gandhiji has insisted that those who would serve him, should do so through service of the down-trodden; those who would truly know him, must study his philosophy. Something in the weakness of human nature leads us to believe that in proclaiming a *creed*, we practise a *faith* — and so we shout *Gandhijiki Jai!* — we don *khaddar* — we fool only ourselves!

Now it is all over. Or is this but the beginning? Gandhiji has proven by his life that our measurements of the stature of man are false. He has risen beyond all such considerations. The limitations set to the average man's thoughts did not exist for him. The Truth he beheld — unity to him was a matter of experience — and there no race nor creed, nor colour nor nationality — no, nor caste, was known. In that unity Gandhiji saw the only hope for the world today. In that unity of purpose and of endeavour — in that unity of man, alone lies the possibility of India's coming through this stygian darkness to the light of day. We are in a long, long tunnel. Here and there we pass out in the mountain's side through which we breathe free air and view the distant land — and with that memory that there *is* light, we dive again into the darkness — and into what Darkness! — the darkness as of annihilation, not knowing when we shall emerge. The only thing that matters is that we should *go through*. It is so that Gandhiji lived his life: consecrated, concentrated, intent on the goal he had set himself; he entered fearlessly into the darkness. He never claimed to have a unique message to give, but regarded himself rather as a window through which a ray of the age-old wisdom of the ancients might be brought to men. What each of us would do with that wisdom — that he left to the individual to decide. It was extreme humility; it was his utter self-abnegation; it was his courage to live up to his ideals even before the most bitter opposition that cost him his life. He loved not wisely, but too well. He trusted men even when he knew them unworthy, believing that by trust the most depraved might be inspired to redeem themselves. Those of his own community feared that love, feared the truth he taught, feared above all, that brotherhood on which he based his life. For, while it meant the coming of peace in the world, it involved the abolishing of caste restrictions and communal isolation. Because he called the Muslim his brother, a Hindu brother shot him down!

And the responsibility — how shall we place it? Where shall we focus the "blame"? In so far as any of us have indulged in race or creedal separateness, in so far as we have allowed the colour prejudice to enter into our relations with a dark-skinned brother,

to that degree that we have been revengeful or unforgiving, whether it be to an individual or to a nation—even though it be but in thought—we are guilty of this crime; we are partakers of this murderer's guilt. To rightly honour Gandhiji today would be to try even a little, to follow in his footsteps, would be to try, however falteringly, to understand the heart and the compassion which were his guides and which led him to pray, not so much with his lips as with his life, that the sins of the world might fall on his shoulders.

Cologny - Geneve,
Switzerland

D. C. T.

HARIJAN

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1948

URDU ALSO

The *Harijan* of 16th May publishes the resolution of the Maharashtra Rashtra Bhasha Sabha on the question of Hindustani and its script. The resolution advocates the adoption of Hindustani as the federal language, and Devanagari as its principal script, and Urdu and Roman scripts for particular purposes. In his note thereon Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala supports the Sabha's resolution generally, and on the question of scripts sets forth a view, which in effect, gives the Roman script such equality of status with the regional scripts of India, as would make it almost the common script of the nation for all practical purposes.

The suggested use of the Roman script by the Tarachand Committee on the University medium of education, has unnecessarily started a new controversy in the solution of the script problem. It must not be encouraged. It would be best to realize clearly that the Roman script has no place in the national scripts of India. How many people know it? The attempt to reform it will bring in all the diacritical marks such as appear in the Urdu script. Spelling is the body of a word and it has to be learnt with effort. In addition to the spelling of a word in one's own script to learn its *romanized* spelling also is unnecessary and wasteful labour. The Roman script is not needed by the masses.

Leaving aside the question of the Roman script for the moment, what shall be the relative position of Nagari and Urdu? Is it right to decide as a settled fact or policy that Nagari shall be the principal script of Hindustani and Urdu shall occupy a subordinate or second place? In this connection, the eighth clause in the resolution of the Maharashtra Rashtra Bhasha Sabha is very important. Indeed, it is possible that the Sabha itself may not have fully realized its importance. The clause runs thus:

"(viii) The Sabha would also like to caution our legislators against being swayed with the idea of raising any of the provincial languages to the

status of a federal language, as such a course is bound to fail as utterly impracticable and unnatural; it also means a logical death to the provincial languages sought to be fostered."

It is clear that this warning is directed against the attempt to make sanskritized Hindi of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan the federal language of India. It is a right warning. It means that Hindustani—the national language—is not the language of any particular province or provinces or the style and turn given to it by a particular school of literary writers only. But the people and forces and currents of every province have taken and will take part in its development and progress. It is this capacity of Hindustani which has made it popular as a common national language. Its peculiarity lies in the fact that though it is a language understood and generally spoken by the masses from the Punjab in the north to the Vindhya in the south, and extending upto Bihar in the east, it is not in its entirety the mother-tongue or dialect of the people of any particular region. It has been developed both through the Nagari and the Urdu scripts. The non-recognition or even subordination of Urdu would mean casting away its achievements and future contribution in the development and propaganda of the national language. This would be inconsistent with item 8 of the Sabha's own resolution quoted above. If the language of a particular province is not to be made the national language, it is quite clear that Urdu (both as style and script) cannot be ignored or side-tracked. If the Urdu script is so treated, it is not possible that such a federal language would "in its scope be wide and extensive, in its form simple and elastic and in its spirit inclusive." Because, it is that script which has contributed no less than the style, to make Hindustani what it is.

Gandhiji insisted on keeping both the scripts and both the styles of Hindustani, because he realized that unless it was so, it was not possible to have a national language which every province could accept and feel as its own. Let us avoid both the extremes—that of a narrow view of the Hindu culture as well as that of too wide internationalism. If we did so, we would at once see that Hindi + Urdu = Hindustani, written in both the scripts, is the only common national language acceptable to the people. Will the Congress be loyal to this cause at this period of its test? Or will it fail the masses? At the A. I. C. C. meeting at Bombay Pandit Jawaharlal had to say a few hard words to its members. He said that they frequently put forth Gandhiji's name to suit their convenience, but asked whether they cared to accept his views on language, script, communal unity etc. I do not put forth this plea for the script and the language in the name of Gandhiji, but for an independent and dispassionate examination of his opinion on its merits.

Ahmedabad, 17-5-'48 MAGANBHAI P. DESAI
(Translated from Gujarati)

IN SEARCH OF A MAHATMA

I would like to share with the readers the following narration, by an esteemed friend with a deep spiritual outlook, of the circumstances under which he discovered Gandhiji at the Kumbha Mela of Haradwar in 1915 but understood the full significance of it only after Gandhiji's death.

"I had arrived at certain conclusions on spiritual matters, and the goal of human activity in the world, but wanted confirmation thereof from the mouths of other *jnanis* (wise men). I had returned to Bombay after a long residence in the Himalayas. The Kumbha Mela at Haradwar raised a desire in my mind to visit that place in search of a *mahatma*, among the thousands of pilgrims that would gather there. So I started. But on my way my old friend, the late Dr. Haribhau Dev of the Servants of India Society, entrained the same train with a corps of volunteers going to the same place. As I was familiar with Haradwar and its surrounding locality, Dr. Dev pressed me to encamp with him and help him in his social service. I could not but consent, though I felt that it would then be impossible for me to go in search of *mahatmas*, which was the main purpose of my journey. As I expected, all my time was occupied in assisting the volunteers in their selfless work. There was plenty of hard work to do, as cholera had broken out in a severe form, and there was filth and disorder everywhere. The volunteers had to work as scavengers, nurses, bier-bearers and what not.

"The adjoining camp was Gandhiji's. He was not a *mahatma* then, but, as he was then called, a *karma-veera* (a valiant man of action). That title too appeared to my eyes of those days rather exaggerated, for there was nothing in his outer form or manners that was soldier-like. In his quaint Kathiawadi dress and still quainter party of youngsters brought by him from South Africa, I confess I did not feel in the least that all my time I had been staying and now and then listening to the talks of one, who was to be later proclaimed by the world a *mahatma*. Of course, he had some uncommon ways, if *mahatmas* are to be recognized by their odd ways. His food consisted chiefly of groundnuts and fruits, which was the food neither of the toiling masses of India nor of the well-to-do classes. And his way of training his companions was also different from that of ordinary people or of *sadhus* and *sannyasis*. Nevertheless, the respect which I had felt for him even before I had met him, increased, and later on led me to pay frequent visits to his *ashram*.

"But for the time being I felt that the desire which had urged me to go to Haradwar had remained unfulfilled. After the pilgrims had dispersed, I went to Rishikesh for a short stay, feeling all the way that for want of time I had not been able to go in search of a *mahatma*.

"Later on, of course, I forgot the matter, and in course of time the desire to go in search

of *mahatmas* also abated within me, as I grew firmer in my convictions.

"Some time after Gandhiji's death, I began to recall to my mind the various occasions when I had met Gandhiji, and the first occasion came to my mind very vividly. Ruminating over it, it just struck me how strange it was that I did not know that the purpose of my visit to Haradwar had really been mysteriously accomplished! I had gone in search of a *mahatma*, and had not only found him but had also lifelong connections with him, and still was not conscious of it. I felt like a man, who always sang the well-known tune *bhairavi* correctly, but not knowing for years that it was *bhairavi*, thought that he must learn that tune from some musician, and suddenly discovered that he had always known it!"

Khar, 28-5-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

NATURE CURE—I

ITS PLACE IN THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME

There is no doubt about Gandhiji's zeal, almost amounting to a passion, for nature cure, although it was not formally mentioned as a distinct item in his eighteen-fold constructive programme. The Constructive Workers' Conference held recently at Sevagram did well in giving it a distinct place. In Gandhiji's pamphlet on constructive programme, village sanitation and education in health and hygiene are mentioned as separate items, and he has given some important hints thereon. This may be regarded as covering the preventive side of diseases. Undoubtedly, preventive measures are more important than curative ones. But in spite of the knowledge and observance of the laws of prevention, man consciously or unconsciously commits mistakes and falls a victim to disease. At times, he catches it for reasons beyond his control. Hence, there will always be the need for curative measures also. People would be healthier and happier if such measures were good and effective, and ultimately harmless. Multiplication of hospitals and dispensaries of the familiar type does not fulfil these conditions. It is a general experience that in their attempt to cure a disease, even if they appear to succeed against that one, many a time they create another and the apparent cure often proves to be temporary or simply suppressive of prominent symptoms. As against this nature cure is total and radical. Besides, in Naturopathy, during the time the patient is taking the treatment, he obtains knowledge of both the curative as well as the preventive side of his ailment. He also realizes the importance of adhering to healthy habits, and actually cultivates them as an indispensable part of the treatment. Thus, ultimately, nature cure is likely to prove to be the best system of treatment of disease.

It is often objected that the available nature cure clinics of our country are so expensive, that only the rich can afford to take advantage of them. Also, that the duration of the treatment is comparatively longer than in any system based on drugs, and the patient has to spend a considerable time after it everyday. So, even those who could afford it are not attracted to it.

It will be good to examine this objection in some detail. It must be understood that nature cure is a

radical remedy. It is also educative. Other treatments are, more often than not, palliative or suppressive. They create a life-long drug habit, and it is not unusual to find people taking patent or other medicines and injections all their life. They appear to move about and attend to their routine work, but their bodies become veritable receptacles of various diseases. There are no doubt some diseases for which specific medicines showing quicker and surer results are claimed to have been discovered. But their number is very small, and is confined to a few acute ailments. They are hardly, if at all, able to cure any chronic ailment, and in these nature cure decidedly bring about better results. Though the initial period may appear to be long and expensive, the totality of experience is that on the whole it is not more expensive than treatment by drugs, and that its efficacy is undoubted.

This explanation is not meant to suggest that nature cure methods do not require to be made simpler and cheaper to bring them within the reach of the poor and the villagers. It is neither possible nor desirable to have a physician for every village. It is more important to teach people the laws of living in conformity with the laws of nature and cultivate healthy habits from childhood. That is to say, to avoid highly spiced hot foods and take instead simple, clean and nutritive balanced diet, in a measure just enough to keep body and mind in good order; to insist on clean water and fresh air; to establish a balance between bodily and mental work; to stand, sit and walk erect; to be neat and clean in person and also to keep the home and surroundings clean and tidy. These things do not cost money if one puts the principle of self-help into practice.

No amount of money can bring about all these things without self-help and perseverent cultivation of good and healthy habits. We may take, for instance, the present day well-to-do men; at considerable cost they take all sorts of rich foods and tasty dishes, but still they are not well-nourished. The reason is that the food which they take is not chosen for its nutritive or health-preservative value, but for its capacity to satisfy a palate spoiled by indulgence, and for showing off their riches. They overeat, and yet, their diet being unbalanced, they remain ill-nourished. On the other hand, there are vast multitudes who do not get enough to eat. To say to these people that they should have protective foods, such as green vegetables, seasonal fruits, milk and ghee, is mockery. Thus, one class of people suffers, on account of its ignorance and bad habits, by over-eating and indulgence, and the masses who form the bulk and who are poor and are equally, if not more ignorant suffer from mal-nutrition. So, we have to fight both ignorance and poverty. A nature cure worker, if he wants to work on constructive lines, must tackle both these problems. He should teach people to grow more food, vegetables and fruits in their fields and country-yards, the domestication of honey-bees, the scientific method of cow-keeping, the method of making compost manure from village refuse, night soil and urine, and maintenance of wells and tanks in a clean condition to ensure pure water supply.

Considerable educative and demonstrative work will have to be done on these lines. People can get more food value from things that are available, if they make

wise, instead of wasteful, use thereof. For instance, if they use hand-ground flour and hand-pounded rice instead of machined flour and rice, they would get more food value from the same amount of food grains. Similarly, if food is not over-cooked or fried, they would get better returns from the same amount consumed.

The roots of many a disease are mainly two: deficiency of necessary nutritive and other elements required for the upkeep of the body, or congestion caused by accumulation of foreign matter in the body. For remedying these, water, earth compresses, sun's rays, dieting and occasional fasting are decidedly better remedies than drugs. It is thus possible to bring nature cure remedies within the reach of villagers and the labouring classes. For this purpose experiments must be made upon villagers in rural areas. But the pity of the matter is that, as things stand, it is difficult to get even water sufficient to give to the patient the various baths prescribed under naturopathy. In several villages even drinking water is scarce. Consequently, only remedies other than baths may have to be made use of. But the water problem will have to be tackled by the nature cure worker.

Gandhiji laid greatest emphasis on *Ramanama* in the treatment of disease. He held that a man with faith in *Ramanama* would naturally lead a simple and disciplined life; he would rarely fall ill; and if he did, he would not be upset or nervous, but would remain calm and peaceful, believing that he must have broken somewhere or other the laws of Nature, and must therefore, pay the penalty for the breach. He would completely resign himself to the will of God, and not be worried by his illness. He would not hanker after getting this treatment or that, but would be content with such Nature-cure treatment as was easily available to him. Gandhiji during his last days went even further and said that *Ramanama* was the best and the only remedy of all ailments. Naturally, I put forth this view on his authority. It would be presumptuous on my part to speak of it in a manner as if I had a realization of this faith. Frankly, I am a child in this matter.

So far, few constructive workers have taken interest in nature cure. After Gandhiji's release from the Agakhan Palace, he told the workers that the various items of the Constructive Programme were not independent of one another, but were closely inter-connected. Their integration indicated the way of life, which he envisaged. The constructive worker, be he a worker in *khadi*, or village industries, or *Nai Talim*, or any other item, had to take the whole village as a unit and strive to make it self-sufficient in most matters. Thus alone, real Swaraj starting from and having the village at its centre could be established. Nature cure being a very important item in the Constructive Programme, constructive workers must try to pursue it in their own life and thereby pave the way for introducing it in the villages.

N. D. PARIKH

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GANDHIJI'S MARTYRDOM AND FUTURE OF INDIA

The death of Gandhiji has spoken to the heart-mind of India several messages. None more potent however, than this: Religious bigotry and fanaticism are man's worst foes; these are irreligious forces which spring from ignorance and egotism. This is evident today and the living heart of Gandhiji throbs forth this truth through his death. Whether Indians, especially the Hindus, will make good use of the message remains to be seen.

The hour is ripe to sound a call for a calm consideration of what should be done to atone correctly for the sacrifice of Gandhiji, so that the blood of this Martyr may water the garden of Peace and Unity in the India he loved (and of which India he had a vision)—India, the spiritual Mother and Messenger of the world.

Indians have tolerated the spread of the tentacles of communalism into every aspect of their national life, until today the country is cursed with communal organizations and institutions of every kind—clubs, swimming-baths, hospitals, gymkhanas, hostels, refreshment stalls, charities, educational institutions, and what not. Among such institutions are some not directly inimical to India as a whole, but even they, confining their good work to an exclusive communal sphere, threaten the building of a united India.

The failure of the country's two major communities to come to a settlement delayed Indian self-government for years and has resulted in the division of the country into two dominions on unfriendly terms. But even the major disaster of partition, even the ghastly tragedies that followed that raising of a dividing wall in our common dwelling, failed to bring us to our senses. It has taken the supreme sacrifice of Gandhiji's precious life to expose religious creedalism in its true colours as the fomentor of murder and bloodshed. Today only those blinded by bigotry can fail to see in communalism and caste the abhorrent, evil forces they are.

As long ago as 1908, Gandhiji wrote:

"If the Hindus believe that India should be peopled only by the Hindus, they are living in a dreamland. The Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis and Christians who have made India their country are fellow-countrymen, and they will have to live in unity if only for their own interest."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru deserves the gratitude of every Indian for the firm stand that he has taken against the notion of the "Hindu Raj".

Religion is the power which unites man to man; creedalism is only a maker of cliques. In recent months men calling themselves Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, have played the ruffian and the brute, disgracing the religions they profess and bringing shame upon our common Mother.

Years ago Gandhiji wrote:

"Religion is dear to me, and my first complaint is that India is becoming irreligious. Here I am not thinking of the Hindu and Mahomedan or the Zoroastrian religion, but of that religion which underlies all religions. . . . I am not pleading for a continuance of religious superstitions. We will

certainly fight them tooth and nail, but we can never do so by disregarding religion."

It is not a reaction towards materialism that can cure our ills. It is not religion that has failed, but orthodoxy under whatever label; religion must be strengthened and this can only be by weakening the stranglehold of creeds.

Universal brotherhood is the key-note of religion and the real test of brotherly feeling is what we feel for our neighbours however different their views from ours. India is sect-ridden. Hinduism is caste-ridden. She cannot rise to her full stature until the unity between her sons is realized.

The separate communal organizations check the natural instinct of thinking men and women to group themselves fluidically in terms of all their present common interests—political, social, artistic and humanitarian. These natural groupings normally are diverse, changing and overlapping. It is abnormal to make them exclusive by confusing the secular with the religious and making sectarian conformity the test of personal acceptability. There can be no fundamental and lasting division between men of good will, seeking truth and mutual understanding. The seekers of the Light are one. The communal grouping is unnatural and unsound and its destruction is the patriotic duty of every Indian.

The different communities have more interests in common than they have points of difference. The problems of India are universal problems—poverty, unemployment, indebtedness, preventable disease, illiteracy with the resulting inefficiency and superstition, inadequate housing, transportation and marketing facilities, and now the vast problem of refugee relief and rehabilitation. Which of these affects one community and not another? What community would not benefit from their solution? Self-interest demands the pooling of the energies of all for the construction of a better India.

Now when tragedies of recent months, culminating in the shameful murder of Gandhiji by a fanatic, have aroused the country as nothing else could have done, to the perils that lurk in communal organizations, now is the time to free our country from them and their threat. If this is not done, Gandhiji and all that he stood for, instead of serving as a beacon to our steps will in no long time fade into the limbo of oblivion.

What specific ways are there to break the communal shackles?

(1) Face and admit the evils that communalism has brought on India. Remove from our own minds and hearts the feelings that create minority problems. Condemn anti-social, unjust and cruel acts, by or against whomsoever committed.

(2) Forget misdeeds of members of other communities.

"Let no one ever mention about the past. We have all lost some one, so let us not bring back the things that hurt us Beginning today, we find we are one people only that we live apart in different villages, but let us keep that relationship alive within us."

(3) Insist that communal organizations disband or become cosmopolitan. Political activities on a communal basis must be once and for all, and in sincerity, abjured. The fancied separate interests of groups are a delusion and a snare. Let all the people be encouraged to work together for a common aim.

(4) Do away with communal sports, gymkhanas and clubs.

(5) Sectarian and communal education should be strenuously discouraged. Stop the poisoning of the minds of children and older students with the communal virus.

Stop at once State grants to communal educational institutions at any level. The universities have a major role to play in educating for tolerance and a united India, and we should no longer tolerate Hindu and Muslim "Universities" (the root of the word means "whole"!).

(6) Histories with a sectarian distortion must be rigorously banned.

(7) Refuse support to exclusively communal charitable institutions in recognition of the claims laid upon us by our common humanity; our shared nationhood transcends the claims of any partial group.

(8) Abolish by law the communal classification of railway refreshment stalls. Boycott restaurants which cater to a single community until their communal label is removed and their doors are opened to all.

(9) Abjure communal considerations in public appointments and private employment, patronage of stores, etc.

(10) Free the Hindi-Urdu language question from its artificial communal implications.

(11) Eliminate reference to the community of the individual in newspapers, in hotel-registers, etc., and, as soon as possible, even in census reports. "I am an Indian" — and *buss!*

Gandhiji said on January 12th, on the eve of his last fast to try to bring about true unity among us:

"I yearn for heart friendship between the Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. It subsisted between them the other day. Today it is non-existent. It is a state that no Indian patriot worthy of the name can contemplate with equanimity."

Let us prove worthy of the martyred Gandhiji by repudiating communalism and all its works, and by building an India united and regenerated as the best monument we can erect to him who gave his life for all of us. But all that will follow if the will to unity is there and if the emphasis is placed where it belongs, on duties and responsibilities instead of, as so largely at present, on so-called "rights".

Even a few Indians, who have risen above distinctions of caste and creed, studying together the ideas which ruled Gandhiji's life and work, would be able to use those ideas for the betterment of the country. In the final analysis it is ideas, and not legislation, which rule the world.

(Abridged from *Theosophical Free Tracts*, No. 12, dated 21-3-'48)

QUESTION BOX

SERVICE WITHOUT FUNDS

Q. How may an ordinary man, having no capital except his personal labour serve the poor without begging for funds?

A. There are a number of services which do not need funds. For instance, sweeping, cleaning a village or a street regularly needs only time and labour, but no money. A person has to consider only his physical strength and the amount of time he can regularly devote for this work and do this work as a regular routine. He can fix anything between half an hour to two hours for this kind of service and be satisfied with cleaning the portion only of the village or street.

Another kind of service which does not require money is service to needy individuals. E. g., there is an invalid with none to help. The servant of the people can fetch water or do something which needs more strength than that man possesses and thus render him help. In another house there is a man down with disease, and he is not being properly nursed. He can nurse him, and bring medicines for him. This way of befriending the poor requires only love and labour, not money. It is an error to believe that their services could be worthy of being called "public service" only if a nursing-home was founded and the sick and the convalescent were brought there for treatment. These institutions are also necessary, but they necessarily require funds.

A third service which is very important and yet requires no funds, is one's high moral character and prayer. He who sets an example of high and noble character serves not only himself but also his people. He can also pray, and if he possesses the capacity to draw others, can invite them to pray with him; if he is a good singer or a reader, he can sing and read to them elevating literature and without show or fuss they can all form a band of seekers and practisers of truth.

Labour is a great item of wealth. Money can assist labour, but is powerless without it. But there are a few other items of wealth, without which labour too cannot achieve much. These are strong body and health, clear intellect, pure life, noble heart, unselfish loving temperament and capacity to feel at home and on equal terms with all whether young or old, rich or poor. A man must possess some of these items of wealth at least in order to render efficient service. Most people have some of these at least latently. One must find out one's own capacities and use and develop them.

Bombay, 10-5-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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