

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

THE SLOWNESS OF THE CHARKHA

8-6-32

There is a letter from Polak. He says that London papers report :

"You have taken up the sewing machine having been disillusioned with the slowness of the charkha. I don't believe it for a moment. But it needs a prompt denial."

Bapu wrote a fine letter to him. . . .

Then referring to charkha he wrote :

"It will take me many incarnations to become disillusioned with the slowness of the charkha. The slowness of the charkha is perhaps its most appealing part for me. But it has so many attractions for me that I can never get tired of it. It has a perennial interest for me. Its implications are growing on me and I make discoveries of its beauties almost from day to day. I am not using a sewing machine in its place or at all. I know how the mistake crept into the papers. My right elbow, having been used for turning the wheel, almost without a break for over ten years, began to give pain and the doctors here came to the conclusion that the pain was of the same type that tennis players often have after continuous use of the racquet. They therefore advised complete rest for the elbow. That might have meant cessation of spinning for some time, but for Prabhudas's invention. You know Prabhudas — Chhaganlal's son. His invention consists in turning the wheel with a pedal and thus freeing the right hand also for drawing the thread and practically doubling the output of yarn. I forestalled the doctors by having this wheel brought to me, and before the peremptory order to stop all work with the right elbow came, I was master of the pedal charkha called 'Magan Charkha' after the late Maganlal. A stupid reporter who knew nothing about the invention, when he heard that I was moving the wheel with the pedal came to the conclusion that I was working at the sewing machine and since there are pressmen good enough to imagine many things of me and impute all sorts of things to me, they improved upon the false report by deducing disillusionment about the charkha from it. Now you have the whole story."

M. D.

(Translated from Gujarati from Mahadevbhaini Diary, pp. 207-08)

GANDHIJI'S KHADI SCHEME FOR GOVERNMENTS*

The All-India Spinners' Association as a result of its own experience feels confident that the charkha and the hand-loom possess the capacity of bringing about a condition in which there need be no such deficit of cloth as prevails at present in India and other parts of the world, such as Malaya etc. India is the only country in which *khadi* has continued to be manufactured from ancient times by hand-spinning and hand-weaving, and, even in the modern age of textile mills, she produces pure khaddar through the A. I. S. A. During its career of about a quarter of a century the A. I. S. A. has distributed nearly seven crores of rupees as wages among the poor spinners and weavers of India.

Now that there is responsible government in every province, it is the duty of every provincial government that in order to universalize the manufacture of *khadi* as quickly as possible, it should allow mill-cloth to go only to towns and to places outside India, and prevent its entry in villages. Mill-cloth should reach villages at the most for one year. Simultaneously with this, a scheme should be made and put into operation for the production of *khadi* in every village. The Provincial Governments should distribute all spinning and weaving implements among the people under a system of hire and purchase through easy instalments. The A. I. S. A. and its branches are prepared to give every help within their power for the success of this programme.

Training in spinning and weaving should be imparted in every school — urban as well as rural — for at least one hour per day, and as far as possible boys and girls should be taught to weave the yarn produced by them.

The Trustees of the A. I. S. A. request the Working Committee of the Congress to take a decision that every Congress member should actively exert his utmost to create a favourable atmosphere for the production of *khadi*. Mill-owners are also requested to give their help in this very important work. In consultation with the A. I. S. A. governments and mills should so arrange that mill-cloth does not reach areas where there is scope for hand-spinning and weaving. In addition to this no new mills should be established and no new machinery should be introduced in the old mills.

* Gandhiji's Draft Resolution referred to in the leading article.

The mills should be worked in accordance with the advice of the Governments and the A. I. S. A. The Provincial Governments should pass such legislation as may be necessary for this purpose and implement it.

(Translated from the Original in Hindustani)

ACTION AGAINST HYDERABAD

The not unexpected armed action against Hyderabad has been at last commenced and almost completed. No nationalist or Congress paper or even ordinary citizen appears to be sorry for it. Even Shri Bhansali was worried that it had not started earlier. Indeed, it appears that there is a greater sense of regret in the Government of India for having to take this step than in the public. It shows, in the reported words of Mr. Bevin, Britain's foreign minister

"that in this new Dominion a warlike spirit has developed. Believe me, it is not limited to them. When the match is put to such positions anywhere in the world, you do not know when it is going to end."

If you do not rule out armed action absolutely, it is not difficult to understand the Indian Government's helplessness. Militarily it was a shorter programme, and attended with less loss of life and property on both sides, than the unrestrained arson and killing that was going on for a long time without showing any signs of abatement.

But whether it is a regular or irregular military engagement, and whether it is a prolonged or short-term affair, it does not alter its essentially fratricidal and violent character. Whether the initial fault lies with Hyderabad or Pakistan or India, or with Hindus or Muslims or Sikhs, the fact remains that neither the rulers, nor the leaders, nor the public opinion and collective genius of India, Pakistan, Kashmir, and Hyderabad could find a peaceful and honourable solution of the various self-created problems. The military operations, howsoever unavoidable, are not at all a thing to be proud of. The receipt of the news of the so-called 'surrender' of the Nizam by the people with the joy of a victory is hardly creditable.

It is difficult for unsophisticated and undiplomatic minds to understand why the Nizam should have preferred the crooked course of making a show of resistance, preceded with an extremely depraved type of brutality, and then surrendering before superior militarism, to coming to terms with India in a peaceful and honest manner. What will be the effects of these violent exhibitions on the future relations of the communities? So far as the immediate consequences are concerned there is evident demoralization of both the communities, wherever they have been weak either in numbers or in political power. Surrender out of a sense of weakness leaves an inheritance, which develops into mutual bitterness and enmity in the future generations. Whether the Hindus suppress the Muslims or vice versa, they sow seeds of hatred.

The fratricidal trend in the people of India is a centuries old disease. It can be traced to the time of the *Mahabharat*. The hypnotism of the British rule has suppressed it for a while. And the suppression indeed was so very successful that for a time we even began to feel that we were a non-violent people *par excellence*. Immediately on the removal of the hypnotic influence we have awakened with redoubled vigour for killing one another. We have not shown ourselves better than the most brutal people in the world.

It is only when we give up our illusion of being superior to others, whether as Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs, shall we find an urge to examine ourselves impartially, for our own improvement, and to be able to unite together.

Bombay, 18-9-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

IN FAIRNESS

It was not altogether surprising that I should receive considerable correspondence by reason of my articles on the Manbhum controversy. The correspondents represent both the sides. In the *Amends* article I stated simply that my attention had been drawn to two errors of fact made in *Unclean Means*. I gave no names of the persons who had done so. The reference to Shri Krishna Ballabh Sahay immediately thereafter might lead one to infer that I had him only in mind. In fairness to the original correspondent (whose name I may now disclose, namely Shri Atul Chandra Ghosh), I ought to mention that he himself was one of the earliest, may be, even the first, of them.

But I did not mention him particularly, because though he lost no time in drawing my attention to these errors of fact, he maintained, as he still maintains, that the 'plan and programme' complained of "is being worked out by the local officials in collaboration with many anti-Congress and anti-social elements of the district" And the "regrettable aspect of the picture is that all these activities are carried on with the help, direction and management from the Government. . . ."

The case of the Bihar Government, on the other hand is, to quote from a letter of the Bihar Premier to me, dated 28th July, 1948: ". . . the Government of Bihar have not planned any such programme as has been referred to by you nor were they aware of any such programme until it received publicity in some of the Calcutta dailies . . . There is no such programme sponsored by government or by any official body."

Thus it is a question of allegations and denials. It was beyond my province to enter into a local investigation of the matter. All that I could urge was that the Government should declare its educational policy in respect of language. This was done by Shri Badrinath Varma in his letter, published by me.

The Premier's letter, which I have referred to above, further on says: "I may tell you as I have told my people on so many occasions that the language, culture and interests of the Bengalis living in Bihar are as much dear to me as those of

any other community in the province and, I, for one, cannot countenance any attempt either at the stifling of their language or at the suppression of their culture."

This must be taken as a solemn pledge. I have already indicated that if anything more is to be done for further improvement of the policy enunciated by Shri Badribabu, it should be done through better ways than the kind of propaganda which is being carried on.

I do not attach much importance to the passage or non-passage of Shri Atul Chandra Ghosh's resolution by the Manbhum District Congress Committee. As a matter of fact my assumption that the resolution was in protest against that circular was itself incorrect. The resolution was several weeks previous to the circular in question, as I now realize. It was against the general policy which, the movers alleged, was being pursued by the Bihar Government. Assuming that that policy was in actual operation as alleged by him, then the mere defeat of the resolution (even if it had been by a greater majority than it actually was) is very material. Where fundamentals are concerned, counting of votes is not the final decisive factor. In a non-violent democratic organization, if a party in majority does not satisfy the reasonable grievances of a great minority and seeks to carry on its policy on the strength of votes, it ultimately stands to lose. It simply invites strong agitation leading possibly to breach of the peace. It will be remembered how Gandhiji once gave up his position and surrendered himself to the minority when he found that his resolution had been passed only by a narrow majority and that a great many of his valuable colleagues, though in a minority, were in strong disagreement with him. If the grievances of the Bengalis in Manbhum are reasonable and genuine, then it is immaterial whether Shri Ghosh's resolution passed or failed in the District Congress Committee. The Bihar Government must look into the merits of the matter and bring satisfaction to that section. Since the Premier has pledged his concern for the Bengali language as quoted above, I think it would be more advisable for the Bengalis to iron out their differences with him through personal contacts. Only in case he pleads his inability to implement his promise that a non-violent agitation may have to be carried on.

In fairness to Shri Atulbabu I must also say that he is not one of those who agitate for the amalgamation of Manbhum with West Bengal. He says:

"Our stand all along has been that we should not be participants to any move for demand for any particular province, that the question should rest with the High Command to judge the principle and to do the needful. We have clearly stated our stand in our resolution in question and also in a letter to Dr. Rajendraprasad."

One more point in connection with the linguistic controversy is with regard to the language which some of the Adivasi sections of Manbhum should

adopt in their post-primary education. The case of the Biharis and the Bihar Government is that in the past the Bengali language was forcibly and unnaturally imposed upon them by Bengalis, who administered these areas. I think this was an act natural for them to do. They could not have done anything else. Moreover, let not the Bengalis be blamed for it but the British Government under whose orders these officers must have acted. Nor do I think that the British Government acted unreasonably in the matter, under the circumstances before it. The dialects which the Adivasis spoke had not developed into literary languages. They had to administer through Bengalis which was, perhaps, the only clerical class then available to them, and it was a district just adjoining Bengal. If Bengali had not been given to them, perhaps they might have been compelled to fall upon English at an early age.

But even if I am wrong in all these reasonings, what is necessary is to look into the present position and necessities of the Adivasis. Hindi either as the provincial language of Bihar or as the common language of India (whether in its Sanskritized or Hindustani forms) has to be studied by all, including the Bengalis of Bihar. If they want to play their full part in the life of that province, they must attain as good mastery over it as any Bihari. Even if Manbhum goes over to Bengal, they cannot escape the necessity of acquiring mastery over the common language as zealously as they have hitherto done over the English language. So the Adivasis would be well advised to pursue, wherever possible, their further studies, through Hindi or Hindustani, rather than Bengali. At the same time this does not mean that any Adivasi should be forbidden to join any Bengali school or institution if it appeals to him more or is more convenient than a Hindi or Hindustani institution. As I have already said in one of my previous articles that in every district bordering on two different linguistic areas, I envisage institutions of both the languages side by side.

In the course of his letter Shri Badrinath Varma has made the statement that Hindi was "likely to be accepted as the State Language by the Central Government also."

This statement has been objected to as being against the Congress resolution for Hindustani. With all my advocacy for Hindustani, it is difficult to deny that there does exist a great likelihood of the decision going in favour of Hindi. But even if the Central Government did the right thing, and decided for Hindustani while Bihar preferred Hindi as its provincial language, it must be remembered that the change from Hindi to Hindustani or reverse would not present those difficulties as that from Bengali to Hindi or Hindustani or vice versa.

There is one more point which Shri Atulbabu has urged. He denies that there is any agitation on the part of pro-Bengali propagandists of a violent or inflammatory type. I regret that he is not supported by other correspondents in this respect. I have seen reports and articles in some of the Bengali papers in which there is a clear incitement

to violence if the Government did not amalgamate Manbhum with West Bengal. I have read somewhere even Shri Sarat Chandra Bose's name mentioned in this connection. On the other hand I must also express my sense of keen disappointment at the attitude of the Biharis towards their Bengali-speaking fellow subjects. A large section of Biharis do not regard even those Bengalis who have permanently settled down in Bihar as their fellow citizens. That the two sections have lived apart from each other and not identified themselves with the Biharis is not the fault of the Bengalis alone. It is our age-long caste mentality re-inforced with linguistic difference which has caused all this mischief. Let us put a stop to it with all sincerity and earnestness.

Wardha, 6-9-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

HARIJAN

September 26

1948

GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE TO CHARKHA

I understand that the Government of India has desired to know from the A. I. S. A. whether it has "considered the possibility of alleviating the existing scarcity of cloth by expansion of hand-spinning and hand-weaving," and if so, "whether any scheme has been prepared for the purpose and an estimate made of the extent, if any, to which the Government assistance would be required." The enquiry is welcome and I doubt not that the A. I. S. A. will place its considered views on the matter before the Government.

I have no authority to speak on behalf of the A. I. S. A. and my views cannot commit it in any way. Therefore, in the expression of my opinion in this article, I place only my personal views. I understand that at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the A. I. S. A. held at Poona, Gandhiji had discussed this aspect of the question with the Trustees, and placed before the Trustees a draft resolution for consideration. Though owing to some difficulties the resolution appears to have been dropped at that meeting, the Secretary of the Sangh has kindly supplied me a copy of it. As it is very pertinent to the question in hand, a translation of it is reproduced in another column.

In my humble opinion, the fundamental truth that we all—from the Governor-General and the Prime Minister of India to the youngest intelligent citizen of whatever political party or religious persuasion—must perceive and make our own is that the spread of the charkha does not need so much financial assistance as it needs the moral and spiritual assistance of the Government and all the intelligent sections of the public. The charkha is the lever—and the simplest and the cheapest one—with which the Indian nation can be raised to a high level of moral, economic, and social life.

England is a highly industrialized country. She is also a first class mercantile nation. Napoleon contemptuously called her "a nation of shop-keepers". Of course, she was so, and very successful at that. But it is not for her industrial and commercial talents that she has herself taken pride. She loves to call herself a nation of sailors. Every male member of the Royal Family undergoes training on the sea. Every family loves to send a son to the sea. No job on the ship is considered below the dignity of even the heir-apparent. In spite of all the progress in every branch of industry and science, the sailor tradition is maintained.

And when there is war, and there is need for stockings and sweaters and other woolen material for the fighting forces, every woman from the Queen downwards feels that she herself must knit to produce the supply. Technical science has been able to produce mechanized knitting machines for all kinds of woven articles. But they do not make obsolete the pair of simple wooden, steel or bone sticks. Like the *takli* among lovers of spinning, the knitting needles can be seen working in trains, cars, buses and meetings. The Queen considers her duty to encourage it. Surely, she knows knitting as well as a poor woman who makes something out of it for making the two ends meet.

Neither sailor-work nor needle-work is looked at for the rate of wages it will pay. The English Prince and worker both feel something deficient in them as Englishmen if they are not good sailors; the Queen and the housewife both feel that they are not perfect unless they know knitting. There is an intangible urge in it—call it spiritual, moral, sentimental, traditional, patriotic—whatever you like; it is not merely monetary and material; though in its results it also enhances the nation's material prosperity.

In the same way, I submit that we are a nation of agriculturists and *khadi* weavers. It is the nature-ordained pre-eminent occupation of our country. All other occupations, howsoever dazzling, can only a tiny corner of our life. A diamond ring adorns the finger, satisfies the wearer's vanity and also goes to add considerably to the totals of his account books. Nevertheless, it gives no protection to even the finger on which it is put, if there is intense cold or intense heat, and cannot cover his nakedness if cloth is not available, or satiate his thirst in the desert of Marwar, or his hunger on the Kailas mountain; so too all the other industries put together.

If the governments and, indeed, all the patriots of the country, industrialists or others, even those with intense faith in industrialization and modernization to the extent of splitting the atom, realize and identify themselves with the idea that the pride of India will always be to be known as the nation of the charkha, it is not difficult to devise the initial steps necessary for encouraging *khadi* production.

When the last war broke out, Gandhiji saw the then Viceroy and unconditionally offered India's

moral support to the Allies. The Viceroy was unable to appreciate the value of moral support. He wanted assistance in terms of money, materials and of targets for German guns. He could not realize that the material support coming voluntarily in the wake of the moral support would have been far more powerful than the former without the latter, coming as it must, out of compulsion. Let not our Government adopt the ex-government's mentality in granting assistance to the charkha. The encouragement and push which the people of India need is largely moral not material. The material regeneration will follow the moral regeneration, as the tide follows the moon. Until the people are helped to be awakened morally, no economic plans, whether of the industrial type or the village-industries type, no controls, no penalties, no repressive measures, no compulsions, no advertisements of "Grow More Food" or "Increase Production", will succeed in raising the country from the mire in which it is getting bogged.

If this is agreed to, the following suggestions will be regarded as acceptable:

All the great and important ones in the State and in well-to-do society must themselves regularly spin, whether in private or in congregation. Even as no modern governor, or minister, or secretary, however hard-worked he may be, fails to find time for his daily shave, and the arrangement of his hair and dress, also for giving or attending a tea or dinner party now and then, or to stand to attention for taking salute or inspecting the guard or to hoist the flag and wait for singing of the national anthem, and regards all such functions as part of his duty to his office, so, too, he must regard regular spinning as his duty towards the nation. He must also find time to take part in congregational spinning — not for delivering a speech there, but for taking personal part in it. In his visits, a short function of congregational spinning must be arranged as a part of the programme. Let it be understood that this should not be done for a mere showy demonstration. It must be like salt in one's food.

The economic potentiality of the charkha is not insignificant. Also, fortunately, it does not require colossal capital investment or recurrent expenditure. Even if further improvements in the charkha send the present wheels to the scrap-heap, the loss is trivial. But its far greater worth and potentiality consists in the habits which it is capable of inculcating, and the new moral tone which it is capable of giving to our nation at this stage of our development. It will send a new thrill and moral fervour in the entire nation as nothing else can. Let those who govern the nation appreciate its value.

Wardha, 6-9-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

NOTES

The Khadi Week

The Khadi Week will commence from the date on which this issue will fall into the hands of the readers and will be observed till 2nd October, the date of Gandhiji's birth according to the English calendar. The *Charkha Dwadashi*, i. e. Gandhiji's date of birth according to the Hindu calendar, falls on Thursday, the 30th September. Under the Indian system of reckoning the date on which an event happens is reckoned as first, and accordingly it will be reckoned as the 80th birthday of Gandhiji. The European system is to reckon the end of the first year as first. As Gandhiji would have finished 79 years on the next birthday, according to that system it will be reckoned as 79th birthday. Both the Congress President and the President of the A. I. S. A. have issued instructions for the due observance of the Week. I hope that the public will whole-heartedly respond to the appeals. It is only by carrying out the programme of Gandhiji and by adopting in our lives his teachings that we can properly preserve his message and memory. Those who have personal reminiscences of him will all follow him sooner or later. That part of his memory will gradually fade and may even get distorted. So also might his pictorial representations in spite of photography. It is the adoption of his message in one's own life that is his proper *Jayanti*.

Wardha, 13-9-'48

H. M. I. S. "Delhi"

Bombay has celebrated during this week the purchase of H. M. I. S. "Delhi". Every State in the world wants to abolish war, and every State wants to be armed to the teeth for defence and for aggression, since aggression proves itself to be the best defence. But every country is not sufficiently advanced to manufacture her own destructive weapons. So it purchases them from some manufacturer or Government of another country.

When a person manufactures an article, he must be deemed to have done so with the intention that the article will some day be used for its intended purpose. No bomb, no gun, no armed vehicle is intended to be eternally kept in the store. If it were so, the trade in ammunitions would have to be closed after a time. And so, with every destructive weapon goes the mantra 'thou shalt kill'. The mantra has to fulfil itself. War can never be ended by creation of weapons.

But apart from this, if there is a real desire to establish peace, no country should sell to or purchase from another country any weapon of destruction. If there is nervousness that absolute armlessness might be dangerous, let each country build its war-factories herself without the aid of men or materials from abroad. For in the long run a country must belong to the State, which is in a position to supply the arms.

Bombay, 16-9-'48

The Mines Circular

In my article *Unrestrained Provincialism* (*Harijan* 27-6-1948) I had criticized a circular of the Bihar

Government which disapproves employment of non-Biharis in mining concerns. It led to some correspondence between the Bihar Government and myself. It has resulted in the elucidation of the following points:

(1) The term Biharis includes all those who have provincialized in Bihar irrespective of what language they speak; thus Bengali and Gujarati speaking residents of Bihar are also Biharis under its definition, if they have become provincialized in Bihar;

(2) there is no suggestion to dismiss, discharge or supersede present non-Bihari employees. What is sought is that the employers should make future appointments to non-manual jobs on the recommendations of the Board to be appointed by the Provincial Government.

I regret to feel that the charge of narrowness does not abate by these elucidations. Apart from the fact that the use of a term (Bihari) which has a narrow connotation in popular language is liable to be interpreted narrowly in practice, the very principle of a Government exercising authority on the selection of a private firm's employees is objectionable. It amounts to saying that an Indian of one province is a foreigner to an Indian of another province, and the same rules may be applied to him as to a foreigner like say, an Englishman or an American. At one time in popular languages the word *pardeshi* (foreigner) included a person of another province, but gradually we have learnt to distinguish between country and province. Insufficient knowledge of geography was responsible for the old notion. But it seems that there is now a desire on the part of geography-knowing politicians also to revive and legalize the old narrow meaning.

I regret to be informed that the Bihar Government has no desire to withdraw that circular. It is for the Working Committee and the A. I. C. C. to examine the subject more closely.

Wardha, 14-9-'48

K. G. M.

ASHRAM OBSERVANCES IN ACTION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

III

BRAHMACHARYA OR CHASTITY

(Concluded)

I now come to a point of vital importance which I have reserved for treatment towards the end of the discussion. We are told in the Bhagavadgita (II-59) that 'when a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme,' that is to say, the Truth or *Brahma* (God). The whole truth of the matter has here been set forth by the experienced Krishna. Fasting and all other forms of discipline are ineffective without the grace of God. What is the vision of the Truth or God? It does not mean seeing something with the physical eye or witnessing a miracle. Seeing God means realization of the fact that God abides in one's heart. The yearning must persist until one has attained this realization, and will vanish upon realization. It is with this end in view that we

keep observances, and engage ourselves in spiritual endeavour at the Ashram. Realization is the final fruit of constant effort. The human lover sacrifices his all for his beloved, but his sacrifice is fruitless inasmuch as it is offered for the sake of momentary pleasure. But the quest of Truth calls for even greater concentration than that of the human beloved. There is joy ineffable in store for the aspirant at the end of the quest. Still very few of us are as earnest as even the human lover. Such being the facts of the case, what is the use of complaining that the quest of truth is an uphill task? The human beloved may be at a distance of several thousand miles; God is there in the tabernacle of the human heart, nearer to us than the finger nails are to the fingers. But what is to be done with a man who wanders all over the wide world in search of treasure which as a matter of fact is buried under his very feet?

The *brahmacharya* observed by a self-restraining person is not something to be despised. It certainly serves to weaken the force of the yearning for the 'flesh pots of Egypt'. One may keep fasts or adopt various other methods of mortifying the flesh, but the objects of sense must be compelled to disappear. The yearning will get itself in readiness to go as this process is on. Then the seeker will have the beatific vision, and that will be the signal for the yearning to make its final exit. The treasure supposed to be lost will be recovered. He who has not put all his strength into his effort has no right to complain that he has not 'seen' *Brahma*. Observing *brahmacharya* is one of the means to the end which is *Brahma*. Without *brahmacharya* no one may expect to see *Brahma*, and without seeing *Brahma* one cannot observe *brahmacharya* to perfection. The verse therefore does not rule out self-discipline but only indicates its limitations.

All members of the Ashram, young as well as old, married as well as unmarried, try to observe *brahmacharya* but only a few will observe it for life. When the young people come to years of discretion, they are told that they are not bound to observe *brahmacharya* any longer against their will, and that whoever feels that he is unable to put forth the requisite effort has a right to marry. And when he makes the request, the Ashram helps him in finding out a suitable partner in life. This position is very well understood, and the results have been uniformly good. The young men have persisted in larger numbers. The girls too have done pretty well. None of them married before she was 15, and many married only after they were about 19.

Those who wish to marry with Ashram assistance must rest satisfied with the simplest of religious ceremonies. There are no dinners, no guests invited from outside, no beating of drums. Both bride and bridegroom are dressed in handspun and handwoven *khadi*. There are no ornaments in gold or silver. There is no marriage settlement and no dowry except a few clothes and a spinning-wheel. The function hardly costs even ten rupees, and takes

not more than one hour. The bride and bridegroom recite in their own language the *mantras* of the Saptapadi the purport of which has already been explained to them. On the day fixed for the marriage, the bride and bridegroom keep a fast, water trees, clean the cowshed and the Ashram well and read the Gita before the ceremony. Those who give away the bride also fast until they have made the gift. We now insist that the Ashram will not help to arrange a marriage between members of the same subcaste, and every one is encouraged to seek his mate outside his own subcaste.*

(Translated from Gujarati by V. G. D.)

(To be continued)

HANDICRAFTS IN AMERICA

While touring in the mining districts of North Carolina we came across the Penland School of Handicrafts which is the foremost institution of its kind in the United States of America. By the courtesy of Miss Lucy Morgan, Directress of the School, we were able to get an idea of the position handicrafts occupy in some of the southern States of U. S. A., in spite of the enormous amount of mechanization and mass-production methods established all over that continent. There in Penland, it was a most impressive feature to see that side by side with the large mining and mineral industry concerns a highly reputed and influential community had also established a school where weaving, pottery, pewter-work and other handicrafts were taught. Many persons in that region have taken to these crafts as a subsidiary occupation, while the school itself has made substantial progress since it was founded. It was reported that 18 years ago the school had 5 looms and only 7 students. Last year (1947) it had 354 students ranging in age from 12 to 90 years. We saw how earnestly the boys and girls—both young and old—were devoted to learning their chosen crafts. The instructors and pupils impressed us with their simplicity and high spirit of dedication. We could not help noticing the tremendous difference which this wholesome aspect made in that swiftness and rustle of the more or less 'standardized' American life. The recent popularity of the Penland School may be judged from the fact that for want of accommodation and facilities for instruction, about 400 applications had to be rejected last year by the authorities. From one of the reports we received just a few days back one learns that large funds were donated and more looms are now being installed to meet the ever increasing demand for admission.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture and the various University organizations co-operate with the several handicraft institutions established in different parts of the country, especially in the

southern mountain regions. From the statistics published by the Department of Agriculture in co-operation with the Russel Sage Foundation, it was learnt that over 15,00,000 persons are engaged in the various handicrafts or occupations of rural art. The value of the articles produced annually is estimated to be about \$ 60,00,000 per year. Cotton, wool, leather, wood, metal and clay are the major materials from which the articles are made. Spinning and weaving, quilting and patch work, dyeing with natural vegetable dyes, furniture and other wood work, whittling and carving in wood, making baskets, dolls, toys, musical instruments, pottery-work, needle-work, leather-work, metal-work, candle-making, stone and gem-cutting are the main types of crafts practised in the country.

Makers' own use is by far the most important purpose for which the articles are made, and the value of products sold is about \$ 20,00,000 per year or less than 30% of the total production. The data also indicates that most of the articles are sold locally or in what may be considered the vicinity in which they are made.

Apart from the fact that the handicrafts are practised as an occupational therapy in several cases, some of the benefits which have been reported are that the work provides constructive use of leisure time, supplementing income; provides conveniences for the homes, making them more attractive and comfortable; develops art appreciation and creative expression; and also makes it possible for some families to have articles they could not afford to buy with money.

"The time will come when every kind of work will be judged by two measurements: one by the product itself, as is now done, the other by the effect of the work on the producer. When that time comes the handicrafts will be given a much more important place in our plan of living than they now have, for unquestionably they possess values which are not generally recognized."

In our itineration in Canada, we visited another school of Arts (Ecole des Beaux Arts) in Quebec city. Mr. Soucy, Director, and Miss Irene Beaudin in charge of the weaving section, showed the various looms they have and some of the handicraft articles they are producing. This institution is also highly popular.

There is no doubt that the handicrafts, through the stimulation of both mind and body, develop skill and provide a creative outlet. They increase sensitiveness to surroundings and give dignity to common things. They could bring unsuspected abilities into expression, and they surely explain and help rationalize the machine.

We found there was a great appreciation for the hand-made articles from almost everyone we came in contact with in that country, and Gandhiji's name was invariably coupled with that appreciation. "Gandhi has spiritualized handicrafts too," some of our American friends told us.

* This was written in 1932. In 1948 Gandhiji said a marriage could be celebrated in his presence only if one of the parties was a Harijan and the other a cast Hindu.

THE WORLD IS ONE

Constantly we are being told that the quick methods of communication have shrunk the world and making it a single unit rather than a chain consisting of many units. Unity there can be without physical merger. When we say two persons are in complete unity, we do not signify thereby that their bodies are one, but that their higher self, their way of thinking and their spiritual growth coalesce to form one integrated being though their bodies may be separate. World unity need not and cannot come about by making all peoples of different climes come under one authority and banish their individuality. If we aim at world unity, it will be in certain spheres which will not conduce towards disparity in conditions which will in themselves create discord. If two persons' bodies are tied together there will be great discomfort as in the case of the Siamese Twins. There should be complete freedom of bodily movement for hygienic and social reasons, but at the same time there can be unity of thought, purpose and action which latter are far more important than the physical oneness.

From the economic approach it is being constantly said that the world is to become one and therefore our economic organizations must merge into one without making any unit self-sufficient. This is a fallacy similar to the claim for physical unity of the Siamese Twins type. The causes for discord in the world are largely due to economic mal-adjustments and ideological differences arising out of this. Therefore if we aim at world unity, it will be necessary for us to deal with these mal-adjustments and attempt to bring about a co-ordination of effort.

A great deal can be achieved if we can make each nation self-sufficient in primary needs just as every individual in a united organization has to have his individual and physical freedom guaranteed. In food, clothing and shelter we must remain as far as practicable independent. Otherwise there is likely to be envy, jealousy and hatred generated which will land us ultimately in a world conflagration.

India has been and we hope will always remain an agricultural country which produces all its primary requirements without having to extend the beggar's bowl for its needs. At the present moment there are signs that this organization is collapsing under false economic theories. India is producing raw materials which cannot have a high priority from the rational approach. At the present time we are importing a considerable quantity of food grains from distant lands. This would naturally reduce the nutritive value of such grains. For instance, paddy, if it has to be transported in bulk to great distances, involves great expense because of the space required and the weight of its natural covering. To avoid this difficulty paddy is subjected to mill processing which leaves the rice grains in

a highly polished condition. Polished rice in a country where there is mal-nutrition is a veritable menace. It is pure starch. It lacks the nutritive elements of bran, pericarp, germ and other fats and minerals which have been taken out in the mill processing, and therefore as far as practicable all food materials should be of local production. Other considerations would lead us to the conclusion that materials for clothing and shelter should also be of local production. International trade can only be on luxury articles and cultural materials along with such surpluses in prime necessities which the producing countries can spare.

At a press conference recently held in London Sir Alexander Maxwell, Tobacco Adviser to the Board of Trade stated, "As it is increasingly obvious that we cannot afford to spend more dollars on tobacco, we are looking to other sources of supply as far as possible." They do not want to ration cigarettes. This habit of smoking has reached such a high pitch in Great Britain that they give it priority even over certain food articles. As a consequence of this, Great Britain is turning to India and attempts are being made by the Government supplying seeds to growers to cultivate Virginia tobacco on lands which can grow food. This will mean that we shall be importing rice and exporting tobacco. This is an unstable equilibrium that no self-respecting nation can tolerate. As long as there is a food shortage in our country the highest priority for the use of land must be allotted to the growing of foodstuff. We hope that the Provincial Governments will take these into consideration when they are approached to place more lands at the disposal of the Imperial Tobacco Company.

Unless a broad outlook, which will bring the interests of the nations together for the betterment of the common man, is taken and an economic organization is developed to safeguard the supply of the people's primary needs, there can be no world unity purely by organizational methods such as the U. N. O. or the former League of Nations. Such cannot by themselves bring about unity.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

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