

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: MAGANBHAI P. DESAI

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TWO ANNAS

BUREAUCRATIC RULE

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

A correspondent from Mussooree, U.P., asks me the following question :

"As we are all aware quite a few of our Administrators of the Ministerial Bench are permitting free squandering of precious public funds—the main reason being their utter ignorance of the various technical subjects they are supposed to handle. Naturally, therefore they are more often than not misled by their departmental heads who seem to be simply crazy about 'expansion', adopting 'foreign methods', 'foreign implements' and in fact non-Swadeshi 'everything'. In such circumstances could you very kindly advise as to what exactly a petty employee of the State is supposed to do to prevent waste of public money? Can he, as a citizen tax-payer of the Republic of Bharat, register a complaint and/or offer his views to someone in authority without becoming a victim of official torture?"

One will agree with the writer that it is next to impossible to believe that a subordinate servant can register a complaint to his superior "without becoming a victim of official torture." The subordinate servant will be immediately shown his place in the official hierarchy and to mind his own work better. Even otherwise, it is no job for him to advise his superior, specially if the advice is unpalatable. The pertinent question to my mind is whether, supposing some one does it, it will help anyway. The departmental heads can only be controlled and guided aright by their respective ministers. These only can do successfully what the writer wishes the subordinates to do. It is indeed their duty to do it. If they abdicate or cannot do their job on right lines, things are bound to continue in the manner they have been made to go by our British ex-rulers. The services surely require to be re-oriented to the demands of the new age of freedom and democratic rule. They unhappily still continue to rule as a bureaucracy which refuses to change.

11-7-'54

By Richard B. Gregg

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THE TRUE WAY TO HAPPINESS *

(By Vinoba)

Ask anyone in the world why he exerts himself in doing what he does and most of them would say that they do it for the attainment of happiness. And because he has multiplied his wants he needs an endless number of things for their satisfaction, which is his idea of happiness. Necessarily, therefore he spends his life wearing himself out both mentally and physically for obtaining those things. But what do all these efforts come to? Does he win happiness? You put this question to anyone and the answer would most usually be: As we go after happiness, the happiness seems to recede further and further away. The distance between the seeker and the object of his search—the happiness, is not in any way reduced.

It so happens that in this world while man wants happiness and strives for happiness, what he gets in the end is not happiness but its opposite—sorrow and suffering and disappointment. And this is true not only of individuals but also of big communities. Even big countries do things which lead to the increase of unhappiness. They pile up armaments, produce huge quantities of goods with the help of the machinery and try to capture and control foreign markets as an outlet for disposing of those goods. But on the whole, in spite of—or rather because of—all these efforts to build up security and wealth, fear and unhappiness are not less but more. By some strange alchemy, whatever they do in order to produce happiness, results in creating not happiness but misery. Look at any country in the world and you will find it afflicted with conflict and fear. Look at America with almost half of the entire wealth and armaments of the world. If wealth and armaments—the former for the satisfaction of wants and the latter for protection—could be expected to make men happy, the Americans should certainly have been happy. But they are not. It is the same with Russia and Britain and France and all other countries. They are all living in the fear of war. Acquisition of wealth and piling up of armaments have failed to deliver happiness. Indeed, they

* From a speech at Kuchaykot in Saran District on 12-6-'54.

have only served to make the already complicated situation even more complicated.

We should then pause and consider why it is happening like that. The reason is simple: While they aim at happiness they have taken to a path which leads not to happiness but to its opposite. What is the way to happiness? Tulsidas has provided a very telling answer to this question in one of his sayings. He says: There is nothing unattainable for them who have set their minds on doing good to others*. If you want happiness think of the good of others. It looks rather paradoxical at first sight. But it is true and innumerable sages throughout the ages have borne witness to its being the surest way to happiness. If you think of your own happiness, you do not get it. But if you think of the happiness of others you get it. This is the surest recipe for happiness and applies equally to all — to the individual, the family, the community and the country.

In the last world war crores of rupees were being spent everyday. America spent 55 crore rupees daily. In the same way, there were others who spent 10, or 15, or 20 crores daily. If these countries had spent all this money in doing good to other countries, they would have won the world and achieved the long cherished ideal of human unity. They build up huge armies, kill and get killed but cannot win the heart of the people other than their own. If however instead of the armies they could raise volunteers in their thousands who would be ready to go forth to the ends of the world for fighting poverty and ignorance and helping the helpless, they would surely win the world — win it with love.

At the moment, there is a great outcry in the Bihar newspapers about Bengal's trying to grab some of its districts. There is a similar cry in Bengali newspapers against Bihar. Why should it matter if some of the land at present in Bihar is transferred to Bengal or vice versa? But there is a fomenting of passions and nobody listens to sanity. People on both sides declare rather blusteringly — we will not give a yard of our land. This sort of thing becomes even more difficult to understand when one remembers that our existence on this planet is after all a temporary sojourn and sooner or later we must depart from here. Our ancestors used to say: To be born in India is a rare privilege †. They thought of India as one whole. They did not say that to be born in Bihar was a rare privilege. There is everywhere a tendency to cut up things into bits — to cut up the world into nation states, the country into provinces, the community into groups and individuals, all warring against one another in a mad effort to safeguard and further what they think their interests. Why cannot they

see that this is sheer madness and the right thing would be to help one another in every case?

We will appreciate the essence of Bhoodan only when we understand and appreciate this wise and profound saying of Tulsidas — there is nothing unattainable for those whose hearts are set on doing good to others. This is an age of science. It is going to bring humanity closer together. Isolation and exclusion — ideas of mine and thine could have worked to some extent in olden times, but not now when countries are coming nearer and nearer to one another. Limiting oneself in one's own narrow shell at this moment will be nothing short of suicide.

(Adapted from Hindi)

LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT AND DEMOCRACY

I

[From an address by Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Union Minister for Health, at the Conference of Local Self-Government Ministers held on 25th June, 1954 at Simla.]

As our Prime Minister pointed out at the last Conference, local self-government is and must be the basis of any true system of democracy. We have, I am afraid, got almost into the habit, as it were, of trying to build democracy from the top rather than from below. Democracy can never function successfully unless it rests on a solid foundation. The basis of our political and judicial systems, as has been rightly pointed out by the Prime Minister, should be our panchayats.

Our country consists of 5,58,089 villages and 3,018 towns and out of a total population of 3,569 lakhs of people, 2,950 lakhs live in villages. Writing of the villages in India Sir Charles Metcalfe said in 1830:

"They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down, revolution succeeds revolution, Hindu, Pathan, Moghul, Maratha, Sikh, English are all masters in turn, but the village communities remain the same. A generation may pass away but the succeeding generations will return. The sons will take the place of their fathers, the same site for the village, the same position for the houses, the same lands will be re-occupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated. For it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and revolution and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success. This union of the village communities each one forming a separate little State in itself has, I can say, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence."

From time immemorial, village Government was maintained by the panchayat or group of heads of superior families. As time went on one or more headmen were added to the organization to represent the village in its dealings with the local authorities. The village communities however maintained their individual character and functioned more or less as the sole proprietors of the entire village and its wealth. "Panch Punch Parmeshwar" is an old saying which expresses this sentiment. It was therefore but

* परहित वस जितके मन माँही, तिनकह अग कच्छ दुर्कम नाहीं।

† दुर्कमं भारते जन्म।

natural that the importance of village panchayats as the basis of local self-government which had always been part and parcel of our ancient heritage, should find expression in our Constitution. Article 40 of the Constitution of India provides that "the State shall take steps to organize village panchayats, and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government."

I feel our administrative set-up has up to now been running on the same lines as in the days prior to independence. It is never too late to mend.

It is a matter of regret and concern to me that existing institutions of local self-government have, on the whole, signally failed to arouse the interest of the aspiring public man to whom the apparent glamour, the undoubted publicity and the assured privileges of State and Central legislatures seem more attractive. "Casteism" and "Sectionalism" are the bane of our public life and act and react on the working of our local bodies. It is as such incumbent on the best among us to enter the arena of local self-government and battle with the prevailing evils.

I would also like to emphasize the necessity for women to take a larger and keener interest in the working of local bodies. Women members of local bodies are still regrettably few. As has been rightly pointed out by a well-known British economist, local government is essentially the basis of community-making and of organizing the life of the smaller units which comprise the whole and in this task, women can and should play a leading part. After all it is to local bodies that we should primarily look for the spirit of initiative and enterprise, for a sense of true civic responsibility and self-reliance and for the cultivation of a high standard of morality in public life.

Real 'reconstruction' does not lie in things material but in man himself, in raising him to a higher level of thought and action by evoking his latent powers.

II

[From the inaugural speech by Shri G. V. Mavalankar, Speaker, Lok Sabha, at the Simla Conference.]

The fundamental of my approach to self-government, whether local, provincial or central, is that every person who is a subject of that government must be able to feel, every moment of his life, that the government is his, in the sense that he has contributed something to its building-up, to its prosperity, and to its success and that he is a partner. Unless the life of every citizen pulsates with the feeling, it will not be possible to lead the people to the great sacrifices needed for the reconstruction of society on the desired pattern and its all-round progress. The driving force which each citizen should have is a complete identity with all functions of the State, which will lead him to put forth his best effort.

An eminent English politician has truly said that "good government is no substitute for self-government." What he has said expresses very pointedly and effectively what I mean to convey as the first fundamental of any democratic government.

Unfortunately, we are, in my humble view, sometimes confounding the forms and instrument of democracy with the substance of democracy. But unless we are conscious of the fact that the machinery which we are using for achievement of our objective of creating the spirit and habit of self-government in our people is out of date, is not suited to the genius of our people and is not taking our people forward in the direction of their old cherished ambitions, their habits and their social life, I doubt whether we can do much in the matter of real advance of the spirit and capacity of self-government by merely providing for material amenities for a better way of life.

The problem has, therefore, to be tackled from an entirely different point of view and not merely by an attempt to improve upon the existing laws and machinery of the local self-governing bodies. Local self-government has to be conceived as an essentially important foundation and part of the provincial and central self-governments of the people.

To me, it appears that the predominant feature in all laws relating to local self-government bodies is one of doubt as to whether the people can understand their own good, whether they would exercise powers and discharge their duties in a proper manner. Therefore not only are the local bodies not given full latitude, but what little is given considerably diluted with a number of checks, and counter-checks, on the assumption that the powers would be abused and the duties neglected.

In the present set-up of things, it appears that each higher authority proceeds on the basis of want of capacity or integrity at the lower level, with the result that the lower levels feel no enthusiasm and have no interest in the administration of affairs relating to their areas. This is a very sad state of things and, to my mind, accounts a good deal for the present apathy. The highest in authority has to trust even the lowest and leave him an open field with least interference, excepting in cases of gross abuse or misuse of power or neglect of duties.

The real task before us is to create a spirit of self-government and train people to play their part in all walks of life as citizens of democracy. Approaching from this point of view and remembering the fact that free life in this country has been suffocated for centuries, we have to foster all that is good, ignoring and, if possible, forbearing the evils that have crept into the body politic. And this can be done only if we proceed with a policy of trust and even of granting the freedom to err.

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THE OWNERSHIP OF CAPITAL AND SARVODAYA

(By Maganbhai P. Desai)

One of the things which mark the unfolding of a revolution may be said to be a growing realization on the part of the people about the existence of vested interests. They come to perceive the close link between such interests and the exploitation rampant in society and feel ever more pressing the need to abolish such interests so as to achieve social justice. The main support of these interests in the industrial sphere is the legally protected right of the ownership of capital. This right, whatever might have been its usefulness at the beginning of the present industrial era, has tended, in course of time, to become more and more parasitic and socially irresponsible. It has led more and more to the disappearance of such social virtues as bread labour, charity, self-denial, philanthropy etc.—virtues which are the foundation of the maintenance, the preservation and the solidarity of a well-ordered society. It might be said that this indeed is the source from which the seeds of revolution sprout and grow—to the end that the duty to work and the sense of social responsibility may be re-established.

If the above analysis is correct, we can safely assert that such a revolution is already under way in India today. With the exit of the British, the interests which arose and prospered during their rule in India, are being found increasingly to come in the way of the progress of Swaraj—which in itself acts as a potent factor in impelling the forces of revolution to go forward.

The impact of this revolution is the most obvious in at least the following two spheres: (1) the Land Tenure system and (2) Capitalistic organization of industry. We might also mention a third sphere—that of education, where vested interests are strongly entrenched on the basis of the knowledge of English.

The Bhoodan movement aims at abolishing the first, while the second is being assailed by the advocates of decentralization, Khadi and village industries. As to the third, whose exploiting role is not so evident, people are awakening to the need of displacing English from the improper place which it occupies in our education at present.

Such is the threefold revolution which has to be worked out to a successful conclusion in the immediate future. Needless to say that the time is ripe when we should start thinking about it more seriously and build up a body of

organized opinion. For thought indeed is the foundation of a revolution.

One of the main questions to be considered in this connection is the system of limited liability concerns and the managing agency system as typifying the organization of mechanized industry. On this subject I have just seen a speech by the well-known labour leader Shri Khandubhai Desai, which he had made a few days ago at Rajkot. Earlier I had noticed a statement about this speech by the President of the Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association in an English daily which indeed was the occasion that sent me in its quest. The issue involved in the discussion raised by these two responsible persons is of very great importance.

Shri Khandubhai pointed out in his Rajkot speech that there were at present 3,000 industrial concerns working in our country. They have a capital investment of 1,200 crore rupees of which 800 crores belong to the shareholders and only the remaining 400 crores represent the actual investment of the managing agents, that is, their supposed owners. Regarding how the profits are distributed, Shri Khandubhai said that on the whole 80 per cent of the total profit goes for total management. Commenting on this amazingly disproportionate distribution, he further stated that looking at it from the point of view of responsibility, the mill-agents had not the whole responsibility, their liability being limited only to the amount of their own shares. Despite that, the law enables them to act as though they were the owners of the entire capital at their disposal. And if this ownership—which is so patently devoid of all responsibility—is allowed to be inherited from father to son, it inevitably leads to other evils. Shri Desai has, therefore, put forward the demand that this right had better be scrapped now.

It is natural for the owners to oppose this rather forthright demand. And we find such opposition voiced in the statement of the President of the Mill-owners' Association. The most vulnerable aspect of his statement is the complete absence of any constructive suggestion for the removal of the evils which characterize the management of such concerns at the present time. It may be accepted, for the sake of argument, that this kind of industrial organization—whose parallel is not to be found anywhere else—had some justification when it was created a hundred years ago. Perhaps the evils which have crept into it in course of the century were not there at the beginning because it was then quite new. But it should not be forgotten that we have now to examine it in the changed set-up after a lapse of hundred years and in the context of our freedom under Swaraj. The question, therefore, as to what we should do about this absentee ownership of capital is quite justly raised and calls for our serious consideration.

The matter has to be judged in the light of the following two considerations: (1) Is the 800 crore rupees worth of people's capital lying with these companies being used to the best advantage judged from the point of view of social justice and Sarvodaya? (2) Though this enormous capital really belongs to the society as such the law has made it the subject of a private ownership right through the device of the managing agency system—is this right? And how far is it proper for all this capital to be used thus for private ends now when there is so much shortage of capital for the reconstruction of our country?

Granting that the individual has a right to the ownership of his earnings, it has to be admitted, that even under a democracy it cannot be treated as an absolute right. Just as in the case of land, if the owner does not personally cultivate it, it leads to things which are harmful to the society, so it is in the case of capital also. Hence there should be some kind of a restriction placed on those who would use their surplus capital to earn without work through interest, or rent or in any other manner. For, as Marxism would say, such surplus wealth belongs rightfully to the society and not to the individual, or as Gandhism would say, its supposed owner is really only its trustee and thus only can he use it and that the State should take necessary steps to ensure it.

I have discussed this question of the utilization of surplus capital in the earlier issues of this paper.* There I had tried to show that no person who was not actually taking some part in the industry could be allowed to be a shareholder—that he could not be allowed thus to profit, so to say, by an absentee ownership of capital. He should deposit this surplus capital with the Government banks so that it may be used for national reconstruction work. It is the function of the banks thus to pool the surplus capital with the people. If for this purpose it is found necessary to nationalize the banks, it should be done.

In the same way, the managing agency should not mean a right to the ownership of the entire capital. If the suggestion made above in regard to the owning of shares without any active participation in industry is put into effect, the industrial concerns at present organized as companies will be changed to a form of co-operatives. The person or persons appointed to conduct the management will then be entitled to receive remuneration for their work but no more. Such remuneration too should be kept well within the limits laid down by the national policy in regard to salaries and emoluments.

To sum up, we have now to attend to the task of the equal distribution of the country's wealth. It is in all conscience a tremendous task; the more so, because we do not want to achieve

it either through the Socialistic technique of class-war or the Communistic one of dictatorship. Our approach to this problem is quite different—we might say even unique. It is that of *ahimsa*, of peace, of justice,—of Sarvodaya and we have to apply it to the solution of our problems in many directions. Shri Vinoba has pointed out, for the achievement of this great revolution, the way of *Sampattidan*. There is another way which will prove equally good. Our industrialists and managing agents should convert themselves into trustees, i.e., agree to take only the due remuneration for their work, and make over the rest to the society. The President of the Mill-owners' Association has made an oblique insinuation in his statement that the labour leaders should not limit the benefit of their ideal of a Sarvodaya society only to the thirty lakh workers, but also include in it other sections of our population. This is certainly an important aspect of this question, but I would postpone its consideration to some other occasion. Suffice it to say here that not only the industrialists but all other sections also will do well to remember that none should think exclusively of his interests but of all others and his interests as only a just part of this whole. Indeed this is what Sarvodaya stands for. The rich, of course, should be the first to take heed of it.

1-7-'54

(From the original in Gujarati)

Nationalizing Text-Books

A Nagpur PTI message says that the M. P. Government 'would prepare, print, publish, and distribute through its agencies all language books for primary schools. This decision will take effect from 1955-56.' If the news is correct, it is bad for education as well as the growth of healthy democratic government. It is not known why Government decided as it did to take the unusual step of writing, printing and even selling the books itself. Such monopoly control in educational matters is not desirable nor conducive to free and unregimented education. In this matter, the following warning given by Shri Rajagopalachari should be noted by our Governments:

In reply to a suggestion from a questioner for Government publication of text-books, he said that 'it was more dangerous than appeared on the surface. In such an event text-books would change whenever Government changed and political views would get into text-books.'

Let not our Governments also believe, as they perhaps seem to do, that the evils of text-book trade will disappear with Government servants plying that trade as a nationalized concern. It will be more a work of the nature of a Supply Department than of an Educational nature. The evil of monopoly and regimentation in education must be warded off.

Will M. P. Government reconsider its decision?

6-7-'54

M. P.

* Vide *Harijan*, 28-11-'53 and 12-12-'53.

ASK FOR KHADI HAND-BAG

The cloth hand-bag is today an article of universal use. It has become an inevitable part of every household. Boys and girls who go to school, find it handy. Men who go to offices, too, have found in the cloth hand-bag a thing of multi-purpose utility. To women it is a boon. Be it at the bazar or at the ration shop, the cloth hand-bag is their unailing companion.

The cloth hand-bag is a great leveller and unifier. It does not make any distinction of class and caste, creed and community. Men, women and children of all classes, communities and creeds use it. The cloth hand-bag is popular and has become an indispensable article of everyday use in the home and outside. It is made in diverse types and in different sizes.

But has any one paused to inquire as to who gave us so useful an article? Who set the fashion for this cloth hand-bag? Bapu, the Father of the Nation. Does this surprise you?

This is how it happened. It was the year 1921. The non-co-operation movement was gathering momentum. The National Congress had shed its Western character.

The Congress was meeting in Ahmedabad. There were no chairs, as in past years. Delegates and visitors had gathered in their thousands. Where were they to sit? Where were they to keep their shoes and chappals and slippers? Gandhiji saw their perplexity. He was himself carrying a Khadi hand-bag. His chappals were already in it. He said:

'Let those who attend the session squat on the ground; let them buy a Khadi hand-bag, put their footwear in it and sit in the pandal carrying it with them.' The idea had never struck the delegates. Gandhiji's solution was simple, but novel. It caught. Khadi hand-bags were sold by the thousands.

At the Congress session, it was the problem of keeping one's footwear. But those who bought the Khadi hand-bag soon found to their great satisfaction that the little bag performed a variety of useful services. So, the hand-bag entered every home and cottage and day after day carried the message of Khadi to the high and the low alike.

In these days, when the problem of Khadi sales faces the country, the Khadi hand-bag may come not merely to our rescue, but may even act as an incentive to more production of Khadi and, therefore, to greater employment to a destitute rural population. Let us see how this employment works out.

According to the latest census, the total population of India is 35,69,00,000. There are 7,13,80,000 families.

If every family consisting of five members on an average buys two Khadi hand-bags a year,

the families will require 14,27,60,000 Khadi hand-bags. Now a Khadi hand-bag requires on an average three-fourths of a yard of Khadi. This comes to about 10,70,70,000 yards of Khadi. The price of this will come to Rs 8,03,02,500.

Thus we see how a small deed leads to big results. If each family buys two Khadi hand-bags, Khadi worth crores of rupees can be sold very easily.

And who produces this Khadi? Surely not the big cotton textile mills which make huge profits to fill the bulging pockets of the already rich.

This Khadi is produced by the poorest of the poor, the lowly and the lost. A paltry pice a day means much to them. The price we pay for a Khadi hand-bag goes to feed the hungry mouths of these hapless producers.

Remember, in certified Khadi there is no profiteering. All the 16 annas in the rupee are distributed among the artisans engaged in the production of Khadi.

Here is an illustration of how this distribution takes place:

Out of the 16 annas worth of Khadi you buy from a certified Khadi Bhandar, you pay:

Re 0-2-6 to the peasant as price of cotton.

Re 0-1-0 to the carder of the cotton.

Re 0-5-6 to the spinner.

Re 0-4-0 to the weaver.

Re 0-3-0 to the overhead and establishment charges.

These charges include expenditure involved in purchase and supply of raw materials, purchase and supply of the yarn to weaver, collecting the cloth, transport, godowns and sales etc.

As the All India Khadi and Village Industries Board bears all the establishment charges, the 0-3-0 annas are given as a rebate to the consumer.

Let us suppose that every one of the 7,13,80,000 families buys two Khadi hand-bags of average size. What will be the aggregate amount in money they help to produce in the distress areas of our motherland? Rs 8,03,02,493-4-0. This is not a small sum of money. Let us see who gets this money and for what?

Rs 1,25,47,265-10-0 to the peasant who grows the cotton.

Rs 50,18,906-4-0 to 16,728 carders at Re 1/- per day for 300 days.

Rs 2,76,03,984-6-0 to 2,44,283 spinners at 0-6-0 annas per day for 300 days.

Rs 2,00,75,625-0-0 to 33,459 weaver families at Rs 3-2-0 per day for 300 days.

The establishment charges at 0-3-0 in the rupee come to Rs 1,50,56,718. The All India Khadi and Village Industries Board bears this cost of establishment which, by the way, provides employment to over 11,150 persons. The amount which used to be a charge on the sale price of Khadi, is returned as rebate to the families which use the Khadi hand-bag.

Thus he who buys a Khadi hand-bag is doubly served. He serves himself and the destitute millions in the villages.

What cloth other than Khadi performs this wonderful service by all?

(From the bulletin issued by the All India Khadi and Village Industries Board, Bombay).

THE FIRST STEP

(By A. H. W.)

The desire of every sane person is to have a healthy body in order to be able to enjoy life.

To this end many take up games, physical culture, exercise called sports, cold bathing and such like and for a time appear to achieve their aim.

But "man shall not live by bread alone". He also needs spiritual (i.e. not physical) nourishment, because he has a mind which seeks some satisfaction and aspirations which must reach a goal through his strivings.

This very real but invisible nourishment is found in ideas, in creative effort, in understanding, tolerance and loving-kindness as well as in what is called education. To receive of this spiritual nourishment there must be response and there are few who do not know how difficult it is to respond to these finer influences after "a good meal"; indicating that food affects the power to respond.

An honest examination of this idea will inevitably lead to the further realization that a living, vital response will be better achieved by nourishing the body on living, vital foods, foods in which the Life principle is found at first hand and not after other creatures have ingested it.

The planetary life is sevenfold and the natural living foods of which there is such ample provision, fall into seven categories. These are:

1. Root vegetables (carrots, turnips, etc.).
2. Vegetables grown above ground (cabbage and pulses).
3. Grains (wheat, oats, barley, rye, rice, etc.).
4. Nuts of all kinds, especially pine kernels.
5. Stone fruits (peach, apricot, plum, etc.).
6. Pip fruits (apple, pear, orange, etc.).
7. Grapes—especially those grown out of doors.

They supply most of what man needs for his physical nourishment. A balanced diet, sufficient to maintain health and energy, is found in the use of all these in due proportion with, but preferably more frequently without, the use of heat in cooking. There is much instructive literature about this, easily obtainable.

In the use of such a balanced diet of natural living foods, the power of response to the unseen spiritual influences will be more easily attained. A cleaner life, in many aspects, will result and a greater potency and refinement of taste and smell will develop without effort.

Here is the reason for adopting a pure diet and it leads to the two main reasons for "Vegetarianism", viz.: the becoming of the realization of, and reverence for, Life in all its expressions, and the resultant acceptance of the creatures as sharers of that Life, "our little brother", who are not to be exploited for any of our purposes of clothing, food or medicine.

In this lies the secret of surcease from major and minor ills of the body, of the disappearance of pestilence and the end of war. War will never cease until man ceases to make war upon the subhuman kingdom and ceases to exploit his fellow man, one class upon another and one race upon another, as obtains at present.

Great things have small beginnings and the vegetarian way of life is the first and most essential step in the bringing of "Peace upon earth" and in following "in His steps".

(Adapted from *Steps Unto Him*, Dec. '33)

BHOODAN AND PALM GUR INDUSTRY

To
The Editor, *Harijan*
Sir,

Shri Vinoba Bhawe has said:

"If Bhoodan is to be successful, it has to be wedded to village industries." Palm Gur industry is an ideal supplementary occupation for the farmer, because:

1. The raw material i.e. Palm trees are already standing there on the land.
2. The farmer need not leave his place of residence and go out to ply the industry.
3. The operations of this industry do not affect his cultivation work.
4. Its technique is easy. Capital requirement is insignificant, and all the raw material is available in his own village.
5. There is ready demand for the produce; he can use his produce i.e. *gur* for household consumption.
6. The trees which up till now are put to an unsocial use, such as toddy tapping, will now be put to better use.

What is required is that the Government should declare complete prohibition of toddy in such areas where land is distributed to agriculturists in Bhoodan movement. Sarva Seva Sangh has to see that the State accepts this policy *in toto* and tax-free tapping licences are issued to those who are willing to manufacture Palm *gur*.

Shri Kripalani has sounded a timely warning in that he has said:

"If the landless get a few acres of land and there are a few toddy shops in their midst, their land will evaporate in a few years."

Let us awake in time and do the needful in the matter.

Bombay, 21-6-'54

Yours faithfully,
V. N. Khanolkar

THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER

(By N. R. Balakrishnan)

There is a highly instructive as well as interesting story narrated by Tolstoy. Its moral can be aptly applied to the existing political, economic and social conditions of the nations of the world today. There was a herd of cattle, cows and calves kept inside a wire-fenced enclosure. Outside the enclosure there was a vast area of land with beautiful green pasture in plenty, but inside the enclosure there was not quite enough grass to eat; consequently these animals gored one another and trampled down what little grass was left to them.

Despite the owner's best attention and a large sum of money spent on these animals, they were day by day getting weak and emaciated. The owner felt really sorry for their miserable condition, but he consoled himself and often boasted that he had spent a huge sum of money for fencing, for erecting strong and well-ventilated sheds for their shelter and comforts, deepened many wells for their benefits, employed many servants in order to cut grass and to look after other needs of the animals. In fact, the owner did everything he could think of to improve the conditions of his animals and he was actually spending every day a fabulous sum of money for their feeding and welfare.

One day one old man visited the place, and after seeing the distressing conditions of these mute creatures, asked the owner why he did not do the most obvious thing: namely to leave these poor animals free and pull down the fence so that they may freely graze as they like and eat as much as they want, instead of tying them with ropes and shutting them up inside the shed where they always gore and trample. The owner, hearing this wise suggestion, laughed and replied that if he did so, he would no longer be able to milk them! So ends the story.

Similarly governments all over the world boast that they are doing their maximum for the general improvement of their people. They claim to have erected many beggar homes, opened several industrial institutions, employment exchanges and so many other things. Yet people get more and more dissatisfied, various crimes and violence multiply day by day, and the cases of suicide, starvation-death, poverty and unemployment are on the increase.

On the other hand, like the plentiful green pasture outside the enclosure, God has provided in this world enough for all, and nature is always bountiful and responsive to man's labour. The real truth of the matter is that we are chained by the invisible fetters of monetary system and God-given land is monopolized by some few. As the old man in the story asked the owner, it is high time to proclaim

the truth that these fetters and fences are to be demolished if we want real peace and prosperity in the world. But all governmental authorities are probably aware that if they do so, they will no more be able to extract the maximum from their peoples.

AS OTHERS SEE US

IV

Mr Seymour drove along a road built by village co-operatives for an expenditure by Government of 25,000 Rs. Later he saw a written estimate by a P. W. D. engineer for making this same road with contractors and the estimate was *two hundred thousand Rs!* And herein lies a tale, says he (*Round about India*, p. 155):

'Shri Rajagopalachari has been placed on record as saying, "If the Communists are my Public Enemy No. 1, the P. W. D. are my Public Enemy No. 2."

'I sat one evening in a traveller's bungalow in Mysore among a party of road engineers. One of them got up and said, "Let's have the good old P. W. D. toast: Two inches for the road, two inches for the engineer, and two inches for the contractor!"

'When I enquired what this meant, I was told that if 6 in. of ballast were ordered to be applied to a road, 2 in. actually went on the road, the money-value of 2 in. went into the pocket of the engineer, and that of the other 2 in. into the pocket of the contractor.

'The P. W. D. system is such that only a very good man could remain honest for long under it. As for contractors, there *could* not be an honest contractor, for he would never get a single contract. Why should an engineer give him a contract without being bribed, when there are a hundred other contractors waiting to try to outbid each other in bribes just outside the door?

'The result is that jobs done by the Government in India are apt to cost enormously more than can be accounted for by material and labour only. And many jobs are scamped.

'This P. W. D. problem is India's toughest at this moment.'

V. G. D.

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