

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XII. No. 46

AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, JANUARY 16, 1949

TWO ANNAS

THE OTHER SIDE

While there is enough reason for the general dissatisfaction towards the Congress organization and its members, it would be most dangerous on the part of the people and parties opposed to the Congress to suppose that Congressmen are the only people who should correct themselves in order to set the matters right in our country. The Congressmen are but a small part of the nation, and, perhaps, with everything said and done, the better section of the society. As matters stand, I do not see any body which is organized on better rules of personal and public conduct than the Congress and is capable of replacing it for better. The very fact that the Congress organization itself lays stress on this matter and is alive to the deficiencies of its members is a great and hopeful sign. It is not unlikely that under the chastening effect of its principal leaders, it might yet shed its weakness before it is too late. But the critics who run down the Congress are likely to harm themselves by adopting a complacent attitude that their own standards of conduct are much superior or that it is the Government and the Congressmen who have to mend or end and that they have nothing to contribute.

While, therefore, I allow myself to criticize the Congress-Government or Congressmen unreservedly, when necessary, I feel no pleasure in doing so. If I have said, at times, that the Congress will die or be ruined it is not that I wish so, or curse it. Rather, it is in the spirit of a friend and an old servant of the Congress that I make my remarks.

What is necessary for the Congress is still more necessary for the nation. Everyone of us has to adopt a higher standard of conduct. Everyone of us has to turn Godwards i. e. towards truth, righteousness, honesty, simplicity, cleanliness and love and regard for the comfort of others. Let it be realized that we cannot expel God from our life and yet be happy and contented.

Bombay, 3-1-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

ADVICE TO CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS

Addressing about a thousand constructive workers at Gandhinagar in the early hours of the 30th December 1948 morning Shri Vinoba delivered one of his most inspiring speeches, in which he explained some of his basic ideas which, if given effect to, would go a long way in bridging the gulf between the Congress and the constructive workers, and in creating clarity of thought and self-confidence amongst the workers, which, according to Shri Vinoba, was much needed today.

The first and the most important point which Shri Vinoba stressed was about the discontent which was so much in evidence in the minds of the constructive workers against the Congress. He was not referring to the discontent which was apparent in the Congress due to the defects that had crept into it, but to the one which was due to the inability of the Congress to transform itself into the Loksevak Sangh in accordance with Gandhiji's suggestion. Shri Vinoba opined that their discontent was due only to want of realization and appreciation of the stand taken in this connection by the Congress.

"Why did the Congress insist upon maintaining its political form? Because Congressmen thought that otherwise more than one political party might rise in the country, lawlessness might prevail and Swaraj might go to pieces. It was for this reason that they deemed it necessary to continue as a political party, until at least law and order were fully established. We would not blame the Congress if we could appreciate their point of view which is not without any basis. They have their own line of thinking behind it. Difference in approach presents the same object in different forms. Not that they know not the risk in continuing as the political party but that they apprehend that there is more risk in not doing so. Bapu thought otherwise. According to him the main programme before the Congress after Swaraj would be that of the nation's progress, social and moral. Thus, according to Bapu, were the Congress to transform itself into Loksevak Sangh it would be able to render greater service and also maintain its moral influence. Administration could then easily have a smooth sailing.

"These are the two different approaches. On each side there are advantages as well as defects. The Congressmen have realized the defects in their approach and have therefore included the clause dealing with the Charkha-Sangh, Gramodyoga Sangh, Talimi Sangh and other

institutions which Bapu had suggested to be included in the Loksevak Sangh. The Congressmen thus think of reaping the advantages of both the sides. If we realize the good motive behind this and offer them our necessary co-operation it is just possible that they may derive the necessary advantage also. Of course they will have to be cautious enough to remove the defects that have already crept into the organization or may do so in future."

Next Vinoba referred to the pessimism that was growing among constructive workers. He himself saw no reason for it. If their optimism and pessimism depended upon external circumstances, Shri Vinoba said, they would be nowhere, and their joys and sorrows will be changing according to the gust of circumstances. "But we stand on the rocky foundation of a definite ideology, and there is none other which could refute ours. The different ideologies which are seen today have nothing definite in them. They are uncertain and indecisive. Those who have a definite ideology on their side have no reason whatsoever to be afraid of them; for indecision and uncertainty are like darkness which offers but the most convenient condition for the entry of light. Light never fears what would happen to it in the darkest night of *amavasya* (new moon) for such a night offers the best background for its diffusion. And suppose there does exist some definite philosophy opposing us, shall we give up hope? Rather that would give us an opportunity for a struggle and this should infuse enthusiasm in us. In the long run he alone shall win who has 'truth' on his side.

"The fact is that our own thoughts are not yet very clear and hence such depression. We need to be firm in our own philosophy. We have presumed that we possess some definite thoughts, but we have not pondered on them as deeply as we ought to have. We are yet indecisive in our own ideas. If what I say is true, it is a case for serious heart-searching and not for giving up heart. If our ideas do not inspire confidence and hope in us, I would say, away with those, and accept those which are full of hope. In any case, we have got to be optimistic.

"Firmness in thinking demands the union of meditation and action. Therein lies the perfection of life. I have observed that those amongst us who have engaged themselves in practical work do less of meditation and those who are thinkers do not seem engaged in any particular work. Where meditation and action are thus separated from each other, both become lifeless. If this analysis is correct let the workers supplement their work by meditation and let those who, after thorough and thoughtful examination of several ideologies, have realized that ours is the right one, engage themselves in some practical work. The 'onward path' will be visible only if meditation is combined with action. One who after climbing a distance, becomes stationary and strains his eyes to see around himself, may be able to have a clearer but not a broader view. Those who have climbed a mountain can easily realize this. Unless we rise on a higher level than where we stand today, it is no use straining the sight, for that will not bring us broader vision. While lack of action has hindered the progress of work, lack of meditation has

blocked the path of the workers. Both have to make up their deficiencies. Then alone, shall ideas become firm, vision progressive and despair disappear."

"Thirdly," added Shri Vinoba, "our workers who have been working in different fields should know that there are two parts of their work. One, that of developing all the aspects of Swaraj in their village and second, that of constantly touring in the surrounding villages. This, I call, circumambulation. The villages in your tahsil are like the temples of God. Go around them. Keep the centre informed with your observations. While on tour, be on the look-out for convenient spots and select a few, say five or six, for being developed as models for the others. Circumambulation must not be given up at any stage. This will help in maintaining healthy atmosphere all round and it will have a good effect on the work of our main village which in return will react healthily on the surrounding atmosphere. Thus our progress depends on these two things. When workers, without going around, bury themselves only in one place, the sluggishness in the surrounding atmosphere reacts foully upon them. They lose their enthusiasm. And mere going round also tires them out and brings frustration to them. And then they think of doing some concrete work. The proper way therefore, is that while some of us should be moving, others should be working. And in this way the activities should be exchanged now and then. Thus when both shall contribute towards perfection of experiences our work will be of a permanent nature and shall shine forth on all sides."

"Fourthly," continued Shri Vinoba, "care must be taken that the village workers are not left in seclusion. Division of work should not mean continued employment of a worker in a distant village working under only paper instructions from a leader who does so sitting in the head office. There should be constant personal contact between the two. Such a contact grows out of work alone. That means the leader also is engaged in some work or other, not dissimilar to that of the worker, and on the basis of which he can guide the workers in their difficulties. Unless the leader and the follower are co-workers there would be no harmony in their ideas and both would be dissatisfied with each other, giving rise to mutual faultfinding. The business of faultfinding has got to be replaced by mutual exchange of good qualities. This is possible only when the leader or the guide who sits in the office keeps himself engaged with some practical work. Then alone will his guidance be backed by experience and will not be imaginary. Both the leader and the follower will walk on the same level, and there will be no gulf between them."

"Lastly," Vinoba concluded, "I do not want to repeat the oft-repeated point of possessing an all round outlook for a worker. But it must be confessed that we have not been able to give practical shape to this idea. I would like to give one suggestion in this connection. When we think of an all round outlook, we think of dozens of items, but do not specialize ourselves even in one of them. The result is that not a single work receives justice. Our ancestors have rightly said:

एक साधे सब सधे, सब साधे सब जाय ।

(One thing at a time and that done well,
Is a very good rule as any can tell).

"For an all round outlook it is not necessary that the temple be crowded with various deities. What is needed is the talent which can feel the parts of all the deities in one. Whatever work we do, be it of *khadi*, sanitation or any other, it should be done so perfectly that in its execution our outlook should receive thorough manifestation, i. e. our vision should be broad while our action is specific and limited. Limited outlook makes us narrow-minded, broader activity brings no result. When specific action and broader vision are combined our work will automatically present the picture of an all round outlook."

D. M.

(Translated from the original in Hindustani)

LEST WE FORGET

XVII

MY MISSION

My mission is to convert every Indian, whether he is a Hindu, Muslim, or any other, even Englishmen and finally the world, to non-violence for regulating mutual relations whether political, economic, social or religious. (*Economics of Khadi*, p. 587).

XVIII

NON-VIOLENCE AND KHADI

(a)

Khadi has been conceived as the foundation and the image of *ahimsa* [non-violence]. (*Ibid.* p. 535).

(b)

I identify Khadi with non-violence. Khadi is the chief village handicraft. Kill Khadi and you must kill the villages and with them non-violence. (*Ibid.* p. 593).

(c)

If pestilence, poverty and bloodshed are to be avoided, there is no remedy but Khadi and other village industries. (*Ibid.* p. 546).

(d)

For twenty years I have preached the cult of Khadi to my countrymen. I want to preach the same cult today when I am at death's door. (*Ibid.* p. 537).

[Speech at Haripura Congress Exhibition, February 16, 1938].

(e)

It involves the honour of Indian womanhood. Every one who has any connection with the mill industry knows that the women working in the mills are exposed to temptations and risks to which they ought not to be exposed. Many women for want of home employment accept road repair labour. And only those who know what this labour is understand the risks the women run. Give them the spinning-wheel, and no woman need ever seek any other employment than sitting at the spinning-wheel. (*Ibid.* p. 17).

GO-SEVA CONFERENCE, JAIPUR

The following are some of the resolutions passed at the Go-Seva Conference, which met at Jaipur during the Congress week:

1. SELECTION OF COWS AND THE BULL

It is necessary for the improvement of the breed that experimenting dairies should select cows of the local breed; the bull if necessary, might be of another breed, provided care is taken to see that the bull belongs to a breed known for its capacity to serve the dual purpose of giving good bullocks for agriculture and cows with abundant milk.

Proposed by Shri Mahavir Prasad Poddar

Seconded by Shri Pundalik Katgade

2. CASTRATION OF MALE-CALVES

In order to prevent deterioration of the present breeds of cow, it is essential that male-calves not fit for serving as sires should be compulsorily castrated, within one year after birth or before the appearance of not more than two teeth.

Proposed by Shri Purushottam Narahari Joshi

Seconded by Shri Tukadoji Maharaj

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF GO-SADANS

For the improvement of the breeds, it is essential that cows, which are uncared for and unowned and which are unfit to be allowed to procreate should be kept in *gosadans*. These should be established as soon as possible in forest areas, so that they may not be a burden on the cows of good quality.

Proposed by Shri Gopalrao Valunjkar

Seconded by Shri Parashuram Mahatre

4. SOLIDIFIED OILS

The increasing manufacture and use of solidified oils, or *vanaspati*, has made it difficult to obtain pure ghee. The industry of making pure ghee has declined and rendered cow-breeding a difficult occupation. This must ultimately adversely affect agriculture also. Nevertheless attempt is made to still push further the *vanaspati* industry. In the opinion of this Conference the interests of the people require that Government should prohibit solidification of oil, i. e. manufacture of *vanaspati*, as early as possible.

Proposed by Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju

Seconded by Shri Haradev Sahay

5. LOCATIONS OF GOVERNMENT EXPERIMENTAL FARMS

Government farms for experimenting upon agriculture and cow-breeding at present carried on by the Central and Provincial Governments are confined to laboratory methods. It is necessary that the experiments should be conducted among the rural population, so that people might get the knowledge and benefit of these experiments, and also that the experiments might be conducted in the right direction against the background of the people and the local conditions of nature.

Proposed by Shri Radhakrishna Bajaj

Seconded by Dr. Sharma

(Translated from the original in Hindustani)

HARIJAN

January 16

1949

COMMUNAL MENTALITY

The Government has banned the R. S. S. as a communal organization, and has put several thousand men into prison. I humbly warn the Government and social workers against feeling complacent at this. As the Congress must know from its own experience bans and large-scale arrests make the banned activities go underground. Also, imprisonment of thousands of young men and women, many of them mere boys and girls, and lathi-charges and the like make the people forget the initial cause and look only at the apparent effects—which visibly inflict hardship and pain upon the offenders and their families. Unwittingly, they begin to dislike the custodians of law and order and befriend their victims. This happened to the advantage of the Congress in the past and may happen to the advantage of the R. S. S. and other communal bodies now. Repression like every method based on violence, follows Newton's third law of Nature. The greater the intensity with which you strike a body, the greater is the injury which it will inflict on you. In the present case, the harm might be the development of that very communal mentality which it is our purpose to remove.

There is a great probability of this happening in India. The refugees are still full of anger and are generally communal-minded. The Hindu Mahasabha is avowedly so. A large section of the Sikhs is such: There are few schools and colleges which do not have some active communally-minded members on their staff. And to crown them all, the Congress Hindu too is not quite innocent of strong communal bias. There are not a few Congress Hindus who think and feel in the same way as the Hindu Mahasabha and the R. S. S. on Hindu-Muslim questions. They feel that Gandhiji's espousal of the Muslim cause was an unnecessary and weak policy of appeasement, and they fully give expression to these feelings in their controversy on Hindi-Hindustani language and script. On the subject of communalism, the Socialists are perhaps more clear-minded than many Congressmen. But power politics have thrown the two into opposite camps at a time when they should be working together. The result is that those among Congress leaders who are devoid of communal bias have a somewhat difficult task in their own organization. I would not be surprised if a strict scrutiny discloses that non-communalist Congressmen are in a minority in the Congress.

All these things demand a strong constructive effort to cleanse the nation's heart and intellect; also an honest attempt and patriotic approach in

the organization of political parties—particularly the Congress and the Socialist. Mere suppression of the communal organizations by the arm of the law will not achieve much. For, if the Congress itself develops communal mentality, it does not in the least matter that the Hindu Mahasabha and the R. S. S. are unable to function.

The non-Hindu communities—Muslims, Christians, Parsis, Sikhs and others—have also a duty in the matter. They must co-operate in creating a feeling of common nationhood. Whether or no the Congress, the Socialists and the Constructive Workers can work together in every matter they must at least do so, hand in hand, on the mission of inculcating a non-communalist mentality in the nation. Let no nationalist feel that this is easy, and that a successful and prolonged suppression of the R. S. S. or, for the matter of that, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League and the like will set the matters right. Let us remember that it cannot be a light cause which compelled Gandhiji to stake his life more than once and ultimately brought about his deliberate murder. Let none take the complacent view that the murder was the act of a *pagal* (madman). He was merely an instrument, a robot, of the mentality nurtured by a large section of the Hindus of all political colours.

Bombay, 5-1-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

"A TRUE AND PERFECT GENTLE KNIGHT"

I was not at all prepared to read the announcement of Syed Abdullah Brelvi's death in today's morning papers. Just a few days ago I had a couple of letters from him. It gave no indication of anything wrong with his health. But death from heart attack rarely gives previous notice.

He had made his mark in the field of journalism. He was an ex-President of the A. I. N. E. C. But journalism was, though brilliant, but a minor factor of his personality. Even if he had been anything else than a journalist he would have been regarded a dear and respected friend by everyone who ever got the chance of knowing him. Like his personal and lifelong friends Shriyuts Vaikunthbhai and Gaganvihari Mehta and the late Mahadev Desai, he too was gentleness incarnate. Indeed with the former two he was more a member of the family than just a close friend. In fact, they all lived together for a long time. The late Shri Lalubhai Shamaldas regarded him as an additional son. Differences of religious labels did not tear them apart. I came into personal contact with him in 1930 when we were both fellow prisoners in Nasik Road Central Prison. It was there that I discovered the magnanimity of his heart, his liberal outlook, and his thoroughgoing non-communalism. More than these what touched me most was that he was, in the words of Tennyson, "a true and perfect gentle knight".

Bombay, 10-1-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND THE AMBASSADORS

[The public will welcome the following reply to the article *Questions for Authorities* (19th December 1948), sent on behalf of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, our Prime Minister, and will feel satisfied with it, and dispel from the minds the notion that the Government of India has been spending fabulous sums after its foreign ambassadors. The Governor-General's true receipts by way of salary were also considerably less than imagined, and are now further reduced by about Rs. 1700 per month. The use of liquor at official parties will also be prohibited. I am also authoritatively informed from another source that the Governor-General's salary is further subject to several irreducible heavy deductions; for instance, if he invites a guest, His Excellency has to pay the guest's boarding and lodging charges at a fixed rate, and that the allowances etc. are all budgeted items, that is, the unspent balances remain in the Government Treasury.]

Bombay, 4-1-49

K. G. MASHRUWALA]

May I reply to questions Nos. 1 and 3 of *Questions for Authorities* which you have published in the *Harijan* issue of Sunday, the 19th December 1948?

Question No. 1: The net salary that the Governor-General receives after deduction of income-tax and super-tax is about Rs. 7,200. A large part of it is spent on essential expenditure which cannot be avoided in the circumstances. It has now been decided to fix the salary at Rs. 5,500 free from tax.

Government House is not merely the residence of the Governor-General, but is also the State Guest House and the place for State Receptions. It has also numerous offices and is also the Cabinet meeting place. Some of its Reception Rooms are being used for an Exhibition of Indian Art. Thus the expenditure on Government House is not for the Governor-General, but for a variety of purposes connected with the State.

Question No. 3: It is not correct that the Ambassadors are paid salaries between Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 12,000. Ambassadors are divided into three classes, viz. Class I, II and III who are in receipt of a salary of Rs. 3,500, Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 2,750, respectively. In addition, they receive a representation allowance which varies from place to place, and which is expected to cover their entertainment and also the increased cost of living in the countries in which they are posted. The cost of living is particularly high on account of inflation and exchange rates and our Diplomatic representatives and their staffs are often finding it difficult to maintain themselves even on existing salaries and allowances.

The following figures will show that the representation allowance, granted to our Ambassadors, is extremely modest as compared with that enjoyed by the representatives of other countries. For instance, the Ambassador for the United Kingdom in Paris receives a representa-

tion allowance of Rs. 17,800 and our representative Rs. 3,500. The Ambassador for U. K. in Cairo receives Rs. 8,800, while our Ambassador gets Rs. 3,500. The Ambassador for U. K. in Iran gets Rs. 4,800 while our Ambassador in Iran gets Rs. 2,000 per month.

Instructions have been issued prohibiting the use of liquor at official parties.

Yours faithfully,

New Delhi, 31st December 1948 Sd. A. V. PAI
Principal Private Secretary
to the Prime Minister

SARVODAYA SAMAJ

The first meeting of the Sarvodaya Samaj Samiti was held early in the month of May 1948, at New Delhi. It was decided that the first annual *mela* of the Samaj should be held at Sabarmati, on the 30th of January 1949. It was also decided to convene a conference, along with the *mela*, to bring about closer contact among the *sevaks* of the Samaj and facilitate exchange of ideas. The Samiti also proposed to organize, if possible, an exhibition on the occasion for the benefit of the general public. Shri Rajendrababu, Shri Vinoba Bhave, Shri Shankarrao Deo, and Shri Jajuji participated in the proceedings of this meeting.

The workers of Gujarat heartily welcomed the proposal to hold the annual *mela* at Sabarmati and started preliminary preparations for it. Unfortunately, due to failure of rains this year, North Gujarat had to face conditions of acute scarcity and the workers had to abandon the idea of holding the *mela* at Sabarmati.

The Sarvodaya Samaj Samiti again met at New Delhi in the month of November 1948 to consider the whole situation and provisionally decided to hold the conference of the *sevaks* on the 28th, 29th, and 30th of January 1949 at a convenient place in the Central India. The Samiti however wished to take final decisions in this matter after consulting Shri Vinoba Bhave and other friends at Jaipur in December. It therefore met again on 20th December 1948 at Jaipur on the premises of the Sarvodaya Exhibition. Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Shri Jajuji, Shri Prafulla Chandra Ghosh, Shri Shankarrao Deo participated in the discussions to finalize the programme for the annual *mela* and the conference. The decisions arrived at, were as follows:

MELA AT RAJAGHAT

The first annual *mela* should be held at Rajaghat (Delhi) on the 30th of January 1949. The *sevaks* of the Samaj residing in and near Delhi will undertake the responsibility of organizing the *mela*.

SARVODAYA DAY

The Sarvodaya Samaj Samiti also decided to make an appeal to the country to celebrate the 30th of January 1949 as "Sarvodaya Day". The programme of the day should include congregational prayers, sacrificial carding and spinning, village cleaning groups, public meetings, so as to further among the people, principles and programme enunciated by Bapu.

LOCAL MELAS ON THE 12TH OF FEBRUARY

At places where Bapu's ashes have been immersed, *melas* should similarly be held on the 12th of February 1949 and the occasion be utilized to imbibe in the minds of the people Bapu's ideal of *sarvodaya*.

CONFERENCE OF SEVAKS

It has been decided to hold a conference of the *sevak*s of the Samaj in the second week of March 1949 at Rau near Indore in the Central India. The programme will be for three days. Those who enlist themselves as *sevak*s till the 15th of February 1949 will be entitled to participate in this conference. Those who wish to participate in the conference should communicate to the Secretary of the Samaj before the 28th of February 1949, in order to facilitate arrangements for lodging and boarding.

R. S. DHOTRE

Secretary, Sarvodaya Samaj,

Wardha, 4-1-'49

Wardha

VILLAGE WORK BY A KASTURBA VIDYALAYA

Shrimati Bharati Vidyarthi, Organizer, Kasturba Gram Sevika Vidyalaya, Madhubani (Dist. Darbhanga, Bihar) reports:

For practical training in village work the trainees of the Vidyalaya, camped at Sagarpur, Rampatti and Chakdah during the whole of November. They were divided into two parties each consisting of about 20 persons under the charge of a lady teacher of the Vidyalaya. One of the parties spent half the time at Sagarpur and the other half at Rampatti. The other party stayed at Chakdah for the whole month. Their work consisted in teaching women and children how to keep their houses and their surroundings neat and clean, explaining to them the evils of the purdah system and of customs like untouchability, drink, unequal marriage, and child marriage. They were also addressed on subjects of education, health, civic duties and the proper care of children. Villages round about the camping centres were also served by the campers. In all 25 villages were attended to. At Chakdah the campers conducted a 'Bal Shala' consisting of about 40 children of the village. Classes for the grown up formed a regular feature of the work.

The campers went about this work in their uniform, namely in *salwar* (Panjabi trousers) and *kurta* (shirt) and without covering their faces with veils. At first old men and women did not welcome the newcomers. Some of them were either shocked or amused, when the would-be Gram Sevikas took broom-sticks, baskets and spades in their hands to clean the wells, tanks and streets of the villages. But when they learnt who the Sevikas were and what their mission was they regretted their hostility and extended full support. The mess expenses at Sagarpur and Rampatti were borne by the local people. At Chakdah, which is a flood stricken area and extremely poor, the Vidyalaya had to bear all the expenses. Arrangements for supplying free milk, soap and oil to the children attending the Bal Shala at Chakdah were made at the cost of the Vidyalaya. The noon meals of the campers were usually provided by the villages when they visited them in connection with their work. The meetings and entertainment programmes conducted by the campers used to be attended by large numbers of women, men, and children.

THE LAW OF RETURN

[The following interesting lines are from a letter I have lately received from our old friend Reginald Reynolds. India, having run after Western theories, must not stop short in the middle, but must note that those theories are now falling out of favour in the very lands where they first developed.

2-12-'48

—MIRABEHN]

It was very good indeed to hear from you again, after such a long time, and to have news of the good work you are doing. It links up with a spontaneous world movement in which an increasing number of people are interested including myself and most of my immediate associates here. I refer to the new interest in the soil, to which the greatest stimulus was given by Sir Albert Howard and his Indian associates at Indore. Thanks largely to Howard, people in all parts of the world have become conscious of the fundamental necessity for preserving and building up soil fertility. There is an increasing realization of the importance of humus, and the necessity for returning all animal and vegetable waste to the soil, preferably in the form of compost—the *Law of Return*.

It is not without significance that I first heard of this 'movement', when it was very young, through the *Young India*. About 1929-30, when I was over there, some references were made to this question in the *Y. I.*, quoting the researches of Colonel McCarrison (now, I believe, General Sir Robert McC). He was then the nutrition expert in the I. M. S. and had begun to study the conditions of health instead of the symptoms of disease. He drew attention to the decline in the nutritive value of plants, grains etc. which were deprived of organic manures, and showed that no amount of artificial fertilizers could replace this lost quality. The later work of Howard, especially in the last 15 years of his life, (he died last autumn, in England) showed the positive harm done by artificial manures.

Probably you know all this, but there is no harm in telling you how the movement is growing elsewhere, and I do consider that your own work links up closely with this increased understanding of Mother Earth, and the desire to get back to that 'loving cultivation of the soil' which was once an essentially religious occupation.

As in your own work and Bapu's conception of the new India, this new attitude to the soil over here has gone on hand with a belief in the necessity for a return to craftsmanship. It is all part of the revolt against our monstrous urban civilization, and its false values. Over here and even in America, this revolt is growing and one can feel it not only in much of the literature now appearing but in the efforts of men and women, especially those young enough to be able to uproot themselves, to go 'back to the land' or 'back to the crafts'. The war has helped on this process, for it showed the utter falseness of our civilization, as well as its weakness (weak because over-complicated, and therefore, vulnerable to a

blow at any of its hundred 'arteries'). But, above all, there has at last dawned the realization that the Industrial Revolution "took the play out of work and God out of both"—the brilliant phrase used by my friend H. J. Massingham.

We feel that the time has come to show to a world faced with a growing problem of food production to meet its needs, that it is only on a vegetarian diet that we can make the best use of available land to feed the maximum number of people. This has been proved beyond doubt, but it is not widely known and gives us a great opportunity.

And, above all, we feel that the time has come for pacifists to set an example in regarding all natural resources not from the mercenary angle which has written its meaning in ruin over the dust bowls of the American 'Middle West' (and Australia) but from the spiritual standpoint that "doth lift up

Matter, like a sacred cup."

REGINALD REYNOLDS

THE COW-CENTRED CIVILIZATION OF INDIA

The following is a report of Shri Vinoba's speech delivered at the inauguration of the Go-seva Conference at Gandhinagar, Jaipur, on 16-12-'48:

Goseva (service of the cow) should not really present any difficulty in India, Shri Vinoba said, because it was entirely in the people's own interest. Human life would be almost impossible in India without the cow, as her agriculture was entirely dependent upon the ox. A few tractors had begun to make their appearance for some time past, but "tractors will not lend any great support to the agriculturist. In the first place, tractors are not made in India, and secondly, they do not live on fodder. They want petrol, which is not produced in India, and might, therefore, fail the people at a critical period.

"It is clear, therefore, that until we muster courage to cultivate with only human manual labour, our agriculture must depend upon the bullock. I do believe that it is possible to cultivate with human labour alone with the assistance of small hand tools, and I would recommend that such experiments should be conducted here and there. But I need not dilate upon this subject here. As circumstances stand the bullock is the indispensable presiding deity of our agriculture, and therefore it is the pivot of *goseva*. Our ancestors very wisely co-ordinated *goseva* with man's scheme of life. It makes human life both easy and humane.

"Just as the ox is indispensable for our agriculture, so is milk indispensable for our children. Perhaps man is the only animal, which depends upon the milk of animals of species other than his own. This appears to be against the divine scheme of life. But again, as circumstances stand, it is difficult to get rid of this dependence."

India, Shri Vinoba continued, was the only country to start the experiment of giving up meat. The saints could see the way to it only by resorting to milk. Hence the importance of milk in India. Even other

countries had begun to realize, Shri Vinoba said, that with the increase of population pressure on land increased, rendering maintenance of animals for meat progressively more difficult. This had already raised and in course of time would further raise the importance of milk. Medical opinion in America had already begun to declare that milk was a better food than meat. India had already passed through that experience. "It would not be surprising", Shri Vinoba said, "if a thousand years hence, man is obliged to give up even milk and depend entirely on fruits and vegetables." The two facts that our agriculture depends upon the ox and our life upon milk make the service of the cow just the service of the self. Consequently, there should be no difficulty in the service of the cow.

"But it is argued that the milk of the cow is costly. My contention is that we should give up milk altogether if we could afford it, irrespective of what it costs. But since we are unable to do so, let us understand that nothing which is indispensable to life is too costly. Whether dear or cheap, food has to be produced and consumed; because man cannot live without it. So too is milk. The service of the cow has to be undertaken because of the indispensableness of the ox and the milk. *Goseva* will bring the realization, as nothing else will, that cow is the centre of India's village-predominant civilization. The ox and the cow together also show what place the machine occupies in India's life. As long as we have not decided to eat up our oxen, machine cannot replace them in agriculture."

"Nevertheless", Shri Vinoba continued, "it is true that to some the cow and to others the ox appear as a heavy burden. The reality behind it is that man's own life has become burdensome to him in India. We have forgotten the science and art of life. We have children, but we do not know the science of childbirth. We do not know how the child should be brought up. If the child dies, we do not understand the cause but attribute it to destiny. Similarly, we call the cow Mother, but we do not realize that in our country beef is cheaper than all other meat. Is not this disgraceful? We call her Mother, but we do not fulfil our duties towards her. If we know how to serve the cow in a scientific manner, she would not be felt a heavy burden. For this, we must improve her breed in a scientific manner.

"Is it not surprising, that the cow which gives manure, milk, and calves while alive, and supplies valuable hide and bones after her death, should be felt as a burden? It is not the cow, but our own dullness and ignorance, which is a burden. The subject deserves intelligent and scientific approach and tackling individually, corporately as well as officially. Scientists must also contribute their services to produce dual-purpose breeds.

"It is also necessary to remove the obstacles in the way of cattle-improvement. The question of *vanaspati* is one of them. It must be studied with an open and scientific mind. If it becomes clear that *vanaspati* obstructs the improvement of the cow and the bull and is used for being adulterated with ghee, wisdom demands that its production should be stopped whatever capital and energy might have been bestowed upon it for developing the industry.

"There is a story in the *Mahabharat*," Shri Vinoba said in conclusion, "in which *dharma* is represented as appearing before God in the form of a bull and complaining to Him how he was ill-treated by man. Thereupon, as the story says, God promised him that country which neglected him would not rise high. The promise involves the conferment of a boon upon the ox and a curse upon the neglecter."

D. M.

(Translated from the original in *Hindustani*)

FOREGO NON-ESSENTIALS

Throughout the fifty odd years of our struggle for independence our leader Mahatma Gandhi was always insistent on three noble observances—Truth, Non-violence and Simplicity. For a time we adopted a measure of simplicity in our dress and the like. But generally we paid only lip-service to what he wrote and said in that field. The result is that instead of being the torch-bearers of a new message for the stricken humanity of the world, we have succumbed to lavish display and luxury.

After all our dreams of *Rama Rajya*, look at India now. It is widely proclaimed that she is lacking in the bare necessities of life, and must depend on vast quantities of imported foodstuffs. She has also been importing foreign cloth. With another world war in the distant offing one could imagine no end to this situation. We have won our independence but still we are dependent on our utter shame for the bare necessities of life—food and to a lesser extent clothing. When we seriously think over the predicament in which we are, several reasons suggest themselves to us. And the first one that comes to our mind is inflation.

Everybody knows there is a big inflation on and the high prices prevailing are thought to be directly due to less production and more consumption. Inflation is too much currency. It is unequally distributed among consumers with the result that a few people have superfluous money in their pockets, which enables them to pay fancy prices for anything that they think they must have. There are so many people in Bombay and elsewhere of this class who have, for instance, even now stocks of clothes and other things to last them for some years. And still they go on purchasing if it is rumoured that the prices might go higher a few months hence. They patronize the black-marketeer and the profiteer. As against this there is the vast majority of the people who have limited cash which is insufficient to meet even their reasonable demands at the prevailing prices. The production may have decreased; the demand may have increased than before. But the two are not so disproportionate as is imagined. It is the class of purchasers with too much extra cash in their pockets which is responsible for making the supply seem more deficient to meet the needs of the people than it really is.

Among such purchasers the Government itself should be reckoned as one. During the war it

printed money lavishly and purchased war necessities at fancy prices and hoarded them in such large quantities that ultimately a good deal of the stocks went to waste or were sold off at a great loss back to the very merchants from whom they had purchased them. Though possibly to a lesser extent the same habit still persists. The Government does not seem inclined to be stingy with its printing press. The responsibility for correcting the situation lies with the Government. It should by suitable methods drain away the flood of currency notes, which is producing the glut on the one side and the utter poverty on the other.

A large part of the population of cities and towns use four or five times more than their basic requirements in clothing. We should do away with fashion and adopt a simple dress as we did at the beginning of the Khadi movement. A shirt or a *peran* and a *dhoti* should be sufficient in our country to constitute a decent dress. Our climate is such that except for the northernmost portions for some time in the year, we do not need a multiple layer of clothing on our body. Gandhiji himself set the example by going about the country in his loin cloth. Our rich and middle class women purchase far too many saris and other items of clothing than they need and madly go in for attractive articles. By adopting a simple dress the nation's deficit in clothing can be easily made good.

Almost a similar situation obtains in the matter of food. Most of the city dwellers usually eat much more than is required for a normal healthy life and waste much more than what they eat. Those who can afford to live on non-vegetarian food should do so and those who can make use of pulses, or afford fruits etc. should consume less of rice and wheat, thus releasing a large quantity of staple grains to the less fortunately situated in society. We should be able to forego at least one meal a week and save the poor villager that much of food.

No amount of monetary contributions or numberless metallic statues to the memory of our departed Father will entitle us to be called his worthy inheritors. Only selfless service and sacrifice for the uplift of the underdog can entitle us to be his worthy successors.

"GANAPATI"

CONTENTS	PAGE
THE OTHER SIDE ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	381
ADVICE TO CONSTRUCTIVE WORKERS ... D. M.	381
LEST WE FORGET—XVII-XVIII ... M. K. GANDHI	383
GO-SEVA CONFERENCE, JAIPUR	383
COMMUNAL MENTALITY ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	384
"A TRUE AND PERFECT GENTLE KNIGHT" ... K. G. MASHRUWALA	384
THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND THE AMBASSADORS ... A. V. PAI	385
SARVODAYA SAMAJ ... R. S. DHOTRE	385
VILLAGE WORK BY A KASTURBA VIDYALAYA ... BHARATI VIDYARTHI	386
THE LAW OF RETURN ... REGINALD REYNOLDS	386
THE COW-CENTRED CIVILIZATION OF INDIA ... D. M.	387
FOREGO NON-ESSENTIALS ... "GANAPATI"	388