

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

FUNDAMENTALS OF EDUCATIONAL REFORM

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

We have had at present budget sessions of the Legislatures in all the States and at the Centre. A noteworthy feature this year is that the discussion on the education demand is more interesting and keener than before. And this is not surprising. The Five Year Plan is shaping our economic things to come. If at all there is anything that should come next to it for our urgent attention, it is reconstructing our educational system. Naturally, therefore, it has emerged of its own strength, which shows the intrinsic soundness of our vision and approach for rebuilding India.

Just a few days back there was a debate on the education demand in our Parliament. Shri Kripalani, Tandonji and others took part in it. Acharya Kripalani complained that education till now was restricted to the upper classes only and for their benefit. Therefore, if at all a major reform in it is immediately necessary, it is to begin to change it, so that it becomes the education of the common people. This is a true observation.

Shri P. D. Tandon and Sheth Govinddas gave vent to their wrath about Hindi, only to expose their narrowness on this problem. Maulana Azad, the Education Minister, in his frank and forthright reply said that it was such narrow outlook that brought about Pakistan and it was people who opposed Urdu on account of their queer views on language and culture that impeded promotion of Hindi in the country. These two protagonists of Hindi seem to desire keenly that the regional language of the U.P. becomes the all-India medium. It would be good if only they knew the dire results of such an unwise policy.

There was a very keen debate on education in Bombay State also. Here the main point was the medium of instruction. A kind of overzeal for Hindi is rampant at present, spoiling its very cause itself. As we saw, in the Hindi area it is the narrow provincial and communal view of language and culture that hampers the progress of Hindi. A similar overzeal, though in a different matter, is to be found in non-Hindi area in the form of making Hindi the medium of

instruction, to the exclusion or disregard of the regional language. People of this view are oblivious of its results. They should remember that the English medium also began at the top, and percolated down to the secondary and further down to the primary stage also in the form of 'English teaching schools'. Surely the process is bound to repeat itself now with Hindi, if like the English medium here, started a century ago, the Hindi here is started now. The upper classes, with the instrument of the new medium which will not be the language of the people will continue to rule them as before. It is a matter of deep regret that such a mistake is being committed in a progressive State like Bombay.

Such a thing is possible because we do not realize the truth of Shri Kripalani's observation stated above. This is not a new thing. We aim to establish people's rule in our country. We swear by it. But if education shapes itself keeping in view the needs of Government service and servants it can only be of a few classes. The most potent instrument to do it is to enthrone a foreign language or a language other than that of the people in the place of honour in education and administration and government services. It was so for English. If it is repeated with Hindi, the same mistake, even if on a smaller scale, will repeat itself, and the poor of the land will be nowhere as before in the new order.

How then can we save ourselves from this catastrophe? Maulana Azad said that Government had accepted Basic Education shown by Gandhiji. All State Governments say the same thing also. So too they say for Prohibition. And it may be true in a sense. But what does this affirmation really mean? What is actually being done about it? Unfortunately, it must be said that the answer we may get is not satisfactory. I may not argue about it but note a point or two in this regard.

What is Basic Education? Governments have defined it for themselves in different ways. These may be right so far as they go; but they are defective. Fundamentally, Basic Education defines what the education for our whole people should be like. It gives us the broad outlines of

what fundamental changes we should make if we wish to make education, not of or for the classes, but of and for the whole people. It is an original and constructive criticism of English education as we have it today as a legacy from our ex-rulers. There is a valid complaint that this has not dawned upon the educational departments of the States and the Union. Officers of the educational departments seem to confuse the matter by at best trying to put the new wine in their old bottles. And the advice that Gandhiji gave to Education Ministers Conference in 1946 remains to be fulfilled. He had said :

"If he were in the Ministerial Chair, he would issue broad instructions that hereafter all educational activity of the Government should be on Basic Education lines....."

"If they (inspectors and other officers of the educational department) had no faith in it (Basic Education) or if they were unwilling loyally to work out the new policy, he would give them the choice to resign.....Merely issuing orders would not do the trick." (*Harijan*, 25-8-'46)

Which are the basic reforms that Basic Education calls for? I may quote Gandhiji who laid them down as follows during his last days at Delhi :

"1. All education to be true must be self-supporting, that is to say, in the end it will pay its expenses excepting the capital which will remain intact.

2. In it the cunning of the hand will be utilized even up to the final stage, that is to say, hands of the pupils will be skilfully working at some industry for some period during the day.

3. All education must be imparted through the medium of the provincial language.

4. In this there is no room for giving sectional religious training. Fundamental universal ethics will have full scope.

5. This education, whether it is confined to children or adults, male or female, will find its way to the homes of the pupils.

6. Since millions of students receiving this education will consider themselves as of the whole of India, they must learn an inter-provincial language. This common inter-provincial speech can only be Hindustani written in Nagari or Urdu script. Therefore, pupils have to master both the scripts." (*Harijan*, 2-11-'47)

It is high time our Governments now concentrate themselves to achieve the above few fundamental things, and make the bureaucracy take to it.

30-3-'54

(From the original in Gujarati)

VILLAGE TANKS v. MAMMOTH VALLEY SCHEMES

(By Valji Govindji Desai)

The following is taken from Shri Mirza Ismail's *My Public Life* (Allen and Unwin), p. 50 :

"The cultivation of Ganjam figs may seem a small matter hardly worth mention, but even so small a project can be productive of much good. The name is that of a suburb of Seringapatam, the capital of Tipu Sultan which in his time had a reputed population of half a million.....Ganjam has now no more than a hundred houses, mostly of mud. It was well known, even in Tipu Sultan's days, for the figs it produced....."

"I found that the fig cultivation had all but vanished and Ganjam was languishing owing to the prevalence of malaria....Thanks to D.D.T. malaria has now been overcome. A protected water supply was also provided and improvement in public health took place.

"The fig gardens were suffering for want of water. The village is quite close to the river, but the difficulty was to raise the water to the gardens. Fortunately electric power was at hand, and it was arranged to pump water from the river and supply it to the gardens at a reasonable rate. The state afforded other facilities, such as a co-operative sales society and permission to sell the fruit at railway stations without payment of a fee. In this way the growers began to prosper. I visited the village each time I went to Mysore, which was at least once a month. It was a pleasure to see how happy the people were....."

"When I went there a year ago, it was a great shock to me to see the place slipping back to its former state.

"We in India, I fear, are prone to concentrate attention on spectacular schemes to the neglect of less ambitious things which might be of more direct benefit to the country. For example huge irrigation works have recently been started at a staggering cost, but sufficient attention is not being paid to the minor irrigation works which would yield a quick return at a comparatively small cost. These works require close attention and constant effort on the part of the administration and are therefore apt to be neglected, while a big project appeals to the imagination and is taken up with alacrity.

"It takes years to construct a big dam and to bring the land below it under cultivation. The Krishnaraj Sagar was completed in 1932. It was to irrigate 1,25,000 acres. Even to this day, only 85,000 acres are under cultivation because of many practical difficulties....."

"That major irrigation and power projects are a necessity in India, I would be the last to deny, but I do maintain that Government should not neglect the minor irrigation works which can give an almost immediate return. If a state can afford to do both at the same time, let it by all means, but how many states are there which have resources in men and money, sufficient for such a programme? The question is: are we making the best possible use of the limited resources at our disposal? Moreover let us not overlook the fact that huge projects are embarked upon with a haste that makes one wonder if costly mistakes are not being committed in the designing and execution of these works."

To this it may be added that huge dams are a huge liability from the standpoint of defence. A few bombs dropped by the enemy would destroy them and flood the country as far as

goodness knows how many hundreds of miles away. And that the real problem before the country is how to provide gainful employment for all the inhabitants of each of our several lakhs of villages at their very door and that too all the year round.

22-3-54

THE WAY TO REAL STRENGTH*

In the present set-up of world conditions, there rests on the people of India a special responsibility. America and Russia and other countries too speak of the need of concord and co-operation between different nations so that there may be peace and prosperity throughout the world. But we find that the way they are acting is carrying the world in the opposite direction.

Pakistan has chosen to seek military aid from the U. S. A. They believe that this will help them grow strong. One is free to think what would be best for oneself. India, however, has made it known that she does not want to enter this race for the armaments. It is a great good fortune for our country that our leaders continue to follow the path shown to us by Gandhiji. Speaking about this development, I had remarked that if we too were to give up the policy of promoting peace and follow Pakistan, since the latter was accepting military aid from outside, we would be creating a great danger for ourselves and for the world. It is heartening to find that our leaders in the political field, particularly Pandit Nehru, have resolutely stuck to this view. When, therefore, the American President says that he would be willing to extend similar aid to us as well, the offer sounds offensively teasing; and though we should be ready to believe that he did not mean any insult, yet that is what it amounts to.

Let it, however, be borne in mind that the refusal to take outside help, by itself, will not serve our purpose. It merely marks the beginning of what we want to do. We will have to strengthen the country in the real sense of the term. It is an error to think that strength lies in being militarily strong. A country striving after real strength, instead of creating a danger to the peace of the world, will be a source of strength and stability to all the rest. Real strength consists in working for the elimination of artificial divisions between individuals and classes, promotion of self-reliance, and creation of love and harmony. If this is done we may safely withstand any number of dangers. And since, in the present times, things happening in one part of the world affect those in others, this may well set off a chain of similar efforts setting in all along everywhere.

We are not inert matter, but conscious beings. A conscious being has a conscious will

which matter has not. He therefore has the capacity to give what shape he likes to the things around him. He can make, unmake and remake his environment—the circumstances. If we work for building up this real strength through moral and peaceful methods, there is every reason for the belief that we can not only keep clear of all dangers or get over them if they come, but also succeed in saving the world from them.

We have no faith in seeking safety by joining this or that bloc. Most countries today are doing that. We however refuse to do it. Strength is after all the quality of the spirit and not a product of material means. Where the spirit is weak and there is no respect for moral principles, mere combination, however large it may be, cannot produce strength. Such alignments would be worse than useless when the real test comes. It is only by firm faith in the victory of truth and adherence to peaceful ways that strength—real invincible strength—can be generated. What are we to do then?

There is economic inequality in our country. It must be abolished. Production must be stepped up and increased. All factors which make for division and disunity in the society must be removed.

Lately we have been witnessing another disruptive tendency raising its ugly head—the political parties. The animosities between different parties seem to be on the increase. The distinction between the caste Hindus and untouchables, though in disfavour, is not yet dead. Then there is corruption, bribery and drink, all tending to degrade the moral climate. Cinema is another potent cause of our young men falling into evil ways. We must make a sincere and sustained effort to rid individual and social life of all these degrading influences.

The Bhoodan movement is no one-sided affair confined to just a sector of our economic life. It includes all efforts aimed at building up a strong and noble life throughout our land. It certainly includes moral regeneration of our people. The redistribution of land and promotion of village industries will help in eradicating poverty and clear the way for moral uplift.

Ours is a country endowed with all necessary resources of wealth. It has big rivers and mountains, rich soil and a variegated climate suitable for every kind of crop. Thirty-five crores of people with seventy crore hands can produce and make whatever they like. We can easily be the wealthiest country in the world. But we must do away with all the pernicious distinctions which divide man and man. Bhoodan along with *shrama-dan* (gift of work) and *sampatti-dan* (gift of wealth) is the way to do away with these distinctions, achieve unity, and rouse the nation to work for peace and prosperity, for itself and for the world at large.

18-3-54

(Adapted from Hindi)

L. N.

* This is an adaptation of some of the important extracts from Shri Vinoba's recent speeches.

HARIJAN

April 10

1954

ATOMIC DEATH DANCE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

When our Prime Minister, in a statement in the House of the People on April 2, announced the following four-point programme for the immediate attention of the world in general and the U. N. O. General Assembly in particular, he was indeed voicing the silent heart-felt desire of the whole of our people, in fact the whole of world's humanity. These are the four points he has put forth:

"I have stated publicly as our view that these experiments, which may have served their one only useful purpose, namely, expose the nature of the horror and tragedy, even though but partly, should cease. I repeat that to be our considered position, and it is our hope that this view and the great concern it reflects, and which is world-wide, will evoke adequate and timely responses.

Pending progress towards some solution, full or partial, in respect of the prohibition and elimination of these weapons of mass destruction, which the General Assembly has affirmed as its nearest desire, the Government would consider, among the steps to be taken now and forthwith, the following:

1. Some sort of, what may be called, 'standstill agreement' in respect, at least, of these actual explosions, even if arrangements about the discontinuance of production and stockpiling must await more substantial agreements amongst those principally concerned.

2. Full publicity by those principally concerned in the production of these weapons and by the United Nations, of the extent of the destructive power and the known effects of these weapons and also adequate indication of the extent of the unknown but probable effects. Informed world public opinion is, in our view, the most effective factor in bringing about the results we desire.

3. Immediate (and continuing) private meetings of the sub-committees of the Disarmament Commission to consider the 'standstill' proposal, which I have just mentioned, pending decisions on prohibition and controls etc., to which the Disarmament Commission is asked by the General Assembly to address itself.

4. Active steps by States and peoples of the world, who, though not directly concerned with the production of these weapons, are very much concerned by the possible use of them, also at present, by these experiments and their effects. They would, I venture to hope, express their concern and add their voices and influence, in as effective a manner as possible to arrest the progress of this destructive potential which menaces all alike.

The Government of India will use its best efforts in pursuit of these objectives."

And when he said that "it is of great concern that Asia and her peoples appear to be always nearer these occurrences and experiments and their fearsome consequences, actual and potential", he was expressing, even in a very subdued tone, the deep and silent resentment

and humiliation that we of Asia feel towards the fiendish monstrosity and the wanton cruelty unconsciously exhibited by the atom- and H- bomb powers of the Western world, and the reckless disregard for the Asian life that is apparent in their atomic behaviour. Surely Asia is not the guinea-pig house of the warring white for their indiscriminate experiments in maximum human slaughter.

It was in Japan that the West first had its atom bomb use at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is again that country which is the sufferer under the new bomb test. The new bomb is many times more devastating than the former. And the mad search for still worse bombs is still on in that part of the world. Not only the Asian world, but also the homeland of these weapons—the Western world as well,—excluding the politicians and such others in the two cold war blocs who are lost to sanity, being overwhelmed by their ferocious enmity and unrelenting envy—the whole world of humanity is gasping at hearing the opinions of scientists and statesmen about the results of the Bikini explosion. And all are demanding with one voice that the new weapons that the world, in its mad craze for invention is, as if directly, importing from Satan's workshop, be totally banned. This will save not only humanity but her soul and her hard-earned wealth as well.

Japan is having at present an 'International Conference of Religions on the Foundations of Peace' at Shimizu city, from April 3 to 10, says Shri M. Sadayasu, who kindly invited me to it. Replying him to say that I am very sorry that my work in India does not permit me to avail of his very kind invitation and offer of hospitality, I told him to convey my fraternal greetings to all lovers of peace who will meet in Conference, in the following immortal words of Lord Buddha:

"Not at any time are enmities appeased through enmity, but they are appeased through non-enmity. This is the eternal law."

This law is the aptest message to our warring world today. I hope the Conference will consider the terrible question posed by the Bikini bomb trial. Should Japan militarize itself? Should it join America with American aid in the 'free world's fight with the opposite bloc? A bold and courageous nay to such a selfish demand of the so-called 'free world' can be the only honourable answer to the tragedy of the second bomb experiment which did even an unconscious havoc to her people and their peaceful fishing industry. Peace-loving peoples of all the nations should even refuse to trade and co-operate with the atom bomb powers, if they do not heed to this piteous voice of staggered humanity, for stopping their atomic death dance, the veritable *Pralaya* foreboded by Hindu mythology.

H-BOMB AGE

(By Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru)

[From a press report of the inaugural address at the Indian Institute of Public Administration in Delhi on 29.3.54.]

A hydrogen bomb was exploded in Bikini, a little island in the Pacific, and we have been given information about it in dribblets. This explosion took by surprise even those who made it. Nothing is known about the number of persons who suffered. None knows how many have suffered because, apart from the immediate impact of destruction and suffering, it has some kind of after-effect. People were affected a fortnight later; it might make people blind after some time; it might affect the waters of the ocean and the animals of the ocean.

It has just come to us that some people in Japan have suffered. Nobody in Japan knows if it is safe to eat fish at all although the Japanese eat a lot of fish. They have suddenly stopped eating fish in some places because fish has been affected by radio-active substance.

What do all these things mean? It is a visible indication that man is using powers today which are going out of his control completely. That has been said previously in a rhetorical way. Human beings are unleashing something fierce which will be completely beyond their control after unleashing. I am reminded of the story of the genie coming out of the bottle.

We may talk about war and peace. We may talk about this bloc or that bloc. We may talk about our being neutral and our being outside the scope of war, but this overwhelming fact is common to everybody. We must realize this, whether we belong to this bloc or that bloc. You must have seen reactions in certain countries to the hydrogen bomb explosion. Even in countries apart from Japan like England and Australia there have been strong reactions suggesting that there should be no more experimenting with hydrogen bombs and no more unleashing of the evils which we do not know where they will lead us to.

There is some kind of an outcry, not among the ignorant but among the wise and thinking people in Japan, England and Australia, who say: 'Stop this experiment.' Till now we were afraid of a great war which might inevitably involve the use of atom bombs and hydrogen bombs. Now even before a war comes, this experiment might cause havoc which might not be possible to control.

I must say that I entirely sympathize with the demand or request which is being made in England and several other countries that this type of experimenting should stop. I hope that the people who are in authority will pay attention to it. They have a terrible weapon at hand. Whether they are going to use it or not, I do not know but mere experimenting with itself has become dangerous to the world.

REGARDING THE MEDIUM OF INSTRUCTION

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

A friend sent me the following seven questions on the problem of medium of instruction for higher education. They are as follows along with the replies thereto which I sent to him:

Q. 1. What should be the medium of instruction in Universities?

A. The language of the region in which the University is situated is the natural medium of instruction and examination.

Q. 2. What should be the place of Hindi in University education?

A. (a) Teaching of the National Language should be made compulsory upto four years of College studies. Its study should begin from the fifth standard of a child's education. Thus every College student will study Hindi compulsorily for eleven years.

(b) A question here arises about Universities of the Hindi-speaking regions. Because, what I said above in (a) applies to non-Hindi regions only. It is obvious that in the Hindi-speaking region students will learn Hindi as their mother-tongue. In addition to it, they should learn another regional language of India other than theirs, from the fifth standard and continue its study upto the fourth year in the College. We know that in the whole of North India—from Panjab to Patna—Urdu also is more or less the regional language along with Hindi. So the study of Urdu as a second regional language for Hindi-speaking children should begin from the fifth standard. Those whose mother-tongue is Urdu should similarly learn Hindi. This study should continue in the Colleges; or there might be offered an option to study a South Indian language like Tamil or such other regional language of India.

This suggestion is for the North and as such is for them to consider and act upon. For the non-Hindi regions as ours, I have indicated my views above.

Q. 3. What should be the place of English in Universities?

A. Teaching of English may begin from Standard VIII and may continue in Colleges. But students who wish to learn any other modern languages in its stead, might be permitted to do so. In short, English will occupy the place of the third language. Equipped with it, students will obviously be helped in having access to books in English.

Q. 4. How will you solve the question of text-books?

A. It will not be proper to postpone the change-over of the medium of instruction until the preparation of the text-books. The right thing would be rather the other way. If we change the medium of instruction, text-books will

follow in its wake. That will have an added advantage, as text-books will be based on actual experience. This is not to say that we should not do whatever we can do even at present. The text-books for the High School grades are ready and in use; on the strength of them we can further our efforts for preparing College text-books also. Writers and publishers for text-books in new subjects will also come forward. The essential prerequisite for such progress is that the work of the change-over of medium should be undertaken in right earnest and with the sincerity of purpose.

Q. 5. What are your suggestions for teachers and students who do not know a regional language?

A. It would be natural for teachers and students going to other regions to know and study the language of that region. Thereby they will express their sentiment of love and regard for that region.

It is this principle which underlies the rule that obtains in the Bombay State, viz. it is obligatory for non-Gujarati students to learn Gujarati from Standard III; its study to continue upto Std. VII. It is understood that thereafter they will align themselves with their Gujarati friends at the High School stage. It is obvious that this arrangement should continue in the College also.

But just as for the purpose of inter-State administrative communication Hindi is provided for by the Constitution of India, similarly, if teachers and students of other regions feel that they will be better able to express themselves through Hindi rather than through Gujarati, they might be at liberty to use Hindi for themselves. I believe it is in this sense that the Gujarat University has used the expression 'Gujarati and/or Hindi' for its medium. If all Universities of our land work on these lines, there will be no difficulty.

Q. 6. Some have expressed their apprehension that if education is imparted through the regional language, students will find difficulty in Government services. What is your opinion about it?

A. It is clear that English will not occupy the place it does today in Government services too. Its place will be taken by the regional language for the purpose of the region and by Hindi at inter-State and Central Government levels. Therefore Government servants will have to learn these two languages. And if we note that only a small percentage of Government servants will be in the Central services, majority of Government servants will be required to be well equipped with a sound knowledge of a regional language. Again great many of the Central services will be working in regions, where they will be required to equally use the regional

language. Therefore, there will be no difficulty in working on the above lines; rather it will be the only proper thing to do.

A little or no attention has been paid till now to consider the question of language equipment which the Government servants will be required to possess in future; therefore, it is that we see much shallow and superficial thinking based on what we actually see regarding English and on its misleading analogy. A fresh approach is now necessary as the time is fast approaching for the change-over of medium of administration.

Q. 7. Some fear that education through the medium of regional language will be a danger to national unity. What are your views?

A. I rather feel the other way. If Hindi is made the medium of higher instruction, it will endanger national unity. Only the way and the manner shortly shown above will pave the way for real national unity and bring out the strength of such unity. Those who say that we had unity because English was the medium betray only their utter ignorance of the real thing. To establish and bring out the spirit of unity in the apparent diversity that we have in our land and to make it a living experience of our common people—this is the chief and distinguishing feature of India's culture. Various linguistic regions of our country may come nearer to one another by mutual respectful study of their languages and for the common all-India need of inter-communication, they may devise a common language in terms of Art. 351 of the Constitution of India—this is the surest and the soundest way for our national unity.

3-4-'54

(From the original in Gujarati)

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SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

[Shri D. M., Vinoba's Secretary in Bihar, has sent the summary of questions and answers which passed between Mr. Frank Horrat, artist and journalist of International fame, and Shri Vinoba when the former spent a few days with him in November last. It is published below:]

Q. 1. You say that Parliamentary Democracy should be abolished and that, instead of it, laws should be made by common approval. You also suggest some other political and economical changes, such as the abolition of money economy, etc. I do not understand if you mean that these changes should be made now, when people are as they are, that is, some good and some bad; or if you think that these changes should come only after a moral regeneration?

A. I believe that men are substantially good; and our movement is striving for the moral regeneration of mankind. But we suggest that the reforms in the system of voting should be done now and not only after a future moral improvement. There will always be some good and some bad people; and if we had to wait for all people to become good, we might have to wait for thousands of years. Moreover the idea of unanimity of consent should not be taken too literally. I believe that legislative and executive power should be decentralized as much as possible in favour of the villages. The central Parliament should have only the function of co-ordination. Laws made in the village assemblies should be accepted not by a majority of 51 against 49 per cent but, say, by a majority of 70, 80 or 90 per cent. A similar idea is followed by the Quakers.

Q. 2. You say that laws should not be enforced on an unwilling minority. Does this apply also for certain laws now made in India? For instance, the Prohibition laws in Bombay and Madras. Do you approve of these laws as enacted now?

A. There are certain points about which there might be a disagreement between a majority and a minority and in these cases the minority might publicly defend its point. When this is the position, I feel that the majority should not enforce its will on the minority. But in India the case of alcoholism is different. In the same way as there would be no political party defending the right to commit robbery, there is no party in India standing officially against Prohibition and even people addicted to alcohol admit drinking is bad. The position might be different in other countries as is today in America where elections are held on wet and dry issues.

Q. 3. You approve of certain forms of science and machinery like typewriters or airplanes. You do not approve of others like textile machines. How do you draw the line between the one and the other? Is not every kind of machine producing inconvenience to some classes? For instance, trains might be ruinous for camel drivers and typewriters for scribes.

A. I think there are three kinds of machines:

Time-saving machines which do a work that cannot be done in any other way; for instance,

airplanes and radio, we are in favour of this kind of machine.

Then we have destructive machines and, of course, we are against them.

The third kind of machines like textile mills could be called productive machines. We are not against them. Only we feel that they should be introduced gradually and without causing unemployment and large population shifts. I think that the Charkha is the ideal solution but not in an absolute way. I mean it for our country at the present moment, not for every country and every time.

Q. 4. Do you think that Charkha should be a voluntary and free occupation for whoever wants to do it? In that case those who have not the time or desire to work a Charkha should be free to produce and to buy mill-made clothes. Or do you believe that Charkha should be protected by law by putting taxes and barriers on mill-made cloth?

A. I do not want to destroy the industries that already exist in the towns and they certainly should have the right to go on working for the town population and perhaps for export. But the industrial goods should not be forced on any one. The villagers should be free to put barriers against the import of industrial textiles and food stuffs into the villages. As a matter of principle I feel that it would be a good thing for everybody to find the time and have the ability to produce their own food and clothing.

Q. 5. I feel that some of your followers would like to have some principles of Bhoodan enforced by law. For instance, Charkha and land distribution. In that way these reforms would be enforced by a majority against a minority with the help of the usual means, that is, by law and police. Would you approve of a step of this kind?

A. I don't think our principles should be forced on anybody. Actually what we are doing in Bhoodan is not to accept any gift of land or money without being sure that the donor understands the idea of it.

Q. 6. I feel that the principles of Bhoodan and non-violence could bring a lot of help and improvement also to the Western countries, especially to underdeveloped countries of Europe, like Italy and Spain. Do you have any particular idea about the way the Western countries should follow in order to be in line with Bhoodan?

A. The principles of Bhoodan and non-violence are universal and apply to the whole of mankind. But I believe that they might succeed more easily and much faster in India than in Western countries. In India people still follow the voice of their heart and in the villages the tradition of mutual help is still living. In the Western countries people are rather following their brain. On the other hand, I believe very much in science. Maybe by its own excesses, science will bring a change of heart to the West.

PATIENCE AND PROPORTION

(By Pyarelal)

The most tragic casualty when we let bigotry take hold of us is our sense of proportion and sense of humour. That was the feeling that came uppermost to one's mind by the recent debate on the national language in the Parliament. It is always a treat to hear Maulana Azad's Hindustani. It is an education to see him bring out in Hindustani the most delicate nuances of thought and feeling in simple words. His rendering of "misleading conception" as *purjareh takhayyul* the other day in Parliament was one such instance. The furore it caused among the protagonists of orthodox Hindi was unbelievable. If the members had a little more resilience and sense of humour they would have appreciated the fine expression and enriched their vocabulary by assimilating it. If they had a little more sense of proportion they would not have made a mountain of a molehill, as they did. One is glad that one Congress M. P. at least had the tact and presence of mind to point out the correct meaning of the elegant expression used by Maulana Sahab to the irate members. What was there in the use of such an innocent expression to set their solemn fur flying, one wonders!

I remember how once in a meeting of the All India Congress Committee some one reminded the House that they had to be "watch-dogs of liberty", whereupon some members angrily walked out as a "protest" against being applied the canine epithet!

However, one has these days to be grateful for small mercies.

The Jackdaw sat on the Cardinal's chair!
Bishop, and abbot, and prior were there;
Many a monk, and many a friar,
Many a knight, and many a squire.

The Cardinal rose with a dignified look,
He call'd for his candle, his bell, and his book.

He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed;
From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head;

Never was heard such a terrible curse!
But what gave rise to no little surprise,
Nobody seem'd one penny the worse!

Maulana Sahab is to be congratulated on his spirited stand. What he said was exactly what Gandhiji told us repeatedly and it holds even truer today than when Gandhiji uttered those words. We cannot pride ourselves on being a secular State and at the same time shy at the very mention of the word Hindustani.

The only complaint that can be made against the Maulana Sahab is that he should have described the Hindustani Prachar Sabha of Wardha as being largely engaged in propagating Hindi and not Hindustani as defined by Gandhiji

and still made out a case for a special grant to it in the name of Gandhiji. If what Maulana Sahab is reported to have said about the Sabha is a fact, it would be a case for stopping the grant to the Sabha and for asking the Sabha to wind up. Can it be? Gandhiji did not establish Hindustani Prachar Sabha to be "Hindustani" in name only and to sail under false colours. His definition of Hindustani (a harmonious blend of Hindi and Urdu, written in both Devnagari and Urdu scripts) is well known.

New Delhi,

31-3-'54

Celebrating Jan. 26 with Liquor

Stray correspondents write to say that drink is fast increasing on an alarming scale in Delhi, to the utter shame of the Indian Constitution. A few days ago Pandit Jawaharlalji speaking to a Delhi audience said that the cocktail parties that go on in Delhi are bad and flaunting wealth that way was rather vulgar.

I am writing these lines in Delhi. During my stroll in Chandani Chawk, my companion friend pointed out a shop and said it was a drink shop and there were two three such ones in that area. These shops formed part of the normal bazar, and people could have liquor like any other common soft drink.

And the same day I read in the local Hindi paper that in reply to a question in the Delhi State Assembly, the Chief Minister said that liquor shops were kept open on Jan. 26, as the people desired to enjoy themselves with drink, even though it was Tuesday, on which day they were normally kept closed.

One remains aghast as to what to say about a Congress Government that goes out to provide for liquor in celebration of the Independence Day. Is it any wonder then that such a Government would play liquor shops?

In a previous issue of this paper, there was noted an incident wherein liquor bottles were openly awarded as prizes in some games competition. Providing liquor to celebrate Jan. 26 is quite on a par with this. What a thing in the affairs of our Governments!

1-4-'54

(From the original in Gujarati)

M. P.

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