

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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AHMEDABAD — SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 1952

TWO ANNAS

## PRIME MINISTER'S CONDOLENCES

[A Telegram to Shri Aryanayakam, 9-9-52]

The news of Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala's death this evening comes as a great shock. During all these difficult days he was one of that noble band who was not swept away by passing events, but kept true to Gandhiji's message. The country and all of us are the poorer for his passing away and I send you and all our friends and comrades at Sevagram my deepest sympathy and condolences.

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

## KISHORLALBHAI

The sad news of the death of Kishorlalbai will be received with deep sorrow and profound grief by all. That he chose to die in harness regardless of the consequences to his frail body speaks eloquently of the strength of his spirit. We felt anxious about the recent deterioration in his health and had requested him more than once to suspend writing for the *Harijan* until he was well enough to resume it, but he felt that it was the breath of his nostrils and he could not live without it. We had very reluctantly to respect his wishes.

He was essentially a man of greater reflection than action and yet he was a *dnyanyogi* and *karmayogi* too. He was a consummate rationalist and the rectitude of his thoughts and feelings was remarkable. He had imbibed in him the quintessence of ancient Indian philosophical thought and action and strove constantly to shape and

evolve a pattern of thought and behaviour worthy of a brave new world based on the teachings and ideals of Gandhiji, with whom he was very closely associated since 1917. He was an ardent seeker after Truth and had abundant faith in God's mercy which enabled him to bear success and failure, joy and sorrow with serene contentment.

He was gentle in his temperament and simple and abstemious in his habits. He believed in unattached performance of duty. His self-restraint and capacity to suffer were almost super-human. He gave to life a meaning and significance which makes life on earth a great adventure and does not end with death but persists even beyond. He will be remembered for the nobility of his soul long after the things of mundane life are forgotten. May his soul rest in peace.

MORARJI DESAI

Bombay, 10-9-52

## TO CORRESPONDENTS, CONTRIBUTORS AND OTHERS

The *Harijan* establishment at Wardha will be closed at the end of this month. Hence, all correspondence, contributions etc., and all newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets, reports etc. sent to me as Editor of, or in exchange of, *Harijan* papers (all editions) may kindly be addressed hereafter to P. O. Box 105, Ahmedabad.

Wardha, 6-9-52

K. G. MASHRUWALA



KISHORLALBHAI

Birth: 6-10-1890

Death: 9-9-1952

### ACHARYA vs. ACHARYA

While Shri Dharendra Mazumdar regards, and justifiably so, the mild demand of Shri Rajaji to reserve *dhotis* and *sarees* for handloom industry as altogether inadequate for the prosperity of villages, the Union Commerce Minister, Shri T. T. Krishnamachari has, according to the correspondent of the *Times of India*, (3rd September, '52), "virtually rejected Shri C. Rajagopalachari's suggestion to reserve *saree* and *dhoti* production to the handloom industry." The Commerce Minister claims that the Central Government is interested in the progress of the handloom industry but apprehends that it would result in "short supplies of *sarees* and *dhotis*." He gives figures to prove that handlooms by themselves would not be able to produce all the *dhotis* and *sarees* which the country needed.

In the same speech, according to PTI, Shri Krishnamachari said, "that Government looked upon handloom industry as something very important for providing work to the unemployed. But the industry had to face certain odds in recent years as handloom weavers thought they could get higher profits and more people turned handloom weavers. They made money all the while. Now that they find that things had reversed, they blame the Government."

Shri Krishnamachari's logic is rather difficult to understand. He regards handloom industry as very important for providing work for the unemployed, provided the unemployed do not take to it when there is scope for it! He forgets that handloom weavers are not produced overnight; that if more handloom weavers took to it at a favourable period, it was because they already knew the art, but had to give it up for sheer want of favourable circumstances; that during the period they gave it up, they were either unemployed, or employed in an occupation which did not give them adequate returns. What does Shri Krishnamachari mean when he says that the handloom weavers "made money all the while"? How long was that "all the while"? Was it at the cost of the mill-industry? For a few hundred rupees that the mill-owner allowed the weaver to make, he himself made perhaps lakhs and crores. And the handloom-weaver supplied the Indian consumer, while the mill-owner planned how to capture the world market after the war. If Shri Rajaji's demand is accepted, some thousands more would certainly rejoin that industry and indeed the various rural development workers would be expected to encourage them to do so. Since they would be assured of a reserved field, even those who weave cloths other than *dhotis* and *sarees* would begin to weave these and there would be no dearth for *dhotis* and *sarees*, as apprehended by the Minister.

But this camouflage argument is resorted to, because the Government are afraid to face the combined opposition of the capitalist and factory-

labour forces, which are highly organized, although the Government realize that their duty is to liquidate or decentralize them as quickly as possible in the interest of the villages.

Shri Rajaji's suggestion is a dose of very low potency in that direction. The Government should have the courage to face the initial reaction to it. And the mill-owners and workers should also read the signs of the times. Awakened rural India will not bear this process of being bled white.

Wardha, 4-9-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### CONTROL THE MILLS

(By Dharendra Mazumdar)

In 1946 when the National Government was formed Gandhiji pressed for control over mills as a first step towards national reconstruction. It was clear to him that if the millions of this country were to be given employment mills would have to be progressively closed down and replaced by *charkha* and village industries. But the leadership then refused to consider, much less concede, this demand. It was obsessed with the splendour of the West. Its heart was set on leading India along the road the West had gone. It little thought that what the modern West had achieved was of doubtful value. Naturally, therefore, it thought it fit to ignore Gandhiji as a practical proposition. The leadership thought that it was enough if Gandhiji was given a place in history and dismissed.

Six years have gone by. Unemployment is increasing at a terrific pace. Our leaders are puzzled. But their obstinacy prevents them from heeding, even now, the advice Gandhiji gave in 1946. It is gratifying, however, to find that some people are at last reacting to the compulsion of circumstances and have started talking of *charkha* and village industries. But although they talk of these they little realize that *charkha* and village industries can thrive only at the cost of mills. Both cannot exist simultaneously. This is inevitable, and is the only correct position to take. But somehow they choose to shut their eyes against reality. The result is that they fail to see light. No wonder then, that they are led to the position that it is not the business of the State to provide employment to all.

Of late Rajaji has forcefully reacted to the tragedy that obtains in Madras. He has recognized the force of circumstances. He has come to the conclusion that handloom must be protected against mills to the extent that the manufacture of *dhotis* and *sarees* should be entrusted exclusively to the handloom. No more should the textile mill compete with the handloom in the manufacture of these varieties. This development in Rajaji's outlook is a happy augury. Rajaji clearly feels that no village industry can be saved unless it is protected against the ruinous competition of the corresponding mill. But unfortunately, Rajaji's thinking is confined but to a narrow compass. He is not looking beyond Madras. The

fact is that in Madras the number of *dhoti* and *saree* weavers is so large that no government, much less a democratic government, can afford to ignore them for long.

Rajaji's is not an ordinary position among the front rank official leaders of the Congress today. The Government of India for a time may ignore Sarvodaya workers including Vinobaji, but it can ill afford to ignore Rajaji. Our appeal to Rajaji is that he should go a step further and consider whether centralized industrialization can solve the problem of unemployment in this country. If he comes to the conclusion that centralized production and employment to all cannot go together, and that village industries are essential, then he must know that no village industry can survive by mere words of sympathy or by casual financial aid. Among the vast population of India, are weavers the only people who are unemployed? Have our mills not rendered workless and breadless the millions of our spinners, paddy-thrashers and *ghani*-men? What does Rajaji propose to do for them? True that the weavers of Madras are organized and vocal, whereas the others lack organized strength to voice strongly enough to disturb the Government. But is it for this reason alone that Rajaji will not look at the problem from the basic national angle and will be content to look at it from the mere official angle? We do hope he will not do so.

We have no doubt that if Rajaji gives earnest thought to the problem of unemployment in the country as a whole he will arrive at the same conclusion which Gandhiji reached years ago, and then he cannot but tell the Government of India that it must reserve the production of food and cloth exclusively for village industries, and slowly squeeze out the mills operating in this sphere. Decentralization of the processes of food and cloth production is the only solution. Rajaji must know that even if the Government of India accepts his suggestion and put an embargo upon mill production of *dhotis* and *sarees* his object will not be achieved. For, in the event of mill-made *dhotis* and *sarees* not being available, the hard-pressed customer will not go in for more expensive handloom *dhotis* and *sarees*; rather, he will purchase plain calico, or some printed variety of requisite width and use it as substitutes and the poor weaver will remain where he is today, workless and breadless.

Let us face the basic realities of the situation. We hope Rajaji will do so. If millions are to get bread, mills will have to be controlled. There is no escape from this.

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#### STRANGE ARGUMENTS

(By Vinoba)

[After my note, *Acharya vs. Acharya* was written, I received a report of Shri Vinoba's speech made at Banaras on the 3rd September. I summarize it below.—K. G. M.]

Before setting about to plan for villages, Shri Vinoba suggested, the Planning Commission office should be shifted to a hut in a village, and the members of the Planning Commission should take to village industries for four hours per day, and devote the rest of their time to planning. Then alone their plans would become worthy of consideration.

Shri Vinoba examined Shri T. T. Krishnamachari's arguments one by one. First, the Commerce Minister had said that the mills produced 170 crore yards, against which that of the handloom weavers was negligible. The question was not how much the latter produced, but what they were capable of producing if given an opportunity. There were already 25 lakh trained weavers in the country. Even if they produced no more than 4 yards per day per weaver, 170 crore yards could be produced in 170 days.

Shri Krishnamachari's second argument was that it was not easy to give protection to handloom industry, which was on sick-bed. The other industry could not be killed to save this patient. Shri Vinoba said, it was plain that Shri Krishnamachari was not prepared to give protection to a cottage industry against a rival large-scale industry.

And yet, Shri Krishnamachari had advanced as his third argument that the Government was going to do something for cottage industries. What was it, Vinoba asked. Giving a subsidy here and there? Can it help?

Shri Krishnamachari's fourth argument was that, it was no use insisting on the survival of uneconomic occupations. They should be provided with other occupations which the society needed. This was, Vinoba said, a strange argument indeed. He wanted to snatch away from the villagers' hands their main occupation, capable of satisfying one of the most essential daily needs of the people, though he had nothing ready in his hands to provide them with in its place. All he had was talk of providing new occupations. Vinoba asked him to do so before depriving them of what they had.

Incidentally Vinoba remarked, the Congress was no doubt fond of Gandhiji, but most of the Congress leaders were enamoured of Western economics. Economics, Vinoba said, was not a science like that of Mathematics. Rajaji also understood economics quite well, but a shrewd statesman that he was, he first started with decontrol, and then he had taken up the cause of the weavers, who formed the largest section of the people in South India. He could have demanded that all weaving in mills should be stopped, but he made only the least demand, which, too is being rejected.

**PERTINENT MESSAGES***(By M. K. Gandhi)***To Socialists**

"Socialists have been visiting me for the last two days. I have been telling them the same thing; namely, that if they wanted to bring Socialism in India, they should forget personal animosities. I ask them to take to physical labour, to develop their moral character by closely examining their personal, private and public life. Socialism will not come by arm-chair discussions or platform speeches, but by examining every moment of their wakeful life. Your aim should always be clear and perfect, and if in attaining it, you do not observe truth and non-violence in every minutest detail the Socialism that you desire to bring will dash to pieces and not a trace will be left of your existence, like a body falling from the top of a mountain into the valley below. This applies equally to the Congress. If Congressmen or Socialists do not follow the high principles which their fine designations connote, there will be a revolution in the country, opening the gates to Communism. I shall not live to see that tragedy; but I caution you to develop your activities carefully, and guard so that posterity might not pour curses on you."

*(From Manubehn Gandhi's Diary of 7-5-47, as published in Bhavnagar Samachar, 16-8-52).*

"Replying to a French friend, Gandhiji said he felt that a socialist State was bound to come into being in India. He hoped that Indian Socialism would not be an arm-chair but a practical, Socialism. The goal must be clear and perfect or else they would be sailing on an uncharted sea and might founder. He himself naturally clung to the hope that future society in India would be built on non-violence. And only in that case would Socialism become a permanent way of life." *(Harijan, 18-5-47).*

**To Non-Europeans of South Africa**

"Sheth Cachhalia, Honorary Secretary of the Transvaal Indian Congress, cabled for a message on the rally which was to take place in Johannesburg of all the non-European races in the Union of South Africa on the question of racial disabilities in the Union. The question is most intricate and almost baffling. It is intricate enough when confined only to the Indian disabilities but the inclusion of all the races while logically correct is fraught with grave danger, if the struggle is not kept at the highest level and is not firmly based on truth and non-violence. I want to warn the organizers of the rally against rhetorical display or raising idle hopes and to advise them to carry on their demonstration with dignity and restraint. Let no one doubt that the

salvation of all the exploited people of the earth and, therefore, of the world lies in the strictest reliance on the coin on whose one face is written truth and the other non-violence in large letters. Sixty years of experience has taught me no other method." *(Harijan, 18-5-47).*

"Field Marshal Smuts is a trustee for Western civilization. I still cling to the hope that he will not sustain it on the suppression of Asiatics and Africans. South Africa should present a blend of the three.

To the people of South Africa, to whom I am no stranger, I would say that they should not make the position of their representatives impossible by their unwarranted prejudice against colour. The future is surely not with the so-called White races if they keep themselves in purdah. The attitude of unreason will mean a third war which sane people should avoid. Political co-operation among all the exploited races in South Africa can only result in mutual goodwill, if it is wisely directed and based on truth and non-violence.

I have no doubt that those South African Indians who seek to create a division will do harm to themselves and to the great cause of liberty for which the movement of Satyagraha has stood and must stand.

To the Satyagrahis I would advise strict adherence to the fundamentals of Satyagraha which literally means force of truth and this is for ever invincible. It is a good sign that they have a progressive European group solidly behind them. The Satyagrahis of South Africa should know that they have India at their back in their struggle for preserving the self-respect of the Indians in South Africa." *(Harijan, 25-5-47).*

**On Craze for Machinery**

An English lady, in a two minute interview with Gandhiji, asked :

"Europe is at present caught in the maelstrom of machinery. Don't you think that India will go the same way? Wherever I go I hear plans of industrialization."

*Bapuji* : You are right. The Western wind is blowing hard here at present. It will not be wrong to say that at present I am the only believer in village industries. There are of course a few colleagues in the Sevagram Ashram, who are engaged in experimenting on village industries. But they are not even a drop in the ocean; a hundred or a thousand among four hundred millions may well be regarded negligible. Nevertheless, I make bold to assert that India does not need these mills and machinery in the way Europe does, and she can save herself from their onslaught if she wills. But it is not easy to resist their fascination.

*(From Manubehn Gandhi's Diary of 6-5-47, as published in Bhavnagar Samachar, 9-8-52).*

**Message to Public Servants**

On 8-5-47 Bapu passed through Patna on his way to Calcutta from New Delhi. At Patna, the

Bihar Ministers came to the station to pay their respects to him.

The ministers were busy talking with Bapu. The time for starting the train was due. The station-master nervously entered Bapu's carriage and meekly told him, that it was time for the departure of the train, but if Bapu desired he would delay the departure for as many minutes as Bapu wished. Before anyone else could speak, Bapu said :

"I do not blame you for consulting my convenience instead of duly discharging your right duty. The fault lies in the training given to you. Why should you ascertain my convenience in particular? Do you visit every carriage to ascertain if any passenger wants the train to be detained? If not, you should not have come to me also. I am not your superior officer. Of course, these ministers are, in a way. But they have not come to see me in their capacity as ministers; but as my friends or, better still, as members of my family. If they had not come, I could not have taken them to task. But as we are colleagues working together for many years, it is natural for them to come and meet me here. But so must have the friends of many other passengers on this train. Please, therefore, follow your timetable and whistle off the train at the right moment. You should do so, even if the President or the Prime Minister were travelling, unless you had due previous instructions from your superiors to follow a different schedule of timing.

"Let this be a lesson to you and the ministers also. You need not get nervous at the sight of ministers. They are servants of the people. Hence you should be rather fearless. And ministers also should treat their subordinates as younger brothers and not as servants. That is the way for happiness; and to taste the blessing of democracy.

"Henceforth make no exception for me, but apply the same rules to me as you apply to other passengers. I confess that I do enjoy some exceptional privileges in travelling. For example, a separate compartment is reserved for me and my two companions. This would not be done for all. But I accept it, as there is no alternative. Otherwise everyone would try to enter my compartment. Hence, I continue to accept this special favour originally provided to me by the British Government.

"I have not said all this to censure your conduct, and please do not take ill. This was an occasion for us all to take a lesson from; and if I did not express myself, how would you know my mind? (Speaking in a jovial mood) You know I am a teacher after all, and if I see a mistake, I cannot resist the temptation of correcting it.

"Now, I have given you a few minutes, and you can unhesitatingly start the train right off. I appreciate your kindness and courtesy, but I could not help saying this thing."

The Station-master humbly bowed to Bapu. He was too pleased to hear Bapu's sermon, and with a cheer on his face, he exclaimed (to the hearing of the crowd) :

"How generous and humble Bapu is! If there were only one such strict discipline-minded officer in every department, how greatly would it affect the training, straightforwardness and fearlessness of the servants? Then we would feel the love for our land and look upon our ministers and officers not as our superiors but as our elder brothers. But it is my experience, and that of many others too, that if personal comforts of our superior officers are not attended to, our careers are ruined. Therefore it has become a habit with us, much as we do not like it, to attend to their personal comforts. This is the first incident I have known of fearlessness and insistence on strict discipline during 45 years of my life. Is there any wonder that Gandhiji is called the Father of the Nation?"

For a little while a complete silence prevailed. It was characteristic of Bapu to lose no opportunity of giving a lesson to those who conduct the nation's affairs, and the presence of both ministers and officers was a proper occasion to do it.

(From Manubehn Gandhi's Diary of 8-5-47 as published in *Bhavnagar Samachar*, 23-8-52).

## ON PROHIBITION IN SOUTH AFRICA

(By M. K. Gandhi)

[As is well known Gandhiji was strongly opposed to every discriminatory law against Indians in South Africa; and he put up a relentless fight against them. But the following letter written by him from the Pretoria Jail in April 1909 to the President of the Liquor Committee shows when Gandhiji made exception to this, and supported even a discriminatory law, as it was definitely beneficial to both the discriminated and the ruling communities. The letter appeared in the *Indian Opinion* of 10th April, 1909, under the caption *Indians and Alcohol*—C. K. Gandhi.]

I have seen your letter addressed to the British Indian Association regarding its evidence to be submitted to the Commission. I have not been able, my movements having been uncertain, to submit my statement earlier, nor has it been possible to call a meeting of the Association to consider the evidence to be given. The Chairman and the Acting Chairman of the Association are in gaol. The statement, therefore, I am about to submit represents my personal view only.

I have been in South Africa now for the last fifteen years; and having almost throughout that period been officially connected with Indian public bodies, I have come in contact with all classes of Indians. Since 1903 I have been practising as an attorney in Johannesburg and have held the office of the Honorary Secretary of the British Indian Association.

The Transvaal has a population of not more than 13,000 adult male Indians. Indians actually resident in the colony since the war, have probably never been more than 5,000 in the colony.

These are chiefly Mahomedans and Hindus. For the purposes hereof I do not consider the Christians and the Parsis as they form, though an important — a numerically small section of the Indian community

Both Mohammedans and Hindus are prohibited by their religions from taking intoxicating liquors. The Mohammedan section has very largely conformed to the prohibition. The Hindu section, I am sorry to say, contains an appreciable number who, in this colony, have disregarded the prohibition of religion.

The method adopted by Indians who indulge in alcoholic drinks is generally to secure the assistance of some unscrupulous Whites. There are other methods also, which I do not care to go into.

I am of opinion that the legal prohibition should continue. I think however that the prohibition has not succeeded in preventing Indians who have wanted it, from obtaining liquor. The only use I see in continuing the prohibition is to let those of my countrymen who indulge in it, retain the sense of shame they have in drinking liquor. They know that it is wrong for them both in religion and in law to obtain and drink liquor. This enables the temperance workers to appeal to their law-abiding sentiment. I draw a fundamental distinction between wrongful law-breaking and a conscientious breach of man-made law in obedience to a higher law. Happily those Indians who break the liquor law know that it is wrong for them to do so.

I am aware that some of my countrymen — themselves ardent temperance men — see in the liquor legislation one more disqualification based on the ground of colour. Superficially speaking they would be right. But I believe that this legislation has little to do with colour. It is, in my opinion, a recognition on the part of the predominant race that the drink habit is an evil, which, while they themselves are yet unable to get rid of, they do not want other races to contract. Viewing the position in this manner, I believe liquor prohibition among the Asiatic and Coloured races to be the forerunner of general prohibition.

Whether, however, general prohibition becomes an accomplished fact or not, so long as the predominant race continue to indulge in alcoholic drinks, be it *never* (ever?) so moderately, partial prohibition such as we now have, cannot be of much practical use. This, it is submitted, is a forcible illustration of one of the evil incidents of contact between the Europeans and other races. And unless those who preach abstinence are themselves ready to practise it, all liquor legislation must largely be a makeshift. I wish the Commission would see their way to point out to the electors of the Transvaal what a serious responsibility rests on their shoulders. They make it impossible for their representative to pass legis-

lation that is so desirable. It is they who must take the responsibility for the breaking up of many a home. I am writing under a full sense of my own responsibility. I know only too well how many Indian youths who never knew the taste of spirituous liquors have succumbed after having come to South Africa or the Transvaal.

If the Commission desire me to answer any question, I shall be pleased to do so.

(Note: The letter is a typical example of Gandhiji's original and clear thinking.

1. Engaged as he was in fight against discriminatory laws, he did not indiscriminately resist every law. If the law was in accordance with a moral principle, and in the interest of the community concerned, he welcomed it and would not break it even in a civil resistance campaign.
2. The Whites have pleaded that they did not want coloured races with them in order to protect their civilization from contamination.

Gandhiji showed that total abstention from drink, which the Hindu and the Muslim religions enjoined upon their followers, was a great principle which even the White races and followers of other religions might accept with advantage to themselves. The Whites, moreover, as the ruling community had a duty to do so, since Hindus and Muslims of South Africa, who were free from these vices, were contracting them from their rulers.

3. All in the European culture is not gold, and in the Indian culture dirt and dust. Hence, the prohibition law even for Indians alone, being essentially good, should be retained, as some day it may be expected to be extended to the Whites also. Even though unsuccessful, it was useful as a constant reminder to the breaker that he was going against both law and his own religion. That he cannot own and do it openly is a restraint in itself.

4. So long as those who run the administration are given to drink, prohibition laws will most probably fail. Nearer home, this means that it is essential that every public servant and legislator must be entirely free from drink habit, if prohibition is to be made a success. — K. G. M.)

#### Errata

In the article "The Subject of Fertilizers II" (*Harijan*, 30-8-'52) for item No. 11 please read the following:

#### Sewage Irrigation for Sandy Soil

Dr. Pillai and others (Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore) observed that "on the basis of nitrogen content the sewage of the major Indian cities was equivalent to 1,70,000 tons of ammonium sulphate or 35,00,000 tons of farm yard manure per annum. . . . Experiments of the authors had shown that the type of soil most suited to sewage irrigation was sandy soil. . . . Sewage grown vegetables were variously infected with bacteria. . . . However, fodder and forage crops were ideally suited. . . ."

### HE DIED IN HARNESS

Just when this issue is almost ready to be set for the press, the local news Agency phones to say that Shri Kishorlal Mashruwala, the editor of this paper, breathed his last at Wardha at 5-45 p.m. The grief at hearing this sudden and very sad news is too much for me to pen any lines about the great soul that departed from our midst yesterday. However, as there is some time for the issue to be printed, I must write a few lines even to share with the readers the grief of this sudden bereavement.

Shri Mashruwala was 62 when he died. Those who knew him know how delicate he was in his health. He had asthma for about 40 years last. He lived a life of friendship and charity to all; he, as if, befriended this his illness as well, which had been his constant companion for almost the whole of his life. He bore with it and fought against it heroically. In spite of this illness he led a life full of action which was to him a call of *Dharma*. He guided and conducted various institutions established by Gandhiji; he joined all the fights for freedom and courted jail in the national cause; all through his arduous life he devoted himself to various constructive activities; and he wrote so many books on philosophy, religion, education, social reform, etc. full of original thinking. He in his writings interpreted Gandhiji in a manner that evoked attention and admiration even from the Master. On the day of his demise at 5 p.m. he finished an article for the *Harijan* and was just resting when he felt some uneasiness and within a short time he fell down. And that was the last of him.

For the last few months he was asking to be relieved of the burden of the editorship of the *Harijan* papers so that he might quietly retire for the rest of his time on earth, whatever was left for him. The Navajivan Trust decided that he should be relieved as soon as possible and wrote to him a week ago that he could retire any day he chose. In a letter received only two days back he wrote to the Manager saying that he proposed to be free by the end of this month, and he gave detailed instructions to the Manager regarding necessary desposals in his office and the staff.

Who should take charge of the papers after him was being discussed with him by the Navajivan Trust. A proposal was mooted that I should be given the charge. In reply I was saying both to the Trust and to Kishorlalbai that the burden was too great for me. In one of his letters to me he said in reply, in words of the Gujarati poet Narmad, that if it came to it I should take courage to shoulder the burden.

“याहोम करीने पडो फतेहू छे आगे।”

And when he learnt that the Navajivan Trust, after thoroughly going into the matter, came to decide that I should be asked to take charge, he wrote in his reply which reached the Manager on 8-9-52, “You have decided well. May Maganbhai succeed in his work.” These blessings from him

are a very dear precious prize for me; they will be a source of strength and inspiration in my new work.

At this moment when I am called upon to take up the work of editing the great *Harijan* papers of Babu, I am reminded of the following famous lines of the great poet Kalidas,

एव सूर्यप्रभवो जलः

एव चात्पविषया मतिः ।

What a small man I am for this great venture! But I am not speaking here about my new duty and well may I leave it at that with a request for the blessings of the elders and for constant help and co-operation of all friends and co-workers as also numerous readers of this paper.

As I said above, Kishorlalbai was preparing to retire from the editorship. To that end he sent an announcement to “Correspondents, Contributors and Others” which the reader will find in this issue. When this is out, not even he had imagined that he would be retiring, but quite in another manner. To him old age, disease or death were no terror; a great philosopher and seeker of Truth as he was, he had grown to be above these matters of human sorrow and misery. In him we have lost a great and original thinker and an ideal good man of God. The whole of Gujarat and the vast family of the servants of the people which Gandhiji built up in our land mourn him as having lost one of their own kith and kin. May God give courage to Shrimati Gomatibehn Mashruwala to bear this her great bereavement. May she be consoled at the thought that we all share her grief. May the pious and devoted life of Shri Kishorlalbai be our constant light and inspiration. Such never die.

10-9-52

MAGANBHAI DESAI

(From the original in Gujarati)

### GOD'S HEMLOCK

(By V. G. Deshmukh)

Out of a turbulent sea,  
Tempestuous, rash  
Gods churned out  
Alas! a deadly poison!  
It was pink and dreary wine,  
Creator's worst genius at play!  
Red with the blood  
Of battered heads,  
Pink with the blood-shot eyes  
Of weeping wives,  
Snatching the rose  
From children's cheeks,  
Devil's tears collected;  
Or is it the saliva  
Of concentrated, dark  
Slithering deadly snakes  
From the nether world?

### WHY PROHIBITION

By Bharatan Kumarappa

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## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

A regular and devoted reader of *Harijan* suggests that for the benefit of readers I should arrange the publication of articles on "Community Projects in India" by Shriyuts Kaka Kalelkar, Kripalani, Kumarappa Brothers, Nirmal Kumar Bose, Pyarelalji, S. N. Agarwal, Shankarrao Deo and others including myself.

The subject is undoubtedly important and the desire of the writer to know the views of the eminent writers named and unnamed is understandable. But I regret that the publication of so many articles in *Harijan* whether in a special issue or one after another is itself a difficult project. Most of them have already published their views in various papers. An enterprising publisher can usefully collect them and publish them in a book-form; or the editor of some magazine may take up the correspondent's suggestion and bring out a special issue inviting these and others to write afresh on this subject.

As for my own views, I must confess I have not a clear mind yet. I have not visited and am unable to visit and examine personally any of the centres that have been started already. Indeed, I have been contemplating an early retirement from public life, and am preparing myself for that. Among those who have visited the Etawah and other projects, range from warm admirers at one end to bitter condemners at the other, and I do not know whom I should accept. The draft outline does not raise before my unimaginative brain a clear idea of what is going to turn out in execution. For the present it looks like what used to be said of the Chinese engineers, who having been asked to bore a tunnel through a mountain, began to do so from both the ends, but having miscalculated ended in boring two tunnels instead of one! Since many more sets of engineers than the Chinese could employ are anxious to undertake boring tunnels through the mountain ranges of our society, it is quite possible that if all are able to persevere till the end, we might have a hundred tunnels instead of only two!

Though this remark might appear satirical, let not the reader imagine that I speak in despondency or disgust. I regard this, apparently a chaotic state of ideas, an inevitable stage in our development. Provided we all work selflessly with the sincere desire to make our people happy and prosperous and advanced spiritually as well as temporally, we shall ultimately come through right even if bungling and tumbling. Ours being the homeland of *rishis* and *munis*, we— their descendants—cannot but have a multitude of theories and opinions. We must take ourselves as we are and strive according to our nature, and hope for the best.

It seems I can render better service by not offering to be one more tunnel-borer, but may sim-

ply watch what others are doing, offering a helpful suggestion or caution here and there, if possible, or else keep silent except where a moral or basic principle is involved. Accordingly, let me offer a suggestion about the name "Community Project". I have received a complaint resenting the unnecessary introduction of this foreign name to a plan meant for India's villages. It is by itself suggestive of the inference that the whole idea is taken from U.S., as if Indians had never thought of the planned reconstruction of India's villages. A part of the mistrust against this scheme is no doubt due to this foreign nomenclature. Instead of popularizing an Indian word and introducing it in the English language, why should new English words, which are not even technical terms of science, be sought to be put into Indian languages? What is sought to be achieved through the Community Projects is the planned reconstruction of India's political, social and economic life by organizing groups of villages. It is an extension of Gandhiji's idea of *Samagra Seva* in the Constructive programme. A name like *Gram-kalyan* (ग्राम कल्याण) or *Dehati Navajivan* (देहाती नवजीवन) or *Firka Vikas* (फिरका विकास) *Karyakram* (कार्यक्रम) might have made the people look upon and examine the projects with a different mental attitude. Due respect should be paid to the new awareness of Independence and sense of self-respect and self-consciousness of the people.

Wardha, 1-9-'52

K. G. MASHRUWALA

## Leprosy Organizers' Course

Due to unavoidable circumstances, the Second Leprosy Organizers' Course will start from the 1st of November, 1952 instead of 2nd October, 1952, as previously announced.

P. O. Nalwadi,  
Wardha (M. P.)

M. B. DIWAN  
Secretary,  
Maharogi Seva Mandal

## A NATION BUILDER AT WORK

By Pyarelal

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