

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## QUESTIONS FOR AUTHORITIES

The following questions have been put to me by several correspondents. Some of them have been coming to me for a long time. I have refrained from expressing any opinion on them for want of proper material. I put them off for a long time in the hope that the authorities concerned would explain their position. But it has not yet come. I think I must not postpone further giving ventilation to people's queries. I shall be glad to publish authoritative answers to them if received.

1. The principal attack is against the salary of about Rs. 20,000 per month drawn by the Governor-General. Most of the questioners have expressed surprise that "perhaps the most frugal and the simplest leader of our country" should be made the recipient of an indefensibly high salary, to reside in an immensely big palace and move about with an unnecessarily large number of camp-men.

2. The Bombay Governor's salary is another criticized item. He has voluntarily reduced his salary from Rs. 10,000 to 5,500 per month, but it is still, I understand, about Rs. 2,500 per month more than that drawn by other Governors.

3. The salaries to Indian Ambassadors range from Rs. 3,000 to Rs. 12,000 per month plus representation allowances. It is alleged that they spend a good deal on giving entertainments. Not only so, but even liquor is served at these parties. What is the justification for these salaries as also for the use of liquor? Is it in accordance with India's prohibition policy?

4. The minimum fee for an admission ticket at the Jaipur Congress is Rs. 10. It is too heavy for the poor population of India. For, besides the ticket charges, visitors have necessarily to bear various other expenses for boarding, lodging, travelling, visit to the exhibitions etc. The heavy charge effectively shuts off the humble ones of India, and makes that august assembly a reserve for the well-to-do. The session is expected to cost Rs. 50 lakhs. Taking a present rupee at one fourth of the former value, the expenditure still means nearly 12 to 13 lakhs. It shows that the style of the Congress is year by year progressing towards more and more luxuries, comforts, and shows. Each succeeding Reception Committee seems to feel that it must outdo its predecessor in providing a more luxurious show. Now that the Congress rules India, it is able to manage it. But is it justifiable? Does it benefit India? If so how?

5. It is also asked why the Congress should have chosen this cold time of the year for holding a session in the north of India. The season itself will add to the expenses of the visitors. Woolen clothings and coverings in the present times mean a few hundreds per head. Besides, people of South India may not have a proper idea of the intensity of the cold in the north. They are likely to come insufficiently protected and take ill. Why has the old resolution to hold the Congress session in March or thereabout been abandoned?

I hope the authorities concerned will satisfy the popular curiosity.

Bombay, 5-12-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

**RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH**

I have received recently some literature about this institution. It has come to me from more correspondents than one with a request that I should recommend the removal of the ban against it. I was inclined to maintain silence about it in the *Harijan* as I had no material before me to enable me to conclude that the Government ban against it was unjustifiable. It appears, however, that some sympathizers of this institution have been working on its behalf at least in Gujarat. Under the circumstances, it is necessary to express my opinion publicly.

I regret to say that I have misgivings about the alleged innocence and loftiness of the aims and objects of this institution. This opinion was formed long before Gandhiji's death, in fact, since about 1940. During my imprisonment in 1942-44, I had an opportunity of looking into a few Marathi magazines, in which this institution was discussed both by its friends and critics. I also used to get information about it in Wardha. My misgivings about it became stronger every time. Of its slogan "Love for Hinduism and Ill-will towards None", my opinion is that the last half is not true. It has, from all that I have heard about it and read of its literature, ill-will and dislike for Muslims.

Some of my dear and respected friends had sufficiently come under its influence to feel sympathetic towards it, and they tried to attract me towards it. I warned them not to make a mistake. It was not appreciated then. Their views have changed since, and they regret having given some kind of support then. Under these circumstances I feel unable to plead on behalf of the R. S. S.

Bombay, 6-12-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA



## CONSCRIPTION FOR SERVICE

[The following is another letter on the subject of conscription for service. In editing it, I have omitted certain portions, not absolutely necessary for elucidation, to save space. The letter, of course, does not touch that aspect of resistance to conscription to which Mr. Horace Alexander has referred in the letter published in the *Harijan*, dated 14th November, 1948. — K. G. M.]

In answer to your question, 'Do you think I have departed from pacifism in my answer to the question on compulsory training?' I answer quite simply, 'No!'

I can give you only my own point of view, not that of "an European pacifist," which I am afraid I do not know. My own has grown as a result of the study of Gandhiji's philosophy during the many years that India has been our home. . .

Conscription as clearly stated by you in the *Harijan* of the 9th May does not imply either the necessity to carry arms, or to engage in the violence of war. . .

There is plenty of work to be done in India which has no bearing whatsoever on war. Especially at this time when the country is undergoing the pains and difficulties of its new birth, every able-bodied man and woman should be ashamed to live a life of ease and comfort made possible only by the keeping in subjection and ignorance the vast majority of the country. Those days are gone. The moral and mental forces of every son and daughter of India should be "conscripted" to serve the country in that capacity to which the individual is most fitted. The man or the woman, who is not directly or indirectly engaged in some work of creation or of service, is living on the labour of others.

The true conscientious objectors are far fewer than at first appears. How many are willing to undergo the hardships such a life imposes? It is not any outside authority which can prescribe the discipline. It is a matter of self-discipline. . .

Those who would get the full import of the life of the *satyagrahi* will do well to read and to study what Gandhiji has written. Fearlessness is the cornerstone of the temple of Truth—fearlessness which gives the *satyagrahi* a living faith in the Divine Law. No longer can he entertain anxiety for the consequences of his acts. His interest is with the action only, not with the fruits. Not to lie—not even to misrepresent in business or take what seems a legitimate enough advantage of one's competitor; not to play the hypocrite and pose for something better than we know ourselves to be, and perhaps consent to live on an income derived at least in part from investments in war-supporting industry; to be humble but courageous; to be as stern with ourselves as we are lenient to the weaknesses of others; to speak the truth in the face of the world's opposition if necessary; to know neither caste nor class distinction, ready to call the craziest sot our brother, and finally to practise a religious tolerance, nor let a

difference of opinion divide us from another—no it is not easy. We must be prepared to be lonely men and women as all truly great men have been lonely. The Buddhas and the Christs have been lonely; Gandhiji was a lonely man.

If a man finds no prudent companion who walks with him, is wise and lives soberly, let him walk alone, taught Lord Buddha. It is better to live alone, there is no companionship with a fool.

Nor can we take life, however indirectly, save and except as it becomes absolutely necessary to sustain the health and life of man. We cannot become fanatics lest in seeking to avoid "violence", we end by killing ourselves! Since it is on the plane of the mind that all action takes place, even to wish our adversary ill, is already a violation of the law of *ahimsa*. Yet, conscientious objectors think of "killing" exclusively in terms of wars and murder. How many of them refrain from eating meat? How many spare the life of mosquitoes because at some later date they may (or they may not) sting them? How many others find recreation in fishing or shooting harmless birds? To kill in order to sustain life is not the same as killing for "sport". And so much that passes for necessary killing might be avoided were we to change our habits of cleanliness and sanitation so that cockroaches, rats and ants which infest so many of our Indian homes would never be attracted to us.

Finally, how many think that not to take the life of the physical body fulfils the demands of *ahimsa*, and fail to count the wholesale slaughter of men's reputations and fair names with all the consequent sufferings that results from idle gossip, whispered innuendoes, or a wilful silence when a strong stand taken might save more than a mere "life"? Such an application of *ahimsa* may be far beyond many of us, but as teaches Patanjali: 'Realization comes from dwelling on the ideal to be realized!'

Let a man become a true votary of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* as it was understood and taught by Gandhiji, and there will be no danger of his being conscripted to kill. When he has reached the necessary stage of self-purification, his *karma* will remove him from the fields of physical murder. The Law is not subservient to the whims of governments and men.

But for the sake of argument, let us suppose that the *dharma* of a true *satyagrahi* necessitates his being conscripted in the army; there are other duties than that of killing which may fall to him. And suppose that even he is given gun and ordered to shoot the nation's enemy—he has still the power of choice—no man living can force him to commit that murder if he honestly believes it is wrong. He himself may be shot, but what of it? He will not be the first to die for his principles. And whether we die today or tomorrow matters very little, since die we all shall and death comes as a release and



as a blessing to one who meets it in the fearless performance of his duty. *Ahimsa* demands physical and moral martyrs—*no coward can practise ahimsa*.

You ask about the import of conscription in Europe. It differs with the country. In Germany and Italy before the last war, conscription meant just one thing: preparation and eagerness for war. In Switzerland where there is no such thing tolerated as conscientious objection, the ideal is just the opposite. Every able-bodied Swiss must undergo his military training. After the prescribed years of concentrated training are passed, men are obliged to go out for a period of training every year. Every Swiss citizen is a soldier. He keeps his equipment, gun, ammunition and uniform, in his home. Far from seeking war, the Swiss is determined to remain free and independent whatever wars may rage like angry seas against his country's borders. Such has been his military training that it would never occur to him to use his gun against his neighbour. Periodically his equipment is inspected by government authorities; he regards it as a sacred trust. I believe that very much the same idea exists in Scandinavian countries.

Such conscription, far from having prepared Switzerland for wars of violence, has enabled her to maintain her neutrality throughout two great European wars.

In India today we need vast armies of social workers; we need men and women trained to go out into the villages and live and labour with the peasant—as the peasant. The great difficulty is that those who have any training, shy clear of village life with its hardships and primitive amenities. This must be overcome. The "conscript army" of workers must be fired with a passion to sacrifice themselves, for it is only through complete consecration and a self-forgetfulness that their offering may become a sacrament.

Such was the ideal of Gandhiji. Such was his life. He was a practical idealist though he knew that the ideal could not be realized. Like the moth, man may enter the Light, but to reach the Sun of Perfection is not for mortal man. "Non-violence presupposes ability to strike," he wrote. "... if we do not know how to defend ourselves, our women and our places of worship by the force of suffering, i. e. non-violence, we must, if we are men, be at least able to defend all these by fighting."

"Difficulty, abnegation, martyrdom, death, are the allurements that act on the heart of man," wrote Carlyle.

Then let only those get relief from military training and service who have a conscientious objection to violence and absolute faith in *satyagraha*. If that faith is true and pure, they will not object to being conscripted for such training and the rendering of such service as could be compared with the hard life and service of persons in the military.

Cologny-Geneve,

Switzerland, 18-9-'48 DONALD C. TOWNSEND

## ASHRAM OBSERVANCES IN ACTION

(By M. K. Gandhi)

VI

SWADESHI

At the Ashram we hold that Swadeshi is a universal law. A man's first duty is to his neighbour. This does not imply hatred for the foreigner or partiality for the fellow-countryman. Our capacity for service has obvious limits. We can serve even our neighbour with some difficulty. If every one of us duly performed his duty to his neighbour, no one in the world who needed assistance would be left unattended to. Therefore one who serves his neighbour serves all the world. As a matter of fact there is in Swadeshi no room for distinction between one's own and other people. To serve one's neighbour is to serve the world. Indeed it is the only way open to us of serving the world. One to whom the whole world is as his family should have the power of serving the universe without moving from his place. He can exercise this power only through service rendered to his neighbour. Tolstoy goes further and says that at present we are riding on one another's backs; it is enough only if we get down. This is another way of putting the same thing. No one can serve others without serving himself. And whoever tries to achieve his private ends without serving others harms himself as well as the world at large. The reason is obvious. All living beings are members one of another so that a person's every act has a beneficial or harmful influence on the whole world. We cannot see this, near-sighted as we are. The influence of a single act of an individual on the world may be negligible. But that influence is there all the same and an awareness of this truth should make us realize our responsibility.

Swadeshi therefore does not involve any dis-service to the foreigner. Still Swadeshi does not reach everywhere for that is impossible in the very nature of things. In trying to serve the world, one does not serve the world and fails to serve even the neighbour. In serving the neighbour one in effect serves the world. Only he who has performed his duty to his neighbour has the right to say, 'All are akin to me'. But if a person says, 'All are akin to me' and neglecting his neighbour gives himself up to self-indulgence, he lives to himself alone.

We find some good men who leave their own place and move all over the world serving non-neighbours. They do nothing wrong, and their activity is not an exception to the law of Swadeshi. Only their capacity for service is greater. To one man only he who lives next door to him is his neighbour. For a second man his neighbourhood is co-extensive with his village and for a third with ten surrounding villages. Thus every one serves according to his capacity. A common man cannot do uncommon work. Definitions are framed with an eye to him alone, and imply everything which is not contrary to their spirit. When he observes the law of Swadeshi, the ordinary man does not think that he is doing any service to anybody. He



deals with the neighbouring producer, as it is convenient for him. But an occasion may arise when this is inconvenient. One who knows that Swadeshi is the law of life will observe it even on such occasions. Many of us at present are not satisfied with the quality of goods made in India, and are tempted to buy foreign goods. It is therefore necessary to point out that Swadeshi does not simply minister to our convenience but is a rule of life. Swadeshi has nothing to do with hatred of the foreigner. It can never be one's duty to wish or to do ill to others.

(Translated from Gujarati by V. G. D.)  
(To be continued)

## HARIJAN

December 19

1948

### FOR UNITY

When, last February, the question was discussed as to whether the *Harijan* should be continued or not, I strongly favoured its discontinuance, and the starting of another paper on much the same lines, but with this difference, that it would be just our own effort without using the title, style, and fame of the little paper so completely associated with, and sacred to Bapu. It had seemed to me unthinkable that the *Harijan* should continue in its original form, and, when the decision was taken to carry it on, I could not bring myself to write for it. For years and years every word that appeared in the *Harijan* passed before Bapu, and none of us, not even Mahadev, escaped the stroke of his editing pen. How often have I sat near Bapu and watched him reading through articles written by others for the *Harijan*. At such times he was completely concentrated. He never needed to re-read, or cogitate, but would just quietly pass his pen through words, sentences, or whole paragraphs as he went along, and write a word or two of his own in their place. Sometimes Mahadev would be sitting by watching these operations on his own writings, and there were moments when a little grunt of astonishment or gentle disappointment would escape him when he saw the relentless pen passing through sentence after sentence. And then, when Bapu would begin writing down his corrections, Mahadev would lean forward, with keenest interest, to see what Bapu could be saying which would express, in a few words, a deleted paragraph!

Such thoughts and sacred memories had deterred me from writing all this time, in spite of the pleasure it would have given me to support so old a friend as Kishorlalbhai, who, against overpowering odds of bad health, has heroically carried the burden of editorship on his frail but tireless shoulders. But recently, when I emerged from Pashulok, and spent some ten days in Delhi, I was disturbed to find the extent to which cohesion was lacking amongst us. Nobody could tell me where Vinoba had gone, Kumarappa had vanished no one knew where,

Kripalani was untraceable, Pyarelal's programme was unknown, and so on and so forth — and our activities seem to be becoming as unconnected as ourselves. Bapu had been the central power round whose physical form we all foregathered in common devotion. Are we to lose that cohesion because the bodily presence has passed away? That would indeed be a tragedy of tragedies, for the first and the greatest memorial we can raise to Bapu is unity of purpose and action amongst ourselves. Our weekly paper naturally should be our thought-meeting ground, and it is for that reason, in spite of the sentiments expressed above, that I feel the need to come back again to these columns.

On all sides there are theories and policies which we had never dreamed of for Free India in the old days. In this welter of reaction and delusion it behoves those of us who *believe* to hold together to the end. We are like ship-wrecked sailors clinging to a raft in a mighty storm, while clutching in our hands a priceless treasure. But there is a Star above to which our raft is hitched, and so long as we hold fast, no waves can drown us, or peril prevent us from reaching harbour with our priceless treasure, the Word of Truth.

Pashulok, 2-12-'48

MIRABEHN

[I am sure the readers will welcome the return of Mirabehn.  
— K. G. M.]

### SETTLEMENT OF THE MEO PROBLEM

After detailed consultations with Shri Triloksinghji (Government officer in charge of the work) in connection with the rehabilitation of dispossessed Meo Muslims of the Gurgaon district (East Punjab), Shri Vinoba addressed a meeting at Nuhu where they had been waiting to hear him.

He told them in brief what had transpired between him and Triloksinghji and assured them that most of the hurdles that beset the path of negotiations had been removed. The old order, he said, under which they were looked upon and treated as subjects by the officers of the British rule was now over under Swaraj, which meant their own government. Every officer of the new State was now a servant of the people, and they were his principals. And provided they looked upon the State as their own and were loyal to it he assured them that they would be treated exactly on a par with the rest of their countrymen. The Government were anxious that all their hardships should be removed and they should be rehabilitated in a satisfactory manner. One of their main hardships, he knew, was in respect of the payment to be made for the lands allotted to them. He was glad to announce that the Government had appreciated their difficulty and dispensed with the payment. He therefore exhorted them to avail themselves of the concession, occupy the lands, and start working without delay. As for their demand that non-Meos such as Khanzadas, Saiyads, Shaikhs and others should also be rehabilitated along with them, Shri Vinoba informed them that the scheme under discussion was restricted for the benefit of the



Meos only, but he was in a position to tell them that there was a separate scheme for the non-Meo Muslims also, and they would also be rehabilitated.

Referring to the complaint that lands which should have been allotted to the Meos were being allotted to refugees, he said that even if such cases had occurred, they would not occur thereafter, and if any of the lands reserved for the Meos had been allotted to refugees, the former would get other lands in lieu of them. The Government felt as much responsible for them as for the refugees. They would also get the houses available at Palval and other places without difficulty.

Other hardships too which they were undergoing, the speaker continued, would be tackled by the local officials. In a fit of madness both Hindus and Muslims wrecked vengeance on one another. After enough ruin was wrought they began to turn sane. The Hindus then began to realize that the Muslims were their brethren. The Muslims too had felt the lure of Pakistan and were anxious to migrate leaving their hearths and homes. A brief experience disillusioned them, and they realized that their interest lay in staying in their own places.

He was told that village officials took bribes. He was not surprised. Such practices debased both the giver and the taker. He who gave the official an opportunity to be corrupt in order to serve his immediate personal end was as much a sinner as the man who took bribe. He was also told that the Meos were somewhat of a criminal tribe. He did not give credence to the story. The Meos were a community of agriculturists. The tiller of the soil, to his mind, walked always in the fear of God. When a draught occurred he did not repair to the Commissioner but prayed to God who alone was the giver of relief. He had thus something of a direct relation with God. He could not belong to a criminal tribe. He was sure that the Meos would falsify the charge against them by their conduct and engage themselves in agriculture forthwith.

One of the audience interrupted to say that they could do so only when they got the lands. Shri Vinoba admitted that it was undoubtedly so. He had tried his best, to secure lands for them as early as last May, but the Government machinery, as they knew well, moved slow and even urgent business often took time to be transacted. God's agents, the seasons and the rain, however, did not wait for men's unpreparedness and functioned with regularity. So they were late for the season. The blame was on his side, not theirs. He nevertheless hoped that they would give a good account of them by their industry in agriculture. [A voice: We will].

Continuing, Shri Vinoba said, he had heard their grievances and also told them what was being done for them. With regard to several minor complaints, they would do well to settle with local officials who were there to serve and help them. Besides Shri Satyam, the speaker's representative, was in their midst for the last six months. He was their whole time servant. He would mediate between the officials and them and fear neither.

Lastly, the speaker warned his hearers against all exaggeration in voicing their grievances. If they did so and the precise truth was found out after investigation, they would stand falsified and humiliated. If they would rather understate their case than overstate it, they would never be the losers.

In conclusion he made an appeal to the officials :

"I am as much your servant as of these distressed people. They are in the wilderness for a year. It is God's grace that they are still alive. If they don't till the soil here, no one else will. Our Government are in earnest to rehabilitate all displaced Muslims. If you discharge your responsibilities truly and well all ill-will generated under momentary madness will be forgotten like an evil dream. It is a characteristic of our people—their weakness as well as large-heartedness—that we blame Fate for all our ills and forget them."

Turning again to the Meos he said that he had pleaded their cause before the authorities to the best of his ability, and would with equal earnestness plead with the Meos to be patient. For patience was a high virtue and yielded great results in the end. The Holy Quran extolled patience as one of the highest virtues when it said, *بَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِينَ*—'Convey good tidings to those that practise patience.'

D. M.

(Translated from the original in Hindustani)

## COMPULSORY SERVICE FROM BARBERS

A reference to *veth* (enforced service) by the potters of Gujarat has already appeared in the *Harijan*. The following letter from Shri Purushottam Parekh, Secretary to the Committee for the Removal of *veth* appointed by the Gujarat Nayi Brahman Sabha, relates to *veth* which the *nayis* (barbers) are required to perform in Gujarat. Their demands appear to be quite just and there should be no difficulty in complying with them :

"There are, in the villages of Gujarat, only two castes which have to undergo the harassment of *veth* (enforced service) from amongst the so-called *vasvayas* (artisan-settlers). They are the potter (*kumbhar*) and the *nayi* (barber). Everywhere it is compulsory for the *kumbhar* to fetch water. But I shudder to describe the humiliating duties which the *nayi* is forced to render for a whole day.

"In the early morning he is required to present himself before the officer visiting the village. He waits upon him while he cleans his teeth and washes his mouth, giving him tooth-stick, water etc. Then he fetches milk and makes tea for him, and sweeps the premises. That over, he gives a massage to the officer and then the bath, and afterwards washes his clothes. Then he has to fetch from the market articles required for his mid-day meal. He has also to wash the utensils used by him during cooking and taking food. Then at 3 p. m. he has to attend upon him again, for his evening tea. This entails the bringing of milk, sugar and tea powder, boiling the decoction, serving it to the officer and again cleansing the vessels. Thereafter he must find cots, beds, and covers from various places in the



village for the officer's sleeping arrangements at night, and arrange them properly. Then he brings again articles needed for the evening meal, and again cleanses the vessels. He has also to keep ready and kindle the lamps in the evening, and when the officer retires to bed at night he has to shampoo his legs. Thus it is nearly at midnight that he returns home after performing all these tasks. Thus for centuries past, there prevails in the large States of Gujarat this tyrannical *veth* by the village servants. The only return for this is an annual remuneration of Rs. 8 to 10.

"There are usually about 10 to 15 houses of potters and barbers each in a village, and the members of both these castes have to suffer this unbearable harassment. We wonder how long it will be allowed to continue even with Congress leaders in office!

"I suggest that a paid *nayis* should be appointed for the village and so too a blacksmith, a carpenter, a *kumbhar* and others. The blacksmith and the carpenter are not required to perform any duty when Government officers visit the village, but these artisans are necessary for the service of the peasants of the village, and when the villages were founded, they were expressly made to settle down there and lands were assigned to them. These lands must be deemed their rightful heritage.

"It is the *nayis* and the *kumbhars* who have to perform the *veth*. The *kumbhars* have to supply free of cost earthen pots and fetch water. In the same way, over and above the work of shaving and other services connected with the barber's profession, *nayis* have to render the above-mentioned services. All these can be got done by payment of wages, and no one would have any objection if it is got done from a person of any other caste or community. He may be even a *dharala* or a *waghari*, a *bajania* or a *mali*, a *kunbi* or a *brahman*—whoever is willing to do it for the payment of wages offered. Instead of this, this compulsory service is being exacted from these communities by the rule of the rod. There have been agitations in the past to do away with it and it should now be done away with forthwith, and compulsory enforcement of *veth* must be penalized by law.

"Hundreds of years ago when the villages were founded, these communities were made to settle down there for the social and economic benefit of the people of the village concerned and in consideration of their services they were given small rent-free pieces of land in perpetuity in the village for their subsistence. These communities live in villages even today, and serve a useful purpose in the economic life of the people. But it is believed that the system of *veth* by *nayis* and *kumbhars* was introduced during the British regime. Hence there is no connection between these services and their occupancy rights. All the same, a *vasavaya* (artisan-settler) who is unwilling to perform the *veth* would be prepared to pay the ordinary assessment, if Government thinks it proper to demand it, as the price for doing away with this type of slavery."

Bombay, 9-11-48

K. G. MASHRUWALA

(From the original in Gujarati)

## NEW EDUCATION

[The new session of the Nai Talim Bhavan (Basic Training College) at the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, Sevagram was inaugurated by Prof. Humayun Kabir, Secretary, Education Department, Government of India. The proceedings began with community prayer in the Mahadev Bhavan, where the students and workers of the several institutions of constructive work joined.

Shri Ashadevi, Assistant Secretary, Hindustani Talimi Sangh, welcomed Prof. Humayun Kabir, explained the fundamental principles according to which the work of *Nai Talim* was carried on by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh at Sevagram and introduced the students province-wise. The total strength of the trainees is 101, and they have been deputed by the different provincial governments and States:

1. The Government of Madras	12
2. The Government of Assam	27
3. The Government of Orissa	9
4. The Government of Bihar	8
5. The Government of Cochin State	8
6. The Government of Mysore State	6
7. The Government of Udaipur State	7
8. The Government of Panna State	1
9. The Government of Patna State	1
10. Candidates deputed by different institutions of constructive work throughout India	22

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She was followed by Prof. Humayun Kabir, who gave a short talk on the work of Basic Education and symbolically inaugurated the Training Course by lighting a lamp to represent the light of knowledge which should spread throughout India through Basic Education. His speech is reported below.]

I am deeply grateful to the organizers of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh for giving me the opportunity of participating in the inauguration ceremony of the Graduate Teachers' Training Course in the New Education. I have come to Sevagram after nine years. The first time when I was here, Bapu was among us and his influence pervaded the whole place. His influence has for a long time pervaded the whole country. Someone said that out of dust he made us men. I can think of no better description of his service to India.

Of his many gifts to the nation, I think, the experiment of New Education is one of the greatest. This experiment aims to create a new type of individuals in our society. The whole effort of education is to make new individuals, to shape new human beings who can contribute to the wellbeing of the society. The experiment of New Education serves to prepare new individuals by teaching young people to live together as a community on the basis of co-operation, love and truth.

There are many defects in our system of education. The British built that up for their own purposes. They wanted men who could help them in carrying on the administration. They were not



very much interested in the education of the rest who constitute the vast majority of the people.

I would refer specially to two defects of our existing educational system. It has created a bifurcation in our lives. The so-called 'educated' and the so-called 'illiterate' have been sharply differentiated one from the other. Present-day India is divided socially, economically, and politically. Of even greater danger is this bifurcation of India into the literate and illiterate. If we go to the villages, we see that the so-called 'educated' man does not even know how to talk to the so-called 'illiterate'. The illiterate also does not sit with the so-called educated man. The educated man did not often behave properly with the illiterate and neglected them. This is seen in all parts of the country. Bapu saw the danger of such bifurcation and introduced this new system of education. It aims at reconstructing the social structure and bridging the great gulf which was created. I know that you who have come here, are workers, who have faith in this work and the work can be done only when there are honest and sincere workers.

The other great defect of the old education was that it was one-sided. It developed the intellect, or perhaps not even the whole intellect, but only the linguistic ability of the pupil. The New Education aims to make education comprehensive so that it may lead to the all round development of the individual. The emphasis on linguistic skill in the old system was inevitable. A foreign administration required linguistic experts and did not need whole men. Now that India has attained her political freedom, we must reconstruct our social structure. This can be done only through a new type of education. Bapu introduced this New Education to train new individuals, new human beings. Whenever people start anything new, they are in a minority. It may even be a minority of one in hundreds. You, who have come here, will get back and may have to work in a minority of one among hundreds, but you must not lose heart, for what the minority think and do today the majority do tomorrow if the minority follow the truth and have the right spirit.

Some may say that the New Education has only just begun. It has not attained finality. I would say that the New Education will have finality. As Shri Ashadevi said just now, only a beginning has been made. The vast task lies ahead and everyone must strive for all we are worth. In her words, let our spirit be like that of Newton when he said that he was only playing with the pebbles on the shore and the vast ocean of knowledge lay unexplored before him.

I am glad that you have come to take training in New Education from the place where it originated. You will, I am confident, catch the spirit of the work and take it to your own places. It is the spirit in a teacher that makes all the difference to education. No system can succeed if the teacher is not of the right spirit. India is facing a number of problems today and is undergoing terrific changes.

It is the duty of the teacher to build up our nation's social structure so that we can take our rightful place in the world. Rome was not built in a day. If we want to build our nation, we have to go slowly and steadily and never lose heart. So it is with the ideals of this New Education. If a system alone could work, gramophone records would have taken the place of the teacher. Education is a process of mental enlightenment. Just as one lamp lighted up another lamp, the illumination in the mind of the teacher illumines the mind of the pupil and there is greater light for both because of this co-operation. It is the spirit of the teacher that alone can carry out the ideals. Every teacher should feel it his duty to take active and timely step in the reconstruction of India's communities. We want to build a society, where equality will rule, where hatred will be stamped out, where honesty will be the order of the day.

I think the thing I have liked best here is that you have tried to create such a community. You had only read about co-operation, sympathy and self-help. Here you are practising these virtues. Where this true character of a school is revealed, that it is an epitome of society, the education cannot but be fruitful. And in Sevagram, we have a small world-community, a community representing all parts and languages of India. I am confident, your stay here will instill in your minds a sense of the community of all Indian, and not only Indian, but all peoples of the world, and help you to train young citizens of India as citizens of a common world.

I again thank the organizers of this Training Course for giving me an opportunity to take part and to inaugurate your training course.

Prof. Humayun Kabir also entered the following remarks in the Visitors' Book of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh before he left Sevagram:

"I am grateful to Shri Ashadevi and Shri Aryanayakamji for this opportunity of seeing *Nai Talim* at work in the home of its origin. I feel that the name they have chosen for the institution — Anand Niketan or Abode of Joy — expresses the spirit of the new learning. Children learn not only through activity, but through joyful and creative activity, that has an immediate as well as a remote social significance. It is one of the first experiments in community living that I have ever seen, and I feel that its spirit should pervade education throughout India.

"I am greatly impressed by the economics of the organization. It has made universal free education for the masses capable of immediate realization, and though it may be difficult to reproduce elsewhere all the conditions that one finds in Sevagram, the lessons of its experience should serve as an eye-opener to educationists all over the country.

"Two features in the *Nai Talim* which immediately strike an observer are the 'quiet self-confidence' and the 'sense of discipline' of the children. They are more self-assured because they have the joy of achievement in their work. They



are disciplined because they have learnt through actual work that there can be no achievement without order and discipline.

"Of all Gandhiji's gifts to India and the world, the conception of *Nai Talim* is one of the greatest and Ashadevi and Aryanayakamji are carrying out his plans in his spirit."

## PROPOSITIONS TO SAVE INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE

Prof. S. R. Bhagwat, a great Poona worker in the cause of Rural Development, puts forth the propositions summarized below for saving India's independence :

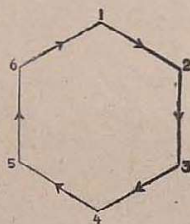
1. "India must solve, without any more loss of time, the immediate problem of carefully conserving, harnessing and developing, to the maximum extent and within the shortest time possible, all her available natural resources and power-sources with the sole object of making herself self-sufficient, at least as regards food, clothing and other essential necessities of decent standard of human life for everyone of her citizens."

2. "Educated patriotic Indians—specially highly trained engineers and scientists—should unhesitatingly and boldly cast aside all the demoralizing methods and paraphernalia of narrow, parasitic professionalism—the creation of hypnotic foreign domination of a century and more, and merge their personal interests with the wider interests of India and the welfare of her struggling masses."

3. "It is urgently necessary to closely and relentlessly examine the present standards and methods of work and codes of specifications and regulations, from the point of view of their suitability to the present conditions of her masses, viz. poverty, ignorance, want of stamina and staying power and condition of her vast resources lying neglected and uncared for, wasting and deteriorating for want of clear and broad vision, implicit faith and devotion on the part of her talented intellectuals."

4. "Utmost effort is necessary to resolutely get out of the vicious circle, viz.

1. Ever-rising prices and cost of living,
2. more and more wages, salaries and emoluments,
3. higher and higher taxation,
4. greater and greater starvation, emaciation and disorganization of the producers of real wealth,
5. further and further neglect, deterioration, wastage, and destruction of soil and natural resources,
6. lesser and lesser produce of necessities of life,



by immediate adoption of an emergency programme of bold short-range measures, to stop further neglect, wastage, deterioration, and destruction of soil and other natural resources, through carefully planned and efficiently organized mobilization of all available man-power, animal-power and also electrical and mechanical power ultimately forming a well-fitting co-ordinated part and parcel of the long-range plan of permanent measures of Rural Reorganization and Reconstruction on sound lines."

5. "The present-day trend of red-tape administration through multiplication of specialized departments and their slow development into so many watertight compartments is not only not suitable to the conditions at present prevailing in India, but is positively harmful to the organization of the masses into a strong disciplined and self-reliant nation of patriotic and dutiful citizens."

Prof. Bhagwat proposes to convene "a conference of such of the members of the Associations who appreciate the importance of these propositions, in the first fortnight of January, 1949, preceded by a short study tour in the valleys taken up by Mr. S. R. Bhagwat for the work of Regional Development."

Those interested should correspond with him, at address, 232 Sadashiv Peth, Poona 2.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

## Birthday

I think it would be a good thing to reserve birthday celebrations for children to whom really birth is an interesting mystery. As for men of my age, work matters and not a date in the calendar.

C. R.

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