

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XVI. No. 2

AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, MARCH 8, 1952

TWO ANNAS

THE PRACTICAL IDEALIST *

(By Pyarelal)

I — Pursuit of Truth

As I stand before you, memories of thirty years back come crowding in upon my mind when I was a college student like you at the threshold of life. The story of the intervening years has been a stirring saga. We have passed from bondage into political freedom. The question that is presenting itself to the minds of all thinking people is whether its advent has fulfilled the expectations with which it was hailed and which filled the minds and actuated the efforts of those who strove to win it.

We have learnt to be wary of catchwords and slogans. Again and again mankind has dreamt great dreams, made reckless, sometimes even foolhardy sacrifices to realize them, only to end in bitter disillusionment. We all remember the anguished cry of Madam Rolland, "Liberty, Liberty, what crimes have been committed in thy sacred name!" In our own times and nearer at home we have seen irreligion practised in the name of religion and crimes committed in its name which make one blush and almost despair of humanity.

Let us, therefore, beware of being carried away by catchwords and slogans. Let us try to analyse their contents and examine all propositions on their merits instead of being led away by prescriptive sanctities. Let us find out for ourselves what is the content of freedom which we want to realize for ourselves and what is the method by which it can be realized. Is freedom to starve, to wallow in dirt, to oppress others, freedom? No, it is a misnomer — you will agree. The freedom which we fought for and strove to win was freedom in which the least should have as much right, opportunity and scope to realize the highest in life as the tallest. There are two ways of realizing this equality. We can realize it by eliminating the weakest as so much uneconomical ballast. This is the violent approach. The other is to realize it by sharing with the weakest and denying ourselves what cannot be shared with them and till it can be shared with them.

* This is the first of the three Gandhi Memorial Lectures delivered by Shri Pyarelal at Kanpur, under the auspices of the Agra University, on 3rd, 4th and 5th December, 1951, and published with its kind consent.

This is the non-violent approach to the question of freedom, democracy and equality which Gandhiji introduced.

Has Gandhiji's method and approach any validity today? Can it provide a solution to the many challenging problems that confront us — or is it only a spent force, an extinct tradition which has outlived its purpose and use and has now only historical interest? It is my conviction that never were his message and method needed more than they are today. We are in the habit of kicking away the ladder by which we have climbed to success. But it is also a truism that freedom can only be conserved, retained and enlarged by the very methods by which it was attained. If we stray away from the royal road on which we were launched by the Father of the Nation, we shall lose what we have gained and the golden apple of independence will turn to ashes in our mouth. I go further and say that many of the ills from which we are suffering today and much of the frustration that today fills the hearts of our youth is traceable to our deviation from those principles and methods.

Let us, therefore, examine and study in a spirit of research and scientific detachment some of those principles as exemplified in the life of Gandhiji and the epoch-making movement into which they effloresced.

To many of you the story of his career and the freedom struggle which he conducted has become only a legend or a vague myth. It was my privilege to be associated with both in an intimate manner during the best part of my life. I am, therefore, today here before you, so that you might hear about it from the mouth of one whose life was closely inter-woven with it. For me it is a precious privilege and a sacred debt which it is a pleasure to discharge.

What was it that made Gandhiji one of the biggest events of our time? If we examine his life closely, we shall find that at the core of it was his passion for truth. It was the mainspring and fountain source of all the other things in his life. They all flowed from it.

What was his conception of truth and how did it become the core of his philosophy of life? He made a clear distinction between truth as a vow or means and absolute truth. Relative truth (which is the basis of vows) is truth we perceive

in relation to a particular set of circumstances. It is not the whole truth. What may be true under one set of circumstances may not be true in relation to a different set of circumstances. To take a very simple instance, lukewarm water is hot in relation to cold water and cold in relation to hot water.

As against relative truth is the absolute truth—the ultimate reality which alone is, was and for ever shall be. In its absolute sense Gandhiji identified truth with God. He worshipped God as Truth. In this sense Truth is the end—the *summum bonum* of man's existence.

But finite man cannot grasp the whole truth—not even relative truth in its entirety. What may, therefore, appear as truth to one person may appear to be error to another person. And yet both of them may be right from their relative points of view. Proceeding on this reasoning, Gandhiji early came to the conclusion that pursuit of truth does not admit of violence being inflicted upon one's opponent. Hence the necessity of patience, and patience means self-suffering. Therefore the doctrine of truth or *satya*—which Gandhiji described by the word *Satyagraha* or holding on to truth—means vindication of truth through self-suffering, in other words, love. For you cannot suffer in your person for your opponent unless you have love for him.

Gandhiji's truth and non-violence or *ahimsa* were not abstract ideals or cloistered virtues. They were to be realized in life. Truth to him meant not the uttered word, not the professed belief but something that had to be lived. If we say something and do another, profess one thing and do not practise it, we live untruth. It was Gandhiji's constant endeavour to work out in his life to the full all the implications of the ideals he professed. This was his *Sadhana* of truth. It made his entire life a ceaseless round of worship at the shrine of truth which is God.

As a corollary to truth and *ahimsa* is Gandhiji's ideal of non-possession or *aparigraha*. If we love our neighbours as ourselves, we cannot crave for or possess superfluities when others lack even the necessities of life.

Non-stealing, the fourth cardinal principle of his life is again derived from the interaction of truth and non-possession just as non-possession is derived from the interaction of truth and non-violence. For, stealing is breach of non-possession plus breach of truth.

The fifth and last basic principle of his life, *brahmacharya* is the all-in complex of the other four principles and like them is derivable from truth and *ahimsa*. *Brahmacharya* literally means to live in the way of the Lord, in other words complete dedication: body, mind and soul to God—the immanent Spirit, the eternal ultimate Reality. In common parlance and in a restricted sense it means continence or chastity.

It includes complete control over one's sense organs, particularly the organ of regeneration.

If we have vowed undivided allegiance to Him we can have no carnal desire left in us. Again, since true *ahimsa* must mean equal love for all, argues Gandhiji, one cannot fully live up to this ideal and indulge in carnal desire. One cannot share carnal love with all women. But one can give equal love to all by regarding all women as mothers and sisters. Hence the necessity of continence in single or even in married life for one who aspires to realize the ideal of *ahimsa* in full. It held a place of great importance in Gandhiji's plan of discipline for *Satyagraha*. As he put it, "Without *brahmacharya*, the *Satyagrahi* will have no luster, no inner strength to stand unarmed against the whole world.... His strength will fail him at the right moment."

It is a fascinating theme—this theme of Gandhiji's basic disciplines. I have just touched on it in passing. Gandhiji's outlook and approach in regard to them was not that of the orthodox moralist (he refused to accept their traditional interpretations of these disciplines), but of a revolutionary, scientific mind, an experimental seeker after truth. He poured into them a content which sometimes left orthodoxy gasping for breath. But I may not pursue this theme further in the limited time at my and your disposal.

I have shown how his intense idealism coupled with the passion not merely to find truth but to live it, led to his adoption and practice of the other basic principles of his life. Idealists are generally classed as visionaries, unpractical people. Gandhiji's idealism was not Utopian. He was no "ineffectual angel beating his luminous wings in the void". He claimed and proved himself to be a practical idealist. He showed how goodness could be made effective, how good ethics must be good economics and vice versa, and what was moral was also practical. He wanted people to be good but not goody-goody. "Good must be joined with knowledge. Here goodness is not of much use as I have found in life," he remarked on one occasion. "One must cultivate the fine discriminating quality which goes with spiritual courage and character. One must know in a crucial situation, when to speak and when to be silent, when to act and when to refrain. Action and non-action in these circumstances become identical instead of being contradictory." His insistence on truth and full practice thereof gave him a firm hold of reality and endowed him with that unrivalled knowledge of human nature—its potentialities as well as its weaknesses—which enabled him to choose his instruments with an unerring instinct and make heroes out of clay. Perhaps no other person, we know of, was able to draw round him men and talent of such diverse types as Gandhiji or to hold them together as a team.

(To be continued)

DISTINCTLY BENEFICIAL

The review of the progress of the policy of Total Prohibition for the second quarter of the second year of Prohibition, i.e. July-September 1951, in Bombay State brings forth a good deal of evidence to show that the majority of former drinkers have greatly benefited by that policy and they are now better off in every respect, especially in the matter of food, housing, clothing, etc. When viewed on the background of the general economic conditions, which are so difficult, the rise in the standard of living attained by these people at once becomes noteworthy.

Backward Tribes and Classes

The Director of Backward Class Welfare has reported several instances where the members of the backward classes, who were previously given to the drink habit, have now been able to reduce their indebtedness and redeem their mortgaged lands. In the village of Simoda, in Chorasi Taluka of Surat District, five backward class families, with an average monthly income of Rs 70 per family repaid half of their total debt of Rs 1,000 from the moneys they could save because of the Prohibition policy. A family of eight members of the village of Bhamadia, in Baroda District, paid off its debt of Rs 600 and bought two bullocks for Rs 500 and a cart for Rs 150. Similar reports indicating definite improvement in the economic condition of the Backward Classes have been received from other parts of the State also.

Peasants Invest Money in Land

Such farmers as were formerly accustomed to drinks and drugs are now investing money in land and agricultural equipment. The instance of three confirmed "liquor addicts" of the village of Kaujalgi, in Gokak Taluka of Belgaum District, is worth mentioning. They used to spend all their earnings on drinks before Prohibition and lead miserable life, but now they have formed a society of their own for manufacturing mats, ropes, etc., which is flourishing. A resident of Pandharpur in Sholapur District, who used to drink liquor heavily and was spending everything he earned on liquor, is now maintaining taxis and doing excellent business.

Better Turnover by Artisans

The reports received from various centres indicate that Prohibition has, on the whole, proved very beneficial to artisans such as tanners and leather workers, weavers, potters, carpenters, blacksmiths, etc. A good number of these people are now paying greater attention to their work resulting in better turnover. In Sholapur District the share capital and profits of the co-operative societies of artisans are increasing. The Harijan weavers and farmers of the Sabarkantha District have now been able to purchase additional quantities of raw materials. They are also investing their savings in the share capital of the societies.

Happier Home Life for Workers

As a result of the moneys saved on account of Prohibition, the working classes are purchasing useful domestic articles and clothing and are spending more money on education and entertainment. Womenfolk in labour areas appear to be materially better off and also happier. A report from Ratnagiri states that a resident of the village of Shirgaon, in Chiplun Taluka, who had left his family and was living separately because of his drink habits, has now come back to his family and is cultivating his lands personally.

Municipal Sweepers Do Better

The Administrator of the Nandurbar Municipality states that the condition of the sweepers in his town is steadily improving. The general atmosphere is more peaceful and quarrels have decreased. The President of the Sirsi Municipality says that most of the ex-drinkers are now saving money out of their earnings and contributing the same towards life insurance. The Administrator of Haliyal Municipality reports that Municipal sweepers are economically better off today and the moneys that were being wasted on alcoholic drinks are now being utilized for the purchase of necessities of life such as foodstuffs and clothes.

Permits for Consumption of Liquor

During the quarter under review, 9,595 permits of various categories were issued for the possession and consumption of foreign liquor as against 20,338 in the previous quarter. During the same period, 4,795 applications were received for health permits in Greater Bombay, out of which 844 were rejected. The total quantity of foreign liquor issued against all kinds of permits, during the quarter, was 81,567 units, as against 63,213 units during the corresponding quarter of the last year. The increase is mainly due to the fact that the maximum quantity of foreign liquor under health permits was raised from two to four units after the High Court judgment in the Prohibition Case.

During the quarter under review 6,698 permits were issued for the consumption and use of opium and hemp drugs and about 604 seers of such drugs were issued from departmental depots.

Relief Measures

During the quarter under review, 43 Prohibition-affected persons were granted various kinds of relief under the rehabilitation scheme and five persons were granted Prohibition-affected persons certificate. Four forest labourers co-operative societies of Prohibition-affected persons—three in Thana District and one in Kolaba District—have been granted forest coupes for the year 1951-52. When these societies start the work of felling and cutting trees in the coupes allotted to them, a good number of Prohibition-affected persons are likely to get employment.

Recreation Activities

Recreation activities continued to engage attention of the authorities, during the quarter under review. *Powada* parties gave 1,185 performances attended by about 3½ lakh persons and the *Kalpathak* parties staged 308 programmes attracting about two lakh persons.

At the end of September, there were 144 *Sanskar Kendras* in the State. The average daily attendance at these *Sanskar Kendras*, during the quarter, was 8,400, as against 6,600 during the previous quarter.

HARIJAN

March 8

1952

BADSHAH KHAN

Kazi Ataullah, Khan Saheb Abdul Ghaffar Khan's loyal co-worker, has just laid down his life having been released from custody only when he was dying. It is frequently reported that Khan Saheb himself has not been keeping good health for a long time. His illness as a prisoner of the Pakistan Government necessarily causes much anxiety and pain to the lovers of Sarvodaya. There is nothing political in this feeling. I doubt if there is any instance in history in which a country or a nation has risen in prosperity and power after wiffully taking the life of a saintly soul. Badshah Khan, as Khan Saheb's countrymen love to call him, is a *Khudai Khidmatgar* (servant of God) in the truest sense of the term, i.e. a friend of humanity. He wants to raise the moral and economic condition of the Pathans and for that purpose their political status. But there is no narrowness in his patriotism. That the Pakistan Government should consider him their enemy and keep him in prison is as tragic as was the British Indian Government's act in keeping Gandhiji in jail and hoping that he would meet his end there.

The British Government must have realized later that Providence was very kind towards them in not granting them their dangerously foolish desire. I pray God will show the same kindness to the Pakistan Government and save them even against their infatuated will from the dangerous consequences of allowing a true *fakir* to linger in thier prisons.

Wardha, 25-2-52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

A PILGRIMAGE FOR PEACE

Gandhi & Frontier Gandhi among N.W.F. Pathans

By Pyarelal

Pages xvi+216 21 Illustrations and 2 Maps

Price Rs. 5 Postage etc. 12 as.

NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE
Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

MAHAMMUD GANDHI!

(By Manubehn Gandhi)

7-4-47, Bhangi Nivas, New Delhi

Bapuji's post today consisted of some very amusing arrivals. A cover bore the address, 'Mahammud Gandhi', a few spoke of him as a Communist. Some correspondents, however, had performed a more daring feat; they called him 'a hireling of Jinnah Saheb'. I read out the contents to him. Bapuji wrote out smilingly: "It was the people who conferred on me the epithet of 'Mahatma'; that other appellation, 'Bapu' was also given me by the people, (albeit by those who were close to me), should I not welcome also all the other titles that they give me?"

In the evening, in course of the post-prayer address, Bapuji referred to the above post, and said, "I do not mind them and am not afraid of them. I am a student of the Gita, the Quran, the Bible, the teachings of Zarthustra, and many other religions. And so, God gives me and will give me the strength to bear with patience all the reproach that may be heaped on me. I have full faith in the teachings of the masters of the various religions and I pray to God to give me enough of His forbearance so that I will not let my mind be tinged with anger against those who are pleased to traduce me. Even if they riddle my body with bullets, I would, I should depart with a smile on my face and the Lord's sacred name on my lips. I have firm belief that if I adhere to my faith unflinchingly, and if I have been essaying sincerely to protect both Hinduism and Islam, God shall grant my request." You may take down my words. I will not wish ill of my assassin or be angry with him, even in those last moments. If I do, you may call me a hypocrite, a false Mahatma." Proceeding, he said that a man's worth could be assessed only after his death. And only after his death, people would know whether he was a slave of Jinnah Saheb, or Mahammud Gandhi, or the destroyer of Hinduism and Islam or else a real protector of them.

Rawalpindi, he pointed out, was on fire, the same Rawalpindi where once all communities had combined to give him and the Ali brothers a most enthusiastic reception. Why should they not erase all feelings of revenge? They should realize that it was given to God alone to avenge a wrong, and they should have full trust in Him.

(Extracted from Manubehn Gandhi's Gujarati Diary, published in *Bhuvanagar Samachar*, 22-12-51)

Correction

I regret to have committed three inaccuracies in my article 'BA'. The year of her death should have been mentioned 1944 and not 1943; so Bapu died four years after Ba's death, and not five years later, as stated. Also, the statement that the Hindu Lunar and Gregorian Solar dates of her death fell on the same day this time is erroneous.

K. G. M.

SARVODAYA MELA, PAUNAR

[The readers may have read in daily papers that this year the Sarvodaya mela at Paunar was marked by the opening of Gandhi *chhatra* by H. E. Shri, Mangaldas Pakvasa, the Governor of Madhya Pradesh. The pillar of the *chhatra* is an octagonal structure, on each side of which is placed a marble tablet with selected utterances of Gandhiji in Gujarati and Hindi.

As Shri Vinoba could not attend the mela this year, he had sent the following message in Marathi on the occasion.

H. M. V. J.

"This year I shall not be able to participate in the Sarvodaya mela at Paunar. I am helpless for it, as I am in a walking tour from village to village doing work for the poor. I am trying to bring home to the people that the landless have a right on land. The earth is the mother of one and all. Hence how can it be right that only a few persons can exercise ownership over it? Most humbly I am trying to explain this in different ways to the people. They have begun to realize it. I have received about sixty thousand acres of land until today, the 22nd January.

"A Committee has been appointed to carry on the work of the Land-Gifts-Sacrifice in Madhya Pradesh. To give momentum to it, it is required of everyone to give his best co-operation to the Committee. The Land-Gifts-Movement should be carried on with love, and we should obtain one lakh acres of land from Madhya Pradesh and justify Gandhiji's choice of Sevagram for his residence.

"The idea of offering of one hank of self-spun yarn in the memory of Bapu has appealed to all. It is a vote for the Sarvodaya ideology. Even children and old men can participate in it. It is not difficult to offer annually one hank of self-spun yarn. Why should not the Paunar Sarvodaya mela fetch one lakh of yarn hanks? India has from ancient times four *dhams* (holy places) in four directions. God has now created a fifth one at Paramdham in the central part of the country. It was here that the idea of offering a yarn hank was born. Gandhiji's Ashram is hereafter not to run on money. It has pledged itself to do so only on labour and donation of labour. People from five or six districts round about participate in the Paunar Sarvodaya *yatra*, and it cannot be difficult for such a great circle to collect one lakh yarn hanks. It, no doubt, requires effort, but can any great task be achieved without effort? A resolve should be made this time to collect not less than one lakh hanks next year and the work for it should be planned in this *yatra*.

"Our *yatra* should become an occasion to purify the social mind. For that a varied programme should be organized, such as bathing in the river, observing a total or a partial fast, reading of the *Gita*, *bhajan*, offering of yarn hanks, a determinate resolve for the next year, programme for work during the ensuing year, propagation of Sarvodaya literature, congregational spinning and observance of silence etc. Efforts should be made to raise the standard of purity of *yatra* every year.

"An experiment of *kanchan-mukti* (freedom from money) is going on in the Paramdham Ashram. The people should know its details and should make similar effort in their respective places."

THE NOOSE ?

(By J. C. Kumarappa)

About a month ago an agreement was signed between the U.S.A. and India by which a grant of 50 million dollars was made available to India for developmental purposes. The U.S.A. has been an octopus with financial tentacles in all other parts of the world. Britain specialized in political imperialism while the American speciality is financial imperialism. Is this going to gag us on world questions? Let us beware of baits of all kinds including "rural-urban development".

Not content with a contribution of a mere 50 million dollars, the American Ambassador, Mr Chester Bowles, suggests an aid of 1,000 millions to put forward the "progress" of India. American "experts" have already begun to come in.

There is danger in all this. The American penetration will bring in commercialism and tractors. Basing our agriculture on crude oil and machines will deliver us body, soul and spirit into American hands. If we chafe at anything that the Americans dictate later, all that they will have to do to "bring us to our senses" is to stop crude oil supplies. Then we shall be starved into subjection. Prior to the last war some well-to-do cultivators had installed crude oil pump sets in some district places near Madras. Their economy was dislocated during the war as they could not get any supplies of the needed fuel. Some of them were even ruined by this handicap.

To base our economic order on things our country does not possess or produce is suicidal. Let us profit by Japan's experience. Japan surrendered, not so much for fear of the Atom bomb, but because they had no stock of petrol to carry on the war any longer. Hiroshima provided only an honourable excuse. Humble though our progress may be let us be on our own legs. Any attempt to hasten the pace may be fatal. In the end any foreign aid of this magnitude from which we cannot easily shake ourselves free, will prove a halter round our neck and jeopardize our newly found independence.

Our Latest Publications

By Mahatma Gandhi

GANDHIJI'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Abridged by Bharatan Kumarappa

"I should certainly like to narrate my experiments in the spiritual field, from which I have derived such power as I possess for working in the political field."
— Gandhiji
Pages xi, 294 Price Rs 2 Postage etc. As 11

DRINK, DRUGS & GAMBLING

Pages xi, 175 Price Rs 2-8-0 Postage etc. As. 10

NAVAJIVAN PUBLISHING HOUSE

Post Box 105, AHMEDABAD

ELIMINATION OF MECHANIZED ARTICLES OF DAILY USE

(By Vithaldas Jeraiani)

We are today faced with the problem of making a choice between village and mechanized articles of daily use. It is a problem that brooks no delay. A section of the people holds fast to the view that we shall be able to meet the needs of the people only through machines. It is now up to those who have faith in village industries to demonstrate that it can be achieved through village industries in a quiet and easy manner.

The responsibility of this task rests on the shoulders of constructive workers. They have the experience of thirty years of the village people at their back. With this asset to their credit they must go ahead.

In order to meet the annual requirements of the people of the villages in respect of food and cloth through decentralization only, that is, on a self-sufficient basis, constructive workers shall have to organize a movement for the elimination of mechanized articles of food and cloth from their daily consumption.

This movement may be started from villages. A *panchayat* may be appointed in villages for the purpose. Where there are groups of spinners, they may undertake this work. These *panchayats* or groups should organize villages for self-sufficiency in food and cloth. They should persuade the people of the villages and ask them to take a pledge to eliminate from their daily use machine-made articles of food and cloth.

Local *bhajan-mandalis* may also be properly utilized for the purpose of awakening the people.

Local groups thus awakened will produce their needs of food and cloth during the next year. Consolidated areas of a fifty or hundred villages might resolve to completely abstain from machine-made products of food and cloth. They might then request the machine-minded Government that they have produced their needs of food and cloth and now no more need mill goods. The surplus goods may either be diverted to earn areas or be exported to foreign countries to earn dollars.

Constructive workers should bend all their energies on achieving this object in the course of the next year and demonstrate their claim of village industries against mechanized industries.

Bihar has come forward to accomplish this task. By January 30th 1952, preliminary arrangements will be over; and by 30th January 1953 a group that will have been organized in a corner in Bihar will send the information as stated above to the Government. A small spark in a corner of Bihar will kindle fire in the whole of Bihar and will spread all over the country.

Let constructive workers of other provinces also prepare themselves to organize the movement for elimination of machine-made articles

of daily use and demonstrate the efficacy of constructive work.

Kora Centre,
Borivali, 18-12-'51

(Translated from Gujarati *Khadi and Gramodyoga Patrika*, Jan. '52)

SHRI VINOBA'S TELANGANA TOUR

XVII

April 28, Niradgon (Fourteenth Halt : 9 miles)

With the Lambadas

At Niradgon, we put up at a house which still bore the marks of having been set fire to by the Communists. They had failed to carry out their destructive design. Vinoba as a messenger of peace preferred to lodge in the same house, in order to apply the healing unction on afflicted hearts.

Shortly after our arrival, a party of Lambadas—men, women and children—came to see Vinoba. Lambadas are a tribe originally come from Rajasthan, but now settled in various parts of Hyderabad. They have been already introduced once to the reader. They still preserve their old customs, dress, dialect, etc., and live an isolated life, away on the hills. The Government suspected that they harboured the Communists and ordered them to leave their settlements on the hills and come down and live in the villages. This had put them in serious difficulties, since they found it hard to look after their fields and farms from the far away village. We noted their complaints and difficulties.

A Wrong Impression about Backward Tribes

Later, a long talk, which threw considerable light on their social and economic conditions, ensued. It also revealed the psychology of this and similar tribes. It is often said that these tribes prefer to live in isolation and that it would not do any good to them to disturb them from their long-settled ways. Even some eminent anthropologists hold this view. But the talk that the Lambadas had with Vinoba disclosed that much of our fear in this regard is imaginary. For, if the right approach is made, there is no reason why they should not be won over to civilization and integrated into the larger fabric of the community.

Vinoba had an interesting conversation with them. Here are a few typical questions and answers:

Vinoba: I have looked into your complaints, and shall try to get them redressed. But I would like to ask you one or two questions, not about your present, but about your future arrangements, say, of ten years hence. Would you like to come down and live in a village along with others, or would you rather prefer to stay away?

L.: Sir, we have to live far away, on the hills, since our fields are there.

V.: Suppose, we provide fields for you here, then?

L.: Then we shall be happy to stay here with the others. We shall no longer have to walk long distances to go to the market, nor to live in fear of wild animals, which destroy our crops.

Next Vinoba asked them whether they would have any objection to people from the village going and establishing colonies in lands adjacent to their fields. To this, they replied that they would only be too happy to have a new village rise in their midst, so that they would be no longer lonely. Vinoba then referred to their customs and costumes, and asked them whether they could not change some of them. He spoke to them of a leader of their community, whom he had met at Mandvi, and told them how he (a Lambada) had introduced many reforms in his home. "The women in his house no longer wear the old heavy ornaments or the long flowing garments. They have taken to simpler ways of dressing, much neater and more convenient for the kind of work they have to do. Would you not like to do the same?", Vinoba

asked. When they replied in the negative, and said that they would like to continue to live as Lambadas Vinoba asked them whether they believed that God had made their womenfolk different from those of others. He told them that other communities like theirs had accepted the changes appropriate to the needs of the time. They accepted that there was no difference between them and others who had changed, "but we are too old to learn new ways or to give up old customs. You may educate our children, and they may accept new ways."

Taking Work from the Cow

The Lambadas make use of the cow for ploughing their fields. They complained that the police force that had been posted there forced them to discontinue the practice. But they could not afford to purchase bullocks which had become too costly. Vinoba told them that there was no law to prevent them from using cows for ploughing their fields. But he asked them not to yoke cows that were pregnant. They said that they could never do so, as it would be sacrilegious to burden a pregnant cow with the yoke.

Land Cannot Be Priced

The total land deemed in the village was only 40 acres, but Vinoba deemed it valuable beyond its actual worth as it had come from the poor.

In his post-prayer speech, while expounding the importance of providing land to every one who needed it, Vinoba said that land was not to be had in plenty in our country, and the population it had to support was vast. The desire, therefore, for more than one's share of land was wrong. It meant the snatching of the sustenance of life from the hungry and the helpless. Even as it was, one could not keep possession over land for very long. With each successive generation it would get divided amongst the claimants and the possession would dwindle in quantity.

Explaining his idea further, Vinoba said, that water and air were invaluable to life, and were indispensable for the production of wealth. So also was land. But water and air do not—must not—have price; nor should land have it. He was opposed to the possession of land being used as the means of getting rich, he should not however be understood to be opposed to wealth.

Industry—The Way to Wealth

He wanted the country and the people to be rich and prosperous but not by establishing exclusive possession over land. The way to wealth lay through industry. "Let us live on land," he said, "and grow prosperous on industry." Land should be divided that all may live. But land could not bring in prosperity by itself. He did not hold and would not hold out that hope to them. For plenty and prosperity, he would urge on them to take up industry in its several forms and carry it into the villages so that they may manufacture all their needs from the raw materials there. How could they be rich if they continued to purchase their cloth and oil from the cities? Industry was the only vehicle for Lakshmi.

Destructive Role of Communists

Referring to the Communists, he said that they claimed that they were fighting for the welfare of the poor. He could not understand, however, how the burning of farms and houses could conduce to that end. If they wanted to serve the poor, they too should undertake to teach the people various industries. But they would not because primarily they wanted power and not the welfare of the poor.

Vinoba ended the speech by advising the village people to give their attention and protection to the welfare of the Lambadas who were their backward brethren. He asked the Lambada women to leave off old ways, such as the wearing of ornaments which were like so many fetters shackling the body and did no good to them.

(Translated and abridged from Hindi)

D. M.

THAKKAR BAPA'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY

Observance at Harijan Colony, Kingsway, Delhi

Shri Viyogi Hari, the General Secretary of Harijan Sevak Sangh, arranged a programme of touring in some villages adjacent to Delhi for 5 days from the 15th to 19th January, 1952. The party consisted of 13 representatives from the staff of Harijan Sevak Sangh, Bharatiya Adimajati Sevak Sangh, and Harijan Udyogshala and also a few students of the Udyogshala and was led by Shri Viyogi Hari. They covered a distance of 60 miles on foot and after covering eight villages in four days, reached the banks of Jamuna near Delhi on the morning of 19-1-1952 where they were received by all the inmates of Harijan Colony. After a bath in the sacred river, the whole of the *Gita* was read. In the afternoon there was mass spinning for one hour and a meeting in the Harijan Colony in which all the inmates of the Colony took part. Shri Viyogi Hari addressed the meeting in a feeling manner, stressing the two important qualities of Thakkar Bapa namely, *shraddha* (faith) and *pramanikata* (honesty) and exhorted the audience to follow his footsteps and work for the uplift of backward classes—the Harijans and the Adivasis.

During the tour the party kept two aims in view, namely, (1) cleaning the Harijan Bastis and (2) investigating into the grievances of the Chamars and the Bhangis. At every place Shri Viyogi Hari explained to the people the object of the visit, the work of the late Thakkar Bapa and the necessity for the removal of untouchability. The tour has brought out the following important features in the conditions of the Harijans in the villages visited:

(1) Though in cities untouchability is not very much noticed, it is still prevalent in a very bad form in the villages.

(2) In two villages Hiranki and Bankoli, where there are no separate wells for the Bhangis they are not allowed to draw water from even the wells of the Chamars, not to speak of from the wells of the Caste Hindus.

(3) Apart from the prevailing attitude of Caste Hindus looking down upon the Harijans, the recent elections have estranged the feelings between the two communities still further in some villages, as the Harijans of those villages voted for the Congress. The party who were unfortunately identified by the Caste Hindus as being the agents of the Congress were refused permission to sit even on the *pials* of the houses of Caste Hindus. This was the case at Holambi. In some villages the party was refused accommodation even by Chamars as they were afraid of harassment by the Caste Hindus. At another place the party was refused even fresh water to drink.

(4) In most of the Bhangi Bastis there are no drinking water wells. Immediate attention requires to be paid by the Government as well as public bodies for removing this grievance.

(5) In Delhi State half school fees are charged from Harijan students, while in other States Harijan students are fully exempted from school fees. The result is that not very many Harijan boys are studying in the schools in this State.

D. RANGAIYA

Sarva Seva Sangh Resolutions

The Sarva Seva Sangh, Wardha, has passed the following resolutions in its meeting held on 23-2-1952:

I.

The question of taking over the publication of the *Harijan* was discussed, and after a careful consideration of all the aspects of the question, the Sangh came to the conclusion, as the Prabandh Samiti itself had earlier indicated,* that it would be desirable that the Navajivan Trust itself continued the publication of all the three *Harijan* weeklies. In its latest resolution, (see *Harijan*, 23-2-'52, p. 437) the Trust has expressed its preparedness to continue publication of the *Harijan* for another six months. The Sangh welcomes this, and appeals to all constructive workers and institutions throughout the country to make energetic efforts to enrol more subscribers for these weeklies and to render it possible for the Navajivan Trust to ensure the continued publication of the *Harijan* weeklies.

However, if for any reason, this was not possible, the Sangh authorizes the Prabandh Samiti to make arrangements necessary for taking over the *Harijan* on behalf of the Sarva Seva Sangh.

The Sangh is of opinion that the publication of the *Harijansevak* (Hindi) is as necessary as that of the *Harijan*, and is, therefore, happy to learn from the resolution of the Trust that the question of discontinuing the *Harijansevak* does not arise at present. The Sangh, however, authorizes the Prabandh Samiti to make arrangements necessary for continuing the publication of the *Harijansevak* also, if the Trust finds itself unable to do so.

II

Concession Rates for "Harijan" & "Harijansevak"

The Sangh feels that for the purpose of increasing subscribers of *Harijan* and *Harijansevak* and propagation of Sarvodaya ideology

* The resolution of the Prabandh Samiti (23-1-'52) referred to here is as follows:

Shri Shrikrishnadas Jaju has informed the Sangh that the Navajivan Trust is thinking to discontinue the publication of the *Harijan* weeklies. The Prabandh Samiti, having considered the matter resolved that on behalf of the Sarva Seva Sangh, the Navajivan Trust be requested to continue the publication of the said weeklies or at least of the English edition of the same. The (Hindi) Sarvodaya magazine might be regarded as a substitute for its Hindi edition. The Sarva Seva Sangh is prepared to offer the Trust any help, if such is needed, for the continuance of the English edition.

If the continuance of the English edition is found impossible under any circumstances, the Sarva Seva Sangh desires to shoulder the responsibility. The Navajivan Trust would render as much help under the circumstances as would be possible. The Secretary is hereby directed to have the necessary talk in this connection with the Navajivan Trust.

among students and constructive workers, the Sarva Seva Sangh should assist fifteen hundred new subscribers to obtain *Harijan* or *Harijansevak* at half rate, that is to say, it should bear loss on this account upto rupees four thousand five hundred. The Prabandh Samiti is empowered to frame rules for the purpose.

Wardha, 24-2-'52

VALLABH SWAMI,

Joint Secretary, Sarva Seva Sangha

EARTH, THE MOTHER OF EVERYONE

(By Marjorie Sykes)

The following is a fairly close English rendering of a poem by one of the best known Hindi poets, Shri Maithili Saran Gupta, inspired by Vinoba's pilgrimage.

Fickle is Lakshmi, unstable for ever, wayward as lightning flickering gone.

Constant is Earth the Mother, whom never may any man take for himself alone.

How many sons of Man, your brethren, are cheated of bliss.

They have no part in the land, who then shall answer for this?

Now is the God-given moment, now will the gift avail.

Give for their sakes, of your riches, let justice and mercy prevail.

Glory is yours for the gathering now, like ripe fruit fallen before you strown.

Constant is Earth the Mother, whom never may any man take for himself alone.

A prophet, a leader is with us, the pathway of right to make straight.

Could there be greater good fortune than this which is now our fate?

Behold, the merit you sought for hath come of itself — Oh heed!

For the call of Life, unheeded, of death may be the seed.

Yes, where the sap of Truth springs not, there is the blight of poison thrown.

Constant is Earth the Mother, whom never may any man take for himself alone.

(From an article in *The Friendly Way*, Feb. '52).

CONTENTS

	PAGE
THE PRACTICAL IDEALIST	9
DISTINCTLY BENEFICIAL	11
BADSHAH KHAN	.. K. G. Mashruwala 12
MAHAMMUD GANDHI!	.. Manubehn Gandhi 12
SARVODAYA MELA, PAUNAR	.. Vinoba 13
THE NOOSE?	.. J. C. Kumarappa 13
ELIMINATION OF MECHANIZED ARTICLES OF DAILY USE	.. Vithaldas Jerajani 14
SHRI VINOBA'S TELANGANA TOUR — XVII	.. D. M. 14
THAKKAR BAPA'S FIRST ANNIVERSARY	.. D. Rangaiya 15
EARTH, THE MOTHER OF EVERYONE	.. Marjorie Sykes 16
NOTES:	
CORRECTION	.. K. G. M. 12
SARVA SEVA SANGH RESOLUTIONS	.. Vallabhsвами 16

Subscription Rates — Inland: One year, Rs. 6; Six months, Rs. 3; Foreign: One year, Rs. 8 or 14 s. or \$2 Desai, Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad 9.

Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai