

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

ONCE AGAIN VANASPATI

Vanaspati has once again made its appearance in the House of the People. The following Press reports have appeared :

"New Delhi, June 10: Mr Nehru today turned down a demand for a ban on the production of *vanaspati* in India. Intervening at question-time to reply to members in the House of the People who demanded its ban on the ground of its being injurious to health. Mr Nehru said: 'The Government is quite clear and convinced of the fact that the use of *vanaspati* is not harmful to health. By repeated scientific tests and research, it has been found that nobody suffered from it although *vanaspati* or its like is used by 75 per cent of the people the world over.'

"Mr D. P. Karmarkar, replying on behalf of the Food Minister, said that the committee appointed by the Government to examine the extent of adulteration of *ghee* with *vanaspati* and other products had suggested that *vanaspati* be coloured orange by using carotene oil concentrate as the colouring medium in addition to its latent colourization with sesame oil.

"The report was under the consideration of the Government which was now 'struggling' with the problem of colourization, Mr Karmarkar added." (*The Times of India*, June 12, 1952).

"Other recommendations were that *vanaspati* should be fortified with synthetic 'A' so that its nutritive value could be increased, and that production should be so controlled that every batch that leaves the factory is certain to contain the requisite amount of sesame oil give a clear Boudouin test.

"While the recommendations were still under consideration the Government had taken the following steps: *vanaspati* should not have the colour or flavour of *ghee*; it should be packed in the specified manner so that the purchaser is not deceived; *vanaspati* should not be stocked or sold from premises where pure *ghee* is also sold.

"As for colouring, Mr Karmarkar said carotene oil concentrate was not produced in India. For the present it may have to be imported, but efforts would be made to produce it locally." (*The Hindustan Times*, June 11, 1952).

All this is unsatisfactory reading. Carotene, I understand, is not the proper colouring material for distinguishing *vanaspati* from *ghee*, because it will make *vanaspati* indistinguishable from cow's *ghee* or butter. *Vanaspati* has hitherto done its best to ruin the buffalo-*ghee* industry. Is it now sought to destroy the cow-*ghee* production as well?

What are the grounds for rejecting the red oxide of iron, which gives a good rosy colour, and

makes the *vanaspati* easily distinguishable from both cow and buffalo *ghee*? The colour is not destroyed by an easy process. Phenolphthalein has also been mentioned in one of the notes of the Mysore Food Research Institute as a chemical which "makes a useful latent colour even at a very low level". What colour is that? Why has it been rejected?

How can adulteration be stopped by simply selling *ghee* and *vanaspati* from separate shops? The adulteration of *ghee* with *vanaspati* need not be done, and is not often done, in the shops. The process can be carried out and, I understand, is carried out, in the cottages of the butter and *ghee* producers in villages. It is mixed even before the milk is set for curds. The test methods of the *ghee* experts employed by municipalities are, to say the least, rough and ready, and not free from doubt. There are instances which go to show that even Bombay experts have honestly adjudged adulterated *ghee* as genuine and *vice versa*.

The Prime Minister's attitude is very regrettable. It is obstinate, and that itself is enough to render it inconsistent with a scientific approach. His answer cannot be supported by facts. It is difficult to understand how he says that 75 % people of the world use *vanaspati* or the like (margarine?). If his words mean what he says, do 75 % of the people of Africa, and India, China and other countries of the Far East who together comprise more than half the population of the world, use any of these normally? How can the *vanaspati* consumers in India be compared with the consumers of *vanaspati* or margarine of other countries? It should be remembered that *vanaspati* has to be consumed in India to a large extent by people who cannot supplement its deficiencies by other things like eggs, meat, or fatty foods. It should also be remembered that the economic life of India is based on agriculture and the cow. As the Prime Minister himself frequently reminds all who are likely to forget it, the purchasing power of the people of India is very low. How does he then support an industry, which (i) jeopardizes agriculture by making the bullock too costly, (ii) indirectly, but without doubt, ruins the village dairy industry, (iii) directly strikes at the

root of the village *ghani* industry, (iv) removes in the first place the healthy ingredients of the fresh oil by 'refinement', (v) makes it more expensive by hydrogenation, without adding anything whatever to its nutritive value; and (vi) as if this expensiveness were not sufficient, seeks to remove the deficiencies of *vanaspati* by fortifying it with synthetic vitamin 'A' and other artificial products? Is this the way of helping a people whose purchasing power is low?

The Prime Minister refers to "repeated scientific tests and research". The statement is an exaggeration. Will the Government give a list and details of the tests and researches carried out in India by their experts and the exact reports of each? How many allopaths who practise medicine understand or even care to know what their patients eat or drink, and how a particular food affects their health? Let a patient ask a doctor, "What shall I eat?", and in more than 80 % of cases, the answer will be "Oh, anything you like", or "you must find it out yourself." The doctor has to say so, because he does not know much about the effects of food. He has a superstitious belief in his medicine, and will prescribe "miraculously effective drugs" to cure ailments however produced. He will prescribe all sorts of vitamins to be taken from one end of the year to the other, but he does not know what exact food he should prescribe to his patient. Since he does not know it, he regards questions about food-selection as mere superstition. I doubt whether there are even a hundred doctors in the whole of India who have made a scientific study of their patients' food and food problems, or possess data regarding them. Dietetics and dietopathy are neglected subjects in modern medicine, at any rate in India. A school of Ayurveda declares "If your diet is proper, you need not take medicine; if your diet is improper, medicine is useless." This might be an extreme statement, but it shows that the subject of diet used to be very carefully studied in India at one time. It has been given a very much secondary and unimportant place in modern medicine.

Even if the doctors had the will they have not, at any rate in India, adequate means of testing how particular food-stuffs affect health. It is, therefore, the evidence of the patients and the public that is more relevant, even though it may not be very perfect.

I doubt whether the Government have sufficient evidence even for rebutting the allegations that *vanaspati* tends to increase bronchial and skin troubles. Let the Health Ministers of the various States and the Centre direct a close inquiry into these allegations.

Vanaspati is purely a mercantile venture thriving on its capacity to practise fraud. This is the real reason for insistence on hydrogenation

and resistance to colourization by industrialists, experts and Government, who all earn a good income from it. How otherwise could eminent scientists and statesmen employ their talents to argue that the demand for colourization of *vanaspati* was comparable to one for colouring water, which is used to adulterate milk? Such arguments convince none, deceive none. They indicate that both the scientist and the statesman act in collusion with the industrialist and simply create estrangement between the Government and the people. People cannot feel enthusiastic for giving co-operation to Government and industrialists suspected of wanting to build income and commerce by exploiting them.

Wardha, 15-6-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

DISSOLVE PARTIES

"If the leaders of different political parties have some political sense, they would dissolve their parties and form one party of all the *sqavals* of society. There can be not only more than one point of view but 35 crore points of view. But all that I want is the acceptance of a common programme for the betterment of the people. I admire churning of thoughts (*vichar manthan*), but not conflict in action (*achar gharshan*). The latter creates fire which destroys society. Nature has made India great and we have only to strive for unity to retain it.

"Had I placed this *Bhoodan-Yajna* before a conference of intellectuals and leaders a year ago, I am sure all would have ridiculed me by saying that it is impracticable and impossible, for such a thing had never happened before in the whole of human history. I say that God has created us, —you and me, to achieve something new and unprecedented. History of the past is just clay in our hands and it is for us to give any shape to it. So I started my work and now I appeal to all to take up this revolutionary programme of mine. The programme is like an ocean where all rivers meet. If you just help in creating an atmosphere, the rest will be done by that atmosphere itself. Even wingless dry leaves rise high like birds when a powerful storm comes. Thus this programme will give life to the soulless and power to the powerless. People are but a manifestation of God, we will get this faith if we go to them."

— Vinoba Bhave at Fatehpur, U. P.

(Abridged from Hindi)

D. M.

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CO-OPERATION: THE HAND-MAID OF DECENTRALIZATION

(By Shankarrao Deo)

In my three days' tour of Karnatak for the *Bhoodan-Yajna I** reached Belgaum on the evening of 21st May. I was told that the next morning, at nine, I had to visit a Gramodyoga-Kendra (Village Industries Centre) in a village near Belgaum. As it was a visit to a Gramodyoga-Kendra I gave my consent immediately.

Next morning, we motored to Angole, which though a village, is really an extension or a suburb of Belgaum. We entered a house which looked quite affluent from the standards in the village and found that sixty to seventy women, young and old, from two or three neighbouring villages were sitting in orderly rows. They looked healthy and had bright and innocent faces. The sight of these innocent and earnest faces produced in me a kind of religious feeling which overwhelmed me and filled my heart with joy and piety. I could not help giving expression to my feelings before those simple-minded mothers and sisters, and other friends who had gathered there.

I was told that they were all members of a paddy-husking Co-operative Society which had been formed at Angole on the 26th of January 1951. The total capital of the Society was Rs 705/-, each share being worth Rs 5/-, no single person is allowed to buy more than five shares. There are in all eighty-two shareholders, in the Co-operative Society. Of these 82 members, 3 are men and 79 are women. In the months from March to December they husked 11,000 bags of paddy and earned Rs 13,062-8-0 as wages, of which they have so far received Rs 8,250-0-0 in cash.

During this period, the Society has spent Rs 2,460-0-0 for other kinds of labour, such as clerical work etc. The Government had charged the Society Rs 2,475-0-0 for the price of husk. The highest amount of wages earned by a woman during this period was Rs 400/- and the lowest was Rs 40/-. The old woman who had the unique honour of earning the highest wage was present in the meeting and when I asked her how she could earn such a high amount, she replied that there were four women in her household and that all of them were utilizing their leisure time for this work.

The Angole Society has now opened two new branches, one in Machala and the other at Vadgaon. There are 65 shareholders in the Machala Society, and each shareholder has only one share. This Society was formed on the 5th February 1952; and during two months, February and March, it has husked 2935 bags of paddy and has earned Rs 2,598-7-0 as wages.

The Society at Vadgaon started work in March with 96 workers and husked 840 bags of

paddy, and has earned Rs 997-8-0 as wages. In all 240 families are working for the Society and it hopes to husk 40,000 bags of paddy this year.

The Society gets this paddy by arrangement with the Government. The Government has agreed to supply $\frac{1}{4}$ of the paddy procured in the Taluka to the Society for husking. The Society now wants the Government to extend this ratio to the whole district. The Government has also agreed to take work from the Society on special concession-rates. Whereas the mills receive Rs 25 to 35 per hundred Bengali maunds, the Society receives Rs 59-6-0 for the same quantity. The yield of both is practically equal.

The workers complained that it took months to get their bills cashed. They said that if they were assured a regular supply of paddy and if the payments for the work were prompt, they would be in a position to reduce the rates.

Shri Marathe who was working for the Society proudly said that the Society was also conducting an adult women's education class.

The Sarva Seva Sangh (by the resolution adopted at Sevapuri) has asked people to take the vow of Swadeshi i.e. as far as food and cloth are concerned, to use only products of decentralized industries or Gramodyoga and to boycott the products of centralized industries.

In Gandhiji's view, the votary of true Swadeshi has to start by dedicating himself to the service of his immediate neighbours. In the economic field, in the conditions that prevailed in our country today, it can only mean providing work to the crores of people in our villages.

Village industries and the crafts and the workers behind them have to be protected today from the crushing competition of power-driven machinery. This can be accomplished only if the spirit of true Swadeshi is revived in this country and the boycott movement carried on vigorously.

Even the Government can join in this movement. One of the most effective ways would be to adopt the policy of using only village crafts (to the exclusion of power-driven mills) for the purpose of processing the grains procured by them and to encourage and help people to do this work preferably through Co-operative Societies like the 'Angole Paddy-husking Society'.

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HARIJAN

June 28

1952

DISSOLVE GANDHISM

(1) "Gandhiji believed in Democracy. He was the greatest democrat in practice. When the Second World War broke out he wished well of the democratic powers and not of the fascist and the totalitarian ones."

(2) "Gandhiji said that non-violence was superior to violence, but violence was better than cowardice."

(3) "Gandhiji said that he was one with the Communists in their aim, but his method was one of non-violence."

(4) "Gandhiji said his was not inactive non-violence, but active dynamic non-violence."

(5) "Gandhiji confessed at the closing period of his life that what the people of India had practised was not Satyagraha or the non-violence of the brave, but passive resistance or non-violence in the absence of power to use violence."

Thus say the various Gandhites and none may be contradicted.

Now Gandhiji's followers are called upon to make a choice between Democracy and Communism; and between violence and non-violence. They are all agreed that cowardice is out of question. But some argue that Gandhiji alone could practise and give a lead in the dynamic non-violence of the brave and that after his death none may be accepted in his place. Indeed, at the time of the 1942 movement Gandhiji himself had told the nation that after his arrest every one was to be his own leader.

It is also felt by many that the so-called nearest co-workers of Gandhiji have become inactive votaries of non-violence and have shut themselves behind the walls of their Ashrams, plying the *charkha* and repeating parrot-like *Ramanama*, Sarvodaya and Constructive work, and purifying their souls. No great and widely-embracing movement could be expected to come out of them.

And so some of them have chosen Democracy, even though supported by violence, — it being better than cowardice — and they have entered the legislatures and undertaken the responsibility of running governments.

But some have not approved of this because it is a capitalist and not revolutionary Democracy. And so they have left their Ashrams and other routine activities to their juniors and the small populations of their villages and tahsils to their fate, and begun to tour the country criticizing

the present Government as having let down Gandhiji.

And some have felt that they should not confine themselves to their small fields of activity in India, but cover the four corners of the world, and preach the message of Gandhiji's Peace and Non-violence to a war-weary world.

And some have recommended the establishment of Communism (of course) by non-violent methods.

Now the common people and young workers, who are also dissatisfied with the present state of affairs, argue: "Since Communism is good, and promises relief and happiness to the poor, and since there is not dynamism enough in the Gandhites to establish it non-violently, at least not within a reasonable period, why not help the Communists, in spite of their violence? The disciples of Gandhiji might be pledged to non-violence; we are not. Let us accept their frank admission that Communism must be brought about, and straightaway work for it by the cut-the-knot method."

This is the kind of reasoning suggested and unconsciously encouraged by some Gandhites.

When a great master's life and teachings are reduced to a few *sutras* like those numbered above, we end in deducting from them propositions, which the master might never have intended and would probably have been staggered to hear. Unconsciously the best disciples make the worst caricature of their master.

Shri Sourindra Kumar Khan, a young writer of Bengal, says:

"...In all cases, after the prophet's death, his disciples who are all well-meaning and unimpeachable fail to agree among themselves and break up to resort to preach different modes of interpretation and application of the master's teaching which, taken together, later on comes to be regarded as a religion or a school of thinking."

I think he is right.

Hence, my earnest appeal to all followers of Gandhiji, or Gandhism, is: Let every one of us say, "This is *my* attitude towards non-violence, or Communism, or Democracy, or whatever it may be", instead of saying "this is what Gandhiji desired", or "this is Gandhism".

If there ever was anything like Gandhism, it died with Gandhiji. For Gandhiji alone could have the whole of it. Every one else might have something in common with him, or even everything of his *plus* something else of his own, but none the whole and nothing but the whole of Gandhism. So, let no associate, however close, say that he is a follower, or interpreter of Gandhiji or Gandhism. It is needless to say that I include myself in this.

Let us all, whom the world takes to be the followers of Gandhiji, agree to dissolve Gandhism,

if it at all survived him. Let not any of our movements, activities or actions be named after Gandhiji, or invoked in his name.

This does not mean that Gandhiji's life and writings may not be studied closely, or that he may never be quoted. The study of his noble life and extensive writings will always be necessary and will always do good to the reader; and when a particular idea, expression or teaching appeals to a person and is regarded by him as helpful to others, or as expressing his own ideas in a better way than he himself can express them, it will be natural for him to quote Gandhiji. But such quotations will not be for shutting the mouth of an adversary as they do in courts of law, where authorities are cited to prevent an opponent from advancing adverse arguments, or the judge from adopting an independent line of thinking. It is possible that Gandhiji will be studied and even followed better by men, who accept him as one of the great leaders and teachers of men, reserving to themselves the liberty to disagree with him when they are not convinced, than by those who accept him as their final authority, but are compelled to circumvent or dilute his teachings to justify their own actions and attitudes. It is possible that Buddha, Mahavir, Jesus, Mahommed and other world teachers would have been studied more universally and reverently by religious-minded people all over the world than they are now as founders of particular religions or systems. Even as Shri J. Krishnamurti dissolved his Order of the Star several years ago, and Gandhiji dissolved the Gandhi Seva Sangh in 1940, let Gandhism stand dissolved.

Wardha, 9-6-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

Rich Hearts of the Poor

"I ask even the poor to give their donations in the *Bhoodan-Yajna*. None should abstain from participating in a sacred work. I don't demand large donations from the poor. I ask only small ones as a token of love. But my experience has been that they have in the aggregate donated more."

"A carpenter offered all his 12½ acres of land saying that he follows another occupation and earns his livelihood from it. The poor have offered generously, for their hearts are large."

Today about 400 acres of land were donated in the *Yajna*. A cultivator prostrated before Vinoba's feet and began to weep loudly. When he became calm, Vinoba asked him, "What do you want to say?" He replied, "Sir, I own here six *bighas* of land. I desire to give them to you in this sacred work." Vinoba asked him if he had enough land for his livelihood. He said, "I have five more *bighas* (elsewhere), and if required I shall donate them too." Vinoba acceded to his request and permitted him to sign the gift-deed for six *bighas*.

Sardhua, (Dist. Banda)

7-6-'52

D. M.

GANDHIJI'S LETTERS

[The following is an English rendering of a part of the Publisher's Note to the Gujarati book *SARDAR VALLABHBHAI* (To *Sardar Vallabhbhai*),—being a collection of Gandhiji's letters to the Sardar.]

Gandhiji's letters form a great and important part of the immortal writings that he has left us. In the innumerable letters that he wrote to persons of various stations in life, of different nationalities and age-groups, and on diverse subjects lie hidden various rare facets of that rich and manifold life. These letters will undoubtedly be of great value to his biographer.

The reader is aware that Gandhiji has willed all his copy-rights and writings, published as well as unpublished, to the Navajivan Trust. The Trust has to discharge the responsibility of publishing this form of his abundant literature. It is also necessary to collect as many letters of Gandhiji as possible for Shri Pyarelal, who has been entrusted to write the authoritative biography of Gandhiji.

Shortly after Gandhiji's demise an appeal was issued to all those who possess letters from Gandhiji to send their letters to us. They were assured that the letters would be properly taken care of while they were in our custody and after being copied would be returned to the owner if required; also that if any sender desired his correspondence to be kept confidential, his wish would be unreservedly respected. The Trust realized that Bapu's letters being a prize possession the receivers have every right to possess and treasure them.

In response to our request several friends sent letters to us. They were copied and returned to the senders. Some of these letters were published in *Harijan* and *Shikshan ane Sahitya*. Some have been collected and published in book-form, such as *Bapu's Letters to Mira*² and *Ashramni Bahenone* (Gujarati).³ Two more collections of letters to Ashram-sisters are being edited by Kakasaheb Kalelkar.

But the present collection of letters to Sardar Vallabhbhai is a unique one, being correspondence passed between two of the greatest personages, who played a prominent part in shaping the destiny of the country. It covers more than a quarter of a century, beginning from 8-7-1921 to 29-12-1947. The collection has been edited by Shri Manibehn Patel and Shri Narhari Parikh.

The Trust proposes also to bring out shortly a collection of Bapu's letters to Shri Manibehn and Dahyabhai Patel, daughter and son respectively of the Sardar.

I again take this opportunity to request those who had the privilege to have correspondence with Gandhiji to send us his letters.

(From Gujarati)

JIVANJI D. DESAI

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² Price Rs 4/- postage etc. 12 as.

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SHRI VINOBA'S UTTAR PRADESH TOUR - V

We covered Balia (in the last letter) and were in Gazipur now. Before entering Banaras, or old Varanasi, we were to halt at four places along our route through Gazipur and cross the Ganga thereafter.

The four halts in Gazipur were, Muhammadabad, Gazipur, Nandagaon, and Saldpur. Muhammadabad naturally reminded us of the late Dr. Ansari; his birth-place is only two miles from there. The great service, he did to the country still lives, and its sweet aroma was evident in the help that we received from the local Muslims in our work at every stage. They used to attend our meetings in large numbers.

In our collective spinning programme at this place, two lady-spinners gave a demonstration of spinning with their eyes blindfolded. Vinoba referred to this in his speech and commended it. It was a good practice, as it enabled one to spin not only in the day but also at night, and with the same ease. Spinning had many merits. It could be done even in darkness and along with thinking, meditating, or *jap*. Arjuna used to practise archery in the dark for gaining greater mastery of that art. Vinoba welcomed such experiments in spinning. He had seen blind people doing good spinning. But spinning with closed eyes gave one a sense of peace, which deepened further if one also observed silence along with it. Vinoba said that he had made similar experiments but they were confined to spinning on the *takkli*, which is easier than blind-folded spinning on the *charkha*.

Expatriating on the place of spinning in the uplift of the villages, Vinoba said, "It is not possible to liquidate poverty until the villagers take to spinning and manufacture their cloth locally in the villages. Land per capita in this district is only a third of an acre. There are no other industries. Some propose to provide work to the people by boring new wells and laying out more roads. I admit that construction of wells and roads is necessary, but these programmes can provide work only for a temporary period. They cannot solve the problem. Village industries alone can help there. *Charkha* is the first among them, but even our workers have not yet realized its vast power and potentiality."

Referring to *Bhoodan-Yajna* Vinoba said that the fact that people in their thousands came forward and willingly donated their lands was a miracle wrought by *ahimsa*. There was, in this passage of land from the rich to the poor, the same quality of spontaneity as characterized the Ganga going to meet the sea or the child running to its mother. Vinoba said that he was wandering from village to village for bringing life and strength to the villages. No village should languish for want of life and nourishment. But strength would not come by building curtains around them. It lay in love establishing itself in village-life. If the village people loved one another, as members of the same family, villages would be strong. *Bhoodan-Yajna* sought to release this love.

Continuing Vinoba said, "A regular army of workers should have come forth in the wake of Independence to translate it into the actual happiness of the people. That did not happen. The opportunity was wasted and the people were left to their fate. Communism sets in where efforts are not made to fight poverty. Even if Communism is somehow checked, crimes, such as dacoities, loot and murder, increase out of sheer desperation. Who can say how long we ourselves would be able to keep patience if we were to be reduced to poverty? How long even the judge who pronounces long and hard sentences on the criminals would himself keep patient if he were faced with it? The judge is honest, because all his wants for comfortable living are provided for by the public. The responsibility, therefore, for the crimes, rests not on the poor, but on us, who make the criminals. It is not justice if the makers of criminals are let off untouched, while the criminals are punished."

"It is the rich who perpetrate crimes, not the poor," someone from the audience intervened.

"I agree," said Vinoba, "the real offenders are we, the white-collared gentry, the makers of criminals. The *bhoodan* movement will lessen this heavy load of sin. It will save us as it will save the poor. Gandhiji brought about awakening in the people through his Salt Satyagraha. That was the starting point of our fight for Independence, and through it he led us to our goal. Even so, if this *bhoodan* movement goes into full swing, and there is no doubt that it will, I am sure, the poor shall come into their own."

From Muhammadabad we proceeded to Gazipur. The region around these places is the sacred land of Maharshi Gadhī (father of Vishwamitra) and Jamadagni (father of Parashuram). Saldpur was our fourth halt. People still remembered the day twentythree years ago when on the no-moon day of Aswin 1886 (V.S.), (2nd October, 1929) Bapu had set his foot in this city situated on the confluence of the Ganga, and the Gomati. They were now equally delighted to find Vinoba in their midst, and presented him with a touching address. These welcome addresses have been regular feature of our experience of the journey and reflect the love and respect with which Vinoba is received everywhere.

Coincidentally, it was April 6, the first day of the National Week. Vinoba made a particular reference to it at the outset of his speech. He said that the Week had been the occasion for many years past of awakening the Indian people to the call of patriotism, to their duty by the country. It had inspired them to do bold deeds, deeds of rare courage and sacrifice. It had therefore about it a sacredness which had refreshed the founts of our faith year after year.

Explaining the importance of *Bhoodan-Yajna* he said that the movement had come at the most opportune moment. Had it not come at this stage, the youth of the country would have had no opportunity to come to the fore and go ahead in the field of service. The old workers had done a great deal in their time. Some of them still continued in their old places, a few had gone higher up to occupy positions of authority. That was necessary. However, if the youth looked to the elders for initiative, work would suffer. There would be nothing doing. The youth must now come forward and not expect only the Congress to do it. After Swaraj, our next task was to build a social order where there would be no exploitation. We had to remove the inequalities of wealth as far as possible and bring to every one a sense of equality with all the rest. Every one had to be provided with food and clothing. And for every item of this vast work, young and new workers were needed.... The President of the Congress, Jawaharlalji, also wanted to put new blood into the Congress. But new blood demanded new work. They must be given a new hope, a new prospect of the brave future of their country, which they were called upon to serve and sacrifice their lives for. The *Bhoodan-Yajna* offered such a promise.

Continuing he said that the older workers suffered from inherent limitations. They could not attract the young because the latter wanted a new programme with the ideals redefined in a new ideology. They wanted new words and new symbols. The *Bhoodan-Yajna* offered such a new programme. "It puts an end to the old differences. Old differences continue only so long as the old words stay. The streams are different and have different names, but when they enter the sea they lose their names and merge into one another in the vastness of the sea. That is why the *bhoodan* movement appeals to every party. The Jana Sangh people feel that it will make for cultural regeneration. The revolutionists see in it an instrument of a social and economic revolution. The merit of a new name is that different persons can read different significances into it, and each the one he liked most."

Referring to the announcement of the U. P. Congress for organizing a *bhoo-dan* fortnight, Vinoba said that the workers should not slacken their efforts in the belief that the Congress having resolved to collect land-gifts, they had nothing more to do. The Congress announcement implied that they had in their task the sympathy and blessings of the old workers. That was enough. The new workers should thereafter take up the work in right earnest. He invited them to do so on the first day of the National Week. He would even take some of them with him in his party for a short while. "Ours is a moving school and a week's training with us will be enough experience for the workers to undertake the task. If new workers come in, in this way, we might even hope to raise a corps of 500 new workers in this province which may be an inspiration to the rest of India and may well be the beginning of a great Volunteer Service Army making for a continuous flow of service throughout the country. I aim at obliterating all differences. I have been roaming about in your province for the past months in the cause of the poor and before I leave I want to provide for the continuity of the work. I should like to keep in personal touch with the workers and exact work from them in a planned manner. I find that the young workers love me and respect me. The love and respect they bear to me is not for my person. It is an expression of their love for the cause I espouse. It is their love for the poor. They, therefore, owe it to themselves to co-operate in this work."

The appeal evoked a good response, and many responsible persons offered to enlist themselves for this work. Offers of this type have been reaching us from other provinces also.

After Saidpur, we entered the Banaras District. Banaras (city) was still a few miles away. We negotiated about five miles by boat. As we were being waited on the waters, hundreds of people lining the banks of the Ganga greeted Vinoba. Then followed a ten mile walk on foot. On the way, Vinoba had to perform the opening ceremony of a Nature Cure Centre. The way was thronged with crowds of spectators all along. The sun had grown scorchingly hot. Vinoba was tired and had to take water quite frequently. But when anyone asked him to rest himself awhile, he declined with a smile and proceeded apace. Hanuman had said, "There can be no rest for me, unless I have achieved Rama's work." It was the same with Vinoba.

At last we reached the destination. There were about 60-70 boys awaiting our arrival at a certain point on the way. They had kept standing for a long time eager to offer their youthful welcome to the distinguished guest. Speaking of these devoted boys in his evening speech, Vinoba said, "My eyes turned to their feet, while they were looking at my face. And I saw that barring one, no boy had shoes in his feet. The sun was hot. I felt ashamed that while I had about my feet the protection of the shoes, they were standing bare-footed in that burning dust. Why should it be that while one has shoes, many others have them not; while one has enough clothing, many others remain bare-bodied? Or while one has enough food, many others go hungry?"

He also provided the answer to this ringing query: "Gita's *samya-yoga* i.e. the yoga of equality is the remedy to this grievous state of affairs. Lord Krishna realized this *samya-yoga* in his life. He has been called a thief who stole milk and curds and butter. But Shukadev, the poet devotee, has woven his pilferings into immortal poetry. He has idealized them in ecstatic verse. Because, it was no thieving. It was an expression of His love for the poor. He wished that all should partake of the village-riches in equal measure. All that he did was aimed at the good of the people. He killed Kamsa, but he did not grab his kingdom. He was pledged to live as the poorest of the poor and to strive with all his energy for the equal

distribution of the wealth among the members of the community.

It was 12th April, the day fixed for our entry into Banaras. We were to cross the Ganga twice. We got into the boat early at four. We were going up the river against the current. When Vinoba saw that the oarsman had to strain himself overmuch, he went up to him, sat by his side and helped him by himself plying the oar.

Our entry into Banaras was one of the most exciting experiences, I had ever had. There was ebullient enthusiasm bubbling forth on every side. They had walked a long way, about 5 miles off the city to receive Vinobaji. He was presented with a welcome address at Rajghat. The students recited religious texts from every religion, and the whole history of culture seemed to unroll before us thousands of years of human progress. A little farther off on the way we were met by Dr. Bhagwandas, the octogenarian savant and *tapasvi* waiting to greet Vinobaji. It was a meeting between two Rishis who have spent their lives meditating on the good of mankind. The meeting augured well for the *bhoo-dan* movement.

Next we stopped for a short while at a women's institution and were very much delighted to hear *bhoo-dan* songs, well sung by the girls there. But Vinoba seemed lost in silence; he was deep in thought. He was entering this, the oldest city of the world, Kashi. Almost every Indian saint from Buddha down to our own day had spent a part of his life here or at least visited it and imbued its holy atmosphere. Kashi is mentioned in the *Upanishads*. A Rishi says, "our eye-brows are respectively Varuna and Asa and in between them is Kashi." It would go to show that the city dates back to a period before the *Upanishads*. Vinobaji himself had come here, 36 years ago. He was thinking of going to the Himalayas, but then, he turned to Sabarmati to live with Bapu, the human counterpart of the Himalayas.

Banaras had done much good work in connection with *bhoo-dan*. The workers had approached every *zamindar* and land-holder. Many who would not agree to their appeal at first, relented later under their persuasiveness. Most of them actively co-operated with the work by giving large gifts. A friend who had at first refused to give anything gave away 500 acres ultimately. Shri Shri-prakashji (now the Governor of Madras) offered his quota as a mark of his happiness over Vinoba's arrival in Kashi, his city. He had given away his lands long ago to the peasants. President Rajendraprasad in Delhi and Shri Shri-prakashji in Kashi placed before the people inspiring examples by their active participation in *bhoo-dan* work.

We had been put up in Kashi Vidyapith. Kashi Vidyapith has played an important role in the cultural and political life of U. P. people. It was conceived and founded by the late Shri Shivprasad Gupta and has had the benefit of the services of many other eminent workers and leaders like Dr. Bhagwandas, Acharya Narendradeo, Dr. Sampurnanand and others. The present popular principal of the Vidyapith, Shri Birbal Singh introduced the members of the staff and the students to Vinoba and assured him of the co-operation of Vidyapith in the task ahead. He also presented to Vinoba the books published by the Vidyapith.

In the morning when we started for Sevapuri, a friend gifted 300 acres. It was a good beginning and we received many more gifts all along the way. The way, a distance of 16 miles, was lined with swelling crowds of people at every point. At last, through all this din and dust when we reached Sevapuri, the *sevak*s accorded a silent welcome. The high seriousness of it was most impressive. Vinoba gave a short introductory speech under the shade of a big banyan tree.

(Abridged from the original in Hindi)

D. M.

BHAI-NALKANTHA KHEDUT (KISAN) MANDAL

Bhai-Nalkantha Khedut (Kisan) Mandal is a special type of institution of its class. It was founded under the inspiration of Muni Santbalji, the well-known Jain Sadhu and public worker of Gujarat. In the course of a letter giving a brief history of the Mandal, the Muniji writes:

"Bhai-Nalkantha Khedut Mandal is established on moral foundations. Originally a few *kisans* formed into a group and pledged themselves not to sell paddy at more than Rs 10/- and wheat at more than Rs 9/- to 12/- per maund. This group gradually developed into the present Mandal.

"Saving of grains and resolution of disputes by arbitration are imperative moral obligations binding on the members. The members of its executive body have to observe stricter rules.

"When in pursuance of Bapu's advice, the Government lifted the controls on food-grains, Shri Ravishankar Maharaj and I explained to the cultivators, who have been rightly described by the poet as 'guardians of life', their responsibilities. This *mandal* was the outcome of those efforts.

"The Mandal carried on a successful propaganda among cultivators not to fall into the temptation of profiteering. As a result the *kisans* of the surrounding talukas of the Ahmedabad district, last year, responded to the appeals of Shri Ravishankar and myself and placed thousands of maunds of wheat at our disposal at a time when it was difficult even for Government to supply grains.

"After the establishment of this Mandal, two more *mandals* have been established on the same principles, one in Banaskantha and the other in Saurashtra. I sincerely hope that if such *mandals* are established throughout the country, village swaraj will automatically come into existence.

"Looking to the present set-up of the Congress, it does not seem that such bodies can function under its direct guidance, but there is no doubt that such bodies ought to work on the principles of the Congress.

"I trust that the Kisan Mandal and activities of this nature will play an important role in the moral reconstruction of society."

Shri Santbalji is the principal guide and spirit of every public activity in the Bhai-Nalkantha Taluka of the Ahmedabad district. This is a backward and very poor region but the people are simple and trustful. Shri Santbalji's efforts have brought about a considerable awakening among these people. Being a Jain Muni, he does not use vehicles and tours on foot. Therefore practically every village of this taluka has been visited by him and he has a direct contact with the people. Being a poet, an eloquent preacher and of strong moral character, he wields great influence on the people of the region and he has collected a fairly large group of earnest workers around him.

The above suggestion of Shri Santbalji deserves to be seriously considered by constructive workers all over the country. The appeal made to producers and merchants by Shri C. Rajagopalachari at the time of lifting the controls

can be fulfilled when the Kisan Mandals and middlemen of this type begin to operate.

Further information may be had from: Muni Santbalji, Gundi P. O. Bhurkhi (Ahmedabad District).

Wardha, 24-5-52
(From Gujarati)

K. G. MASHRUWALA

NOTES

When M.P.s Laugh

"New Delhi, Wednesday—India has a roaring export trade in monkeys. In reply to a question in the House of the People today, the Deputy Minister for Commerce said, India exported 23,257 monkeys in 1951 and 47,185 this year. There was laughter when a member wanted to know whether there was any other country which was competing with India in this trade." (*The Hindustan Times*, 5-6-52).

In the days of British Rule Indians protested vehemently against such practices. Today the House of the People cracks jokes on the subject, and not a single voice is raised in protest. I wonder what sort of laugh would be left in these light-hearted M.P.s, if they were to be told that it had been decided to export them to foreign countries for scientific research!

Pilkhi, 14-6-52

MIRA

Boycott of Cinema

The Hindustan Times of 17-6-52 published the following news-item:

"Allahabad, June 15.—A washerwomen's conference here on Thursday decided to boycott cinema shows.

"The conference, which was attended by their menfolk as well, discussed the baneful effect of modern pictures on the moral life of society and urged all members of the community not to witness cinema shows.

"Any defiance of the 'no more cinema' decision would mean ostracism of the person concerned, stated a resolution adopted by the conference.—P. T. I."

The menace of cinema has assumed such proportions that it seems there is no alternative for right thinking men but to boycott it. It is significant that the lead has been given by washerwomen to wash off this evil. But will the so-called educated and cultured men and women join them?

H. M. V.

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