

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

CONGRESS CLARIFICATION

The Congress has 'clarified' its position about the admission of R. S. S. members into the Congress. In effect it is a revision of the first ruling and should have been so admitted. For, there could have been no case fit for reference to the Working Committee if a person was expected to resign from the R. S. S. or for the matter of that, the Hindu Mahasabha or the Muslim League, in order to join the Congress. Obviously, the reference could have arisen only because there was a suggestion that membership both in the Congress and the R. S. S. might be permissible.

Though the point has been settled for the present, I may respectfully warn the Congress that it is not out of the wood. The mind of many a Hindu Congressman is not quite clear about the difference of approach towards Indian culture as conceived (or desired to be conceived) by the Congress, and that by the Hindu Mahasabha, the R. S. S., the Muslim League, etc. The fundamental point is whether you look upon India's future culture as a composite one, to which several factors have contributed and will contribute, or as one almost entirely developing on the track of ancient *Vedic* and *Puranic* culture. Nor is their attitude towards Muslims, Sikhs, Harijans, and others very open. "Now that there is Pakistan," the Congress Hindu often says, forgetting that there are still 3.5 crore Muslims in his own area. Any plea on behalf of the Muslims is decried as "appeasement". The same seems to be the relation between the Punjab Hindus and Sikhs. It was this attitude which made the Muslims regard themselves as a separate nation, and it may be this attitude of the Punjab Hindus which is at the back of the cry for a separate Sikhistan. We have condemned Mr. Jinnah for his "two-nation theory" often enough. Indeed, he had the temerity to say "not two but many nations". The Hindu Mahasabha and several Congress Hindus have resented this and laid all the blame for it on the British, though they themselves are not prepared to look upon the Muslims as good nationals of India as themselves, and persistently try to relegate them to a subordinate position.

If this communal-mindedness had not been there, there ought not to have been any confusion in thinking about the place of the R. S. S. members in the Congress organization, and there would have been no attempt not only to justify the ruling as mere constitutional interpretation

but also to hail it, as was done by the Congress President and some individual leaders. Even such a staunch and clear-headed Congressman as Pandit Dwarkaprasad Mishra (Home Minister, C. P.) is reported to have said:

"If you want to keep Congress alive and active and save it from decay and stagnation, infuse new blood into it by inviting those who subscribe to its creed and are anxious to join it." He added that when Congressmen did not object to the members of *Jamiat-ul-Ulema* joining the Congress despite their demand for safeguards for Islamic culture, and welcomed those ex-Muslim Leaguers, who had played an important role in the country's partition, into the Congress fold, why should the entry of Sanghaites be opposed? The Sangh, he said, wants safeguards for Indian culture against outside aggression which in the past had come from the N. W. Frontier and from the sea routes when Europeans came. If the Sanghaites believed in inter-communal unity and were prepared to defend the country's freedom and culture they should be welcomed into the Congress fold if they wanted to join it." (*Hitavada*, November 11, 1949).

I am glad that some of the P. C. C.s showed more clear thinking. I have nothing personal against the Hindu Mahasabha or the R. S. S. and no personal axe to grind in the Congress. But if the Congress does not wish to depart from its 65-year old ideal, the Congress Hindus must carefully examine their true faith. Remember that the ideal of non-communal Indian nationalism was not a new element introduced into the Congress by Gandhiji or Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. It was born with the Congress and carefully nourished by its great founders — Hume, Wedderburn, Cotton, Wyomeshchandra Bonnerji (a Christian), Badruddin Tyabji, Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendranath Bannerji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Annie Besant, Gokhale, Wachchha and so many other respected leaders. It is that principle which has been made the pivot of the Indian Republic. If the Congress Hindus are not clear about it, the Congress will founder on the communal and caste rocks.

We are passing yet through a delicate stage. It is true that the loyalty of some Muslims is still a matter of doubt. Also, a great number of refugees is still full of anger towards the Muslims. In some places the Muslims are rather nervous and feel insecure. They look to the Congress for getting redress and just treatment. But if the Congress also fails them, the only result can be disloyalty and fifth-columnism.

I hope my caution will not fall on deaf ears.
Wardha, 19-11-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

IMPOSSIBLE EXPECTATIONS

A number of letters daily received by me show that people expect too much more from me than I am capable of. Thus I am blamed for not yet getting the controls lifted, for not getting those responsible for the sugar muddle to quit their offices or punished, for not getting a minister or an officer, whom the people do not like, removed, for not getting a change in the methods of procurement, for 'failing Gandhiji' by not getting the death sentence of Godse and Apte commuted, for not having succeeded in getting *vanaspati* and races and obscene advertisements banned, for not prevailing upon Congress papers not to advertise *vanaspati*, wines and other objectionable articles, and, in short, for not getting every evil which the people groan under removed. Some of my correspondents are highly educated people. They feel that I am not putting all my weight in the cause.

They must know that my political weight is as much below the normal as my physical one. I conduct no institutions, am not constitutionally connected with any (except the Go-seva Sangh), have no disciples or followers, command no funds, carry on no campaigns, make no speeches and possess no halo. If I enter any great building, no peon will take me from my appearance as any important visitor.

It is true that I edit the *Harijan*, which was Gandhiji's paper and because of my long association with Gandhiji, I have also formed personal friendship with several important people in the country. But that cannot give me or the *Harijan* the weight which Gandhiji and his *Harijan* commanded. And still, even Gandhiji said that all his influence was moral and of non-violent strength only. What is mine in comparison with his? And governments are not run to please personal friends, however warm the personal regard may be. At best my views would be read with care and respect if there is an important article. For the most part, administrators cannot have time even to read views of persons who are not active leaders. When Governments have some deliberate policies and methods of deciding them, the policies will not be altered to suit the views of the *Harijan*.

So, when I present people's grievances, expectations and aspirations through the *Harijan*, generally it would be wrong to ascribe more value to them than to 'letters from correspondents' in any good daily. Rather they should understand that my address is generally to the people and not to Government. They must learn to regulate their affairs themselves by appropriate mutual help and co-operation. They do not realize their own strength, which, if they did, is greater than the strength of the Government. Government thrives on their strength and not vice versa. This strength is all constructive. There is no need for any violent or destructive action in it. But to realize it, they must begin in the initial stage at the lowest rung

of the ladder. I find that most of the people, and even leaders, both in the Government as also those who are dissatisfied with the present state of affairs and want to build something new, wish to capture the present machinery, be it the Government, the Congress or Gandhiji's name, so that they might have ready-built power and prestige to help them, instead of starting anew. This does not seem to me a healthy sign.

My writing thus must not discourage or depress all those who are or are capable of being active workers. Getting angry either with Government or Congress or me will not help the people. I must not be counted at all. If all will work on right lines and win people's affection, esteem and co-operation, they will be able to get much of what they desire in the way of good government.

There is a moral law which governs us all, and which none may break with impunity. Those who suffer first can also mend their ways first and shorten their sufferings more quickly. Those to whom the suffering is yet to come will have to endure greater shocks and for a longer period.

Wardha, 14-11-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

SUICIDE ATTEMPT

Shri Kamath's Bill for repealing the section of the Indian Penal Code, which makes attempt to commit suicide a crime, deserves to be considered favourably. It has always appeared to me to be a ridiculous piece of law. The person who proceeds towards a suicidal act does so either under a spell of insanity or under circumstances which should arouse the sympathy of society and its guardians. Generally people are unwilling to die even if it were best for them to do so. But here is an act which is unpunishable if carried out successfully, and punishable only if it fails to achieve its purpose. It means that in the opinion of the State there should be no half-heartedness or want of thoroughness in suicidal propensities of man! Push into or go not near the doors of death. But like Nachiketa of the *Upanishads* there are at times people who knock at the doors of Yama, but are sent back by him. Why should they be punished as criminals by the State? There is no reason to believe that more persons will be tempted to undertake suicidal propensities only half-heartedly if such undertakings are not punished.

And, when the whole civilized world is on a march towards total suicide and employs all its scientific talents to devise means of doing so, in the speediest manner and on the largest-scale, why should an insane or unhappy individual be punished for his or her unsuccessful attempt for it, directed against only himself or herself?

Such persons should be looked after without being adjudged criminals, and the police should be authorized to take charge of them, if necessary, through provisions made in a non-penal law.

Wardha, 23-11-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THAT WAS BAPU *

During his visit to England in 1931 in connection with the Second Indian Round Table Conference, Bernard Shaw once called upon Gandhiji at 88, Knight's Bridge. Their conversation covered a wide variety of subjects from non-violence and world peace to euthanasia, vegetarianism and cow protection. After the meeting, Shaw was asked what his impression of Gandhi was. "Impression of Gandhi!" he exclaimed, puckering up his eyebrows "you might as well ask one to give you his impression of the Himalayas." The Himalayas overwhelm you. How can one describe it? That was his Shavian way of expressing appreciation of a great contemporary and a mark of his own greatness. But if Gandhiji had been asked about it, he would have said, as he did actually say on a remarkable occasion, "Do not dub me great. I am made up of little things. For, I aspire to serve the least of God's creation."

Therein consisted his greatness. Once in the course of our detention in the Aghakhan Palace at Poona he was discussing Marxism with me. Suddenly he exclaimed, "I do not care whether Marxism is right or wrong. All I know is that the poor are being crushed. Something has got to be done for them. To me it is axiomatic. Even as a child I used to argue with my mother, 'How can the touch of a scavenger pollute?' From that time forth, I became at heart a scavenger. He gave to the world of the suffering poor the name *Daridranarayana*. To serve it and therethrough to serve and realize God was his life's aspiration.

If then he was to serve the meanest of God's creation, he could not, he felt, do it through the power of arms, but only through the weapon of the spirit, or soul-force which even the physically weakest can wield. How can a decrepit old man, a sick person, a helpless woman or a child defend his, her or its rights by wielding arms? So he came upon *ahimsa* and put into the hands of the Indian masses the weapon of *satyagraha* which nobody could deprive them of. This *satyagraha* or soul-force of his was not an intangible or a mystical thing. It was as concrete and objective a force as, say, coal or electricity. By coal or electricity you can propel engines, sail ships or melt minerals. Even more potent and capable of producing concrete and tangible results in society, he demonstrated, is soul-force or the power of non-violence. That is the most precious heritage that he has left India and the world. It has enabled us to gain our freedom after 150 years of bondage and achieved what we could never have done by the use of the gun or the rifle. Take the case of the women's franchise. Because our fight was non-violent, women could take equal part in it with men. As a result Indian women have without any special effort got for themselves the right of franchise, which it took over half a century of suffragette agitation in England to secure. In the remarkable short span of a quarter of a century the age-old institution of untouchability in our country has been abolished in law. The credit for it is due entirely to the non-violent character of our struggle. Thanks again to the non-violent foundation of our struggle for independence, four crores of Muslims are today living in India with an equal status in law and citizenship rights in spite of the passions aroused by partition and advocacy of the "two nations theory". If we forget the secret of this strength or its use, we shall have lost our special heritage which has given lustre to India's name in the world. If the salt lose its savour wherewith shall it then be salted? On the other hand, if we want to prove worthy of our heritage we must hold fast to the crass roots of Gandhiji's non-violence, viz. the twenty-fold constructive programme outlined by him and his plan of *khadi*, *charkha* and village industries—those homely little things that can nestle in a

sweeper's hut or in an illiterate poor woman's lap, which simple, unsophisticated folk can understand and master, not the Cyclopean factories or subtle hair-splitting philosophies and 'isms' which are beyond their plebeian comprehension or reach.

His life was an unbroken round of penance. During the Second Round Table Conference days he would some time return to his residence in the East End in the small hours of the night. But instead of straightaway laying his weary limbs to rest in bed, he would remember the *Daridranarayana* and sit down religiously to do his half an hour's sacrificial spinning to identify himself with the toiling poor. At the time of his meal the picture of the half-starved skeletons of Orissa would be before his mind's eye. I shall never forget the trouncing I got when once in all innocence, I purchased a small phial of honey for him for six pence. "What right have I to spend so much on myself while the poor starve," he exclaimed and wept. He gave standing instructions to Mirabehn (Miss Slade), who used to serve him his meals, that the daily expenditure on his food should never exceed 1 s. or 1s. 6d. He wanted to know the price of every item of his menu before partaking of it. During his detention in the Agakhan Palace, he used himself to maintain the diary of his daily caloric intake to make sure that he took not a calorie in excess of the strict requirement of the body which he regarded purely and simply as an instrument of God's service.

Again, did he espouse the cause of the so-called Untouchables or of Hindu-Muslim Unity? He then did not hesitate to stake his life on it, as for instance at the time of the Yeravda Pact Fast also known as the Epic Fast. At the termination of his last Delhi Fast in 1948, thousands of Muslim women turned out of their purdah and filed into his room at Birla House to tell him how they had fasted in their homes during those agonizing days with him and prayed for his long life. The flood of congratulatory messages and telegrams from Pakistan that inundated him at the successful ending of his fast in spite of the orgy of communal madness that had recently convulsed both the dominions was a revelation to everybody. At the root of it lay his lifelong *tapas* (assiduous practice) of truth in thought, word and deed. He professed what he believed and whatever he professed he scrupulously lived up to with God as witness. That was what made his *satyagraha* a world-shaking force.

We are the heirs and trustees of this power, the weapon of the spirit which he gave us. It is the right and duty of all those who regard India as their motherland to ask the people of India, what they have made of this precious legacy. Have they like a faithful steward added to it or have they like the Prodigal Son squandered, or wasted it? We are in the habit of kicking away the ladder by which we have climbed to the summit. But it should not be forgotten that whatever is gained by truth and *ahimsa* can be preserved and retained also through the same means and none other. Shall we, now that independence has been attained, give the go-bye to non-violence, *khadi*, eradication of untouchability in practice, or communal unity for which Gandhiji died? Shall the tongue which Gandhiji's life-long colleagues and fellow architects of India's freedom like the late Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari spoke be regarded by us as "unnational" or the culture which they represented as "alien"? If that happens—which God forbid—we shall have in practice denied Gandhiji whatever we might profess to the contrary. It should be the pledge of every son and daughter of India not to let such a thing happen while he or she is alive even though they may be in a minority of one.

PYARELAL

* By the permission of the All-India Radio—being the text of a broadcast address in Hindustani made for overseas transmission on the 2nd of October 1949 from the New Delhi Broadcasting Station.

Correction

In the *Harijan* dated 11-12-49 on p. 357, column 2, lines 3 and 4 for "Incidentally" read *Incidentally*.

HARIJAN

December 18

1949

THE PLACE OF SATYAGRAHA IN DEMOCRACY

In his otherwise very thoughtful and able speech in the last session of the Constituent Assembly, Dr. Ambedkar said :

"If we wish to maintain democracy not merely in form, but also in fact, what must we do? The first thing, in my judgment, we must do is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives. It means we must abandon the bloody methods of revolution. It means that we must abandon the method of civil disobedience, non-co-operation and Satyagraha. When there was no way left for constitutional methods for achieving economic and social objectives there was some justification for unconstitutional methods. But where constitutional methods are open, there can be no justification for these unconstitutional methods. These methods are nothing but the grammar of anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned the better for us."

If the learned Doctor had said that until all constitutional methods are exhausted, no unconstitutional methods—even non-violent—should be adopted for removing an evil, and that now that the nation has got a very good democratic republican constitution, there should hardly arise an occasion for such methods as civil disobedience, non-co-operation and Satyagraha, there was nothing to say against it. Even under the British rule, Satyagraha was never regarded a justifiable step as long as all constitutional remedies that then existed had not been exhausted. Gandhiji was never in a hurry to rush in for Satyagraha. In fact, he was even often blamed for tarrying too long.

"Those only can take up civil disobedience, who believe in willing obedience even to irksome laws imposed by the State so long as they do not hurt their conscience or religion,....." he held. (*Young India*, 3-11-'21.)

He even went to the length of submitting to an injustice against which he had agitated, if he was assured of its removal as soon as possible. For,

"a born democrat is a born disciplinarian. Democracy comes naturally to him who is habituated normally to yield willing obedience to all laws, human or divine. I claim to be a democrat both by instinct and training. Let those who are ambitious to serve democracy qualify themselves by satisfying first this acid test of democracy. Moreover, a democrat must be utterly selfless. He must think and dream not in terms of self or party but only of democracy. Only then does he acquire the right of civil disobedience." (*Harijan*, 27-5-'39.)

He had demonstrated this in his fight in South Africa against the registration of Indians. The registration certificate required even finger impressions of its holder, as if he was a criminal. On being promised that this law would be repealed, if he made a gesture of submission to save the face of the Government, he went to the length of advising the people to take out certificates. This was furiously resented, and a murderous assault was made on him, as he proceeded to the Registration office. Undaunted though wounded, he got himself registered first.

"Since Satyagraha is one of the most powerful methods of direct action, a *satyagrahi* exhausts all other means before he resorts to Satyagraha. He will therefore constantly and continually approach the constituted authority, he will appeal to public opinion, educate public opinion, state his case calmly and coolly before everybody who wants to listen to him, and only after he has exhausted all these avenues will he resort to Satyagraha." (*Young India*, 20-10-'27.)

Should not this amply satisfy any administrator of a democratic State? Indeed this is a principle which stands good irrespective of the form of government under which the *satyagrahi* lives.

That occasions for Satyagraha should be rarer in a good democratic popular government than in an irresponsible authoritarian one is a different thing. In fact, one of the tests of a thoroughly satisfactory democracy may be laid down to be that it should give no occasion to a *satyagrahi* for resorting to that remedy, and in case of a hasty resort to it by an enthusiast, it should end in failure by abandonment without even the necessity of a repressive measure by the State.

But everything said and done, it should also be realized that Satyagraha is not a right, but a *duty* of a responsible citizen, which in a proper case he must perform for the very success of democracy. Or, if you call it a right, it is a right which does not depend upon its recognition in the chapter on Fundamental Rights of a country's constitution. In the very next sentence in the last quotation, Gandhiji continues :

"But when he (the *satyagrahi*) has found the impelling call of the inner voice within him and launches out upon Satyagraha, he has burnt his boats and there is no receding." If at times it involves breaking of laws, it is for fulfilling a higher law which can be transgressed only to cause moral loss to the individual and both moral and temporal loss to the nation. If constitutional remedies fail, if the government happens to be administered by, as the learned Doctor himself says, 'a bad lot', and in the name of political parties and constitutional methods, the administration gets controlled by cabalas, caucuses, and from top to bottom by a corrupt machinery and lawless law ; in

short, if an unbearable situation prevails and all economic, social and moral progress is held up in the name of law itself, there are only two courses left open for the downtrodden masses : either armed risings against the State or resort to non-violent civil resistance and non-co-operation with evil. The former is ruled out by the *satyagrahi*.

"They are a remedy worse than the disease sought to be cured. They are a token of the spirit of revenge and impatience and anger. The method of violence cannot do good in the long run." (*Young India*, 9-6-'20.)

At the same time,

"Submission . . . to a State law wholly or largely unjust is an immoral barter for liberty. A citizen who thus realizes the evil nature of a State is not satisfied to live on its sufferance, and therefore appears to the others who do not share his belief to be a nuisance to society whilst he is endeavouring to compel the State, without committing a moral breach, to arrest him. Thus considered, civil resistance is a most powerful expression of a soul's anguish and an eloquent protest against the continuance of an evil State. Is not this the history of all reform? Have not reformers, much to the disgust of their fellows, discarded even innocent symbols associated with an evil practice?" (*Young India*, 10-11-'21).

Indeed, the non-violent Satyagraha is the only method which will preserve and ensure the health and progress of society and the State. So, far from telling the people not to resort to Satyagraha, a statesman of India should rather tell his people that in spite of this Constitution, if the Government was not well administered, all constitutional remedies proved ineffective, and their representatives betrayed them, then the people should remember that Gandhiji had showed them a direct and sure method for remedying all ills, namely, of drawing the attention of the State and driving away its lethargy as well as vices by voluntarily courting suffering through Satyagraha. Even a fascist and dictatorial constitution would bend before Satyagraha, much more easily would a democratic one do. Did not Lord Hardinge, though Governor-General and Viceroy of India, lend all his support to the Satyagraha in South Africa?

Dr. Ambedkar regards Satyagraha methods as unconstitutional. I understand that this is a disputed proposition among eminent statesmen and jurists.

It may be pointed out that General Smuts, Gandhiji's adversary in South Africa, considered the Satyagraha movement there as a constitutional movement. (*Speeches*, p. 480.) Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India, also approved of Gandhiji's Satyagraha in South Africa. Charles E. Merriam describes Gandhiji's system of civil disobedience as being "within the borders of legality". (See his *Political Power*,

p. 174). Sir Stafford Cripps considers as legitimate the use of general strike by the working class in a democracy under certain conditions. C. R. Attlee holds that in the absence of democratic means of redress resort to unconstitutional, even violent, means to bring about fundamental change is inevitable. (*Why I am a Democrat* edited by Richard Acland : contributions by C. R. Attlee and Sir Stafford Cripps ; — *The Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi* by Dr. Gopinath Dhawan, p. 242, footnote).

But the question whether it is constitutional or not is of secondary importance. The most important thing is that the spirit, the discipline and the training of Satyagraha should really be rather widespread in the people than otherwise. The more disciplined and *satyagrahi* a people are, the less will its country need armaments and police. There can never be a successful democracy based on force. It can exist only if it is based on the love of the people. And it cannot thrive and remain pure if it is not chastened and restrained by Satyagraha, whenever it goes astray. It is the greatest lesson which Gandhiji taught to the downtrodden, the weaponless and the *have-nots* of the world. *Nai Talim* will be worthless even with its *charkha* base, if it fails to impart the spirit of Satyagraha to the rising generation.

Wardha, 5-12-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

[I am obliged to that excellent compilation of Prof. N. K. Bose, *Selections from Gandhi*,* for finding the various references to Gandhiji's writings. I have often found it to be a very handy and useful book for tracing Gandhiji's writings on any point. It should be possessed and read by every student of Gandhian literature in English.

— K. G. M.]

Another Exhibition

I referred to an "Indian Industrial Exhibition in Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and other places" in a previous article, *Swarajya and Swadeshi*. I understand that another exhibition called "All-India Industrial Exhibition" is being organized at Hyderabad under the presidency of Shri L. N. Gupta of the Hyderabad Civil Service. It is to be opened by H. E. Shri C. Rajagopalachari on December 20th. The President desires me to clarify that my article does not refer to this exhibition, assuring me that "this Exhibition is not being held by any commercial firm or under the auspices of any private enterprise. It is being held under the patronage of the Government of Hyderabad and is being organized by a Committee consisting of official and non-official honorary workers who have nothing to do with any business house," and also that "the Exhibition will be confined to products of Indian origin and manufacture."

I have nothing to say against a function of this nature.

Wardha, 5-12-'49

K. G. M.

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AHIMSA IN SINO-INDIAN CULTURE

II

Mencius

Mencius was the first sage who attempted to apply this perfect doctrine to practical politics. When he first met king Hui of the Liang State, the king asked: "Venerable sir, since you have not counted it far to come here, a distance of a thousand miles, may I presume that you are likewise provided with counsels to profit my kingdom?" He replied: "Why must Your Majesty use that word 'profit'? What I am 'likewise' provided with, are counsels to *jen* and *yi* or benevolence and righteousness, and these are my only topics.

"If Your Majesty say, 'What is to be done to profit our families?' and the inferior officers will say, 'What is to be done to profit our persons?' superiors and inferiors will try to snatch this profit, the one from the other, and the kingdom will be endangered. . . . There never has been a man trained to *jen* or benevolence who neglected his parents. There never has been a man trained to *yi* or righteousness who made his sovereign an after-consideration. Let Your Majesty also say, '*jen* and *yi* or benevolence and righteousness and these shall be the only themes.' Why must you use that word 'profit'?" (*The Works of Mencius*).

With this noble mission, Mencius went from State to State and preached to and discussed with the kings one after another. Although none of them did actually act on his wise advice and made real avail of his presence, he has left behind him an inextinguishable spirit of love, mercy and benevolence in the Chinese polity through all the long centuries. A few passages from his exhortations to the heads of the different States and his discourses with his disciples will illustrate a little more his lofty ideals.

"The man of *jen* has no enemy."

* * *

"Treat with the reverence due to age the elders in your own family, so that the elders in the families of others shall be similarly treated; treat with the kindness due to youth the young in your own family, so that the young in the families of others shall be similarly treated."

* * *

"The carrying out of his kindly heart by a prince will suffice for the love and protection of all within the four seas, and if he does not carry it out, he will not be able to protect his wife and children."

* * *

"*Jen* or benevolence is the most honourable dignity conferred by Heaven, and the quiet home in which man should dwell."

* * *

"Benevolence is the tranquil habitation of man, and righteousness is his straight path."

* * *

"The benevolent man loves others. The man of propriety shows respect to others."

* * *

"*Jen* or benevolence is man's heart, and *yi* or righteousness is man's path."

* * *

"Benevolence subdues its opposite just as water subdues fire. Those, however, who nowadays practise benevolence do it as if with one cup of water

they could save a whole wagon-load of fuel which was on fire, and when the flames were not extinguished, were to say that water cannot subdue fire. This conduct, moreover, greatly encourages those who are not benevolent."

(*The Works of Mencius*)

Lao-Tsu

Lao-Tsu, another of the greatest saints of China, elder than Confucius, was perhaps the only Chinese who preferred to use the negative rather than the positive phraseology in discourses on his principles. He would like to lay stress more on the passive side of things rather than on the active side. For instance, the Confucianists used to say: "The heart of Heaven is benevolence and love," but he said:

"Heaven and Earth are not benevolent; they treat all created things like straw dogs we use at sacrifices. The saint is not benevolent; he looks upon the people in the same way." (*Lao-Tsu: Tao Te Ching*).

Again he said:

"Tao is eternally inactive, and yet it leaves nothing undone. If kings and princes could but hold fast to this principle, all things would work out their own reformations. If, having reformed they still desired to act, I would have them restrained by the simplicity of the Nameless Tao. The simplicity of the Nameless Tao brings about an absence of desire. The absence of desire gives tranquility. And thus the Empire will rectify itself." (*Lao-Tsu: Tao Te Ching*).

Lao-Tsu was also perhaps the first sage, not only in China but in the world at large, who openly and strongly opposed the use of violent force and weapons and condemned war. He said:

"He who serves a ruler of men in harmony with Tao will not subdue the Empire by force of arms." Such a course is wont to bring retribution in its train.

"Where troops have been quartered, brambles and thorns spring up. In the track of great armies there must follow lean years.

"The good man wins a victory and then stops; he will not go on to acts of violence. Winning, he boasteth not; he will not triumph; he shows no arrogance. He wins because he cannot choose; after his victory he will not be overbearing.

"Weapons are instruments of ill omen, hateful to all creatures. Therefore he who has Tao will have nothing to do with them." (*Lao-Tsu: Tao Te Ching*).

He went even so far as to say:

"The violent and stiff-necked die not by a natural death."

"The best soldiers are not warlike; the best fighters do not lose their temper. The greatest conquerors are those who overcome their enemies without strife." (*Lao-Tsu: Tao Te Ching*).

Mo-Tsu

Another great Chinese saint who preached the same gospel of *ahimsa* or non-violence as Lao-Tsu and of *jen* or love as Confucius and Mencius but in a different way from them all, was Mo-Tsu.

Mo-Tsu lived a little later than Lao-Tsu and Confucius but earlier than Mencius. He was born about 500 B. C. The mode of his life, his ideals and works are very similar to that of the ancient Indian Buddhist *bodhisattva* Ksitigarbha and that of Gandhiji. I therefore have sometimes called Mo-Tsu the ancient Mahatma of

China and Gandhiji, the modern Mo-Tsu of India. Mencius described him by saying: "If there is benefit for the world, he will do it even by grinding away his body from crown to heel."

Mo-Tsu preached the Gospel of Non-violence and opposed war not only by words but also by action. Once when he heard of the news that the Chin State was to attack the Sung State, he immediately went from his native State Lu, walked for ten days and ten nights, to see the king of Chin and persuaded him to stop the aggression, and he succeeded in his effort.

According to Mo-Tsu's philosophy, all people should only love one another, should not fight and hurt anybody; this is the will of Heaven. He said:

"Heaven wishes people to love and benefit each other, and does not want people to hate and hurt each other. Why? Because He loves all and benefits all."

"How do we know that Heaven loves all and benefits all? Because He possesses all and feeds all."

"How to follow the will and wish of Heaven? That is to love all people under Heaven." (*Works of Mo-Tsu*).

He thought that non-loving is the only cause of chaos and calamities and attacking a country and killing people are the greatest sins in the world. Thus he said:

"How were chaos and calamities caused? They were caused by people not loving each other. A thief loves his own house and does not love the other's house, he therefore steals the other's house for the benefit of his own house. A murderer loves his own body and does not love the other's body, he therefore murders the other's body for the benefit of his own body.....Officers, each loves his own family and does not love other's family, they therefore exploit others' families for the benefit of their own families. The State kings, each loves his own country and does not love others' countries, they therefore attack others' countries for the benefit of their own countries.....If all look upon others' houses as their own house, who will steal? If all look upon others' bodies as his own body, who will murder? If all look upon others' families as his own family, who will exploit? If all look upon others' country as his own country, who will attack?.....Therefore, when all love each other, there will be peace and when all hate each other, there will be chaos and calamity." (*Works of Mo-Tsu*).

Again he said:

"To kill one man is called wrongful and must receive one death punishment. Accordingly to kill ten men is ten times wrongful and must receive ten death punishments. And to kill hundred men is hundred times wrongful and must receive hundred death punishments.....Now the greatest wrongful is to attack a country but receive no punishment.Is this right?" (*Works of Mo-Tsu*).

Again he said:

"Which are the greater ones among the evils of the world? They are those actions of the big countries attacking small countries, of the big families disturbing the small families; and those deeds of the strong robbing the weak, of the group of many oppressing the group of few, of the clever deceiving the dull, of the high class scorning the low. These are the greater evils of the world." (*Works of Mo-Tsu*).

TAN YUN-SHAN

ORGANIZATION OF SPINNING CLUBS

Village *swaraj* implies the planning and execution of village economy. The organization of spinning clubs is the first step in this direction on account of its capacity to make the village self-sufficient in its clothing requirements. The formation of such clubs throughout the length and breadth of India constitutes the beginning of the attempt to establish a non-exploiting society. Without a planned self-sufficiency scheme with this end, not even the best of constitutions will succeed in establishing a *swaraj* of the people.

But such small units as spinning clubs can achieve the great aim of making society self-sufficient, only if, along with enjoying complete freedom of action in themselves, they are knit together in an orderly manner and in spite of separate independent status of each, there is a common thread running through their activities and their organizers and members have a clear conception of their aim and work and also order their own lives in a manner consistent with the aim.

With a view to deliberate upon this aspect, the first all-India meeting of the secretaries, organizers and workers of spinning associations was held at Sevapuri (in U. P.) on the 12th and 13th of November last. Naturally the largest number consisted of the constructive workers of U. P. and Bihar. The programme of spinning clubs was discussed from various aspects and several suggestions were made. (A detailed report of these proceedings will be published by the Charkha Sangh shortly). Some of the suggestions made will involve a change in the rules and regulations framed by the A.I.S.A. for such clubs. These will be placed before the meeting of the Trustees to be held in December next and the final decisions will be announced thereafter as soon as possible. In the meanwhile, some of the most important suggestions approved at Sevapuri are published here for the information of spinning clubs, so that they could be acted upon immediately:

(1) The minimum number of associate and self-sufficient members for registering a spinning club is reduced from 10 to 5, provided all the five members belong to different families;

(2) A member of the spinning club must not be a dealer in mill yarn or mill cloth, or liquors;

(3) The Secretary or organizer of the club must be an associate as well as self-sufficient member of the Charkha Sangh and every member must become an associate member of the Charkha Sangh.

(4) The members of a spinning club must meet together for congregational spinning and study and discussion at least once a month, and preferably more frequently, say once in a fortnight or week;

(5) The clubs must make their own arrangements for getting the yarn woven. But as this would take time, in the initial stage the Charkha Sangh and certified *khadi* producers will arrange for getting such yarn woven within a month of their receipt, or within two months, if the woven *khadi* is to be delivered after being washed. (This applies to ordinary *khadi* only; *khadi* of a special type may require longer time).

Spinning clubs are requested to put these suggestions into practice.

The deliberations at Sevapuri point to the importance of holding such conferences in every province or division. The Secretaries or Organizers of spinning clubs in the Province, associate members and workers of the Charkha Sangh associated with this work should be invited to such meetings. The Provincial Secretary or Organizer will announce the time and venue of the meetings in his province or division. It has also been suggested that the expenses and arrangements of the meeting must not be a burden on the inviting centre but all should share in the work and the expenses. Also, opportunity should be taken at the time to mix with the people to as great an extent as possible. Clubs anxious to make any suggestions in this matter are requested to address them to the Secretary or Organizer of the Charkha Sangh of their division as soon as possible. It is proposed that every province will carry out this programme during the period of 10th December to 15th March next.

Sevagram, 27-11-'49 KRISHNADAS GANDHI
Secretary, A.I.S.A.

(Translated from *Hindustani*)

CONTRIBUTION TO DELAY

It is necessary for common citizens like us to realize how we ourselves contribute to administrative delays and confusion. Since the institution of popular ministries we have enormously increased the volume of work in the Secretariats. I believe it must have become at least four times more than what it used to be under the British regime. This is an estimate made from what I receive myself by way of copies of letters sent to ministers or important officers. Every week I receive letters and other communications with the post-script: "Copies sent to the Governor-General, Prime Minister, Dy. Prime Minister, Minister for.....and so on", the last copy being to the 'Editor of the *Harijan*'. The communications are at times typed, at times hand-written carbon copies, and in various languages. Very often they are not personal or specific complaints but suggestions, advice, general complaints, expressions of reproach, and opinions on administrative matters and policies.

I can say from my own limited experience of the *Harijan* and Gandhiji's Secretariat, how impossible it must be for any minister or his secretaries even to read all the correspondence which he gets everyday, and it is too much to expect that a secretary can put before his Chief every such communication or even acknowledge its receipt to the writer. Nevertheless, the secretary at least, if not the Chief, has some day to go through it and use his discretion. It may easily happen under these circumstances that

in some cases the secretary may commit a mistake in assessing the importance of the communication and neglect to attend to a really important matter. Also, at times the letter would remain on the Chief's pending file and soon become part of a goodly pile before the Chief can attend to it. It also causes loss and misplacement of letters, apart from delay and unconscious neglect of genuine complaints.

We must therefore be more restrained in sending letters, etc. Moreover, it is no use sending a letter to a minister who is not in charge of the matter complained of. For instance, if you have a complaint against the Railway administration, it might be necessary to address the Minister for Railways. But if you send a copy of it from the Governor-General at the top to the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Commerce and Supplies Ministers also, each of them would simply forward it to the Railway Minister. Thus that minister would get several complaints for the same matter, each in a different envelope. His Secretary (or rather his clerk) might easily make the mistake of regarding each complaint as a new matter and register it under different numbers. This leads to further confusion and delay rather than speedy disposal of the complaint. For each would be forwarded as a matter of course to the proper officer for report, who might have already received it direct and forgotten all about it!

Apart from confusion and delay, this necessitates increase of clerical staff, more postal expenditure, more stationery and waste of time of several officers.

And in addition to all this, if a copy of it is sent to me, I am at a loss to know what I should do with it. Since it has been already sent to the proper authorities, and since it is a pending matter, I have nothing left to do. Nevertheless, my assistant has to register it, I have to peruse it, often to acknowledge it, sometimes also to keep it on file, thus leading to waste of time, increase of work, piling of files, and postal expenses. All this can be avoided if the writers are more frugal with their own money and time and stationery.

Wardha, 16-11-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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