

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## DEDICATION

The Fifteenth of August reminds me of Mahadev Desai as the First of that month does of Lokamanya Tilak. Both were dedicated lives. The death of the Lokamanya coincided with the birth of the Non-co-operation Movement, with which commenced active mass effort to achieve that birth-right, which the Lokamanya had for more than a generation striven ceaselessly to make the people conscious of. From stage to stage the movement developed until it reached the final stage of the "Quit India" Movement of 1942, which claimed Mahadevbhai as its first great offering. The date of Indian Independence coincided with the date of his death.

Mahadevbhai joined Gandhiji in 1917. Several of us had done so in that year, but none that I know of in the spirit and with the urge which had moved him to do so. All of us had some already 'pre-fab' conceptions about serving the country. They might have been vague or clear. But the ideas had some shape.

I once specifically asked Mahadevbhai what had made him cast in his lot with Gandhiji. Was it Home Rule, National Education, Swadeshi, Co-operative movement, religion, journalism? He unhesitatingly replied: "*It was Gandhiji himself.*" He came in contact with Gandhiji and felt that he was the Master for whom his life was meant. He had no ambition except to end his life in Bapu's service. His spirit had yearned for some one to whom he could fully and unhesitatingly dedicate himself, even as one's body dedicates itself to the soul. He found that one in Bapu, and he threw himself in his service.

And we know how loyally and devotedly he rendered it until life itself ended, and in circumstances which compelled Bapu to perform those very rites over his body, which generally a Hindu father hopes to receive from his son. Whether the service consisted in washing Bapu's commode and clothes, copying his letters, carrying his luggage, delivering his message (whether to a Bapu's patient or to the Viceroy), editing his journals, translating his writings, interpreting and reporting his ideas, negotiating on his behalf delicate political business, or whatever other petty or important work Bapu entrusted to him, Mahadev never felt that it was a kind of work which Bapu should not have expected *him* to do.

As Gandhiji himself wrote in the *Harijan* of 18-8-'46, "The greatest characteristic I can think of about Mahadev Desai was his ability to reduce himself to zero, whenever occasion demanded it." And what various types of work Bapu put him to? On Bapu's bidding, he edited Pandit Motilal Nehru's journal in Allahabad and went to prison for doing it, secretaried Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Bardoli and Borsad, gave company to Shri Mathuradas Trikamji convalescing at Deolali, nursed patients, taught children as well as elderly persons elementary lessons, carried on Gandhiji's correspondence on every conceivable topic, took notes of Gandhiji's talks with visitors and also attended to their comforts if they came as guests, fetching them from the station or seeing them off, went all the way from Wardha to Sevagram and back on foot every day for months at a stretch, put up before him complaints against himself of being a haughty secretary, who stood between Gandhiji and the writer for some unsuccessful visit or an unanswered letter! And Gandhiji himself was no easy master to please; and his hardness was severer on those who had chosen to stay near him most. He could make them weep all their tears, even as he could make them laugh all their cheer. And even Mahadevbhai was no exception to this.

But what can a man do with his body, if it makes him glad with its robustness or sad with its pains? So was Gandhiji to Mahadevbhai. Physically Mahadevbhai was Bapu's hands, legs, eyes and ears; he also reflected Bapu's sentiments and reasoning. But spiritually the relation was otherwise. Bapu was all in all to him. He could not leave him. When in a moment of despair and humility, he once or twice thought of doing so, thinking that he was too unfit to serve Bapu, the attempt failed. It was as difficult for him to leave Gandhiji as to get one's skin flayed in all consciousness. Any suggestion by Gandhiji of doing something which might endanger his health or life was unbearable to Mahadevbhai. There was no objective thinking where Bapu's life or health was at stake. It was M. D.'s devotion and love that eventually succeeded in dissuading Gandhiji from going on fast in 1940 and direct instead individual *satyagraha* against war. And those who were near him alone know how miserable he was for days and nights till the date of the leaders' arrest on the 9th August, 1942, because there was a possibility



that Gandhiji might embark upon a fast in case of arrest. Though Gandhiji had for the time being reassured him and his comrades that he had given up that idea, the mental strain which Mahadevbhai had suffered for a long time had evidently exhausted him completely, and within a week he died so suddenly, that Bapu was too late to be by his side even though in a neighbouring room !

Such personal dedication to a Master is too rare in the world. *Gurus* are not so rare in the world, particularly in India, but a disciple like one Mahadev was — is — too rare a find. And the loss which Gandhiji ever since sustained in him was irremediable as any one, who worked with him and saw him ever after his release, could clearly see. As Shri Rajagopalachari wrote, four years after the passing away of Mahadev Desai,

“.....we have not been able to overcome the grief or the loss. Gandhiji is an essential figure in our life today, and we feel he has been maimed in an important limb. There is not a day that we pass through but something acutely reminds us of Mahadev's not being with us. He was one of those men whom no one could hope to replace. But in many cases, we are able to forget the dead through being absorbed in what others are doing. But in Mahadev's case his service to the public, through his devoted service to Gandhiji, was of that essential character, which does not admit of any kind of replacement.” Gandhiji could bear it because he had identified himself with another, even as Mahadevbhai had done with Bapu. The other one was the people of India and through India humanity and life in general. Gandhiji laughed India's joys, and wept India's tears. He could make no distinction between Hindu and Mussulman, Christian and Sikh, Brahman and *Bhangi*. His life was dedicated to *Swaraj*, but that *Swaraj* was *Swaraj* for all. It was this spirit of Dedication which made him work for her liberation till the end and it was that which made him ultimately lay down his life for her.

Our Independence was achieved by such self-dedications, and they alone will be able to sustain it.

Wardha, 1-8-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

#### Letters with Book-Post Matter

I often find enclosed in packets sent as 'book-post' letters addressed to me personally. This is in contravention of postal regulations and the whole packet becomes liable to be treated as letter-post and charged at double rate. Moreover it savours of dishonesty. The letter should be sent separately and stamped as such.

Wardha, 3-8-'49

K. G. M.

### NAI TALIM RESOLUTIONS

[I have received rather late the resolutions passed at the All India Basic Education Conference held at Perianaikpalayam, on 7th, 8th and 9th May, 1949. Every resolution has its peculiar characteristic and practical importance. None is a mere theoretical or sentimental expression of an idea. They are all businesslike and educative.

— K. G. M.]

#### 1. Basic Education

The Conference notes with satisfaction the results reported from several quarters, with regard to production of useful goods when craft-work was given its rightful place in the educational programme. The results justify the hope that in schools where the significance of craft-work as an educative force is fully recognized, production will be enough to meet the running cost of the schools. This is, however, possible only in full basic schools of 7 or 8 grades as the last three grades contribute much more than proportionately to the total craft-production of the school. The Conference views with misgivings the tendency in some provinces to reduce the duration of basic education to five years for financial reasons. The Conference also believed that the continuation of education to the eighth grade will, if craft-work is properly organized, entail no net extra expenditure. The Conference also feels that an all-round education including a balanced and harmonious development of personality and citizenship can be completed in a minimum period of eight years. For educational as well as financial reasons, the Conference feels convinced that the duration of Basic Education should in no case be reduced to less than eight years.

#### 2. Pre-Basic Education

This Conference is of opinion that the work of Pre-Basic Education should be seriously taken up by all institutions and associations of constructive work as an important basis for a programme of national reconstruction, and recommends that a centre for training teachers of Pre-Basic Education be organized by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh as the first step in this direction.

#### 3. Post-Basic Education

The Conference notes with satisfaction the results of the experiment of Post-Basic Education being carried out at Kumarabag (Dist. Champaran) by the Bihar Government and at Sevagram by the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and recommends that a tentative syllabus of Post-Basic Education may be prepared on the basis of the experience of this experiment. It further recommends that at this preliminary experimental stage all institutions may be organized as a self-sufficient, self-reliant society based on co-operative work which fulfils all its necessities in balanced diet, clothing, and intellectual and recreational life through co-operative work.

#### 4. Literature on Basic Education

The Hindustani Talimi Sangh and all other agencies and workers, official and non-official, in the field of Basic Education, should devote their special and urgent attention to the production



of literature bearing on Basic Education. This should include both literature for the guidance of teachers and reading material for children. Amongst the former preference should be given to guide-books and brochures dealing with specific aspects of basic teaching, accounts of significant work done in any area or institution and books providing enriched subject-matter included in the syllabus. In the case of children's literature, priority should be given to booklets dealing with topics pertaining to social studies and general science. Amongst sources which can be explored by students in training colleges are booklets written by teachers and students of different types of Basic institutions and kindred material available for translation and adaptation in the English language.

This Conference recommends that all provinces and important non-official agencies should set up suitable committees for utilizing the available material as well as preparing of new material which may help teachers and children of Basic schools in implementing the Basic syllabus fully.

#### 5. Buildings for the Institutions of Nai Talim

In view of the fact that the house and environment play an important part in Nai Talim, this Conference recommends to all institutions of basic education that the institutions of Nai Talim be housed in buildings in keeping with the objectives of Nai Talim. The Conference hopes the Hindustani Talimi Sangh will get typical plan of basic school houses made to help the institutions concerned in making a good choice.

#### 6. Training Institutions

This Conference is of opinion that all Basic Training Colleges and Schools engaged in the work of training teachers in Basic Education shall be residential institutions where the teachers under training shall live as a community and that each Basic Training institution shall have the practising school attached to it which will make adequate arrangements for the midday meals of the children.

#### 7. Adult Education

In the opinion of the Conference it is time that the country should make an all-out effort for adult education through all constructive activities that the official and non-official agencies are carrying on. As in other spheres, this education should be education for life and not confined to mere literacy.

#### 8. An Appeal

This Conference appeals to the nation to share with the State in the responsibility for the provision of land and buildings for the immediate spread of Basic Education of at least seven to eight years' duration on a nationwide scale, and to the State to afford to the people the necessary facilities for the purpose by simplifying the rules and procedure for the transfer of land and for the grant of government subsidy and expert technical guidance for the consideration and maintenance of school houses.

While the Conference recommends to the teachers and pupils to plan this productive, purposeful and educative activity to fulfil the needs of the school community and the village community so as to reduce the need for an elaborate marketing organization, it reiterates the recommendations made in the Zakir Hussain Committee Report that the State take upon itself the responsibility for the utilization of the basic school products for its own purposes and for their disposal through a separate agency other than the school.

Sevagram, 20-7-'49

E. W. ARYANAYAKAM

### FANATICAL ZEAL

In a broadcast on the food situation in India Rajaji appealed to the people to "co-operate with fanatical zeal" in the solving of this problem. He suggested to cut down our imports to a level where we can pay for it by exports and he stated, "we have to produce all the food we require or we invite famine and chaos which will reduce our population" and at the same time he justified himself for entertaining at an "At Home" given by him to 1,500 guests at Simla by saying that no alcoholic beverages were served nor an ounce of rice, wheat or millet!

Tackling the food problem on a war basis does not mean merely foregoing the use of things in which we are supposed to be short but it implies that a definite condition of austerity has to be advocated and followed. Austerity cannot even be stopped with the tightening of the belts, especially if it is to assume fanatical proportions as suggested in Rajaji's talk. Merely taking shelter under the fact that the hospitality was not as lavish as in the days of the Viceroyal parties is poor consolation to the man in the street who expects the leaders to set an example which should be one which appeals to the citizen rather than one that takes the form of an apology. Accepting flower garlands worth Rs. 150 is not in keeping with war-time austerity! High-placed persons cannot be too scrupulous in following the simplicity of life that is called for to meet situations like the present. The very fact that Rajaji had thought it necessary to make apologetic references to his "At Home" shows that he had to clear up the misunderstanding in the public mind. We hope that such occasions will not be necessary in future and functions will be reduced to a minimum if the public is enjoined to follow a war-time social and private life.

J. C. K.

*By Mahatma Gandhi*

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# HARIJAN

August 14

1949

## GANDHIJI'S THOUGHTS ON INDEPENDENCE

### (1) Celebration of the Day

On 14-8-'47 at Beliaghata, Gandhiji said that the next day was the fixed day of deliverance from the foreign yoke. It was, therefore, a great day. They were bound to celebrate it. In his opinion it was a day when both the Dominions were to shoulder a heavy burden. He invited every one to have twentyfour hours' fast and prayer during the day for the wellbeing of India as a whole and pass it in spinning as much as possible. For, it was hand-spinning that had knit the poor and the rich together and had given occupation to countless men and women who were without occupation. (*Harijan*, 24-8-'47)

### (2) Now that Freedom has Come

"My views remain as they are. In the scheme of reconstruction for Free India, its villages should no longer depend, as they are now doing, on its cities, but cities should exist only for and in the interest of the villages. Therefore, the spinning wheel should occupy the proud position of the centre, round which all the life-giving village industries would revolve." (*Harijan*, 31-8-'47)

### (3) A Grim Warning

"These (members of the Constituent Assembly) have no common goal. Congressmen themselves are not of one mind even on the contents of Independence. I do not know how many swear by non-violence or the *charkha* or, believing in decentralization, regard the village as the nucleus. I know on the contrary that many would have India become a first-class military power and wish for India to have a strong centre and build the whole structure round it. In the medley of these conflicts I know that if India is to be leader in clean action based on clean thought, God will confound the wisdom of these big men and will provide the villages with the power to express themselves as they should." (*Harijan*, 28-7-'46)

### (4) Utilitarianism v. Sarvodaya

"I do not believe in the rules, 'The greatest good of the greatest number' and 'Might is right'. 'The wellbeing of every one'—*Sarvodaya*—and 'the weak first' are the rules for man. We call ourselves bipeds and human, but have not yet been able to give up the nature of quadrupeds and the brute. *Dharma* consists in giving up this. (From a letter reproduced in *Mahadevbhaini Diary*, Vol. I, 10-7-'32)

## FURTHER CLARIFICATION

It would not be in the fitness of things for those who make an appeal to enter into argument in a spirit of contest with those who file a caveat against it. For this reason, we wish to refrain from giving anything savouring of a rejoinder to the joint statement of Dr. S. K. Chatterji, Pandit Balkrishna Sharma, Shri Rahula Sankrityayan and Shri Jaichandra Vidyalkar, who have disapproved of our appeal and recommended its rejection. They are great and eminent scholars and their views will necessarily be considered by the public as well as the members of the Constituent Assembly. What we say, therefore, is just for clarification of doubts and misunderstandings.

### (1) Name

The name 'Hindustani' is not preferred merely to please the Muslims. It is also the name which appeals to Parsis, Christians, Anglo-Indians and also to a large section of Hindus. We refrain from going into a scholarly retrospect about the names 'Hindi' and 'Hindustani'. It is the present generally understood connotation of these terms that is important.

### (2) Structure

Shri Mashruwala has already clarified the words "the language spoken in Delhi and surrounding regions". We note that Dr. Chatterji and his friends also agree that "It is no doubt true that that form of Hindi which is known as *Khari Boli* will form the standard in the matter of syntax of the national language." They further say, "It is plain that in matters of vocabularies and to a certain extent in the matters of grammar and syntax a conscious attempt will have to be made to approximate to the 'common core', which is found in all the languages of India—that is to Sanskrit."

We agree that the language will grow and the growth will also affect its grammar and syntax. We do not know what exact shape it will take a generation hence, since it will be influenced by people of so many provinces who themselves will be under the influence of various political, social, economic and external as well as internal forces. These all will affect the grammar, syntax and vocabulary of their own languages as well as the common language. Sanskrit will certainly be one of these influencing forces. It is sufficient, we feel, to fix the starting point.

### (3) Script

Even on the question of script we speak on behalf of the present generation. They consist of a number of Hindus of the Hindi provinces, Muslims of several provinces, Sindhis, Punjabis (both refugees as well as residents), and others who have been brought up to read and write in the Urdu script alone. Even today there are newspapers, periodicals, correspondence etc., in the Urdu script. It was allowed in public offices till the other day in several Northern provinces and



possibly is still allowed in some parts. It is but just and proper that they should not be inconvenienced. In course of time, as the knowledge and practice of the Nagari script increases, it is possible that the Urdu script might drop off in practice. But we need not speculate into the future. It is sufficient if we do what is right today. The question of other regional scripts does not arise, since those scripts have never been used in any of the provinces which claim to be the home of the National Language. All those who have different provincial scripts have always learnt the National Language in any of its forms through the Nagari or the Urdu script.

#### (4) Appeasement

Ours is not an appeal in a spirit of 'Appeasement of Muslims'. Not that there is anything against one's self-respect in even trying to please a section of our countrymen if it is necessary. But the present appeal, as we have conceived it, is meant to placate the protagonists of Hindi; subject to what we consider to be just and equitable in the interest of all Indian sections, we have been trying to approach as near as possible to those who advocate the name and cause of Hindi. We earnestly repeat our appeal hereby.

KAKA KALELKAR

Wardha, 7-8-'49

VINOBA

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### EIGHTY-FIRST CHARKHA JAYANTI

The Charkha Sangh (A. I. S. A.) has issued the following appeal in connection with the observance of the Charkha Jayanti celebrations, which will last this year from the 19th of September to the 2nd of October :

Gandhiji was born on *Bhadrapad vadi dwadasi*. Samvat 1925 (Gujarati Hindu calendar) corresponding with 2nd October 1869. When the public began to celebrate his birthday, Gandhiji named it 'Charkha Jayanti' for two reasons: he did not wish to encourage his personal worship, and secondly, the *charkha* was his most beloved object and the centre of all his constructive activities. His life's mission was to root out *hims* in the form of exploitation and to establish a non-violent social order of *Sarvodaya*. He believed that this social order could be brought about only through decentralized production of man's primary necessities, mutual co-operation and self-sufficiency. The *charkha* was the symbol of that programme. It is therefore meet that after Gandhiji's death, spinning should continue to be encouraged by observing the Charkha Jayanti according to the tradition set up by Gandhiji. The Hindu date this year falls on the 19th September. Therefore, the Charkha Sangh has decided to observe the Jayanti from the 19th September to the 2nd October (both days inclusive) and appeals to the public to co-operate with the Sangh in its programme.

As the Charkha Jayanti celebration is connected with Gandhiji's birthday, this year's celebration has been called the Eighty-first Charkha Jayanti.\*

Spinning will be the main activity of the celebration and it is hoped that every one will spin as much as possible and devote his or her thoughts to the establishment of a non-violent social order. There can be individual as well as community programme

for observance of this Jayanti. Particularly the 19th September and the 2nd October should be enthusiastically observed by holding community spinning, prayer, *bhajan*, discourses, etc.

The real object of the *charkha* is to make every small unit self-dependent and self-sufficient in the matter of important necessities of life like food, cloth, etc. That object cannot be achieved by one or two big organizations or groups only. For that purpose, citizens who understand the rudiments and the co-operative aspect of the *charkha* and who give shape to its idea by precept as well as practice, should form themselves into small groups in every place and carry out the programme of *khadi* as a continuous day-to-day activity. The Charkha Sangh envisages establishment of such bodies or *Katai Mandals* (Spinning Clubs) all over the country. Naturally, the first object of these Mandals will be to create an atmosphere which will encourage the idea of cloth self-sufficiency and spinning for self-sufficiency, and to provide facilities for the same. This work can be carried on only by those who have faith and devotion in it and who themselves put the idea into practice.

The Charkha Sangh has classified such workers into two groups, viz. associates and self-sufficient spinners. Ten associates and/or self-sufficient spinners can form a Spinning Club and get it affiliated with the Charkha Sangh to avail itself of its help.

The Charkha Sangh proposes that such clubs should be established all over the country in as great a number as possible during the ensuing Jayanti and thus give the spinning activity a permanent place in our economy. It has been resolved that on the 81st Jayanti at least 81 spinning clubs should be established in the rural and urban areas of each province.

The Sangh has prepared a pamphlet explaining the programme and details about the policy and conditions of the Sangh in regard to such spinning clubs. Copies of the pamphlet can be obtained from the Central and Provincial offices of the Sangh.

In addition to the main programme of establishing spinning clubs, the Sangh has also decided to increase the number of associate members, to collect yarn subscription from those who are unable to become associate members, and to prepare a register of pure *khadi*-wearers.

Associate members of the Sangh are those who believe in the establishment of a social order based on non-exploitation, and therefore, besides being complete *khadi*-wearers, spin regularly according to their capacity and pay an annual subscription of six hanks to the Sangh. The value and dignity of bread-labour (physical productive labour) should be established before there can be a non-exploiting social order. Gandhiji always stressed on payment of subscription in some kind of labour instead of in cash, and yarn subscription was given importance as a symbol of that labour, as being most convenient and useful for the purpose. Therefore the subscription for the membership of the Sangh has also been fixed in terms of yarn instead of cash. To facilitate those who cannot become regular members of the Sangh for any reason whatever, but would wish to make their contribution of labour in token of their respect for Gandhiji, the collection of yarn subscription will form a part of the programme of celebration, so that spinning might be encouraged. It is not necessary that this yarn subscription should necessarily be sent to the Charkha Sangh. It can be utilized by the local spinning clubs or in *khadi* work. But in order to present an account of such subscriptions to the public, it is requested that information regarding them be sent to the office of the Sangh and also to the centres.

The preparation of a register of *khadi*-wearers on this occasion will be an aid in the work of *khadi*

\* The Indian way of reckoning is to number from the beginning of the year and not from the end of it.



propaganda. Therefore the Sangh will try to prepare such lists through its branches and centres. But a complete list cannot be prepared in this way. The Sangh therefore appeals to all institutions to prepare such lists and send them to the Central Office at Sevagram. It also appeals to *khadi*-lovers to send their names with full address to the Charkha Sangh or *khadi* institutions of their areas in case they have not already registered their names. The Sangh's definition of a 'complete *khadi*-wearer' is one who habitually wears *khadi* spun by himself or at his home, or *khadi* produced or certified by the Charkha Sangh.

The Charkha Sangh requests the people to take up the above programme with enthusiasm and appeals to the leaders, *khadi*-lovers, Congressmen, other institutions and government officials to co-operate in this programme of celebration.

Sevagram, 15-7-49

KRISHNADAS GANDHI,  
Secretary, A.I.S.A.

### Messages

Gandhi Jayanti, which was named 'Charkha Jayanti' by Gandhiji, falls on the 19th September according to the Hindu calendar and on the 2nd October according to the English calendar. The Charkha Sangh has appealed to all people to observe these two days and also the intervening days for encouraging the *khadi* programme. I hope that the people of India, whether they are government officials, labourers in fields and mills, businessmen or teachers in schools, or those engaged in other occupations, will spin as much as possible during these days. The country has a great demand for production and along with production, for immediate consumption also. The programme of cloth self-sufficiency of the Charkha Sangh satisfies both these conditions simultaneously and it is also one in which all people can take part. I pray to God that the people of India may attain success in their noble efforts on these solemn days.

RAJENDRAPRASAD

The annual celebrations of Mahatma Gandhi's birthday as well as his death-day will remain sacred to the nation to which he belonged and to the wider world which he came to serve, but will also be a source of inspiration perhaps for centuries to come. He taught us lessons which we could not understand in his day, some of which we are beginning to understand now after he has left us, and many more of which will be understood by our successors of future generations.

B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

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By Mahatma Gandhi

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— Gandhiji

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### A. I. V. I. A. BOARD MEETING

A meeting of the Board of Management was held at Wardha on 26th July, 1949. Apart from the routine administrative work, the following business was transacted:

It was resolved to take on the Board of Management the following:

1. Shri R. R. Keithahn
2. Shri A. W. Sahasrabuddhe
3. Shri G. Ramachandran.

The question of appointing a Secretary in place of Shri J. C. Kumarappa, who was elected President, at the last meeting, was considered. It was unanimously decided to elect Shri G. Ramachandran as the Secretary of the Association for the next period of three years. Shri G. Ramachandran agreed to take up the responsibility.

It was decided to ask the President to represent the Association on the Central Cottage Industries Board in response to the invitation of the Government of India.

The Secretary was instructed to dispose of the remaining busts of Gandhiji as early as possible and it was decided to charge Rs. 1,000 per bust.

The Secretary explained that the new course of six months for Rural Development Organizers has been started and some women trainees have been deputed by the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund to undergo this course. After going through the syllabus the Board was of the opinion that it was desirable to make the course a full ten months' course and the Secretary was requested to negotiate with the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund authorities to extend the term of their trainees to ten months.

### "PRE-BASIC EDUCATION"

[The Sarvodaya Sahitya Sangh, Banaras, has published the above booklet in Hindustani by Shri Shantabai Narulkar. In this booklet, Shri Shantabehn discusses the scheme of education for children between 2½ and 7 years and her experiences among the children of Sevagram village. Shri Vinoba has written a foreword to this book, which is reproduced below.

— Ed.]

The ideas expressed by Shri Shantabehn in this book regarding the education of small children deserve serious attention. So far this question has been generally discussed from the point of view of city people. But the comprehensive outlook of education, which Gandhiji placed before us, comprises education for all and for life, special attention being given to the villagers. Shantabehn's ideas are based on this wide outlook.

This book has been written against the background of practical experience; that is, the ideas contained in it are the result of actual experiments and, therefore, the book has its own



importance. No doubt it draws also from other methods previously followed, but its importance lies in the ideas being based on experience gained from her own experiments.

Ideas which are based on actual experiment and experience are always of practical use for others also, since they are not forced on any one but are simply suggestive. So are the ideas contained in this book.

In my opinion, what we call Pre-Basic Education, that is, the training of small children, should be available in the home itself. Parents are the first *gurus* (teachers) and their authority is also greater than that of others, provided they possess some teaching capacity. But the conditions are not so today. Therefore we have to think of a system of Pre-Basic Education and draw its outline. But the ideal should be that Basic Education and Adult Education should spread in the country so universally that every family should become a school and, as the *Smritis* say, the education of the child should start right from the moment of conception. Until we reach that ideal, others have to take the place of the parents and carry on the work. This book gives one aspect of this work. It can be altered to suit the local conditions. Readers will study this book in that spirit.

(Translated from Hindustani)

#### MAHADEV DESAI MEMORIAL PRIZE

The trustees of the Mahadev Desai (Bombay) Memorial Trust have decided to call for theses on Gandhian philosophy and to award prizes for the best essays received. The subjects and terms of the competition are:

I. The Mahadev Desai Memorial Prize shall be awarded to the authors of the best theses in English on the following subjects:

1. A free society riven by violence and anarchy is a contradiction in terms.
2. Gandhiji — "It is my belief that machinery unless it is put in its proper place will not serve the world but will disrupt it."

II. The competition is open to Graduates of recognized Universities only.

III. The theses should not exceed 100 (hundred) typed pages: it should be typed on foolscap paper with double spacing and submitted in suitable binding. The theses should reach the office of the Memorial Committee c/o Shri Shantikumar N. Morarjee, Scindia House, Ballard Estate, Bombay 1, not later than 30th January 1950.

IV. The prize is of the value of Rs. 500 (five hundred only) and will be awarded in cash or books for each thesis on each subject assessed as deserving the prize by the Judges appointed in this behalf.

V. The award of the Judges shall be final.

VI. The Copyright of the theses on which the prize is awarded shall vest in the Trustees of the Mahadev Desai (Bombay) Memorial Trust.

#### THE POWER OF NON-VIOLENCE

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#### THE SANTINIKETAN PILGRIMAGE IV

The discussion was resumed on the next day when he had a meeting with the workers and members of the staff of the various departments. "I want to hear from your own lips what inspires you to be here and what are the difficulties that confront you," he told them, and with that prefatory remark invited questions. As some of them did not know Hindustani well or at all he gave the replies in English. But he warned them that the next time they met him they would have to speak in Hindustani, at any rate they would not find him speaking to them in any other tongue than Hindustani. Here are the questions and answers:

Q. Should Santiniketan allow itself to be drawn into political work?

Gandhiji: I have no difficulty in saying that Santiniketan and Visvabharati ought not to be mixed up with politics. Every institution has its limitations. This institution should set limitations upon itself unless it is to make itself cheap. When I say that Santiniketan should not get mixed up with politics, I do not mean that it should have no political ideal. Complete independence must be its ideal, as it is that of the country. But that very ideal would require it to keep out of the present day political turmoil. I was asked this question when I was here thirty years ago and the reply I then gave was the same as I have given today. In fact it applies with even greater force today.

Q. In order to make Visvabharati really an international university, should we not try to increase the material resources of the university and provide greater facilities and ordinary comforts of life to attract scholars and research workers of outstanding merit from all over the country?

Gandhiji: By material resources I suppose you mean finance. Let me then say that your question is addressed to a person who does not swear by material resources. 'Material resources' is after all a comparative term. For instance, I do not go without food and clothing. In my own way I have tried — more than perhaps any other man — to increase the level of material resources of the average man in India. But it is my firm conviction that the Visvabharati will fail to attract the right type of talent and scholarship if it relies on the strength of the material resources or material attractions that it can offer. Its attraction must be moral or ethical, or else it will become just one out of the many educational institutions in India. That was not what Gurudev lived and died for. I do not mean that creature comforts should not be provided to the staff and workers who work here. There are ample material comforts in evidence here already. If I stayed here longer and had my way they might be considerably reduced.



As Visvabharati progresses and more and more gifts and donations begin to pour in, in due course it will be able to provide more attractions to scholars and research workers, if it wants to. But if I were asked for advice I would say, "Do not yield to this temptation." Visvabharati must take its stand on the advancement of moral worth. If it does not stand for that, it is nothing worth.

Q. What must be done so that the institution might not lose its high moral appeal? What remedy do you suggest for it?

Gandhiji: Every one of you should understand the significance of moral worth. Moral worth is easily distinguished from material worth. The one leads to devotion to moral value, the other to Mammon-worship. What distinguishes man from the four-footed beast is merely the recognition of moral worth, i.e. the greater the moral worth of a person the greater his distinction. If you believe in this ideal, you should ask yourself why you are here and what you are doing.

Every worker must have, of course, food, clothing, etc. for himself and his dependents. But you do not belong to Visvabharati merely because Visvabharati feeds, clothes and finds creature comforts for you. You belong to it because you cannot do otherwise, because your moral worth increases day by day by working for its ideals. Therefore, every defect that crops up, every difficulty that obstructs its working, will be found to be ultimately traceable to some defect in your outlook in regard to moral worth. I have been connected with many institutions for over sixty years and I have come to the conclusion that every difficulty in their working was traceable to a defect in the understanding of moral values.

Q. We are trying to serve villagers. We find that at every step our activity is blocked by the social environment in the villages. The joyless routine of life there, the stagnation and incubus of evil social customs obstruct our efforts. Should we not work for the eradication of these before we can hope for success in our other activities, and if so how can it be done?

Gandhiji: Ever since I have come to India I have felt that social revolution is a much more difficult thing to achieve than the political revolution, by which I mean ending our present slavery under the British rule. There are some critics who say that India cannot attain her political and economic emancipation till we get social emancipation. I regard it as a snag and a conundrum set to puzzle us, because I have found that the absence of political emancipation retards even our efforts for bringing about social and economic emancipation. At the same time it is also true that without a social revolution we will not be able to leave India happier than when we were born. I can however indicate no royal road for bringing about a social revolution ex-

cept that we should represent it in every detail of our own lives.

Force has been used to alter the structure of society in some countries. But I have purposely eliminated it from our consideration. So my advice to you is: Try again and again and never say that you are defeated. Do not get impatient and say, 'the people are no good'. Rather say; 'I am no good'. If the people do not respond within the time limit prescribed by you the failure is yours, not theirs. It is a thankless and laborious work. But you do not expect thanks for your work. Work that is undertaken for love is no burden — it is pure joy.

PYARELAL

### New Blood

At the last meeting of the Board of Management held on the 26th July, 1949, the business transacted (which is published elsewhere in these columns) included the co-option of three more members to the Board of Management and the election of a Secretary.

Shri G. Ramachandran, the newly-elected Secretary, is not a fresh addition to the group of constructive workers but is a seasoned warrior who had served in several battle fronts and he has the unique distinction of having two *Gurus* — Rabindranath Tagore and Gandhiji — and in his own personal life he combines the artistic with the realistic with a fineness which a master craftsman alone can command.

He is an old stager of the Sabarmati Ashram who had devoted six years of work in the A. I. S. A. before taking on the responsibility for Harijan Sevak work in Tamilnad and Kerala. Then when Gandhiji laid the foundation of education through *Nai Talim*, he functioned as the Assistant Secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. Later when he found a call to help the State, he took up the responsibilities of the Minister for Rural Development in Travancore Cabinet and now he is throwing in his lot with us to combine all the three offices he held before — to uplift the economically down-trodden, to reconstruct the rural areas by means of Gram Udyog Nai Talim.

J. C. K.

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