

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## QUESTION BOX

### ROMAN SPELLINGS OF INDIAN NAMES

Q. Is it not high time that we begin correcting according to our age-old pronunciations anglicized Indian proper nouns which are wrongly spelt by the English ex-rulers? Ganga, Yamuna, Mumbai (not Bombay), Kanpur, Banaras, Lakhanau, Bangala, Panjab, Bharuch (not Broach), Mathura (not Muttra), Tapi (not Tapti), Narmada, Vasai (not Bassein), Dhaka (not Dacca), Himalaya (not Himalayas) etc., can be cited as specimens. Though the attempt is already begun in Northern India, it is still diffident and half-hearted.

A. It is quite proper that these spellings should be rectified.

K. G. MASHRUWALA

### B. C. G. VACCINE FOR TUBERCULOSIS

The Directorate-General of Health Services of the Government of India has published a Press Note dated 21st February last declaring its "full agreement with the views expressed in a statement issued by twelve wellknown doctors", namely Dr. B. C. Roy, Premier of West Bengal; Dr. Jivraj N. Mehta, Premier of Baroda; Dr. K. S. Ray, President of the Indian Medical Council; Dr. K. C. K. E. Raja, Director-General of Health Services, Government of India; Dr. R. B. Bilimoria, Dr. A. C. Ukil, Dr. R. B. Lal, Dr. B. B. Yodh, Dr. K. Vasudeva Rao, Dr. K. L. Wig, Dr. S. K. Sen and Dr. P. V. Benjamin — the last eight being members of the Standing Technical Committee of the Tuberculosis Association of India. The conclusion to which the signatories have arrived is stated as follows:

"As the result of a careful study of the literature on the subject, we are convinced (1) that B. C. G. vaccination is efficacious and that, if it is carried out on a mass scale, it can be expected to reduce tuberculosis mortality in India very considerably, (2) that it is entirely harmless and (3) that segregation of the vaccinated is not essential.

"We are also convinced that B. C. G. vaccination is only one of the many measures to be employed for the control of tuberculosis and that other steps such as improvement of the standard of living including better housing, improved sanitation and adequate nutrition are equally necessary."

It would be foolhardy for a layman like me to challenge the opinion of the eminent and trustworthy signatories, supported as it is by the testimony of

experts of other countries also, regarding the efficacy of this drug. Nevertheless there are a few cogent reasons for my suggestion that the vaccination should be voluntary and must not be actively pushed: namely, there is a section, however small, which has religious and moral objections to vaccination and the use of animal products. The scruples of this section must be respected. There is also a section, which is as keenly devoted to the research of other systems of treatment of disease, one of them being nature-cure. Every system finds some people who willingly offer themselves to be the subjects of experiments even at the risk of suffering and death. They should be allowed freedom and chance to do so. And lastly, though I may not be qualified to challenge the opinion of the medical authorities, I humbly claim the liberty to take their confident assertion that the vaccine is "entirely harmless" with some doubt. I have still to know a drug — whether allopathic, homeopathic, *ayurvedic* or *yunani* — and I may add that I have still to know a nature-cure system also which is "entirely harmless". I may humbly say that if my physicians have been eminent and experienced practitioners of the various systems, I have the experience of having been a patient of lifelong standing. I understand that physicians use a term "patient's idiosyncrasy" when a drug regarded by them as harmless proves otherwise. They also explain some evil effects under the term "allergy". They might thus shift the blame from the drug to the patient, but the fact stands that a so-called harmless drug is not so to every one subjected to it. It might be that those medical authorities who have objected to the use of B. C. G. have had the experience of idiosyncratic or allergic patients also. I also understand that doctors prefer to use the term "arrested" to "cured", when a disease has ceased to show symptoms of existence. I think they should rather prefer to say that no harmful effects of B. C. G. have yet been discovered by them to saying that it is "entirely harmless". This is all the more important because the eminent doctors who have issued the statement have made a careful study only "of the literature on the subject".

If my arguments are reasonable, I request the Director-General to modify his policy accordingly. I am glad that the Directorate is alive to the necessity of other positive measures.

Wardha, 28-2-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA



## GANDHIJI ON TRUTH AND PRAYER

(1)

[The first paragraph of the following letter of Bapu is a reply to my questions involved in the statement, "God is Truth", viz. God is equal to Truth? God has Truth?

The second paragraph is Bapu's comment on an illustration I gave. The picture of chickens inside a net with their mother hen outside of it, was the illustration. And underneath the picture was written, *Too Near But Too Far*.

Bapu was a *karmayogi*. So the place of work in man's destiny is emphasized in the last paragraph.

— P. G. MATHEW ]

9-7-'32

My dear Mathew,

In 'God is Truth', is certainly does not mean 'equal to' nor does it merely mean, 'is truthful'. Truth is not a mere attribute of God, but He is That. He is nothing if He is not That. Truth in Sanskrit means *Sat*. *Sat* means Is. Therefore Truth is implied in *Is*. God is, nothing else is. Therefore the more truthful we are, the nearer we are to God. We are only to the extent that we are truthful.

The illustration of hen and her chickens is good but better still is that of the Lord and his serf. The latter is far from the former, because both are mentally so far apart though physically so near. Hence Milton's 'Mind is its own place' and the *Gita's* 'man is the author of his own freedom or bondage'.

It is to realize this freedom that I would have us to labour as pariahs and labourers.

Love,

Bapu

(2)

[Bapu was not only a man of prayer but also a believer in intercessory prayer. The following letter addressed to me testifies to that. On the release from his last imprisonment, Bapu had to face a very difficult situation. He would then fast for 'kindly light'. My importunities not to do so occasioned the writing of this shortest of all his letters to me. When his heart was full, his words were few.

— P. G. Mathew ]

Sevagram

13-11-1944

My dear Mathew,

Yours. Pray that God may guide me aright.

Love,

Bapu

[Note:-The first volume of Mahadevbhai Desai's Gujarati and Hindi Diary for this period reproduces the first of the above letters. In both, the first sentence omits the word 'not' between 'does' and 'mean' and the translations by the editors follow the print. I therefore asked Prof. Mathew and Shri Narhari Parikh to re-examine their originals. Prof. Mathew certifies that the reading as given by him above is correct. Shri Parikh reports

that the original in Mahadevbhai's Diary reads "does does mean". He thought that the repetition of the word 'does' was a slip and read it as 'does mean' and translated it accordingly. On a consideration of the context, however, he agrees that the second 'does' is a slip for 'not'. The possessors of the Gujarati and Hindi editions would do well to correct this mistake both in the original and the translation. I suggest that facsimiles of both the original letter of Gandhiji and this page of the Diary might be made and preserved.

Rao, 12-3-'49

— K. G. M. ]

## A FORTNIGHT OF WHOLE-TIME KHADI PRODUCTION

To commemorate the first anniversary of the martyrdom of Bapuji, the members of the Nai Talim family at Sevagram performed *akhanda khadi yagna*, from 30th January to 12th February 1949. All the various processes connected with the production of *khadi* were carried on simultaneously for 12 hours from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. every day.

The Nai Talim family at Sevagram consists of three groups :

1. The Anand Niketan or the Basic School.
2. The Uttara Buniyadi Bhavan or the Post-basic College.
3. The Nai Talim Bhavan or the Graduate Teachers' Training College.

Members from all these sections co-operated in the work—cloth-making being taken as the unit.

The average attendance per day was 96 and during the thirteen days, 80 square yards of cloth was produced in 2,410 hours. The net income came to Rs. 97-15-3—the average income per hour thus being 8 pies. This figure would have been higher if all the members had been of the standard of the seventh grade of the Basic School. 855 hours of work was put in by the members of the Nai Talim Bhavan ( Teachers' Training College ) who had only 80 to 90 hours of training in spinning. The Anand Niketan, Uttara Buniyadi Bhavan and the staff contributed 800, 629 and 126 hours respectively.

### SELF-SUFFICIENCY OF SCHOOLS

Bapu always used to tell us that Basic Education can and should be self-supporting; in fact for him "self-support is the acid test of its reality".

Cloth-making could be treated as a unit of co-operative work for the three highest grades of the Basic School. During the *yagna* the income per hour came to 8 pies per student. In a full school the strength of the three highest grades would be 93, including three teachers. If they work for two hours for a day, the earning of the group would be Rs. 8 per day or Rs 192 for a month of 24 working days. The average pay of a teacher being Rs. 50 per month, it is clear that the pay of the teachers of these three grades can easily be met.



## CLOTH SELF-SUFFICIENCY

In 2,410 hours 80 square yards of cloth was produced, or it took 30 hours to produce one square yard. In a month of 24 working days, working two hours a day, a child could thus produce 1.6 square yards, which would mean an annual production of 19 square yards of cloth. This would be enough to meet the clothing requirements of our children.

MASS PRODUCTION VS. PRODUCTION  
BY THE MASSES

In 30 hours, one square yard of cloth was produced or in one hour at least 1.2 x 36 of cloth can be produced. According to the latest statistics there are 9 crore children of the school-going age. If all these children were to devote two hours per day to the production of cloth as a part of the educational programme, then on the average 0.6 crore yards of cloth could be produced in a day. This would mean a production of 144 crore yards of cloth in a year of 240 working days.

The present annual output of the textile mills of India and Pakistan is 467.5 crore yards.

So it is clear that if *Nai Talim* is introduced throughout India, it would help to solve the clothing problem. Here I would like to draw the attention of the Education and the Commerce and Industries Departments of the provincial governments to this aspect of *Nai Talim*.

One of the fundamental objectives of education is to help in solving the economic problems of the nation. We are glad to place before the nation the results of this small experiment of ours, which shows how easily universal *Nai Talim* could help in solving our clothing problem as a by-product of the sound education of the children of the nation.

M. A. SATHIANATHAN

## PROGRESS OF KHADI IN MADRAS

The Government of Madras Firka Development Department has sent the following for information: "You might know that this Government have drawn up an intensive *khadi* scheme which received the blessings of Gandhiji himself and have been implementing it since 1946. I enclose a copy of the latest report, showing the work so far done by this Government in the *khadi* field. We are going further ahead and extending the scheme in a modified form to more areas in the province and also to regulate the production and sale of *khadi* in order to ensure its genuineness and the payment of the prescribed wages to the artisans engaged in its production."

Statement showing the progress of work in the Government Intensive Khadi centres from the inception of the scheme up to 31-12-1948

	Cotton sold (value in Rs.)	Yarn purchased (quantity in Lbs.)	Khadi produced (in yds.)
Vellakkovil	111951	180034	421202
Avanashi	41178	115683	339736
Puliankurichchi	15469	43744	95891

Kotauratla	45494	44588	97850
Guravareddipalem	14470	10169	29694
Erragondapalem	1302	923	2295
Payyanur	43240	51872	157304
Total	273104	447013	1143972
Sold to A. I. S. A. +	15685		

	Khadi sold quantity in yds.	Value in Rs.	Subsidy paid at 0-0-9 per hank to self-spinners
Vellakkovil	190911	291230	16354
Avanashi	193621	290406	6412
Puliankurichchi	68482	113032	4327
Kotauratla	45419	38277	3999
Guravareddipalem	8346	11405	19730
Erragondapalem	2451	3017	37479
Payyanur	97794	131323	1164
Total	607024	878690	89465

Madras, 10-2-'49

## TRAIN BEARERS OR TORCH BEARERS?

In the West, the bride wears a wedding robe which has a long train — a superfluous flow of garment sweeping the floor. This wholly unnecessary and cumbersome appendage is carried by little boys, 'Pages' — "the train bearers". Our country is fast becoming a "train bearer" of outmoded methods of Western countries.

The Government of India is going ahead with the putting up of artificial fertilizer factories and sending out young men to be initiated into the "secrets" of this industry. Agricultural countries like Australia and the United States of America have found from experience that stimulating the soil by chemical manures produced seemingly good crops, but that these products were deficient both in mineral and vitamins content and that the plants themselves were weak in disease resistance, to pests and parasites that attack them. While these chemical fertilizers helped in using up the humus already present in the soil, they did not help in replacing the needed humus for the next crop, thus helping merely in the rapid exhaustion of the soil. With this experience they are now turning towards ways and means of feeding the soil by following the technique of organic farming.

To this end their scientists are hard at work to discover methods of feeding the soil rather than merely stimulating it. It is reported that J. W. Frazer and Eric Eweson have developed a method of composting organic waste of cities. In their plant in Pennsylvania they use factory waste and sewage matter. They claim that soil already exhausted can be refertilized in two years by the use of such compost manure.

Is it not high time that the Agricultural Research Department turned to such up to date methods and be torch bearers of progress rather than run after the discarded chemical fertilizers?

J. C. KUMARAPPA



# HARIJAN

March 27

1949

## THE SARVODAYA CONFERENCE

### II

I have referred to Dr. E. Stanley Jones's *Mahatma Gandhi—An Interpretation* in my last article. He has introduced to the Western world the conception of Sarvodaya in the following words:

"The other is a Movement to be called Sarvodaya, literally, 'total uplift'. This Movement will have no organization. It will be the projection of a spirit to which those who will inwardly accept the central principles of Mahatma Gandhi—truth and non-violence—will be considered to belong. It will be a spiritual fraternity. Once a year as many as possible will meet in a *mela*, or semi-religious fair, and discuss what they can do to further the spirit of the Mahatma in India and in the world. Membership will be open to anyone, anywhere throughout the world. One can send a card to the Secretary, Sarvodaya Movement, Wardha, C. P., India, stating that he considers himself a member, but this is not necessary. Simple acceptance of the Gandhian principles of truth and non-violence will automatically make him a member."

This reference brought a number of letters from various parts of the world from friends desiring association with the Samaj. The second resolution passed at the Conference welcomed these friends to the Samaj and pointed out that not less than eight items of the constructive programme were common to many parts of the world. For instance, basic education, handicrafts, prohibition, resolving racial and colour conflicts, service of the lepers and so on; and of course, the cause of Peace and the message of *khadi*. The mention of the last item might cause surprise. But as was pointed out by Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar at one of the informal meetings and by Shri Vinoba in his first day's address to the Conference, *khadi* is the centre of Gandhiji's constructive programme not only for India but for the whole world. It must be remembered that *khadi* is not confined to cotton fabrics only. Home-spun and home-woven woollen and silk apparel is also *khadi* and on a full consideration of the Sarvodaya ideal, it should not be difficult for one to realize that not only in India but in the most mechanized and industrialized countries of Europe and America also, every home must become as self-reliant as possible about this necessity of life. In fact, as Shri Vinoba had pointed out some months ago, in a civilized society the first necessity of man is not so much food as cloth. You can go about anywhere in the world without feeling ashamed even if you have remained hungry for some days. But modern civilized society does not allow you to move about naked even in all the parts of your house, and hence even though it may not

be possible for every man to grow his own food, he should produce at least his own cloth; and fortunately this is much simpler and more within one's own power than the production of food. Besides, on the moral plane, *khadi* is particularly the emblem of peaceful and non-violent order. It is suggestive of industriousness, bread labour, non-exploitation and self-expression. I do not know how far this will be realized by the admirers of the Sarvodaya Movement. But as Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar boldly prophesied, a day will come when this proposition perhaps will be accepted as obvious and an Indian going abroad will not hesitate to put the *charkha* and the *hand-loom* before the most industrialized people of the world.

Thereafter Shri Vallabhwami, Secretary of the Sarva Seva Sangh, placed before the Conference the report of what had transpired between the last Conference and this one in the matter of the co-ordination of all the constructive activities under a common name and organization. I hope he will publish a detailed report in due course. But I may point out here two of the decisions made by that body. First, that it will hereafter relieve the Sarvodaya Samaj Committee from the task of convening the Sarvodaya Conference during the National Week; and secondly, it has decided to publish a monthly magazine in Hindustani called *Sarvodaya* under the editorship of Shri Kashinath Trivedi. Details of this magazine have not yet been worked out, but it is hoped that the new magazine will not take long to appear.

After the execution of this business, the Conference discussed some of the pressing problems of the day. The people were groaning under the evils of controls, profiteering, black-marketing, bribery, corruption, exorbitant prices, etc. It was felt that there was an increasing tendency to look to the Government alone for the removal of the evils. The Governments as at present constituted know only one way of fighting against evils and that is through punishments. But the experience is that punishment hardly ever puts an end to evils. Unless the people themselves are awakened morally, mere penal measures cannot check them, for, those also who actually administer the State come from the same society as the people. They cannot have a much higher moral standard than the society in which they have been brought up. This is particularly so when the task of administration is not confined to a selected and well-tested class but is open to all classes. This makes it necessary that the morals of the whole society should be raised if evils have to be put a stop to. This topic was ably put forth by Shri Gulzarilal Nanda, and his suggestion for a *Movement for Right Action* has been already published last week.

Shri Mamasahab Phadke of Godhra in a very feeling speech brought the Harijan problem to the notice of the Conference. Since the removal of social disabilities of the Harijans through the machinery of law by the various Governments of Free India, a false sense



of complacency had arisen in the mind of several workers. They felt that the Harijan problem as such was now over and that the Harijans were now placed on an equal footing with the backward classes, who, though never regarded as untouchables like the Harijans, were economically and educationally equally backward and oppressed. Some people thought that it was possible now to consider the whole problem from a common angle. As a matter of fact, Shri Phadke pointed out, there was a great difference between the problem of the Harijans and the problem of the backward classes. In the first place, though the disabilities of the Harijans were legally removed, they were still existent as a matter of fact in society. Secondly, touchable backward classes generally lived in compact areas, where they are often in large majorities. The Harijans as a rule live in small groups of a few houses, scattered in various villages and there was hardly a place where they were in a majority over others. Therefore, they had always to remain at the mercy of the *savarna* Hindus and it was impossible for them to seek the aid of law even when they were entitled to do so. Political workers were interested in putting forth the claims of backward classes, because they commanded votes on account of their majority. It was not so with the Harijans. A social worker with political aspirations had not much to gain by becoming a Harijan worker. The uplift of the Harijans, therefore, could only be really achieved if there was a change of heart in the *savarnas*.

Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar also took the opportunity to place before the audience his scheme of the Gandhi Museum and the collection of Gandhian literature. Until it is decided where things associated with Gandhiji are to be ultimately preserved, it has been arranged for the time being to collect and exhibit them at the Prince of Wales Museum and the Gandhian literature in the Royal Asiatic Society's Library, Town Hall, Bombay.

Naturally, the most important thought-contributions made at the Conference were by its President, Dr. Rajendraprasad, Shri Vinoba and Shri Kaka Kalelkar. Shri Shankarrao Dev, Acharya Kripalani, Mr. Horace Alexander, Miss Agatha Harrison and some others also took a prominent share. Some of these will be reported in these columns. But, for a detailed report of the Conference, the readers must await the publication by the organizers of the Conference. A detailed report in Hindustani of the Conference held last year is now available from Shri R. S. Dhotre, Secretary, Sarvodaya Samaj Samiti, Wardha.

Wardha, 16-3-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

(Concluded)

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## CASKETS AND ADDRESSES

Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar, the Organizer of the Gandhi Smarak Sangraha, has issued the following statement:—

Gandhiji had made it a regular feature of his tours to auction away the caskets containing the addresses presented to him. They are, therefore, scattered all over India instead of being preserved in one place.

It is proposed to collect all the addresses presented to Mahatmaji, for the Gandhi Smarak Sangraha.

We want to prepare a day-to-day itinerary of Gandhiji's travels all over the country, during the thirtythree years that he spent here after his return from South Africa. The addresses will help us to check the dates of this itinerary.

Gandhiji had in his characteristic fashion, issued instructions to all persons or institutions wishing to present him with addresses, not to load them with encomiums, but to give a short history of the place and a detailed account of constructive work being done in the locality. All this information will now be useful to the biographer of Gandhiji as also to the historian of India's struggle for Independence and its parallel regeneration.

Those in possession of these addresses should kindly send them to the Manager, Gandhi Smarak Sangraha, Town Hall, Bombay 1.

Those who wish to do so, may kindly send the caskets also to form part of the Gandhian Museum. These will represent contemporary Indian art both traditional and popular.

## VIEWS ON THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

### II\*

#### SCRIPT

Now I want to say a few words about the script. In my opinion the Nagari script can be a fine instrument to unify India. Not only the national language but the provincial languages also should be written in it. This does not mean the condemnation of the provincial scripts. Provincial languages may be written in their own scripts but it would be easier for students to learn languages, if all the provincial languages could be written in the Nagari script. I speak this from experience.

It was necessary for me to learn many of the Indian languages and in doing so, I had to spend a considerable time to learn a new script for each. If all those languages could be written in the Nagari script, I could learn them with one-fourth as much labour as I had to undergo; and my eyesight would not have deteriorated. If all provincial languages are written in the Nagari script, everyone would find it convenient to learn the other's language. At the same time, it is my opinion that our national language should be written in Telugu, Malayalam, Bangali, Kannad, etc. which are perfect

Concluding portion of speech delivered by Shri Vinoba Bhave on the occasion of the Rashtrabhasha Pracharak Sammelan held at Wardha on 26th February, 1949.



scripts. If a Kannad man desires to learn Hindi, he should in the beginning learn it through the Kannad script. This would be a very easy way of learning. Once he learns the language, he will be able to learn the Nagari script in a short time. To conclude, I opine that all the languages should be written in the national script and the national language should be written in all the scripts. To give special attention towards the national language does not mean that the provincial languages and scripts are subsidiary. They have their own specialities and their study should continue. My suggestion will prove helpful in such study. Everyone would benefit from the other and the nation as a whole would progress.

The work of national language should be done with सर्वोपनिषेध, i. e. without opposition to anyone. Lord Buddha propagated his ideology in the Pali language. Shankaracharya took the help of Sanskrit. There was no conflict in their choice. Lord Buddha was solely devoted to service. He wanted to serve the whole of mankind by serving the people around him. He therefore preferred the Pali language. Shankaracharya was rational and he wanted to spread his ideology all over the country. Therefore, he took recourse to Sanskrit—the then national language. This is an instance which illustrates two different view-points, namely, devotion to service and wide diffusion of knowledge. It is frequently urged by the supporters of Hindustani that the national language should be such as would be fully understood at least by the masses of North India. The supporters of Hindi urge that the national language should be such as would be easily understood by people all over the country. These two lines of thought are not contradictory, but they are complementary. Thus the supporters of Hindustani are the followers of Lord Buddha while the supporters of Hindi are the followers of Shankaracharya. If both of them understand this distinction in the right perspective, they can unite and the problem would be solved soon.

#### SCRIPT REFORM

In the end, I would like to speak something about script reform. It is my opinion that there is need for some reform in the Nagari script. It is not my intention to say that the present Nagari script should cease to function, so long as it is not reformed. It may continue as it is, but reforms are necessary on scientific grounds. Others also need reforms in the script but they look at them from the point of view of convenience in the typewriting machine. I regard the convenience of the machine as a minor thing. To think in this way is not befitting manliness. I want the reforms from the point of view of knowledge. To chisel a script for machine convenience, is just like cutting the foot to suit the shoe. We have to make the shoe to adjust the foot. If, however, the script is deficient from a scientific point of view, then it is subject to reform. The reforms I need in the Nagari script are published in a Marathi booklet called लोकनागरी लिपि (Lokanagari Lipi). I shall not speak to you about them all in detail here. That is not our present subject.

But I would like to place before you what I regard as the fundamental reform.

The practice of writing conjunct consonants (युक्ताक्षर) in the present day Nagari and other Indian scripts is scientifically wrong. This thing became particularly clear to me when I studied different scripts. The words are wrongly split up in the present day Nagari script. If in English we split the word "godown" as "god-own", it would be ridiculous. In the same way, if we split up the compound word कृष्ण as कृ and ण, it becomes equally ridiculous. In fact, the two separate parts are कृष् and ण. कृष् is the main word and ण is the suffix. कृष् means 'to cultivate'. कृष्ण therefore means 'one who cultivates'. The word came to mean the black colour because cultivators who work in the sun are black. Similarly, if we separate the two letters in the word पत as प and त it would be wrong. The right division would be पत् and र. पत् means 'to fall down'. The word is thus assigned the meaning, namely a thing which falls down a tree, i. e. a leaf. The word बुद्यान is again wrongly split up as बु, या and न. The right division would be बुद्-या and न. The prefix बुद् means 'high up', the root या means 'to go' and न is a suffix. The whole word thus comes to mean 'to go high up'. A garden should be developed on a place above the level of the city to get fresh air and thus a garden on such a high level came to be known as बुद्यान. Today this word is commonly used for the term garden.

In the present system of writing compound letters it is not possible to find out the right meaning of the word. For this reason, I suggest that all conjunct consonants should be written with the help of the हलन्त sign. This will render Nagari and other scripts scientific and simple. Conjunct consonants in Bangala are the most difficult. Similar difficulty is experienced in Kannad. In the system as it continues today, children require three years to learn all the conjunct consonants. In the first year of their education, they learn simple letters. In the second year, they learn simple conjunct consonants and in the third year, the remaining ones. Noticing these difficulties, a doubt arises in one's mind as to whether the pandits who formulated such scripts were cruel enemies of the interests of children. If, however, the हलन्त sign is used, much of the time of the children can be saved. Those who are engaged in the spread of literacy know very well the difficulties experienced and the time wasted in teaching compound letters. If they practise this reform, they should come to know as to how easily compound letters can be taught to illiterates. I can say this with authority as I have a personal experience of this while teaching students. By this reform, time will be saved, and at the same time it would be possible to increase the knowledge—perspective of the students. I have suggested other reforms as well. But I shall not take your time in explaining them to you.

These are some of my views regarding the national language, the Nagari script and script reform which I have placed before you in brief.



## ADAPTABILITY

One of the characteristics of mankind is adaptability to environment. The lower orders of creation live and have their being under the conditions ordained by nature. Man alone amongst the creations of nature can within limits control his environment. To the extent we are able to do that we could be said to have advanced from the jungle animals. Many of us, who are too lazy to find out things for ourselves and who have too much inertia to take an active part, take the easier course of imitating those who have controlled their environment.

With the advent of Swaraj, all types of people in India are anxious to mould our surroundings in a way that will indicate advance in the various walks of life. With the great desire to become rich quickly, we are inclined to imitate the ways of the United States of America, forgetting that the conditions in America are vastly different from those prevailing in our country. If the Americans have set up a pattern of life and have gone about conditioning nature to fit into this pattern, it does not follow that that same pattern and the same methods will apply to our country. There is a great deal of effort made from various quarters to import all things American. This tendency may spell ruin to our country, especially in connection with the efforts made to increase production through agriculture.

The conditions of land and land management in America reflect a set of circumstances which do not prevail in our country. The United States has barely 6% of the world's population while it contains about one fifth of the crop land of the world. This indicates that America has enough land to be wasteful in their agricultural methods. Their greed to produce more does not take into consideration the loss in fertility of the soil. As soon as land shows any decrease in fertility, they can easily shift on to more productive land. Therefore they are still at the stage where pioneering conditions prevail. Under such circumstances the recuperative power of the land does not enter so heavily into the equation. They can afford to ignore land as an organism. Under such circumstances they have taken to mechanization. Of course, they can produce a great deal with mechanical power when it is calculated on per capita basis.

In India, on the other hand, our land is considerably limited. It has to feed nearly one fifth of the world in population. Hence we cannot afford to be wasteful in our methods. The recuperative power of land becomes a very important factor in our calculations. When we cultivate a piece of land, we are taking certain elements out of it and those elements go to innervate us. The land recuperates itself through various means within a certain time. We have to allow that time as well as rotating the crops grown so as to fit into this cycle. This is highly a technical proposition, as this recuperation conditions the pace of our production from land. If we produce larger crops by more intensive cultivation, we shall be reaching the stage of exhaustion sooner, after which the land will become fit only

for jungle growth or will remain a desert. Hence it will be necessary for us to draw on our resources with considerable thought.

We may say, in some respects, America is in the position of a rich man's son, who draws on his capital in addition to his income for his current requirements, while India is like a self-made person, who is to equate his expenditure with his income. Therefore, the rate of production in India has to be well-balanced with the possibilities of the soil conditions. In America they are constantly converting cultivable land into grass-land and forests with the depleting fertility and drawing on better lands by reclamation. Lands that have been dislodged are open to the menace of erosion which washes away the cultivable soil. And because of their constantly drawing on virgin soil, it becomes increasingly important to use tractors. While they use tractors they also have access to the necessary fuel in their land. If we produce food on the basis of mechanization while the needed fuel for the motive power is not available in India, we shall be in a very precarious condition. Our bullocks would have died out and at a time when fuel—crude oil and kerosene—is not available; we shall have to die like flies, as bullocks for the needed power cannot be grown overnight.

What we can learn from America is their agricultural practice which is strongly backed by the government. Their scientists are there to carry on research in a comprehensive way to produce fruits, vegetables, food grains, animals and poultry while in our country all that the corresponding department does is to produce by mixed breeding immediate results. They have not attempted still the long term practice of breeding up the local stock.

Again in the land management itself, the American government keeps up the services in contour farming, strip cropping, terracing, sinking tanks, etc., but our government up to now has only planned on huge schemes much beyond the capacity of the country to bear and they are still on paper largely. The American scientists emphasize prevention rather than cure. They are able to forecast the advent of plant diseases and warn people to take preventive measures. We, on the other hand, wait till the crops have been destroyed and dole out remedies which are more expensive than the crop itself.

Our methods have not been suited to the conditions of our country. Our agricultural practices are largely conditioned by the vagaries of the monsoon. In attempting to control this, the authorities have tried in some parts schemes of irrigation based on power. Where electricity is available cheaply, electric pumps are used for irrigation. The effect of this has been that we have been drawing on a very small fraction of the water that is showered on the land during the monsoon, estimated at about 6%, while the balance runs waste into the sea and even out of this 6% the benefit is for the rich. Those who can afford to instal electric pumps draw whatever water is available for their own fields. The poorer sections lose even that which they have, as their own wells and tanks, to which alone they have recourse, dry up as the pumps work. With the advent of the pump



the subsoil water level sinks too deep for the wells and tanks to function. Not only this, but even old trees die out as the subsoil level reaches below the level of their roots. These dried up trees are cut down and the land is exposed to erosion.

The drawing on subsoil water in this manner may not affect the land in cases like the Gangetic plain and the river deltas which are sometimes even water-logged, but in most parts of the country where the water level is already low it will have a very adverse effect. Conditions in our land, therefore, indicate that what is needed is not the more intensive exploitation of the subsoil water, but the conservation of the major part of the water that runs waste into the sea. In other words, more than the electric pump, we require small dams put across streams, rivulets and rivers to hold back some of nature's gifts in store. Here is one instance where the much-vaunted mechanical aid in the form of the electric pump foreshadows ruin and desolation to the countryside.

These instances only show the need for a comprehensive well-thought-out plan, unrelated to the greed of vested interests, bearing closely on the natural conditions that prevail in our country, and which will be within the pattern of life indicated by nature for a tropical country like India dependent on the monsoon. At the present time, the schemes that have been put out do not give any signs of having taken such a comprehensive view of our needs. So we must warn our farmers from taking a step in the dark with promises which will prove to be short-lived.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

### Elephants to the Rescue

Amongst the many problems facing the country one of the common ones is the reclamation of cultivable waste lands. The Central and Provincial Governments have obtained crores worth of equipment for this purpose. They are all imported tractors, bulldozers etc. Their upkeep is also a strain on our exports as the fuel as well as spare parts have to be obtained from abroad. It is agreed on all hands that these can only be used to open up the land.

The situation being what it is, it can to some extent be relieved if our Government officers will turn to the elephants for aid. A great many of these faithful animals had been maintained by the ruling princes and zamindars. With their dwindling income they would be glad to part with these animals. Each elephant will cost about Rs. 20 to Rs. 25 for daily maintenance as against several times this cost for the maintenance of tractors. They can do practically all that a machine can do, though at a lesser speed and will be more in keeping with our economy.

The difficulty is the lack of resourcefulness in the Departments concerned. We have not developed the necessary "accessories" of an elephant—ploughs, harrows etc.

We trust an effort will be made to conserve our precious foreign exchanges by utilizing our local resources to the fullest extent possible. J. C. K.

### A MINISTER'S "GOOD FORTUNE"

*The Hindu* of the 21st February, '49 reports as follows:

"Mr. Sitarama Reddi said that it was his good fortune to declare open the first vegetable ghee factory in South India. He referred to the difficulties of this industry in particular, due to uncertainties of the results of the research by the Government of India regarding the use of the substance as an edible product. The Minister opined that this had been in use as a food product all over the world for a number of years and a mere change in the method of production need not alarm any one as regards the edible value of the vegetable ghee. He hoped that the factory in South India would produce enough vegetable ghee for the Province and also for supply to the Far Eastern market and thereby earn for us necessary exchange so much needed to buy our food requirements abroad."

Shri Sitarama Reddi's good fortune is very costly indeed. It will cost the health and morals of thousands of people and the impoverishment of India's cattle. It is disconcerting to find the Minister of a great province admitting on the one hand that the results of the research about the value of this substance as an edible product were still uncertain and at the same time confidently opining that it "need not alarm any one as regards the edible value of the vegetable ghee". It is still more disconcerting to read that not satisfied with the effects it will have upon the people of his own province, badly deficient in rice, the Minister hopes that his factory will produce this adulterant in quantity sufficient to exploit and injure our rice-suppliers of the Far East.

In my opinion, it is high time the Government of India once for all declared what exactly it feels about this injurious industry. The constructive workers should at least know whether their efforts to improve the cattle wealth and agriculture of India and to improve the health and morals of the people are going to be resisted or helped by the Government policy.

Wardha, 24-2-'49

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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