

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor : K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

CHARKHA JAYANTI MESSAGE

Produce Your Own Cloth

The astonishing constructive work done by the Charkha Sangh is well-known throughout India. It is not necessary for me to dilate upon it. I hope the people will consider the importance of developing it further and strive to adopt the activity as their own. They can solve one of the difficult problems of the country through the activity of the Charkha Sangh. Perhaps throughout history India never experienced such deficit in cloth as she does today. The only solution of it under the present conditions is that every individual must produce as much cloth for himself as he can. This is possible only through the *charkha*. The Charkha Sangh can give complete guidance to the people in this. Provided that the Sangh receives co-operation of the people, I trust that it can shoulder the responsibility falling upon itself in furthering this activity.

31-7-49

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

WORKING COMMITTEE ON THE LANGUAGE PROBLEM

The following is the full text of the resolution on the language issue passed by the Congress Working Committee at New Delhi on the 5th August :

"The question of language has been agitating the public mind and in the opinion of the Working Committee it is desirable to lay down certain principles which may be applied having regard to peculiar circumstances prevailing in particular areas.

Principles

The question has to be considered from two points of view, viz. educational and administrative. There is the further question of a State language for the country as a whole which will be the language also of intercourse between different areas having separate languages.

There are, at present provinces or States where more than one language is spoken. Many of these languages are rich and have valuable literatures of their own. They should not only be preserved but further developed and enriched and nothing should be done to act as a handicap to their growth.

In provinces and States where more than one language prevails there are areas which indisputably belong to one language or another. Besides such areas there are areas on the fringe where one language gradually slips into another and for the purposes of this resolution such areas may be termed bilingual areas.

It is for a province or State to decide what its language is. In multi-lingual provinces undispu-

ted areas belonging to the various languages as also the fringe or 'bilingual areas' should be demarcated and the language of each indicated by the province or State concerned.

Administration

For administrative purposes the language of the province or the area concerned should be used. In fringe or bilingual areas if the minority is of a considerable size, i.e. 20 per cent of the population, documents which the public at large have to use, such as Government notices, etc., electoral rolls, ration cards, etc., should be in both languages. For court and administrative purposes the language of the province or area will be used in all public offices. It will be open, however, to any person having another language to submit petition in his own language which is officially recognized.

For all-India purposes there will be a State language in which the business of the Union will be conducted. That will be the language of correspondence with the provincial and State Governments. All records of the Centre will be kept and maintained in that language. It will also serve as the language for inter-provincial and inter-State commerce and correspondence. During a period of transition which shall not exceed 15 years English may be used at the Centre and for inter-provincial affairs, provided that the State language will be progressively utilized until it replaces English.

Education

At the primary stage a child shall get instruction in its mother tongue which will be according to the wishes of the guardian or parents of the child. It will ordinarily be the language of the area or the province. But in other places also and particularly in fringe areas and in large cities where people speaking different languages congregate, public primary schools giving instruction in the language of a minority will be opened or sections joined to other primary schools, if there is a reasonable number, say 15 pupils in a class, demanding instruction in that language. But even in such schools and sections giving instruction through a minority language, provincial language will be introduced at the middle stage even for children speaking the minority language.

Instruction at the secondary stage will ordinarily be given in the provincial language, but where a sufficiently large number of pupils demand it, schools may be run or sections attached to other schools in a minority language, provided this will be determined having regard to conditions prevailing in the locality, such as, whether there are any existing institutions—Government or private—giving instruction through the minority language, whether the finances of the province can afford such independent schools, etc. At the secondary stage study of the all-India State language should be taken up as a second

language. At the University stage, the medium of instruction will be the provincial language.

For the purpose of this resolution Urdu shall be one of the languages concerned.

"Diet and Diet Reform" *

"I have been known as a crank, faddist, mad man. Evidently the reputation is well deserved. For, wherever I go, I draw to myself cranks, faddists and mad men," wrote Gandhiji in the *Young India* of 13-6-1929.

I would regard this as a rather exaggerated statement, even though made by Gandhiji, except in the realm of Diet and Nature Cure. In other fields, if he drew cranks and mad men also to him, it was by no means the case of birds of a feather flocking together. It must be regarded as in spite of himself and on account of his extraordinary capacity of being *pater familias* of an enormous family. In other fields indeed he drew to himself people who could never be credited with un-normal ways of thinking and acting; like, for instance, the Nehrus, C. R., Sardar Vallabhbhai and scores of others — politicians, educationists, lawyers, businessmen, literators and others. Even in the sphere of Nature Cure and Diet, he was a faddist only in the sense of being deeply interested in the subject. Indeed, he once said that if he could retire from public life (as he envisaged in certain eventualities), he would devote himself to Nature Cure, which, of course, included the science of diet. But there, too, he was not a quack, though he was a bold experimenter and made the experiments readily upon himself as well as others, without being too much worried, about consequences. It is difficult for ordinary doctors to find willing human subjects to undergo 'experiments'. They have, therefore, to subject poor dumb creatures to their fads, or cheat their patients without their knowledge that they are being simply experimented upon (often at their own expense). But Gandhiji's loving Mahatmaship gave him an advantage over other medical men in this, and he could induce even great leaders to become subjects of his experiments. No wonder that ordinary men accepted his counsel implicitly.

But as I have said above, not being a quack, he discovered important truths in respect of Diet, preservation of health and cure of diseases without the help of drugs. He took help from every expert and also shared his own knowledge and discoveries with his readers and quite a handbook has been created out of his writings. Dr. Bharatan Kumarappa has collected all these and also of other contributors of the *Young India* and the *Harijan* on the subject of Diet in the small book mentioned in the caption.

Wardha, 23-7-'49

K. G. M.

THE SANTINIKETAN PILGRIMAGE

V

Q. In an *ashrama* does the introduction of salary system raise or degrade the ideal of the institution?

Gandhiji: I have no difficulty in saying that it makes no difference whether you receive a fixed salary or your expenses are paid for you. Both methods can be tried. The danger to be guarded against is this: if you pay a man his bazaar price you do not carry out the spirit of the *ashrama*. We should rather do without talent and ability, be it of the highest order, if it demands its bazaar value. In other words, we should wait till talent is attracted to the institution, not for money but for something else for which the institution stands. Nor should you let the principle of "according to want" take you even beyond bazaar values. Salary system in Visvabharati is not a thing to complain of. The difficulties to which you have referred cannot be removed by mere tinkering. You must find out and remove the causes which are at the root of the defects you have in mind.

Q. How can we make headway against cynicism or lack of faith that we find among the youngsters?

Gandhiji: I heave a sigh of despair when you ask me that question. When you find that your pupils are without faith you should say to yourself: 'I am without faith.' I have found that again and again in my own experience. And each time the discovery has been like an invigorating bath for me. The Biblical saying: 'Remove the beam from thine own eye before ye point out the mote in thy neighbour's' is even more appropriate in the case of pupil and teacher. The pupil comes to you to find in you something infinitely better than himself. Rather than complain, 'Oh! he has no faith; how can I implant faith in him', it would be far better that you resigned from your job.

Q. The intellectual tradition of Gurudev is being fairly well maintained here but I am afraid that the idealism for which he stood does not find full scope. There must be something wrong in an organization that leads to such a result. What is the remedy? Secondly, should our institution only work to make culture available to the man in the street? This is your ideal. At the same time should not there be a place where higher culture can be preserved for the initiated? This was Gurudev's ideal. Such an institution will necessarily be exclusive and for the select only. I am a follower both of your and Gurudev's ideals and I am torn by the conflict between the two.

Gandhiji: To take the second question first, it is a reflection both on Gurudev and myself. I have found no real conflict between us. I started with a disposition to detect a conflict between Gurudev and myself but ended with the glorious discovery that there was none.

Regarding your first question, all I can say is that the feeling, 'I am all right but there is something wrong with the institution', betrays self-righteousness. It is killing. When you feel within yourself that you are all right but everything around you is wrong, the conclusion which you should draw for yourself is that everything is all right but there is something wrong within you.

Gandhiji had allotted half an hour to the function. Just as he was preparing to leave, Shrimati Indiradevi asked a final question. "Is there not too much music and dancing here? Is there not the danger of the music of the voice drowning the music of life?" Gandhiji had no time to answer the question then. Much as he would have loved to prolong his stay in Santiniketan the mission which had brought him to Bengal peremptorily called him back to Calcutta. Reluctantly he took leave and boarded the car that was waiting for him. But his thoughts continued to linger on the scene he had left behind. From Calcutta he wrote answering Shrimati Indiradevi's question as also some other questions that had been posed but which he had not the time to answer.

"I have a suspicion that perhaps there is more of music than warranted by life, or I will put the thought in another way. The music of life is in danger of being lost in the music of the voice. Why not the music of the walk, of the march, of every movement of ours and of every activity? It was not an idle remark which I made at the Mandir service about the way in which boys and girls were sitting anyhow in the Mandir. I think our boys and girls should know how to walk, how to march, how to sit, how to eat, in short, how to perform every function of life. This is my idea of music. So far as I know, Gurudev stood for all this in his own person."

* * *

"Music in Santiniketan is charming, but has the professor there come to the conclusion that Bengali music is the last word in that direction? Has Hindustani music, i.e. music before and after the Muslim period, anything to give to the world of music? If it has, it should have its due place at Santiniketan. Indeed, I would go so far as to say that Western music which has made immense strides should also blend with the Indian. Visvabharati is conceived as a world university. This is merely a passing thought of a layman to be transmitted to the music master there."

* * *

"I do not like preparing boys and girls for university examinations. Visvabharati is its own university. It ought not to be in need of a charter from any Government. As it is, you are giving Visvabharati degrees side by side with preparing students for the chartered uni-

versity. You have a high ideal to live for and live up to. University degrees are a lure to which you cannot afford to fall a prey. Concessions that Gurudev made to weakness with impunity, Visvabharati without him cannot make. Concession to weakness began with the introduction of the orthodox matriculation examination. I was unable even then to reconcile myself to it and I do not know that we have gained anything by it. I am not now thinking at all in terms of non-co-operation. I am just now anxious for Santiniketan to represent the highest that Gurudev stood for."

* * *

"You will not have real rural reconstruction unless you begin with the basic craft, which is hand-spinning. Weavers' art without hand-spinning is a dead art. You know that I pleaded for it with Gurudev, at first in vain; later on he had begun to see what I was driving at. If you think that I have interpreted Gurudev aright in the matter of spinning, you will not hesitate to make Santiniketan hum with the music of the wheel."

PYARELAL

UNITY *

We all have to live in this country, breathe its air, drink its water and eat its food. After death our bodies will become its dust. There is no difference either in the dust to which we belong or in the food we eat. Nor does the dust, the water or the Sun differentiate between man and man; they treat all alike. That is the lesson we have to learn. Just as we recognize a patient as a patient and not by his caste, so also a devotee should be considered as a devotee and a good man as a good man. We should not look to his religious or communal differences. If a man claims to be a Muslim or a Hindu, his claim will be true only if he does noble work. This applies equally to all religions. Noble work will be the test of their claims. We should not give importance to what name of God one utters, how one worships or whether one buries or burns the dead.

Every river of India is called the Ganga. A dip in a river is considered equal to a dip in the Ganga and right from the Kaveri to the Ganga-Yamuna, all rivers are Ganga for this purpose. That provides a good example of our unity. This unity is in no sense artificial but is a tradition of India and we have to propagate it in the whole world. There was a time when the followers of Lord Buddha went outside India and gave light to the world. About two thousand years later, there was born a man in this country, whose teachings attracted the world. The world expects that the people, in whose country such a great man was born, will possess the strength to bring peace to the world.

VINOBA

* Extracted from Shri Vinobaji's post-prayer speech in Hindustani at Hyderabad on 3-4-49.

By Mahatma Gandhi

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TO MEMBERS OF PUBLIC SERVICES

It is not with a light heart that I write this. I wish I can avoid it. But I see no other way but to talk to you directly about what complaints I receive frequently from almost every part of India. We have begun the third year of our Independence. If its attainment has benefited any single class of persons very materially, it would not be wrong to say that it is you. Owing to the retirement of most of the foreign officers, the choice made by several Muslim officers to go over to Pakistan, opening of several foreign embassies, creation of new departments and the like, several of you, who would have been still in the junior ranks have obtained quick promotions to important posts and better emoluments. Your material condition has definitely improved since Independence. The absolutely new type of government that succeeded the British could have elected to change its system of services radically. Even if it retained most of you, it might have placed over you absolutely new men in places of high importance in order to carry out new policies and create a new India. A government with the Charkha Sangh outlook might have made heavy cuts in your salaries and comforts.

The bureaucracy, as you were called, was, as you know, almost a loathsome term. 'Corrupt', 'wooden-headed', 'high-handed', 'unprogressive', 'dilatory', 'arrogant', 'impudent', 'blind to the needs of the people' were some of the violent adjectives freely used against you by the various Congress leaders including some of the members of the various cabinets. For practical purposes, Free India was equivalent to India free from bureaucratic rule. Indeed, it would not be wrong to say that the younger section of the Congress expected such radical changes to take place, and one of the causes of their and the people's dissatisfaction against the Congress organization is that their seniors did not do so, and elected to continue the old system almost as it was. After assumption of office, the leaders took a view of soberness and sense of responsibility and decided to continue the system as it was. Perhaps this was inevitable under the circumstances in which transfer of power was brought about. Perhaps this became possible also because the radical ideologies both of Gandhiji as well as the rival one of Marx on the economic and social side had never been wholeheartedly accepted by the seniors in the Congress. The only ideology that remained was that of the revivalism of old Hinduism or old Islam on the cultural side and 'industrial progress',

and 'gradual, orderly social uplift' without too heavy a departure from traditional methods on the economic and social side. British institutions were accepted as models.

So there was not much difference between this view and the traditions which were set by the British in India and which you had imbibed. For practical purposes, the British Government had continued and made it possible for you and the Congress leaders to work together. And thus what might have become quite a serious problem became smooth sailing both for you and the new Government.

If this smoothness had been properly appreciated, in spite of the new problems created by the partition and the exodus following it, the peaceful transfer should have been extremely beneficial to the people. The awe of the white skin, which often made the oldest of you feel small before even a raw youth, had disappeared. You now work with your own people and among your own people. The *pardahs* of rank and prestige which separated you from your heads on the one side, and the subordinates and the people over whom you exercised authority on the other side, have broken. You were even then called Indian Civil Servants, though the highest among you were neither Indian, nor Civil, nor behaved like Servants towards the people. Now you are all Indians, have a chance to be civil and to work for the service of your nation.

But I regret to say that however satisfied ministers of the various governments might be about your efficiency, sense of service and conduct, public opinion about you is just the contrary. No, there are complaints that your conduct towards the people is less satisfactory than what it was even under the past regime. You are ruder, more corrupt, less efficient, more dilatory, more open to the monetary influence and nepotic considerations, and your administration is felt more and more oppressive by the people than what it was under yourselves before 1947.

Even in the British regime, the services were not altogether uncorrupt. But the Indian States were notorious for still greater corruption—with this difference that they were more cheaply satiable. What could be got done with the bribe of a few annas in an Indian State needed as many rupees in British India. Do you know what reports I receive from the merged States now? They say that the scale of bribes has also risen with your entry into their administration. I am prepared to concede that some of these complaints might be exaggerated. In a court of law, several might be unprovable. But let me tell you that the complaints I receive are not only those communicated by the public, but also those by some of the government servants themselves. For instance, the tricks, corruption and dishonesties practised in the

railway departments, ration shops, etc. are made known to me by those working in these departments.

When I address you thus generally, please do not misunderstand me. It is not that there is no honest soul amongst you or that there are not officers among you who have worked themselves like self-appointed slaves since the attainment of Independence, or that this is true of every department. As a matter of fact, a majority among you may never have touched illicit money. But in these matters a ten per cent would be quite sufficient to mar your reputation, even as 10 or 20 rowdy men might break a meeting of 500 peaceful men. What I have described is the general picture and the impression. And so let the honest ones also think of this matter seriously.

In what, do you think, will this end? You stand between the government and the people. The government is judged through you and succeeds or fails through you. People necessarily assume that the government controls you fully, and so if your administration is unsatisfactory, they justifiably blame the government for your defects. If the Congress appears to control the government, every corruption in you is necessarily transferred to the Congress. Of course, you will be able to say, and justifiably so, that there is corruption in Congressmen themselves, and you are not the only offenders. For that, if the Congress does not improve, it might have to pay by walking out of the government when its time is ripe. But the consequences of the present demoralization and corruption will not stop by the dismissal of the Congress government. They are bound also to react on your heads. Except in case a second Gandhi rises to lead the nation to ways of non-violent resistance, a semi-awakened humanity reacts against oppression in only one way, namely by a re-enactment of the scenes of the French Revolution. France is a small country compared to ours. We are bigger than about half a dozen Frances put together. Our tragedies will be far greater than those of any other country except China. We had a foretaste of it during the killings of 1946-47. Do you wish these to repeat themselves?

Unless you improve, you cannot make the people happy and an unhappy people will not spare you when your oppression becomes unbearable. Remember that when everything is ready for taking fire, a little spark is quite sufficient to set it.

My appeal to you is to give a place to God in your life and conduct. In your desire to advance your material position you have banished Him from your homes and offices, calculating that money is a better friend than God in adversity and old age. But your calculations are false and will mean the ruin of yourselves and the whole country. God grant you wisdom and strength to become truer and better servants of the people.

Wardha, 27-7-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

COMPULSORY SOCIAL SERVICE

In response to Shrimati Lilavati Munshi's resolution, the Bombay Government have appointed a committee to investigate into the question, in all its aspects, of compulsory social service by students of secondary schools and colleges during the course of their education or within two years of the completion thereof as an essential part of their education and in particular to consider the following:

- (a) The total period of social service;
- (b) The stage at which it may be rendered;
- (c) The various methods and categories of social service;
- (d) The scales of honorarium or remuneration, if any, which may be paid;
- (e) Exemption of any class of students; and
- (f) The organization, ways and means for administering the scheme.

The Committee has decided to issue the following general questionnaire to all interested in the problem:

1. Should school or college students be utilized for social service work? If so, which school or college?
2. What kinds of work will you include in it? Should manual labour be given an important place, for example, as in the 'Labour Camps'?
3. It appears that students can be utilized for social service in three ways: (a) Social service integrated into their school and college work, as an essential part of their education, not necessarily during the school or college time only but also during the evenings, week-ends or vacations; (b) Social service on voluntary basis, encouraged and organized on a full-time or part-time basis, with or without payment; (c) Compulsory social service, with or without payment. Which of these three forms would you recommend in view of its practicability from the point of view of the student, the parents and the community?
4. If you consider compulsion practicable, (a) what should be the duration? (b) at what stage or stages should it be introduced?
5. Will compulsion involve any serious economic difficulties? And, if so, which?
6. How can effective co-operation be secured from the locality where such work is organized?
7. What agency should be responsible for the work of (a) organization, (b) supervision of these activities?
8. Should their work be paid? If so, on what basis?
9. How can co-operation from voluntary social agencies be secured?
10. What is your personal experience of social service work with (a) adults, and (b) students?

Replies to the questions should be sent to the undersigned on or before 25th August, 1949. He will also be glad to supply more copies of the questionnaire if necessary.

B. B. SAMANT
Secretary,

Social Service Committee.

Educational Adviser's Office,
Law College Bldg., Bombay 1.

Correction

On page 173 of the Harijan of July 31, '49 in column 2, line 1 read *From the mandir* for *From their mandir*.

CO-OPERATION

With the advent of the National Government there is a constant effort to popularize reconstruction work through co-operation. The Governments have been looking upon co-operation as a special Department attached to the Government machinery and sanctioned by an act of the Legislature. They have been pinning their faith to Co-operative Societies for credit purposes in the past with dire results both to the Society and its patrons. All these maladjustments arise out of a misunderstanding as to what co-operation is. It is not a special type of organization nor does it get its sanction from an Act of the Legislature. Co-operation understood properly means working together towards a common end. This working together, therefore, must be for mutual benefit and not to satisfy any sense of patronage. This approach is wanting in the present organization of Societies. To take an illustration from weaving, the warp and the weft have to co-operate together to make yarn into cloth. Similarly in the economic life the producer and the consumer have to co-operate together to achieve anything. Unless we find this co-operation, it is futile to expect any work of reconstruction to succeed.

What cement or mortar is to the bricks in a building that co-operation should be in the economic edifice. Just as the adhesive agent keeps the bricks together and converts them into a solid mass, co-operation will also function to consolidate the social order.

The various organs of our body co-operate together to a common end. If the eyes see, the legs move, we are able to get to our destination but if each faculty refuses to co-ordinate its work with that of the others we shall be paralysed. In the same way in the body politic and in a community of people each one has to perform his duties not by himself but in co-ordination with the functions of his neighbours.

Thus we find three functions of co-operation. The warp and the weft function, the cement and the bricks function and the eyes and the legs function, i.e. holding together, supporting each other and working together. We often find that these three functions are not performed by organizational co-operation. The Government Co-operative Department if it is to help the weavers must use the weavers' products. If it is to help paper-makers, it should use hand-made paper and wherever possible it should utilize only products of those artisans whom it wishes to help. A Rural Development Department that uses foreign made brushes, mill-made dusters and laminated wood furniture is more a Rural Destruction Department. At present, may be through sheer ignorance, all our Government departments are working on these lines, though in season and out of season they are crying themselves hoarse in an effort to promote co-operation. We hope not only the Governments but also the various institutions and individuals interested in co-operation will take up this wider ideology of co-operation and work and live in

such a way as to promote the cause they sponsor. We cannot profess one thing and act in the contrary way. Our actions themselves should declare the philosophy of life we have adopted. Co-operation is not merely a method of work but is primarily a way of life. Therefore it requires a missionary's zeal and a oneness of purpose to be practised in all its fullness.

It is not merely the things that we produce that matter, however large or fine they may be, but the way we go about it in our attempt to produce the articles is even more important. Hence it is incumbent on us to watch the means with great deal of vigilance, so that in our anxiety to produce what on the surface appears to be good results we do not destroy the real thing.

In our country our culture has been one that has been based on co-operation rather than on competition, on joint effort rather than individualistic working. Unfortunately today we are in a confusion. The West has brought to us the method of working individually with aids given through legalized co-operative organizations. These may have been useful in a world of competition but are bound to fail where co-operation is looked upon as the essence of life. The standard of life indicated by co-operation would necessarily be comparatively simpler than the standard of living that is possible to a special few under conditions of competition. But it is perfectly certain that the average struck in co-operative living will give to every individual reasonable share in the production of the nation, while competitive economy promises all good things to the strongest. We may say co-operation makes for civilization and social life while competition drives us towards the jungle where the strongest survive at the cost of the weak.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

Ill-trained

Some 30 or 35 college students take their meals in the same lodge as I. About three or four days ago, about twenty of them failed to turn up at the lodge, having left Wardha without notice. The food cooked for them had to be thrown away. Of course, the lodge-keeper will charge them for that day, but it does not make any difference so far as the waste is concerned. The keeper had prepared food today for the expected customers. Suddenly these boys turned up again without previous notice. The keeper in a hurry had to put in more water into the *da* and cook some new food and practise other economies. This is how the educated youth often thoughtlessly and irresponsibly behaves. They feel that the lodge-keeper need not grumble as he is fully compensated. But the country suffers on account of preventable waste. Leaving something in the dish has become a fashion with them. Can they be called 'trained'? Pandit Jawaharlal has done well in strongly condemning this habit.

Wardha, 9-8-'49

R. L.

(Translated from Gujarati)

NOTES

Congress on Languages

The Working Committee's resolution on the Language problem is published elsewhere. Except that the period of 15 years for the continuance of English is too long and a retrograde step, I think that the rest of the resolution ought to satisfy the reasonable demands of every linguistic minority concerned. I hope every provincial government will implement it fully and in a liberal spirit. It is the actual practice and attitude towards the minority languages or sections that is of more importance than the enunciation of policy on paper.

Regarding the period of 15 years for English, it seems like one inspired by the desire of self-insurance by the seniors in public service, legislatures and elected government offices. Most of those who are at present above the age of 45 in services and above 60 in legislatures and offices would quit their places by that time, and be saved by the resolution the trouble of mastering a new language. They will be able to carry on through the language to which they are long accustomed. The burden of the new order is shifted to the succeeding generation of administrators and legislators.

It is fortunate that the resolution is confined to the administrative side and not sought to be applied to the sphere of education. But educationists are not less wanting in inertia and seek the same insurance in their own sphere. If it had meant the toleration of only a few aging professors and teachers, they could be sympathized with. But they seek to perpetuate their own disability to change by imposing the foreign medium upon the growing generation and that makes the position altogether different and grave.

Wardha, 11-8-'49

"The Santiniketan Pilgrimage"

I am sure the readers of the *Harijan* must have read with the same poignant pathos the story of Gandhiji's last Santiniketan pilgrimage as Pyarelalji experienced when he wrote it in December, 1945. It was not intended for publication but was written mainly as a "devotional exercise". It was revised by Gandhiji. Shri Rathibabu saw it by chance, and with Gandhiji's approval, got the permission to publish it as a special number of the *Viswa Bharati Quarterly*. Only a limited edition was published. For wider publication it has now been reproduced in the *Harijan* in five sections with a few corrections and verbal alterations.

The note of pathos which it breathes has for us today possibly deepened. The talk which Gandhiji gave to Gurudev's workers is equally apposite for Gandhiji's workers today. If Gurudev, as he remarked on that occasion, cannot be manufactured to order, still less can Mahatma Gandhiji be manufactured to order. Such *yugapurushas* are born only once in an age. But the void left by their demise can in part at least be filled if their followers strive collectively to re-

present them in their person always putting the cause before self. Gandhiji used to say that he would like posterity to judge him not by what he had done in his person but the imprint he had left on his environment, particularly those who had come in close association with him. Let all those who claim that privilege know that on them rests a heavy responsibility and they are being weighed in the balance. Will they be found wanting?

Wardha, 11-8-'49

Shrimati Aruna Asafali's Insult

Referring to the note *Misunderstanding* (the *Harijan*, 31st July), Shrimati Purnima Banerji writes:

"Without wishing to claim any superiority for U.P. and knowing well how impatient and unpredictable tempers can be in keenly contested elections, I wish to point out a fact which is that Shrimati Aruna Asafali was never shown any disrespect in the United Provinces nor was she assaulted. Besides she was never present at any of the polling booths anywhere. She had toured the Province before the elections.

"Perhaps you know that Shrimati Aruna is my sister and at the moment of writing to you, she and I are together."

Wardha, 9-8-'49

The Reason for Cheapness

I did not know that my remarks in the article *Animal Transport* were going to be justified immediately by the proceedings of the Transport Advisory Council held in New Delhi on July 30. The proceedings show what nice care is taken to develop and encourage motor transport and to make it seemingly as cheap as possible by the State undertaking all expenses necessary to make them run. Thus they are to be exempt from the levy of terminal tax or octroi duty by Municipalities and District Boards, and in order to make this possible,

"The Council felt that the Centre, besides paying for the entire maintenance of the portions of National Highways passing through towns, should also consider payment at double the maintenance rates for the portions of the roads outside the towns. The Centre, it was added, might also consider paying for improvements to the pavements within the towns" on certain conditions.

Also "noting the complaint made by several provinces against recent reduction in grants, particularly maintenance grants, the Council recommended that higher grants should be given as far as possible."

"In regard to road-rail co-ordination and participation by railways in provincial motor transport undertakings, the Council noted that almost all Provincial and State Governments had agreed to give railways a financial interest of not less than 20 per cent in road transport corporations."

This is how motor transport thrives. It is not cheap on its own merits.

The same care should be bestowed by the National Government to develop and encourage animal transport, if agriculture is to prosper. It must be realized that the food problem cannot be solved by considering it singly. Currency, controls, cloth, oil-seeds, cows, bullocks, dairies, export and import policy, roads, all form part and parcel of agriculture and you cannot have prosperous agriculture without a co-ordinated and connected treatment of the whole.

Wardha, 1-8-'49

K. G. M.

NAI TALIM FOR DISPLACED PERSONS

[The following appeal by Shrimati Ashadevi speaks for itself. Shrimati Ashadevi has invited workers and students to participate in the work. Necessarily, those who can contribute to this work must be persons who have a good knowledge of Hindustani and are entirely free from the communal spirit. They must also be physically and mentally capable of living under camp conditions. I hope that Shrimati Ashadevi will get a hearty response to her appeal. — K. G. M.]

The problem of the rehabilitation of the displaced persons is one of the most urgent problems before the nation today. At the Sarvodaya Sammelan held in March, 1948, at Sevagram the constructive workers pledged themselves to take up this work. Since then Shri Vinoba has been specially devoting his time and energy to this service and many constructive workers have been serving in the different camps specially through the medium of *khadi* work. We the workers of Nai Talim, however, have not yet been able to make any contribution to this work mainly because of the limitation of our resources.

Recently in a letter addressed to the Rehabilitation Adviser Pandit Jawaharlal expressed the wish that "he would have liked the whole problem of refugee education to be handed over lock, stock and barrel to the Nai Talim Association in Wardha and Dr. Zakirhussain's Jamia Millia." He also mentioned that this was an ideal opportunity to experiment in Nai Talim. The reasons given by him will be helpful to us workers of Nai Talim. "The whole approach to the problem must be one of the training of the human being to productive effort apart from such social training as we can give the Nai Talim people." He continued, "It would certainly cost much less and will almost certainly produce better results. Their whole education is based on production."

A meeting was called by the Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation on the ninth and eleventh August to discuss this question. The meeting was presided over by the Hon'ble Shri Mohanlal Saksena and attended by Dr. Zakirhussain, Shri E. W. Aryanayakam, Shrimati Ashadevi, Janab Shafique Rahman Kidwai on behalf of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh and the Jamia Millia. After careful consideration the president and the secretary of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh present at the meeting accepted responsibility of the work of Nai Talim among displaced persons on behalf of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh. As our resources are limited and we have few trained persons available for this work, it was decided to start the work on a small restricted scale at the two camps at Faridabad, District Gurgaon, East Punjab and Rajpura, District Ambala, East Punjab. Of these two the camp at Faridabad is entirely for the displaced persons from the North West Frontier Province and the camp at Rajpura for those from Bahawalpur. The Hindustani Talimi Sangh would like to watch the results of the

experiment in these two camps before taking up further responsibilities.

This work will be an entirely new venture in Nai Talim and we are taking it up in all humility and yet with the conviction that this is a problem of national emergency and we workers should accept this call of service to the work of reconstruction among the displaced persons through Nai Talim.

This work will be possible only with the co-operation of the workers in all the fields of constructive work. We, therefore, make an appeal to the constructive workers to make a contribution to this work. We know that all the constructive workers are engaged in their own work. Yet we shall request them to devote some time, even a month if possible, to this work of educational reconstruction.

A branch office of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh will be opened in the camp at Faridabad, District Gurgaon (East Punjab) from the first week of September. A small conference of workers and students willing to take part in this work will be called at Faridabad on the 17th and 18th September. The future programme of Nai Talim for the displaced persons in the two camps will be discussed and planned at this conference.

It is a great work and our experience and capacity are limited. Yet if we start work in all sincerity and humility we trust the path will gradually be clear for us.

Sevagram, 17-8-'49

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