

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## QUESTION BOX

### Questions by a Socialist Group

Q. Do you think that the Government of India is likely to lead to Gandhiji's ideals even in the distant future?

A. I am unable to look into distant future. I do not know what types of Government will come into existence from time to time.

Q. How do you account for the collapse of the Gandhian ideals immediately after the achievement of Independence? Do you consider that the present Government of India and the Congress is or can be the instrument of Gandhian ideology in the national and international field?

A. Nothing has happened since the achievement of Independence which was not observable before — even as long ago as 1932-33. Those who were responsible for deserting the N. C. O. and for carrying on the C. D. O. movements in breach of Gandhian principles could not be expected to behave better than they do now. If in spite of this there is still something to remind one of Gandhiji's ideals and ways of life, it is due to the fact that at the top of the Government there are some of the best and most sincere of India's sons.

I feel that partly the Government of India is honestly attempting to follow Gandhian ideology, partly it honestly feels that it cannot, that is, should not, under the circumstances before them. There can be a difference of opinion on the latter aspect. There is also a part where it seems to fail. But who will say that it cannot be the instrument of 'Gandhian ideology'? If it wills and feels confident enough that it will be supported by the people, it can.

Q. The main problem the nation has to tackle today is that of the economic crisis. How should we tackle it? Do you think that the main reason of this crisis is the present economic set-up?

A. Unless our character is raised, and God is installed in our hearts, from where He has been dethroned by the war and pseudo philosophers, there is no possibility of much improvement. Any outward change in the economic set-up, i. e. Socialist, Marxist, etc., will not help. The moral change is the essential one.

Q. Would you still insist as an ideal a self-sufficient economic unit? Or you would like to

co-ordinate large-scale, medium and cottage industries in such a manner as to avoid conflict and overlapping? If you are agreeable to this, do you think that a plan of this kind would be workable where a capitalist mode of production exists, as it does at present in our country?

A. I believe in decentralization and self-sufficiency in regard to the production and distribution of the necessities of life, e. g., food, water, cloth, construction of houses etc. The unit may be at times larger than a village and may extend to a circle of about five or ten miles radius. Co-ordination is necessary in every case. But the approach must be on lines indicated in Shri J. C. Kumarappa's article *The Wrong Approach* (vide *Harijan*, 2-1-'49).

"Capitalism" is a vague term. What is necessary is to fix the maximum limit of private property and income, and to reduce the difference between the minimum and the maximum to a considerable degree.

Q. What are your objections, if any, to nationalization or to abolition of Zamindari? Would you insist on compensation?

Would you object to general strike to force the hands of the Government to adopt a new economic policy? Would you consider it as against the limits of non-violence or anti-national?

A. Mere words like "nationalization", "abolition of Zamindari", etc. do not enchant me. There might be as much capitalism and selfishness, besides tyranny of bureaucrats or technocrats in "nationalization", as in open capitalism. "Nationalization" might just be highly centralized capitalism or State capitalism. Abolition of Zamindari might be State Zamindarism. So I must see how the proposed systems are desired to be worked, and what sort of human beings are going to work them, before I can say whether I should like them or no.

A strike whether general or particular can do no good in the present condition of India. It can only add to the misery of the people. It will not be non-violent. If there is dissatisfaction with the present personnel or party in power, the dissentients should try to capture power by the constitutional means of defeating the present Government in the legislatures or by winning next elections.

Bombay, 12-12-'48

K. G. MASHRUWALA



## PLANNING FOR GANDHIAN REVOLUTION

As one believing in the strength of truth and non-violence in every sphere of human life, material and moral, I fall in the group of those who have accepted that village reconstruction has the first priority in planning for peace and prosperity.

The villages cannot, however, live alone. They must give and take to and from outside themselves and even from outside the country. The economic life of the towns of today, administrative or industrial, and the economic relations between countries are based on a system which requires a revolutionary change if the suffering millions living in the villages or outside, were to have the four freedoms.

How to bring about this change and create conditions for every one to live and let live is the problem of the whole world. It is by no means a simple problem. The body and mind are the two parts of one whole. Food for the first is material and that for the second is spiritual. The world has often erred by not taking proper notice of the one or the other. The mind and the body are inter-dependent and it is the proper balance of factors governing the two that make the normal man. How and where shall we strike the balance? There are lessons in history. But man who is at once an animal and a god has not always taken the right lesson. Animal is his crude nature and God his culture. The animal in him thrives on the law of struggle for existence and survival of the fittest, while his Godlike mind seeks peace and solace in unity and brotherhood. Violence is the method of struggle for existence, while love is the fountain of the spirit of live and let live.

Is it possible to bring the change in the present system of our social life without violence? I firmly believe that it will be possible. I have got living faith in the Gandhian revolution. But the miseries of India have been so great that younger men with emotion find it difficult to keep patience. They are even ready to challenge violence with violence. But the age-long history of mankind teaches us that a Maginot Line only inspires a Seigfried Line, a rocket bomb an atom bomb, an Atlantic Charter needs reinforcement by a Tripartite Agreement. Violence begets counter-violence and all suspicion and no peace.

The greatest danger threatening our country today is the risk of losing patience. Attainment of our national independence has been an unique triumph of non-violence but all this may be marred and the whole world may lose the light if conditions as they prevail now are not changed without delay.

The change required is a revolutionary one and it cannot come, much less come quick enough, without a revolution.

The question is how to plan and carry out this revolution non-violently. Every man, be he rich or poor, employer or employee, will have to accept the change when it comes. But it will not mean the same thing for all according to the existing system by which society is guided today. It is but natural, therefore, that those who are relatively rich and enjoy superior positions now would fight shy to join this revolution. They might even oppose it. But the millions living in the villages have little to lose, but all hope to gain. If they could be made to know how they can resist the present method of exploitation and how they can get legitimate prices for their produce and wages of labour, and if they could be guided to improve their method of work and manner of living, they will march forward.

Village reconstruction, therefore, has the first priority in our revolutionary planning. This does not, however, mean that we should have no planning outside the village. There the plan should now be based on whatever goodwill and co-operation of the richer section of the people we can enlist. It is not a myth that every man has a heart. Among our rich men there have been pioneers in human qualities who led the way in which we have made so much progress today. Let us have faith and confidence in their head and heart and tell them clearly what our plan is with regard to industries which we shall so much need for turning out machineries to suit the village workers, developing and maintaining speedy communications, for giving electricity to every house and also what our plan is for internal and external trade.

Growth of economically strong villages and awakening of the human genius in those who are in possession of resources today will meet to mutual advantage and contribute to a system where every individual will be free to choose his profession and to work by himself or in co-operation with his fellow-man to earn a living according to his desire and find happiness and peace.

We must begin our revolutionary programme in the villages first and our industrial plans should be taken up steadily. Here we must caution ourselves and must not be led merely by those who cannot but think in terms of the West.

### Village Reconstruction Plan

#### Object

1. To cultivate land fully and to produce food.
2. To produce as much of clothes and other necessities of life, in order of importance, as can be produced in the village (fullest scope being given for home, cottage and village industries).
3. To produce raw materials for industries according to facilities.
4. To improve health and physical culture, (5) sanitation, (6) housing, (7) communications.



8. To improve social relations.
9. To protect (conserve) soil and to grow fuel and timber trees and improve irrigation facilities.
10. To improve education, (11) stimulate art and music, (12) encourage sports.

#### Material

The land and the men in the villages as they exist today must be accepted as the material to begin with. The lands are exhausted and the men have no money, no health, no trust, no initiative but have the inescapable sense of hunger and traditions of a great civilization though masked by reactionary superstition and prejudices.

#### Method

The method shall essentially consist of :

1. Inspiring faith in the minds of the villagers and giving them guidance through organizations of selfless workers.
2. Eliminating the basic cause of rural indebtedness ;— abolishing money rent and introducing grain tax for land revenue, and bringing every bit of land to use.
3. Ensuring an equitable price for produce and wage for labour ;— prices and wages based on minimum standard of living and working hours.
4. Supplying labour — (to begin with through organized labour corps).
5. Introducing better methods of work.
6. Setting up village governments (*Panchayats*) to draw up plans and to carry them out in respect of the objects set forth above.

In a village where a suitable villager may not be present to be able to guide the village, one from outside may be invited.

7. Making the Executive of the State responsible for assisting the village governments and seeing that they fulfil their targets.
8. Organizing village policing and defence against dacoits, etc.

#### Rehabilitation Groups

If such a plan were really to be given effect to, the first essential need is for a group of trained men and women who would work not for personal prospects but for human liberation. These groups shall be raised as far as possible with men and women drawn from every village and shall work in such disciplined and efficient manner as could be compared with an up-to-date army. They shall be trained in methods of agriculture, crafts and industries, storage and preservation of food, sanitation and public health, midwifery, housebuilding, surveying, road-making, excavation of tanks and construction of wells, teachers' training, drill and physical culture, popular art and music, and public relations, etc. Men and women according to their suit-

abilities will receive training in different subjects. Patriotic men and women well versed in these various arts and sciences will have to volunteer to form and organize these groups. Experienced military officers who have renounced militarism may be invited to take part in this organization. The object of these groups shall be to train men and women and organize vigilance for the execution of the village rehabilitation plans, until the villagers themselves acquire the knowledge and habit of the improved methods of life and can also maintain their own organizations and institutions. All-India Spinners Association, All-India Village Industries Association, Talimi Sangh, and all such social workers' organizations shall also come together to work in this Rehabilitation group.

#### Literature

There shall be need for a constant supply of popular literature for adults and children, with impressive sketches and pictures with a view to facilitate education of the villagers and bringing to their notice methods of improvement of agriculture, craft and industries, health and sanitation and manner of living. For this there should be bureaus of expert journalists and artists working with zeal and devotion. It will be the aim to enlist the services of the leading writers of the country who feel for the sufferings of the millions.

#### Finances

Although the plan is to work for the villages which have been driven to ruination and it must needs depend primarily on patriotic and voluntary services, there shall still be required a good deal of finance to pay for the living costs of the Rehabilitation groups and their work. To meet this will be the first charge on the village revenues.

#### Relation with the Existing System of Administration

The village governments (*Panchayats*) and the Rehabilitation Groups will replace a great deal of the present mercenary services. The State departments will maintain the minimum expert staff for co-ordination. The process no doubt will have to be a bit cautious. But eventually this will not only reduce financial responsibilities of the State Government but also eliminate a great deal of red-tape and unnecessary administrative complications due to the present centralized system.

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# HARIJAN

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## OUR REPUBLIC

Before the next issue of *Harijan* is out, India will have presented herself to the world in the new political status of a Sovereign Democratic Republic, casting off all symbols which had tied her helplessly to the United Kingdom for nearly two centuries. For practical purposes the event will not mark the acquisition of any fresh right which was not available to the Government of India since August 15, 1947, except in a formal manner. Also, save in external forms and designations, there will be little change for the time being to distinguish the Indian Government as functioning today from that after January 26th. People will see the practical effects of the new Constitution only when fresh elections are held next year under adult franchise.

Nevertheless, January 26th is undoubtedly ushering in a new era. It is a new experiment in India's life in an important respect. It is a novel experience for our millions to imagine a State without a King. Historians may tell them that India did have republican States at one time in her history. People have not even traditions left of such a political existence. There are even today in India *lakhs* of people who live in blessed ignorance of the status of and difference between the Governor-General, the Governors and their ministers. And there are ministers too who, when people crowd to have their *darshan* are innocent enough to imagine it to be a testimony of their popularity. The reality is, there are still not a few people to be found in the villages even near about district towns who are so simple as to believe that the Congress under Gandhiji defeated the British *raj* and has installed Pandit Jawaharlal as the King of India. They therefore throng in their thousands whenever he appears in public and regard his *darshan* as auspicious. A very large number of others again have at best a very vague realization of the changes that have come.

It is in the name of and for the sake of these countless humble countrymen of ours that we, the educated, better placed and organized classes, shall be declaring India a Sovereign Republic, and enacting for her a democratic form of Government. Though the franchise will be universal, those who will be able to make use of it will be a handful. Millions will be mere instruments, for better or for worse, in the hands of a few thousand. These millions today are voiceless and their vision is dim. Even as when they see the rain falling from the skies either to nourish or spoil their crops, they do not understand how it is made and poured from the clouds, so too they do not know who sets the

good or bad orders and administers over them to make their lives happy or miserable. Their wants are few and simple, and when even these are unavailable their misery is complete. Yet in their naivety they curse not any but their own fate. On the other hand when these basic needs are satisfied, they forget all they have suffered and pay willing homage to their rulers.

It is these millions who will constitute the new Republic. It is these millions who have to be made happy first, even with no more than two square meals a day of simple food, coarse linen and small huts, and since none can be so provided freely, it is these who have to be first given employment to enable them to earn these simple and few necessities of life.

Generations of these simple people have lived in India for centuries within the shadow of palatial buildings and have witnessed without anger or envy the plenty and the luxury of their occupants. If their simple wants have been met, they have not resented the riches of their Kings and *mahajans* with their gorgeous *durbars* and processions, or their giant industries and business houses. These millions are the first charge on the resources of India and the first responsibility of those who undertake to administer her affairs. It is over these that the President and his ministers and the Governors of the States and their ministers have constituted themselves guardians. The safeguarding of the interests of these is the first responsibility of the various elected representatives and public servants. It is for these that all those who have known the blessings of knowledge, wealth, authority, strength, or other attainments are expected to work. Each one of our acts, every political, economic, social, religious, educational or other activity must be tested on the touchstone of its effect, in the shape of blessings it will confer, on these millions living in tiny villages and jungles of India. Whether we discuss linguistic or multi-linguistic states, Hindi or English or regional languages, industrialization or handicraftism, centralization or decentralization, control or decontrol, orthodox Hindu Law or reformed Hindu Law, prohibition or drinks, *Vande Mataram* or *Jana Gana*, appointments or emoluments, let our test be what, if any, effect it will have on the life, comforts, morals and development of the dumb and resourceless millions.

May our Republic be a blessing to the least one of mankind. May it be a message of cheer to all our countrymen and may it promote Peace and Goodwill among all the nations of the world.

Wardha, 9-1-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

By Mahatma Gandhi

SELECTED LETTERS—I

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### A BROTHER'S INDICTMENT

Shri J. C. Kumarappa indicts me as follows :

"I have seen your article *Unfortunate* in the *Harijan* of the 1st instant. It was good of you to have "accepted" my version of the story! For a reader who has not the background of what had happened, it will not be so easy to understand. I am sorry, therefore, that some of the crucial facts did not find expression in the article. Neither Dr. Ghosh nor I had any cause for anger whatsoever; if there was any feeling at all it must have been a reflection of the exasperation prevalent throughout the country; nor was there any idea of *Satyagraha* involved, hence your surmises are wrong as I pointed out when I saw you.

"What happened had been stated by Dr. Ghosh to you in his letter of the 11th December, 1949. The West Bengal Government procures rice at Rs. 12/12/- per md. and sells at Rs. 17/8/- per md. I added that the right of the Government can arise only if it had already done its duty in the production of grain by help tendered in various ways. If not the Government has no right to claim any part of the production. If under such circumstances, Government with its backing of the police, comes to take away part of the production, the Government would play the role of a robber. When a robber comes to take away the valuables there is no duty laid on us to disclose where the jewellery has been kept. Hence, I said, "I can well understand the people doing away with their grain." When a highwayman appears is it wrong to throw away one's gold watch in a bush by the side? The Government does not appear as a "hungry enemy" to be fed. We should never object to such a course. But the Government appears, under the present circumstances, as a profiteer and a looter who is well fattened already. If you had half the concern you had shown towards the Government for the sufferings of the peasants you would have fully endorsed my statement. People do not work so that the Government should make money out of them. On the other hand Government exists so that the people may prosper.

"In fairness to the readers of *Harijan* and to myself I trust you will publish this letter."

I cannot — will not — enter into public controversy with self-defence against my own brother, for whatever charge he may lay against me.

I hold no brief for Government. I do not mind severest criticism of Government policy and administration, specially where it is against the interest of the poor. I do not see eye to eye with so many things which the Government has been doing, and in my own way protest against them. I could not refer to the criticism against procurement rates and Government help to cultivators for I had in my hand at the time the correspondence between the West Bengal Government and Shri J. C. Kumarappa, and a press statement of that Government, which showed different approaches to the question. It required a more careful study of the whole problem and I had no means of doing so. Shri J. C. Kumarappa and Dr. Ghosh, who had evoked the Government statement, could have met the Government defence of their policy by a studied reply; but Shri Kumarappa simply replied that his criticism did not refer to West Bengal, but the All-India Procurement Plan, as he had no detailed information regarding West Bengal;

and Dr. Ghosh, I understand, made no reply at all. Under the circumstances, I had to keep clear of that subject altogether, and examine only the remarks pertaining to sabotage. And, on that point, the above letter does not seem to call for any modification of my remarks.

Bombay, 10-1-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### BACK TO ENGLISH?

From Wardha comes the report that the first batch of Commerce Graduates through Hindi has come out. Quite in opposition to this comes the decision of the Government of Bombay to re-introduce English in standard seventh, two years after its abolition from that standard was agreed upon jointly by the Primary, Secondary and Basic Boards of Education. Since nothing has happened during the period requiring a revision of that policy, this is definitely a retrograde step. It not only tends to shelve the change of medium at the University stage, but also deals a severe blow to the teaching of craft (Government themselves having suggested a reduction in craft periods in standard seventh!), and tends to shift the emphasis again to English.

The reason put forth by our Government is that the life of English has been extended for 15 years by the Constituent Assembly. The reasoning is fallacious: For (1) 15 years is not the minimum but maximum period for complete replacement of English and (2) the period was not expected to be extended to educational policies of provinces. On the contrary, it was expected that the schools should utilize this period in preparing personnel knowing the regional languages and Hindi. The psychological effect of this revision will be very bad upon students as well as teachers. The emphasis shifts from craft to English once again, dealing a severe blow to craft teaching. It has been pointed out repeatedly that the first seven years is a unit in itself which should not be disturbed. It is true that nominally the teaching of English is optional. But, in the prevailing atmosphere, it will be compulsorily taught. Moreover, there will be administrative complications in Standard VIII, where some boys will have learnt some English already and not others.

It is understood that Government's revoking of their former decision has been brought about by the manoeuvrings of those vested interests who do not desire a change at the University stage, because that would affect the retention of English at schools. Instead of using their influence with Government circles to compel the University (after all a semi-official body) to change the medium, they worked at the other end to re-introduce English on the plea that their students will suffer at the university where the medium is still unchanged (and which they do not desire to see changed either). It is time Government is warned of those vested interests that surround them, who pretending all sympathy with changes in the medium, and swearing



by Hindi and regional languages actually work for resisting such changes. The sooner the Government sees through these interests, the better it is for their own prestige, and for the sound and rational educational progress of our nation.

A. L. MAZMUDAR

### THE CALL OF THE AGE

Learning should teach us to live our life so that we may be able to achieve individual moral progress along with social uplift. But unfortunately, the learning which we have developed in our country has, instead of teaching us that, even encouraged us to ignore our social duties and simply developed a curiosity to speculate about the other world and life after death. If religion consists in other-worldliness only, I would not call it religion at all. Religion should light our path at every step of our life; it should show its results in our everyday affairs and achieve individual good along with social progress. Religion which consists in simply thinking of the other world and ends in philosophic discussions only and is confined to the realm of imagination does not attract me.

A study of the history of man and of the essential elements of religious culture passed down from generation to generation in every age and country will show you the great stress laid on Non-violence, Truth, Self-control, Non-possession, and Non-stealing. These basic disciplines are as essential now as they were in the past ages. Only by rediscovering and applying them in life shall we be able to bring back peace and happiness on earth, and put an end to mutual strife and hostility. The low level to which we have degenerated puts to shame even animals and birds. They place more confidence in their own species and even in creatures of a different species than human beings which claim to be Nature's highest creation and take pride in the achievements of civilization and yet cannot trust one another.

The evils of black-marketing and corruption are rampant all around us. This was not so always. We know of a time when people shared their things with others with love. In times of famines and distress, enough rich people were found who gave over all their wealth in alms and opened all their stores for the poor and the needy and established free *annasatras* (dining halls). But today traders suck the blood of the poor. Black-marketing and corruption have brought about a moral chaos in human relations. I have been lately engaged in the *Vyavahara Shuddhi* (Clean Practice) movement. Some days ago in the course of my efforts, I happened to go to some leading merchants. I had prepared a pledge requiring the signatory not to indulge in dishonest dealings thereafter. I found that they were not willing to sign the pledge. It means that moneyed people do not want that these evils should go.

People go to religious temples and hear quite a lot of religious discourses; but there is no desire to put anything into practice. This is the main cause of our present demoralization and has resulted in creating a sense of mistrust against every one. Let us throw this dirt out. Let us bury this false and rotten life deep and resolve to create a world based on truth and trust. Let us purify our society and wash out all corruption and untruth and co-operate with those who work for it.

A thing that pains me most is that our political leaders are formulating very huge schemes for the "welfare of the people". But so long as in every nook and corner of our country we see people starving without food, going naked in the streets, suffering in the sick bed for want of medicines, these paper plans will do no good. It is sad to see the way poor people live their life. We often hear it charged against them that they are idlers who do not want to work. But poverty has deprived them of their capacity and urge to work. Unless they get full meals, their life cannot be a contented one. Where

is the good of preaching religion to them? Let us bend all our energies in creating in them the strength to work by first improving their lot. This is practical religion. It is through serving the poor people that we derive greatest happiness. Religion cannot be divorced from practical life. Unless we learn to co-ordinate both we cannot progress.

There is a wide belief that the great disciplines of Truth, Non-violence, Self-control, etc., are meant for *sannyasis* only. I for one believe that these great observances are more necessary for householders than *sannyasis*. If men of the world lead righteous life and keep their word even at any cost, there would be no litigation, no crimes, the laws and courts we boast of will have no use for us. The pride and demand for more and more laws is not by any means a sign of progress, but rather something to be ashamed of. Laws may be good and executors of law may be very clever, but if men behave morally, speak truth, and observe non-violence in life, where would there be any necessity of laws for them?

People do not get rich without thieving; to earn by dishonest means is also a kind of thieving. He alone is free from this sin who earns his bread with the sweat of his brow; for in self-help there is no room for stealing. Those who have imbibed true religious spirit, cannot have possessions. There must be a limit to the necessities of man. Non-stealing and non-possession lead to the spiritual development of man. Covetousness is sinful. It is essential to develop truthfulness in business.

Self-control also is an important discipline of life. We often excuse ourselves by saying that in procreating children we are passive subjects of Natural forces. But even animals and birds practise self-control until their young ones become self-dependent. So too it is the duty of parents to observe self-restraint until their child grows up to a sufficient age, and to give it good training. It is idle to talk of religion and salvation with a life of self-indulgence.

Take it from me that the five great disciplines are not confined to *sannyasis*, but are obligatory upon householders also. Happiness will follow their observance. True human religion consists in goodwill and good conduct towards others. It is the need of the day. The greed for money which we have developed at present is an evil. It has stuck to us like an addictent. That is why we love to earn in the black market. But remember that those who amass money by dishonest means do not become happy. Real happiness does not lie in riches. A truly religious man alone is happy in this world.

Let us take a pledge to abstain from doing wrong from this day. If we commit errors, let us repent for them and perform penance. This is the call of this age. Learning, talents, intellectual attainments are worthless if we cannot put this into practice. Talents should be used for the service and reform of mankind. Our life and acts have become showy. They might deceive the world; they cannot deceive the spirit.

In brief, let us think of true religion; let us keep on right path, purify our life, mend our ways and be self-dependent. Let us give up our efforts to live upon others' labour and enthrone truth and morality in our life.

KEDARNATH

(Adapted from Gujarati *Prabudhha Jain*, being a speech at Bombay during the Paryushan Week).

### BAPU'S LETTERS TO MIRA

[1924-1948]

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### GLEANINGS

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**VILLAGE INDUSTRIES v. FACTORIES \***

Let me at the outset tell you that though I have learnt to ply the *charkha*, I do not know the how and the why of it. There was no place to handicrafts in my education and by nature I have little aptitude for this work. I have been taught reading and writing and I carry on my work and render a little service only with that implement. So, only experts will be able to tell you your technical matters. I can tell you something only about the philosophy of home industries — its meaning, its rationale, etc.

Man started manufacturing articles to meet his wants. First he made these by hand. Man is distinguished from other animals by the possession of hands. So, in days of old, hand was the only machine and tool combined in one. Then he invented later some tools to give help and strength to his hands. These tools helped him in perfecting the art of his hands and for that purpose they were necessary too. But later on, greed for money seized him and he installed factories to take place of hand-tools. The aim of tools is to produce articles for wants, that of factories to produce them for money. They were started not to produce for our needs, but for making money.

Nature has produced materials sufficient enough to meet man's needs. But factory-owners started exploiting nature in unnatural ways. Thereby they have created 'illth' in place of 'wealth'. The duty of a doctor is to help the patient to regain his health and maintain it in a fit condition; but when money becomes the motive for practising medicine, he is tempted to prolong his illness. The factory also does the same. Instead of meeting man's wants, it multiplies them. It regards the people as children. Just as children throw away old toys when they see new ones, so also the factory-owners tempt the people to throw old articles and get new ones. The result is that we make ourselves dependent upon the will of the factory-owners. We must, therefore, give up our infatuation for factories. If we crave for more things than needed, we become slaves of the factory. There is no happiness in slavery. Our troubles increase in the same proportion as our wants. We must, therefore produce to meet our necessities, and behind production there must be disciplined and controlled organization.

We must try to know the world around us. The villagers of old knew their world well. But we do not know our own world and move in it like blind men. The factories prevent us from knowing our world. We produce wheat in our fields and calculate its cost on the basis of expenses incurred in producing the quantity grown, but we cannot get that price in the market. The price of wheat depends upon the price of wheat produced in far-off countries of the

world like Australia, America, Argentina, etc. We produce foodgrains and we consume as much as required, but in order to purchase our other necessities, we must sell the surplus. But as Australia and America produce more wheat, we are not able to get a remunerative price for our produce, and we incur loss in selling it. The more we produce, the more we lose. Thus the world is going topsy-turvy. If we do not know our world, we shall continue to lead a life of slavery.

In olden days, people used to say that foodgrains must be cheap, but today they want to make them dear; otherwise, our agriculturists would starve. Why has economic reasoning become so altered? Because, village handicrafts have been ruined. Goods are manufactured in cities and sent to villages. In this way wealth has been drained away from villages into cities, which have become rich by exploiting villages. This exploitation goes on in various ways. Children have to be sent to the city for their education, and along with them the wealth of the village goes to the city in the shape of fees. This is not all. The young who go to the cities come back as *babu-sahebs*. What a pitiable fate is the youth — the hope of the villages — reduced to! The city deprives him even of his mental powers. Thus wealth as well as intellectual power of the village is exploited. Even poets, who used to prefer life in the peaceful atmosphere of the village, have fled to cities, because they want to *sell* their poems and they can be sold only in the city markets. Thus, wealth, strength, ability and art, all desert the villages. Similarly, labourers also crowd cities to work in factories in the hope of earning money, and become parts of the machines which they attend to. Through illusion, they imagine that they are running the mills, but, poor people! they do not know that it is mills that really run them!

If you work with your tools, you are the lord of your tools. But in factories, you have to work as the machine bids you — that is, the machine lords it over you. An artist gives exquisite expression to his art if he works with his instruments. He pours out his soul in his work. He gets the pleasure of working out his conception. But in a factory a worker produces according to the design given to him in a ready manipulated manner. He only sees designs being turned over in the process of their manufacture. Since he cannot use his brain in his work, how can he develop himself? A factory worker does not manufacture any goods himself. He simply produces parts — that too in a peculiar way. These parts are given a concrete shape in various parts of the machine at various places. The worker sees only a part of the thing being produced before his eyes. He does not know for what purpose that part is being manufactured. The process of manufacture is divided and takes place simultaneously in various parts of the factory and only when all these parts are

\* Presidential address at the Saranjam Sammelan at Sevapuri, Banaras, on 15-11-49.



assembled together, some of the workers know what thing has been exactly produced. By working in this lifeless manner, the poor worker loses his power of imagination.

With the growth of cities and factories, our Government has also shifted to the city. The village *panchayats* of olden days have ceased to exist. These village *panchayats* could not practise much tyranny on the people, because they were very near them. The modern urban governments are more tyrannical than the worst of them. But modern tyranny is not visible, because it is practised from a distance. In the village life was open. It was possible to find out promptly who was at fault and where the fault lay. But today! Recently the price of sugar has gone up and stocks have disappeared from shops. Do you know how this has happened? At least, I do not. When I too do not know it fully, how can a poor villager know it? We get a slap on the face, but we do not know who gives the slap. We receive hits by brickbats on our heads, but we do not know where they come from. People are suffering for want of foodgrains, cloth and sugar, but no one knows how scarcity of these commodities has occurred. That is why Bapu used to say that we would have freedom only when we shifted the capital from Delhi and installed in the seven *lakhs* of villages. Only when that happens will we be able to see life in the people and establish *panchayat raj* as before. We would know then why sugar was controlled and why prices went up and whether it was due to the foolishness of the leaders in Delhi or on account of the dishonesty of merchants. At present, leave alone the ordinary people, even educated people do not know these things. The retailer accuses the wholesaler, the wholesaler blames the factory-owner, and the factory-owner points to the sugar-cane-grower — *kisan*. Thus, everyone throws the blame on another. We are at our wits' end in tracing the real culprit. We are unable to know our world today. So many huge schemes are launched that one does not know what has happened and what shape our life will take. If the world we had to deal with was rather small, we would be able to understand it. If the price of *gur* increased even by six pies in the village, we could persuade the dealers or boycott them and thus control its price. In the present situation, whom should we blame among the leaders in Delhi and whom can we boycott?

Our economic plight appears serious like a heavy earthquake or a huge flood. God alone can save us from it. All our activities have become so complicated that we do not understand anything. We buy milk in the cities, but we do not realize that it is blood and not milk. The cows are half-fed, the calves are also starved or killed at times, and all the milk is drawn from the cows for being consumed in the cities. But

we do not realize this, because we do not see them with our own eyes. It reminds me of an anecdote about Guru Nanak. He once arrived at a village in the course of his wanderings. A landlord invited him for meals, and made good arrangements for his food. But no sooner Nanak-sahib sat down for meals and saw the food than he got up again. The landlord was perplexed and was anxious to know what was wrong with the food. Nanak asked him to crush the bread and see what was wrong. When the landlord took it in his hand and crushed it, blood came out of it. Nanak showed him the blood and said: "This is full of blood. How can I eat it?" Man becomes what he eats.

Our body is a temple. We must keep it always clean. We must have control over our economic wants. Our necessities should not be produced in a way, which would mean exploitation of the villages. That is the reason why Bapu was opposed to the production of anything which would injure the villages. Political power also should not be such as would result in the regimentation of man, whether it is bureaucracy or democracy.

J. B. KRIPALANI

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