

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

## SWARAJ, SARVODAYA AND RAMARAJYA\*

(By Vinoba)

As you know there is a Kumbh Mela being held these days at Prayag. People are going there from every village for a dip in the waters of the holy Ganga. I am also eager for it, but my Yatra continues, as you know, for the last so many months. What is then the Ganga that I want to behold? It is the Ganga in your hearts. This Ganga flows hidden in every human heart. I want to draw it out and set it flowing in and through entire society. Just as king Bhagirath brought down the Ganga in the celestial region to the earth, so do we want, with the name of the Lord on our lips, to bring out the Ganga hidden in the human heart into the outer life of the individuals and the society. It is with that end in view that I have taken up the work in which we are engaged. And I should like to assure you that if we are able to accomplish it—and there is no reason why we should not—then you will not have to go for your purifying bath to the distant Ganga. You will then be enabled to have it at your will near at hand in the thrice holy Ganga of your heart.

There is a belief that a bath in the Ganga wipes off one's sins. But sins can be wiped off only if there is an ardent yearning, a burning desire to do it. If there is no such desire, no consciousness of one's sins nor any repentance, then a dip in the waters of the Ganga, no matter how often repeated, cannot absolve an individual of his sins. What is therefore needed is a consciousness of one's sins and a burning desire to get rid of them.

We have received so far twenty-five lakh acres of land. People at first did not believe that we could get land merely by asking for it. I admit that what we have received is not sufficient for the purpose we have in view. I am aware that we have still to go a long way. And yet the success achieved till now is not insignificant. History has many examples of lands being donated for temples and schools and such other purposes, but this is the first time when it is being donated to the landless as part of a campaign for rebuilding the village life on the

basis of economic justice and equality. The success, therefore, which has attended our efforts in a work so unique both in its conception and execution must be regarded as quite encouraging.

In Bihar, during the past sixteen months, we have collected more than fifteen lakh acres. It is asked if the land thus secured is all of good quality. My reply to it is that we are getting such land as there is in our country. The Ganga does not turn back inferior streams joining it. Not all the land that has come to us is good but a major part is. Supposing that only half of it is good, we would still be able to provide at least twelve lakh individuals, who have at present nothing to rely upon, with a permanent source of livelihood. And what do the donors get in return? Nothing material. They only get God's blessings, the goodwill of their poorer brethren and inner satisfaction which is of course more valuable than anything material.

Some people are wont to say that this is Kaliyuga i.e. the age in which evil dominates over the good, and we cannot therefore hope to get donations from each and every person. This is obviously a plea of inaction and despair. The character of an age depends on what we make of our times. The age in which Rama lived was also the age in which Ravan lived. But Rama succeeded in giving his character to his age. Mahatma Gandhi was born and lived in this age. I therefore hold that each man fashions his own age by the way he lives and acts. What we are pleased to call Kaliyuga will be a veritable Satyayuga to him who loves the Lord and spends his life serving his fellow beings. Let us therefore have faith and do our duty.

What is the inner spring of India's strength? The poet has sung, "Greece, Egypt, Rome have all disappeared from the face of the earth, but India exists." What is it that has sustained us down the centuries and kept us on up to this day? The secret lies in the teaching of our saints that it is the same spirit everywhere, in every heart. Even a child in India knows this truth. We are preaching the same hoary but ever new truth. Let people think over this teaching and try to follow it in practice and they will see before long that all our problems and

\* From a speech at Mao in Gaya District, on 4-2-54.

difficulties melt away like the mist before the rising sun.

But unfortunately we lose sight of this source of never-ending strength and keep repeating that it is for the Government to do all these things. Indeed, it looks as if we invoke the name of the Government more than we do that of Rama. I feel at times that August 15, 1947, the day of our independence was, contrary to what we believe, a day heralding an era of dependence. Until then our leaders worked and served the people. If there was in any part an earthquake or a flood havoc they flew there to give help and succour to the afflicted. And people followed them. But now when we are independent, we seem to have lost all initiative. For every little thing, we look to the Government. It should be realized that people are, after all, stronger than the Government. There is between them the same relation as between a well and a bucket. So realize your strength and set yourselves to do whatever requires to be done around you. Produce your own cloth and oil and *gur*, thus throwing off the bondage of the cities, and distribute the land to all the landless among you and the picture will change from one of poverty to that of plenty.

The political freedom of the country has brought us Swaraj, the economic freedom of the villages will bring us Sarvodaya, and the spiritual freedom, that is, freedom from *kama*, *krodh* and *lobh* \* will bring us Ramarajya. We have achieved Swaraj, we are now out to achieve Sarvodaya, and then we will march forward to Ramarajya.

\* Lust, anger and greed.  
(Adapted from Hindi)

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#### COMPULSORY MILITARY TRAINING

(By *D. P. Nayyar*)

The question of compulsory Military Training in Indian Schools and Colleges has been in the air for a long time. The majority of the people are in favour of it, though many oppose compulsion on account of its heavy financial implications.

The question of legislating in this regard came up for discussion in the Indian Parliament recently. It caused disappointment in many circles, interested in the cause of peace. That was understandable; because India, by its non-violent struggle for freedom against the British, had held out a new hope of peace to a world, haunted by the Atom, and now by the Hydrogen bomb.

The point of view of those who advocate compulsory military training will, however, need a dispassionate, objective analysis to discover how far we have an effective alternative solution to the problems which lead them to the course they advocate. They take their stand on two grounds:

(1) Military training will inculcate the sense of discipline in our young men; and

(2) it will train a very large number of people, who can serve as a promising ground for recruitment to the armed forces and a second line of defence in case of an emergency.

Let us examine the second reason first. It may be conceded straightway that it is the duty of an individual to defend his country against aggression, violently or non-violently. That is an inescapable obligation. If it is everybody's duty to defend his country, it is plain commonsense that he must be trained for it. The only relaxation can be, and should be, in the matter of choice between violence and non-violence.

The next question that arises is, how a State, which bases its defence on violence—and no State has yet demonstrated that it can stand up against armed aggression on the strength of non-violence—can train individuals for non-violence? For non-violence is not an external discipline that can be given by those having mental reservations regarding its efficacy. The only thing that the State can do is to allow facilities for, recognize and encourage, those who would give non-violent training to the youths who opt for it. As the discipline of non-violence is even more rigorous and taxing than that for violence, there is little fear of any black sheep opting for it as an escape from the rigours of military discipline.

As regards the argument that military training should be imparted to inculcate discipline in the youth, the argument is based on ignorance of the nature of true discipline. For unless discipline is imparted to us through the little acts of our everyday life, and the stress is laid on internal discipline, it is superficial. External discipline comes into play only in the context in which it is imparted. In other spheres in fact, very often it leads to a reaction.



The looseness and indiscipline of the soldier outside the parade-ground is not an uncommon phenomenon. True discipline can be inculcated only through disciplined living, which should, therefore, become the central theme of all educational institutions. That was the objective of Gandhiji, which he sought to achieve through his scheme of 'Nai Talim' or New Education.

#### A YEAR IN RETROSPECT

[From the Press statement issued by the A.I. Khadi and Village Industries Board, Bombay.]

On February 2nd, the All-India Khadi and Village Industries Board completed one year of its existence.

Inaugurating the Board twelve months ago the Prime Minister of India had said: "In my own mind an idea is growing daily that the yardstick by which one can measure the economic progress of a country is the extent of employment. For the unemployed, the Welfare State had no meaning. The small-scale and village industries will help in solving the unemployment problem."

Shri T. T. Krishnamachari, Minister of Commerce and Industry, also said on the occasion, "We consider that the work in regard to Khadi and village industries is a means of social regeneration."

The Planning Commission itself realized that "the development of village industries required drive and direction and in view of the growing importance of the problem of unemployment, the Central Government must now give the same attention to village and small-scale industries as it has undertaken, in view of the shortage of food and raw materials, to give to agriculture."

Village industries constitute the most backward and unorganized sector of our National Economy. No adequate data had been even collected regarding them. The Board had, therefore, to start on virtually virgin fields. Such material as was available from the Planning Commission and from the experience of the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association were, of course, valuable. Schemes and programmes were prepared on these bases and forwarded to the Government of India for sanction.

In regard to village industries, further exploratory work is necessary before practical schemes of future development programmes are formulated. For this purpose organizers for each of the industries have been appointed.

The Board believes, however, that developmental programmes required an army of trained workers as also constant research for improved modes and instruments of production. Accordingly at the outset, it constituted two different committees, viz. "Training Survey Committee" and "Research Committee". These Committees have submitted comprehensive plans which are now under examination.

A Department of Economic Research for specialized studies on the problems of village industries and on the dynamics of their social significance has been set up by the Board.

The Planning Commission, realizing the importance of a State policy which will reflect the significance it has attached to the development of village industries stressed the need for common production programmes for village industries and the organized machine industries and laid down certain principles on which these should be determined. To evolve such programmes is among the responsibilities assigned to the Board. The Board constituted a separate Committee which has studied problems affecting the Village Oil Industry, Paddy Husking and the Cottage Match Industry.

The development of village industries and expansion of Khadi production are possible only with substantial State aid which has to be of three kinds; first, the State must make available adequate funds to finance the schemes; second, State purchase, and third, protection against unequal competition from the organized industries. The Board has pleasure to record that, in the matter of State purchase, the Government of India has shown commendable initiative. Inquiries for Khadi to the tune of some Rs 62 lakhs have been placed by various Government departments. But it cannot be said that, in regard to the other two essentials, the response has been as encouraging. Procedural difficulties have delayed financial sanctions to the schemes and programmes of the Board. This has inevitably affected progress of developmental work. As regards protection, no definite steps have been taken and in spite of the adumbration of State policy by the Planning Commission, no positive measures have been adopted for its application.

The Government of India placed at the disposal of the Board an aggregate sum of Rs 2,21,29,913 for 1953-54. Of this Rs 2,07,78,928 was on account of Khadi and the rest for village industries. The time lag between the submission of the Board's schemes and demands and actual Government sanction has adversely affected the full utilization of the amount for the purposes for which it was required. Thus only Rs 50,47,684-2-0 could be utilized so far for Khadi Schemes and Rs 56,220 in respect of village industries.

Experience has shown that, to be effective, the Board must have statutory powers with adequate finances at its disposal. The question of vesting statutory powers in the Board is now under consideration and it is hoped that during the next financial year it will be possible to make rapid strides in the execution of the different developmental programmes for Khadi and other village industries; for, let it be realized that they alone offer limitless opportunities for gainful employment for the teeming millions.

# HARIJAN

March 6

1954

## AN UNFORTUNATE OMISSION

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The Kalyani Congress passed in all nine resolutions which in substance aimed to tell the people one thing really, and that was to warn the nation against the menacing international situation, particularly in Korea and Kashmir and Pakistan, and to reiterate the Congress stand on that matter and how the Congress proposes to meet it.

It said, "In view of the history of Asia during the past few hundred years military aid and intervention by foreign Powers in Asian countries is a reversal of the process of liberation which had led these countries, after long struggle, to a large measure of freedom."

And it concluded that "because of these developments a grave situation has arisen which demands, above all, national solidarity. The Congress trusts therefore that in this crisis the people of India, whatever their internal differences might be, will present a united front and devote themselves to the development and strengthening of the nation through peaceful processes. It is not by a competition in armaments that India will basically strengthen herself, but by unity, self-reliance and the social, economic and industrial development of the nation."

The solidarity, unity, self-reliance and all-round development require a bold policy of planning and development of the cultural, social and economic strength and resources of our whole people. On that point the Congress cleared its position by declaring as follows:

"While appreciating the very considerable progress made by the country in many sectors of the national economy, the Congress is of opinion that the pace of progress has to be quickened. In particular, improvement in village and small-scale industries has been slow and demands greater attention, more especially with a view to providing employment."

"Future progress should envisage the completion of land reform so as to make the actual tillers of the soil the owners of the land. Particular attention should be paid to the industrial sectors, more especially in regard to the basic and key industries, as well as the small-scale and village industries. In regard to small-scale and village industries, techniques of manufacture must be improved and, wherever possible, spheres of production should be demarcated."

And at the end it concludes by saying,

"The aim of planning must always be the establishment of a Welfare State and full employment. This involves not only greater production and equitable distribution, but progress along all sectors of the national economy. It involves also social reform and cultural progress, more particularly in regard to the

educational system which should be progressively based upon the principles of Basic Education and the training of technical personnel."

Thus the Congress has focussed the attention of the people by naming the following important measures of reform and reconstruction—land reforms, village and small-scale industries and Basic Education. It is good so far as this goes. However it is very unfortunate that it forgot or would not mention Prohibition. The omission is indicative of the preoccupation of this body with things which are too big for the poor people whose life and economy therefore remain untouched by them. Along with their small industries and their children's primary and basic education, prohibition is equally necessary, if the aim of a Welfare State is to be really achieved. Will the Congress remove this grave mistake of omission by giving a directive through the A. I. C. C. or the Working Committee? As an earnest thereof, it may well pull up the Congress Government in Andhra to see that Prohibition is not scrapped.

22-2-54

## CINDERELLA OF OUR INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The reader knows that the A-I. Khadi and Village Industries Board was instituted last year. The Board has completed its one year by now and has issued the annual report of its work. The reader will find a summary (See "A Year in Retrospect") thereof elsewhere in this issue.

We must congratulate the Board for its patience and perseverance with which it did its difficult task of working against very heavy odds. As the report says, the Board's task was 'difficult, complex and herculean'. It is a matter of deep gratification that the Board applied itself to its task with equally herculean zeal and promptness. The only regret is that the response from the Central Government was not up to the mark nor what it should be.

If it is necessary, for smooth and efficient working of the Board and for prompt execution and speedy disposal of its schemes, that the Board should be statutory and have at its disposal adequate finances, we hope, Government will get necessary legislation passed so as to make it as autonomous as possible and not hamstring it with the Ministry of Commerce and Industries. It is urgent to see that the one work that alone can help us out of unemployment takes root and grows even in the adverse climate in which we find it today.

The Planning Commission also owes it to the people that it devotes more of its time and energies to this sector of our industries and not rest content with pious hopes and idle wishes regarding common production programmes, protection and help in this sector of our industrial life.

23-2-54



## THE ANDHRA DRINK COMMITTEE REPORT

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

The Ramamurthy Prohibition Inquiry Committee, as was apprehended, has reported that drink be rationed in the State. To say the least, this is surely no way endeavouring to prohibit it, but it amounts to recognizing drink as food or such other necessity to be duly provided to citizens by the State.

As usual, the fault of the "failure of Prohibition" is found to be not that of Prohibition but that of those whose duty it was to work it. The report complains of "widespread and bare-faced corruption in the three departments—the Co-operative, the Prohibition and Police", which only proves that not the policy of Prohibition, but the Government has failed. Prohibition can never fail; and there can therefore be no inquiry about its failure. Even from the point of view of the Constitution of India, to introduce Prohibition and make it a success is not an open question for Governments in India. Therefore it was a little odd and bad for the Andhra Government to appoint a Committee of the nature it did. If at all, at best there can be a Committee to find out where and what improvement in the machinery is necessary, who are the culprits, and what should be done to see that the Government machinery becomes more effective and efficient. Even now the Andhra Government can rectify the error and forthwith start to remove corruption found to be existing in the three branches of its administration. Instead of this, to ask the Congress President and its Working Committee to decide what they should do betrays evasion of responsibility and lack of faith and firm mind on the question of Prohibition. That is so only because the Government has covetous eyes over the drink income. The Congress should, once for all, clear itself that in the matter of the Constitutional Directive for Prohibition, drink income can never be a valid consideration for its Governments, and therefore all Congress Governments if they are worth the name, must start to implement the fundamental policy of Prohibition immediately and with no mental or monetary reservations. Let Andhra begin it, even for the fair name it always has had in implementing the Congress Constructive Programme.

At the end it may also be noted that only the Congress, among the chief political parties in India, avowedly stands for Prohibition; if it gives away this, it will surely lose a very obvious point in its favour in the eyes of the poor of our land.

25-2-54

## OUR NEXT-SHORE NEIGHBOURS

By Kaka Kalelkar

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## THE DOCTRINE OF 'PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH'

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

To have peace through strength has become the way of modern diplomacy. It is being openly preached and practised by the great powers of the Western world.

In a way the doctrine is not quite new nor so fantastic. It is said in the Hindu Puranas that the demon Hiranyakashipu was striving to see that there was peace in the world. He felt that it could be possible only if he built up necessary and sufficient strength for it. Surely the strength must be under his entire control—his own. So he went on from strength to strength. And it is said in the Puranas that he made himself so invincible through offensive and defensive means that he could not be killed by man or beast, by steel or stone, during day or night, etc. etc. He was a veritable terror to his world. The doctrine of peace through strength,—though of the graveyard type—was a complete success. But its trial of strength came from within—from the little child of the great conqueror himself, Prahlada by name. The child challenged his father, in the name of God and won,—goes the Puranic story. Is the world heading for a repetition of the Puranic story in modern times? The challenge, if ever it comes, must come in the same old way, viz. through truth and non-violence or shortly Satyagraha.

## NOTES

## Prohibition and Welfare State

How Prohibition is truly speaking not an income-losing step, but is a direct welfare activity of the State, really rehabilitating broken hearths and retrieving forsaken souls, is amply shown by the following news from our villages:

"Baban Haribhau Tambe, a resident of Jambivali village in Thana District, is an agriculturist. Shri Tambe, who is about 40 years of age, was given to the habit of drinking before Prohibition. He was wasting about Rs 50-80 per month on liquor. He would, therefore, annually incur a debt of about Rs 200 to Rs 250. He was not keeping good health and good relations with his family. A change, however, took place since the introduction of Prohibition. Shri Tambe gave up his habit of drinking and could save money. He has so far constructed a house worth about Rs 1,000. His social status and monetary position have also been improved. He has now been leading a very happy life, he says."

Will our Finance and Development Ministries and National Planners note this and include this as our national programme in the next Five Year Plan?

19-2-54

M. P.

## Thakkar Bapa Memorial Fund

Shri D. Rangaiya, Working Secretary of the Thakkar Bapa Memorial Fund, Delhi-9, has sent a statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the Fund till 31-12-1953, wherein he says that the total receipts amount to Rs 1,66,932-10-3 and the total expenditure is Rs 9,922-1-0. Thus the net balances at the end of the year come to Rs 1,57,010-9-3.

26-2-54

M. P.

## COLONIALISM IN AFRICA

(By Wilfred Wellock)

Today we speak freely of the passing of Colonialism. It is passing, but let us beware, lest there be a halt, a subtle backward turning.

Events in Central Africa and in Guiana offer a timely warning.

The new era is appearing at a time when the economic system out of which modern Colonialism sprang is crumbling.

That system has brought fabulous wealth to a few Western countries at the cost of semi-starvation and appalling conditions to vast coloured populations. The ending of the policy of exploiting human and natural resources will mean lower profits and living standards for many Western nations.

The coloured world has awakened and is coalescing for the purpose of common action. It demands political and economic independence, and to this end an agro-industrial economy with maximum self-sufficiency in all its parts. Communism has come to its assistance, with the result that two huge power-blocs are clamouring for its friendship and co-operation, for its trade and its natural resources.

### Growing Fear

Another consequence of this conflict is that trade between these two power-blocs is scant and uncertain. Indeed, all the above-mentioned tendencies are causing a restriction of markets all round, and a growing fear in the countries which have developed lopsided, over-industrialized economies, of losing important economic and strategic footholds in Colonial territories. In consequence, most Western nations are frantically trying to hold on to every particle of economic power they possess in any part of the world, and to make numerous concessions to this end.

Colonialism is now a delicate art.

The problem of Africa is unique in that, as a tropical country, it includes wide areas in which Europeans cannot permanently settle, and areas such as the North, the South and South Central, and the Kenya Highlands, where they can settle permanently. The latter are the tension areas, whereas in the Tropical Gold Coast, Nigeria, Uganda, Tanganyika, etc., peasant proprietorship, with co-operative marketing and processing, such as the ginning of cotton, and progressive participation in local and national government, are normal practice.

### The Tension Areas

In the tension areas, such as Kenya a few thousand Europeans own vast acreages of the finest growing land in the country, the Highlands, and dominate its political life.

That land has been taken from Africans in forced exchanges for inferior land.

Many of the victims of that operation were the forebears of many who are now in Mau Mau.

Jomo Kenyatta once related to Roden Buxton and myself in the House of Commons tea room, how the ancestral land of his family was taken from his grandfather. The cultivation of these lands is still done by Africans for white masters, and often, still, under appalling conditions of servitude.

The hopeless frustrations, humiliations and racial indignities of this servitude are among the causes of such lamentable eruptions as Mau Mau.

In South Africa there are the unspeakable tragedies of Apartheid, while there, as in the adjacent Rhodesias and Nyasaland, to the North — where there are also rich mineral deposits — are the problems of cheap coloured labour, of poverty and urban squalor, conditions that are alien to African traditions and that are playing havoc with their habits, values and morals.

What is to be done in these tension areas? Where lies hope?

### A Familiar Pattern

In both Kenya and Central Africa great social and political reforms are promised, but the actual benefits are relegated to a distant future, which destroys all confidence in them.

Moreover, a careful examination of them reveals the familiar social pattern of a small white apex resting on a broad foundation of "well-paid" labour, with a small middle-class of clever Africans to keep the structure in balance.

The Kenya Highlands are to be the agricultural foundation of a wide area, and are to be under white managerial, financial and political domination, with severely restricted African "participation".

It won't do, and Africans will have none of it, for their leaders realize that it does not touch the roots of their problem.

What they want, as they everywhere declare, is a life of their own making and governing.

They want our assistance, guidance and co-operation, but not our domination.

They want a scientific agriculture and appropriate industries in well-integrated self-governing communities.

This will give them a stable and peaceful civilization, also moral stability, which can be engendered only by personal and community responsibility in the building of a good civilization.

This is the way to peace in Africa, and to Africa's maximum contribution to world peace.

(From *Peace News*, London, Dec: 11, 1953)



## AS OTHERS SEE US

(By Valji Govindji Desai)

I

Two books which I had the pleasure of reading recently shed a flood of light on the weaknesses of our national character. Laziness is one of them and is thus graphically described in E. M. Forster's *The Hill of Devi* (Edward Arnold):

'Excavations, whence six men carry a basket of earth, no larger than a cat's, twenty yards once in five minutes. I have not yet discovered who loosens the earth, but am familiar with the boy who bears it on his head along the bottom of the chasm, the next man very chatty, who receives it from him, and merely turning round, places it on the head of No. 4. No. 4 begins the ascent, No. 5 continues it, and No. 6 totters along the surface and drops the earth on to a heap which will have some day to be cleared away. And the basket has to be passed back' (p. 59).

The second book is still more interesting. In his *Round about India* (Eyre and Spottiswoode) Mr John Seymour, describing a visit to the Minakshi temple at Madurai, says (p. 37):

'I went late in the evening.... One of the priests caught sight of me, and before I knew what was happening, rushed at me and clapped a garland round my neck. This, I thought, is going to cost me money. It did.

'After rattling off some facts about the love-lives of some of the gods the priest asked me point-blank to give him some money. I fished out two rupees. No head waiter in a famous restaurant could have given such a performance.

'A look of amazement at the money in hand, a short laugh: of course it was a joke! I was toying with him. Ha, ha, well, well, time's getting on, let's be serious now.

'Sheepishly I fished out another three chips. I know when I have met my master. Again a virtuoso performance. Ah, well, never mind, I see that not only are you a poor man of no account, but you are also ignorant of proper behaviour, but let it be. I hold you no ill-will, and in any case money means nothing to me. Come, let me tell you some more about the gods! Money is no object. May be when you come again, you will have learnt better how to behave.

'This man was one of the ten High Priests who guard the greatest of Indian temples. The image flashed through my mind of the Archbishop of Canterbury haggling with an American tourist as to how much he was going to drop in the offertory box.....

'For centuries foreigners have been judging Hinduism by visits to just such temples as Madura. They see the, to them, meaningless rites, they hear the tales of the often not very orthodox love-lives of the gods and above all they see and suffer from the rapacity of the priests. From the time that a foreign tourist leaves his shoes in the care of the grasping old woman as he goes in, to the time that he finally gets them away from her on his way out, he is beset from all sides by touts, beggars and priests who insist on showing him things he has already seen and telling him things he already knows, and charging him heavily for the service. And when he talks to these priests, he finds they are not learned men. They are not well-read in Sanskrit literature. They are certainly not ascetic! And so he condemns Hinduism in his mind, as a sink of superstition, cupidity and idolatry.'

Mr Seymour has laid his finger on only one of the evils connected with our temples. He has said nothing about the dirt, the bad smells and

generally speaking the repelling atmosphere in and about them. It is high time all this was remedied. The men at present in charge of temples should be, non-violently liquidated in the same way as the princes were and other reforms also carried out, one after another.

(To be continued)

## POLISHED RICE

(By Parashuram Sharma)

It is well known that when rice passes through milling process and is highly polished it loses much in its nutritive value as well as in quantity. By its use several serious diseases such as Beri-Beri are produced and great mortality is the result. It is curious that inspite of this stern warning of Nature neither the governments nor the people are ready to stop this practice of milling the rice in this way.

This position has since some time past been one of the most pressing problems for scientists all over the world and has led them to see how rice could be enriched with the same vitamins which are lost in the process of milling. Accordingly, it is reported that Dr. M. W. Furter, Director of the Hoffmann-Le Roche Pharmaceutical Division in Basle (Switzerland) and other scientists took almost ten years to find out a practical method of putting Vitamin B1 and iron back into the rice after milling. Experiments were carried out in this line and it was seen that within a year of clinical tests on some 60,000 people in Bataan, there was a decline of 67.3 per cent of deaths of Beri-Beri cases, as compared with a batch of 30,000, who were kept on polished rice diet as before, and in whose case death rate was further 2.4 per cent more than previous figures.

Dr. Furter is of the opinion that there will be no difficulty for scientists to add Vitamin C to polished rice, but adding of Vitamin A is very much difficult because of its instability.

Looking to this all one really feels surprised at the stupidity of human beings that while on one hand so much time, energy and money are spent in removing such necessary and natural elements, on the other, money, energy and time are again spent to enrich the spoiled rice for adding the same elements already removed by human hands!

There is another side of the question also. Will the artificial vitamins added to the polished rice be equal to the ones Nature had put in in the progress of their natural growth in fields? Surely artificial vitamins will fall short of the value of the original and natural ones. Moreover scientists admit that certain vitamins cannot be mixed for their instability. But still human beings are so much depraved in their tastes that they are ready to suffer the evil consequences of the shortage and want of natural elements of nutritive value, but will not adopt the ways to change their such depraved habits and tastes!

Nasik City, 11-12-53

## HOUSING FOR THE COMMON MAN

[From the President's inaugural speech at the International Exhibition on 'Low-Cost Housing' at New Delhi, on January 20, 1954.]

A reasonably comfortable house, providing shelter against inclemencies of weather and affording room for necessary rest and leisure, is an elementary need of mankind. It is clear that if the present need is to be met to any reasonable extent, houses will have to be built on a huge scale. It is possible only if the cost of construction and the materials which go to make a house is brought down to a level where a house might come within the reach of a man of average means.

Ever since the dawn of civilization, or may be even before that, when man like beasts of prey lived in the open, he felt the need of some kind of shelter. There was a time when the improvised shelter proffered by bushes and trees satisfied his need. In places where trees did not grow, a subterranean hide-out or a cave or the shade of any projecting cliff answered his simple requirement. As time passed and man learnt to manipulate the twigs and branches of trees, he found leafy huts rendering better service to him. Gradually he began to thatch and plaster these huts with mud. And so man went on progressing, improving upon his craftsmanship and selecting better and better building material, till he found himself capable of raising such gigantic structures as the Pyramids of Egypt.

Although throughout this long stretch of time, known to us as Historic Era, man has been familiar with the art of construction and has been responsible for raising structures of all kinds and sizes, the need of the common people did not receive the attention which it deserved. It is at once the duty and the privilege of us all, living in this democratic age, to think of housing and houses in terms of the common people.

Therefore, I think that this exhibition adds a new chapter to our endeavours for housing the people properly. Here you will consider houses not only from the point of view of mere living space, but also in respect of design and the aesthetic aspect. As Bacon said: "Houses are built to live in, more than to look at; therefore let use be preferred before uniformity, except where both may be had". I hope that you will combine use with beauty.

Another thing in this exhibition which has specially attracted me is its Village Centre. That a vast majority of India's population lives in villages is a fact which needs no emphasis. Unless, therefore, we base the principles on which we are building houses on the pattern of our village life and the special requirements of the country people, our efforts in respect of providing adequate housing facilities will remain abortive. We shall have achieved a great deal if

we succeed in demonstrating how a village-folk might live in houses constructed with locally available materials with the help of their own labour at an expenditure within their means.

Another important gain which I expect from this exhibition is more light on the use of various building materials available in this country. Wisely enough, you have set apart a separate section dealing with building materials. With our limited resources in money and material we have to go ahead with our plans to increase the national stock of housing. That is possible only if we devise ways and means of putting the easily available materials to the maximum use. Incidentally, that is also the best way of ensuring that the cost is kept as low as possible. All this points to the necessity of discovering cheaper building materials and evolving new building techniques so that the materials locally available are put to the best possible use and shortage of any particular material is not allowed to hamper our building programme. Besides, use of locally available material not only saves cost of transport but also reduces the pressure on our transport system. When considering the utility of local material, we should also bear in mind that all our old buildings and structures that have stood the strain of time and successfully resisted the inclemencies of weather in this country of varied and varying climatic conditions, were made with those materials and some of them at least are even now available.

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