

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

THE FEAR OF TRUTH

"But for the fact that the *Harijan* journal as well as your own personality are held over-board even by the opponents, your present plea would be mistaken for that of our *Akhand Bharatists*. It may be so construed by interested communalists in both countries under the stress of the prevailing tensions. This would deprive your otherwise excellent thesis of much of its practical utility."

Thus writes one of the correspondents. It is always possible for unscrupulous people to tear expressions out of their context and put a different meaning upon them. Even Gandhiji, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel have not been able to escape such mishandling at the hands of their opponents. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel had to issue a statement only recently on the subject of his Calcutta speech, which was unscrupulously misquoted and misused in Pakistan.

While a writer must take every care to express himself so that no honest man can misunderstand or misinterpret him, he cannot always be sure of the abuse of what he says or writes by unscrupulous propagandists. Having taken sufficient care, he must see that what he says is necessary to come to a right solution of the problem before the country and whether a solution is ever possible without realizing and fully admitting the truths underlying the whole problem. I have often seen that so many of our troubles in domestic life become difficult to solve because though every one realizes the existence of certain factors inwardly no one wants to confess them or speak them out unreservedly and thrash them out in a straight manner. Truth alone saves us if quickly and unreservedly admitted and expressed. It causes a little irritation in the beginning. But it is bearable. But if it is suppressed, it has the tendency to burst out some day suddenly in a violent manner and the impact is such that the reaction becomes unbearable. Out of fear of the small initial irritation, we go on suppressing hard truths for years together. If what we say is truth and it is necessary to realize it to solve our problem, let not the likelihood of its unscrupulous interpretation alone prevent us from stating it. If there are any defects in stating it, they must of course be rectified.

20-3-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

GANDHI AND MARX

VIII

All the social and economic ideas and programmes of Gandhiji "sprang from his non-violence". His principles of *varna dharma* and trusteeship are not an exception to this. Neither the individual, nor society, nor, for the matter of that, even non-human life was for him a mere material object like a piece of furniture or a machine, which might be created, altered, destroyed or set to any use at will for a man-conceived purpose. The welfare of the individual himself must be regarded as the most important purpose of all, and if the sacrifice of one's legitimate material good was demanded for any idealistic end, it must be voluntary. He did not subscribe to the theory that for the good of the many that of the few, and for the good which will accrue to the future generations, the present generations might be sacrificed by men possessed of power.

Nor, so far as I am aware, Gandhiji ever spoke of a 'class war', or put forth the establishment of a 'classless society' as his ideal. He did speak of the abolition of castes to the extent they obstructed inter-dining, inter-marriage and social intercourse; also of the abolition of hierarchy in the caste system. But the existence of classes is a permanent feature of any but the most primitive society, and Gandhiji suggested the solution of their conflicting interests in the two principles of *varna dharma* and trusteeship. The two together, if honestly followed, could maintain harmony in society, and devise non-violent solutions for resolving conflicts as soon as they arose. As long as man remains an imperfect being, one can never imagine a state of absence of conflict altogether. What is needed is a training and a technique to resolve them in a manner which will be beneficial to the individuals, the classes, as well as the society concerned.

What is this principle of *varna dharma*? Deprived of its scriptural and ritual dress, I would state it as follows:

Normally people follow the traditional callings of their forefathers handed down from father to son. This is good for the stability of social life, for the training of the child and for

the technical advance of the profession itself. If the earnings and prestige of every occupation were equal, or even almost so, only in exceptional cases a person would be attracted to a profession other than the ancestral one. This would happen, for instance, if a person was brought up from a very early age in an environment of another occupation. Even if the popular belief in heredity in respect of professions is not accepted as scientifically established, one need not doubt that pathological changes developed during the practice of a profession for a whole life-time and from generation to generation have a tendency to become hereditary, and this, along with the occupational environment surrounding the child in the home, makes him more fitted for following the ancestral profession than a very different one. Hence the normal law of social life should be that a person must, as a matter of duty, practise for his livelihood the profession of his forefathers, or of one developed out of the ancestral one. A radical plunge into a different profession is not desirable. If the principle were settled that one has to be what his father was for the practice of a profession for living, we would not have the sorry spectacle of the present age, where a person even after becoming a double graduate does not know the profession which he might practise for earning his living. In the settled scheme the training from the very childhood would be a purposeful one.

"The meaning of *varna*," says Gandhiji, "is incredibly simple. It simply means the following on the part of us all of the hereditary and traditional calling of our forefathers, in so far as the traditional calling is not inconsistent with fundamental ethics, and this only for the purpose of earning one's livelihood." (*Young India*, 20-10-'27).

Gandhiji lays down here one exception to the normal rule; namely, if the traditional calling is inconsistent with fundamental ethics, it is not to be followed. He also lays down a limitation of the normal rule by saying, that the pursuit of the traditional profession is "only for the purpose of earning one's livelihood".

He was also prepared to admit another exception to the normal rule when he said in answer to the question, what a man who exhibited qualities opposed to his family character should do —

"If my father is a trader and I exhibit the qualities of a soldier, I may without reward serve my country as a soldier, but must be content to earn my bread by trading."

In another place, to the same questionists, he said :

"...it would be quite right for any brainy carpenter to become a lawyer for service, not for money." (*Young India*, 24-11-'27).

But such people are exceptions even to this day, though it must be admitted that they have become more frequent now than ever before and have already created a problem.

The causes for this are hierarchical gradations assigned to callings, and taking to one's profession not as a duty, but as an instrument for amassing wealth in a society based on competition and institution of private property.

Gandhiji's position about the former is cleared by his definition of *varna dharma* :

"In this conception of *varna*, there is absolutely no idea of superiority and inferiority." (*Young India*, 20-10-'27).

Again,

"In my opinion there is no such thing as inherited or acquired superiority. I believe implicitly that all men are born equal. All — whether born in India or in England or America or in any circumstances whatsoever — have the same soul as any other. And it is because I believe in this inherent equality of all men that I fight the doctrine of superiority which many of our rulers arrogate to themselves. I have fought this doctrine of superiority in South Africa inch by inch, and it is because of that inherent belief, that I delight in calling myself a scavenger, a spinner, a weaver, a farmer and a labourer. And I have fought against the *brahmanas* themselves wherever they have claimed any superiority for themselves either by reason of their birth, or by reason of their subsequently acquired knowledge. I consider that it is unmanly for any person to claim superiority over a fellow-being. I am therefore through and through with every non-*brahmana* when he fights this monster of superiority, whether it is claimed by a *brahmana* or by anybody else. He who claims superiority at once forfeits his claim to be called a man. This is my opinion." (*Young India*, 29-9-'27).

The other cause for the break-down of the principle of *varna dharma* is sought to be counteracted by Gandhiji by the principle of trusteeship. This we shall deal with in the next article.

Let it be clearly understood, however, that *varna* is not a sectarian or theocratic principle with Gandhiji, but the enunciation of a moral but secular duty of a citizen towards himself, his dependents and his society. It is the duty of a citizen to earn his living by practising a profession needed for the well-being of society; the profession must be consistent with fundamental ethics; it must be a profession of his forefathers. All notions about superiority and inferiority attached to professions are arbitrary and harmful and must be abolished; so also, restrictions about inter-dining and inter-marriage. Thus all professions are equal in rank.

ARBITRATION IN INDUSTRIES

Let us now turn to see how wonderfully arbitration initiated by Gandhiji in the labour dispute at Ahmedabad as early as in 1918 is proving successful throughout the whole of India. During that year Gandhiji organized Ahmedabad labour on the basis of peace and co-operation and obliged the capitalists with the force of his usual persuasion and penance to agree to the principle of arbitration. While analyzing the Indian labour position he says :

"In the West an eternal conflict has set up between capital and labour. Each party considers the other its natural enemy. That spirit seems to have entered India also, and if it finds a permanent lodgment it would be the end of our industry and of our peace. If both the parties were to realize that each is dependent upon the other, there will be little cause for quarrel." (*Young India*, 28-4-1920).

The realization of this interdependence is a necessary requisite in the evolution of the parties to enable them to appreciate arbitration. In his later speeches, therefore, he has emphasized more this aspect of the question. At Jamshedpur he says :

"Today capital is afraid of labour and labour scowls at capital. I want to replace that relationship by one of mutual trust and respect." (*Young India*, 20-4-1925).

At another place he addressed labour thus :

"The capitalists' strength is their money; your strength is your capacity to work. Capital would be helpless without labour." (*Harijan*, 7-11-1936).

He rightly evaluates the communistic position and rather than scoffing at it, warns the non-violent workers :

"It must not be forgotten that those who are stirring up violence also do so in the hope of quickening the pace of progress. Believers in non-violence have to be resourceful enough to demonstrate in actual practice that their method is the quickest. God of *ahimsa* or love helps the ever-watchful." (*Harijan*, 27-11-1937).

To capitalists and *zamindars* he points the way of arbitration. He says :

"Capitalists and Zamindars must do everything in their power to employ non-violent means, e.g. the sovereign principle of arbitration for the settlement of all disputes. Success of non-violent action depends upon the progressive measure of relief that it brings to, the exploited and the oppressed." (*Harijan*, 27-11-1937).

He emphasizes the same principle in another way when he says :

"The strongest combination of employers must accept the principle of arbitration, if capital and labour are ever to live in peace." (*Young India*, 19-9-1929).

To both the parties he offers his theory of trusteeship for acceptance :

"Capital and labour will be mutual trustees and both will be the trustees of consumers. The trusteeship theory is not unilateral and does not in the least imply superiority of the trustee. It is perfectly a mutual affair and each believes that his own interest is best safeguarded by safeguarding the interest of the other." (*Young India*, 25-6-1925).

But labour too should be equally dutiful :

"If labour were to bid good bye to non-violence, they would be as bad as capitalists and turn exploi-

ters themselves. The realization of their strength combined with adherence to non-violence would enable them to co-operate with capital and turn it to proper use." (*Young India*, 25-6-1928).

"Adherence to non-violence" means amongst other things, acceptance of arbitration :

"To seek justice without resorting to violence and by an appeal to the good sense of the capitalists by arbitration is lawful means." (*Young India*, 5-5-1920).

Labour should not allow itself to be caught up in the whirlpool of money complex created by the capitalists :

"The moment labour recognizes its own dignity, money will find its rightful place, i.e., it will be held in trust for labour. For labour is more than money." (*Young India*, 31-12-1931).

Strikes, though an inherent right of labour, have obvious limitations :

"I know that strikes are an inherent right of the working men for the purpose of securing justice, but they must be considered a crime immediately the capitalists accept the principle of arbitration." (*Young India*, 5-5-1920).

Also,

"It will be a great gain if strikes became unnecessary and the principle of arbitration is strictly adhered to by parties." (*Young India*, 12-12-1929).

In these days of post-independence active corporate work Gandhiji's sage counsel of arbitration assumes special importance. Differences of outlook, of temperaments, of opinions and of emphasis create complexes which impede smooth work. Those complexes soon begin to dominate and shift the emphasis from work to workers. The result is a miserable stalemate. Arbitration is the only courageous way out for lifting the issue above the mire of parties' prejudices, which should to be referred to an impartial tribunal.

R. J. SOMAN

LEST WE FORGET

XX

Non-violence in Various Aspects

(e)

My ethics not only permit me to claim but require me to own kinship with not merely the ape but the horse and the sheep, the lion and the leopard, the snake and the scorpion.

(f)

I do not want to live at the cost of the life even of a snake. I should let him bite me to death rather than kill him. . . . Snakes, tigers etc. are God's answer to the poisonous, wicked, evil thoughts we harbour. . . . If I want to rid the earth of venomous beasts and reptiles, I must rid myself of all venomous thoughts.

(g)

Himsa is an inherent necessity for life in the body. That is why a votary of *ahimsa* always prays for ultimate deliverance from the bondage of flesh.

(h)

I would not kill a human being for protecting a cow, as I will not kill a cow for saving a human life, be it ever so precious.

(i)

I cannot for a moment bear to see a dog helplessly suffering the torture of a slow death. I do not kill a human being thus circumstanced because I have more hopeful remedies. I should kill a dog similarly situated because in its case I am without a remedy. Should my child be attacked by rabies and there was no hopeful remedy to relieve his agony, I should consider it my duty to take his life.

HARIJAN

April 9

1950

BROAD BASE STATES

The second and the more important one of my propositions disputed by *The Bombay Chronicle* and my correspondents is,

"That no State must be founded in the name of any particular class, creed, race or culture; and the mere fact that the majority of the people in the one are Hindus and in the other Muslims cannot be allowed to permit either of them to develop into a State based on or dedicated to the culture, religion or principles of any one of them."

If we examine matters deeply enough, it will be found that this is the basic creed on which several of our international problems rest. Orthodox Hindus would keep Harijans outside the full citizenship circle. Hindu Mahasabhaites would show all minorities their proper place in India's political set-up. Pakistan wants to cast out its Hindus; Ceylon and Burma would drive away the Indians (i.e. including Pak-Indians) settled there for generations or keep them as foreigners; in addition to Indians, South Africa wants to drive away all the Asiatics or segregate them as well as the original inhabitants from the Whites and keep them permanently as anything but full citizens; U.S.A. would keep its Negroes as Harijans more or less. On the other side, all Asiatics and Africans are united in their opposition to the exclusionist policy of the Whites; all Asia (including Pakistan) is united in its opposition to the South African policy; India and Pakistan are united in their opposition to the policies of Burma and Ceylon. The Arab-Jew and the German-Jew problems are of the same character.

If we hold that a State can be founded in the name of any particular class, creed, race or culture, then all drive-out policies would be justifiable, and no State could interfere in the affairs of another, even if it totally exterminated those extraneous elements which it did not want. If the latter wished to escape extermination they must return to the country of their forefathers or find another asylum.

Indeed, two of my correspondents suggest that it is wrong on the part of India to interfere

with the colour policy of South Africa or the creed policy of Pakistan.

If we like we might adopt a similar policy against them. If we do not wish to do so, it is our look-out. If we cannot receive in India the Hindus of Pakistan or the Indians of South Africa, Ceylon, Burma etc., let those people fight out with their Governments, or die there. But we are not justified in quarrelling with their policy. "We have to forget all affinities of blood, heredity, geography, culture etc. For, when we accept partition in a people's life, it cannot be piece-meal and the less we remember or emphasize those affinities the better for us both."

This is mechanical logic. It forgets that we are human beings and cannot reason bereft of those essential human sentiments and urges, which make man the noblest creation of God. That we cannot disregard natural affinities of blood, heredity, geography, culture etc., is a reality of that kind. Logic consists in according each accident its due place and not pick up only one principle and pursue it to its mechanically logical end. Emphasis on a particular circumstance is proper subject to the condition that it does not lead to inhuman or sub-human acts, but promotes the welfare of every one. A State like any other association or caste may have its particular rules and methods of work subject to the condition that it does not degenerate into barbarism and relegate any part to sub-human conditions of life, or lead to its extinction. If it does so, the noble urges in us will and must revolt against it and exert all its pressure to prevent it.

It is impossible for a cultured man of any part of the world whatever to take resignedly the communal killings that have taken place in India and Pakistan during the last two years. The inhuman transfer of large populations from one place to another that has taken place and is taking place in several parts of the world for some years past, as if men were factory goods, is perpetration of barbarity which should never have been contemplated and tolerated. That it is looked upon coolly and even planned coldly is not evidence of dispassionate logic but of under-development of the head, the heart and the nerves in various ways; e.g. cowardice, selfishness, narrowness of vision, want of will or strength to act, etc. It is the noble sentiments and urges in us which prevent us from being reconciled to the orthodox Hindu doctrine of untouchability, the Mahasabha doctrine of Hindustan for Hindus, the Muslim League doctrine of Pakistan for Muslims, the White-race doctrine of South Africa for Europeans and so on. The creed stated at the beginning of the article rests on these noble sentiments. That every State must be broad-based is a principle which has to be accepted as binding on all States.

NOTES

Mr. Cameron's Murder

The regrettable murder of Mr. A. T. Cameron in, as reported, an attempt to protect his Muslim servant, must serve as an eye-opener to the propagandists of the cult of vengeance and retaliation. Heart-rending as the lot of the refugees is, and quite understandable their mental state, giving vent to those feelings by murdering Indian Muslims cannot be excused, and in the interest of the refugees themselves and of India they should realize and be helped to realize that such acts would result only in creating public opinion against them throughout the world. Instead of being sympathized with, which their hardships and trials richly deserve, such riotousness will only make them look cowards and contemptible in the eyes of the world.

Even one, who regards violence as futile in every case, would understand and even appreciate an attempt by the minorities to offer dogged opposition and refuse to move in the direction of India without giving a fight at every step to the forces seeking to drive them away from their homes and subject them to all sorts of atrocities. If a mouse wounds the cat with its sharp teeth and claws, even though the act may be futile, it is still heroic and praiseworthy. But after leaving the home-land almost without resistance and arriving in a safe place it is unmanly to seek revenge against the co-religionists of their oppressors in the old home. There is no knowing what ruinous folly it might lead them to, as the murder of Mr. Cameron shows. It might easily involve the country in grave international complications, which it will be difficult to get out of.

Let those who urge war or "police-action" against Pakistan first strengthen the hands of their Government by not indulging in or encouraging acts, which compel war or police-action against themselves.

•Akola, 29-3-'50

Dr. Hariprasad Desai

How could I have imagined that when Dr. Hariprasad Desai called upon me at Bombay towards the middle of the last month, it was to be our final meeting? He gave me a good report of his health. Though about seventy years old, he felt quite fit and energetic. He was taking his physical exercises regularly, could bike, and attend to all his activities as usual. We talked on various matters, serious and light. He was his usual self, — jovial and full of optimism. Rather, he scolded me for showing signs of pessimism now and then. "Don't take present evils too seriously," he told me more than once that afternoon. He spent some time in examining my nephew's collection of natural objects and art, and promised to pay me a second visit, as soon as possible. That possibility has vanished for

good. It seems that he got a heart attack not very long after this visit, resulting in his death on the thirtieth March last.

Ahmedabad is enormously indebted to him for the various services he rendered to that city. In cleanliness and sanitation, one has to compare modern Ahmedabad to that of the early twenties to know the difference, and if one knows that the principal organizer and moving spirit of those changes was Dr. H. V. Desai, one would have an idea of the amount of work he must have done day after day to clean the city of its heaps of old mud and dirt of centuries and to change the entire appearance of Ahmedabad.

And sanitation and hygiene were not the only subjects he was interested in. He was a nationalist politician ever since the first partition of Bengal in 1905. He was, perhaps, the first Gujarati graduate of a National University, having taken his medical degree from the National Medical College of Calcutta. Hence his lifelong interest in the political activities of the country. It was quite natural for him to throw in his lot with Gandhiji and become one of his devoted followers for the emancipation of the country. He was also a scholar and a lover of literature, history, religion and art and was connected with many an institution in Ahmedabad and Gujarat specializing in any of these subjects. He was an effective and humorous speaker and writer, a good composer of songs, and was often surrounded by young writers, artists and others, who got all kind of encouragement from him. One could never feel dull in his company, and it was not a scandal club that you got round him.

Last but not the least, was his affectionate heart and freedom from malice. Once he had the misfortune of being the first bringer of news to the Sabarmati Ashram of Gandhiji having taken seriously ill somewhere, (was it when he took ill of appendicitis at the Yeravda Central Prison?). For a few minutes, he could not utter a word; tears rolled down his eyes in a ceaseless flow. Every one was in suspense not knowing what the nature of the evil news was and concerning whom, until he could speak.

Death will come to every one. Man's enemy is not death but disease; and Dr. Hariprasad Desai had successfully fought disease. He died while he was still fit and energetic. His death is enviable. Though we all lose him and will, therefore, mourn it, we must feel satisfied that he had always kept disease at bay and showed others also the way to do it.

Akola, 2-4-'50

K. G. M.

To Lovers of 'Sarvodaya'

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Dada Dharmadhikari. We are sure lovers of *Sarvodaya* and constructive workers will find this arrangement helpful and would avail themselves of it.

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PRE-REQUISITES OF DIRECT ACTION

Democracy would be nothing to the common man — the farmer, unless it ushered in a real understanding of his problems.

Preparation for Satyagraha

Here we are at this sugarcane problem in these villages. But we are not trained to face this problem. A student going to the Medical College for education is first given a dead body to dissect the various organs of the corpse. He handles the delicate instruments and performs delicate operations with these instruments. He gets used to using sharp knives. But this is not surgery. It is a training for surgery. Surgery is the delicate operations done on live persons and not on a dead body. Gandhiji till now had been training us in dissecting the dead body, through the village industries. It was easy for us to dissect such a dead body and gain practice. Now we are to perform delicate operations on living beings in the present social order. We are now handling the throbbing life of the agriculturist.

Three weeks back, I came here to understand your problem. The sugarcane growers, without having dissected the dead body, wanted to perform surgical operations. But this is impossible. You have wanted to show the Government the right way. You have wanted to offer *satyagraha* against the Government. But you can't do that unless you have trained yourselves and the people. People can only be trained through constructive work. You have to do a lot of creative social work to get a highly disciplined set of people to offer *satyagraha*. The first task for us is to prepare ourselves for this new *satyagraha*. There may be the greatest urgency for action at the present moment and an emergency might have arisen. The Government may be absolutely in the wrong. Yet you cannot offer *satyagraha* unless you are trained to do that. A child may have developed an abscess or there may be something wrong inside the eye. You cannot cut the eye open with a knife unless you are qualified to do that. A child may be drowning in the water. If you want to help the child from drowning, you must plunge and take the child out. But you can't plunge into the water unless you know how to swim. If you do not know swimming and you get into the water, both the child and you will be lost.

Now, we are to study this new and open field. We are up against powerful forces. So, we have to go about it carefully. We cannot let ourselves go and be lost in our zeal and anxiety to solve our immediate problems quickly. We should move cautiously. The signs of restlessness among the agriculturists are very evident. The agriculturists are up against their present negative status in society. The intelligent farmers are showing signs of organizing themselves. The problems among the agriculturists are to the fore not only in the South but also in the other parts of the country. So the farmers becoming conscious about their own problems is a healthy sign. The Government officials and Ministers are not aware of these problems and the new awakening among the agriculturists. They are still over a kettle in which water is boiling with a quick fire beneath. They cannot shut the steam inside the kettle. If they do so, there will be a huge outburst. When they notice a little steam coming out here and there, they say that the Communists are active and they are doing the mischief. They follow a very shortsighted policy on such occasions. They arrest a few Communists here and there thinking that the trouble will end that way. But the water is still boiling inside the kettle and gathering power.

You will realize the tremendous force the agriculturists are gathering. You have to regulate the steam. You have to harness the dangerous kettle into a useful engine. Realize the crucial time that is ahead of us. We are now gathered to take counsel with one another. We have to act with resourcefulness and intelligence. It is not our business to be attacking the Government. We have to harness the power of the masses. Let us not come into a clash with the Government unnecessarily.

Let us not allow the gun powder to burst out by putting a spark to it. We must study the situation carefully. Any force can be made useful for two purposes—constructive and destructive. We have invested the Government also with enormous powers. We must see that it uses this power for constructive purposes.

I come back to the sugarcane question which is before you. We can plunge into action immediately. But we shall be carried away into different channels and so lose sight of the real problems. We must educate the people in solving their problems by the way of *satyagraha*. We must get the people disciplined.

Agriculture is a new field for our work. Agriculture had not come into the Gandhian field of action till now. So we have to start a new programme of work among the farmers. As there is a close association between the Government and the agriculturists, our work can be started only when we have clearly understood what the Government is expected to do and what part the people should play.

Long Range and Short Range Programmes

In all our economic activity, we must have a long range programme as well as a short range programme. Growing a good forest is a long range programme. You have to plant the trees and water them and these will be useful perhaps after a hundred years. It is a very easy course to cut down the forest, this is short range work. There is a lot of difference in the qualities of a person who grows a forest and who cuts down a forest.

Again, take the example of a milkman. He cares most for the milk and not for the cow. The cow is of no use to him when the lactation period is over. He does not want to wait till it calves again. He will send the dry cow to a slaughter house and purchase a new cow. This is what is happening in cities, like Bombay. This milkman's work is a short range programme.

In agriculture, the Government is the long range partner and the agriculturist is the short range partner. Our programme and policy must have a long and short range section. Otherwise, it will be faulty. At present, there is no co-ordination and co-operation between these two partners. The Ministers do not understand the long range view. During the wars, the forests had been ruthlessly exploited and we are experiencing the effects of this shortsighted policy of the Government. Rains have failed and the tanks and wells are dry. The Government now follows only a short range policy.

Role of Workers

This group of workers here must stand between the Government and the agriculturists. We must understand the functions of the Government and we must understand the functions of the agriculturists. Before the rights can materialize we have to perform our duties. Every agriculturist is a social worker. He has got his duty to perform towards society. He has to produce goods to satisfy the needs of society. If he is out only to make money for himself in some way or other, there is no difference between an agriculturist and an industrialist or a capitalist. If the Government wants only to squeeze out money from the villager it is failing in its duty.

Nature is another factor in this co-operative effort. We have to correlate the functions of the Government and the agriculturist to nature. Nature has got the power of recuperation. We reap the harvest and expose the soil for some time during which period the soil gets back the nitrogen etc., that have been used up. Such periods of rest for the land are absolutely necessary to maintain the fertility of the soil. Hence you have a duty towards the soil also. These duties we must understand properly. We may consider bullocks also as part of "Nature". Even a landless labourer should be regarded as a helper.

Our immediate work will be to prepare ourselves for this new work. Take for example, wars. For how many years do nations prepare themselves to wage a war? Twenty years and more! In fact we may say that there is a continuous war going on throughout the peace time

and the real war is only the outward outburst of this continuous war going on all the time. Now our fight is a non-violent fight. This requires a greater training. It is not the training of the muscles. It is not the training of the eyes. It is a training to control our own selves. There is hardly any one who has conquered one's own self completely. Self-control and self-discipline are the qualities we have to develop within ourselves.

Agricultural Problems

Now I shall place before you the different aspects of the agricultural problems we have to study. We shall understand the need for performing our duties. When we understand how to control ourselves, we can foresee the permanent value in the result it brings forth. In *satyagraha* if we do not perform our duties we are not entitled to claim our rights. We cannot offer *satyagraha* for getting higher wages for a group; we cannot coerce the people to give you your rights unless you do your duty whole-heartedly.

Taking the agricultural problems, you should have a clear understanding of these problems. The three factors are the agriculturist, Nature and the Government. Let us see the functions each performs. The agriculturist grows the crops and is always looking at the field. What the agriculturist does is simply to co-operate with Nature in the process of production of crops. He helps Nature to work its way. He puts manure into the soil, sows the seeds at the proper time and waters the plants. In these he is co-ordinating the different factors of nature to enable nature to produce. We can say that the agriculturist's work is an artificially intensified stimulation of Nature's forces to provide food in a larger measure or to bring about a better crop in his farm. The earth also functions in the normal way but only when intensely stimulated by man. We are not creating but we only help Nature to create in her own way. The duty of the Government is to look after the long term functions. It has to provide for a regulated supply of water for irrigating the field by the construction of channels, dams, tanks and wells.

The agriculturist needs good bullocks for his work. The Government must improve cattle-breeding. It must establish cattle-breeding farms for milch cows and for draught animals. The agriculturist needs good seeds for a good harvest. The Government should supply selected and graded seeds. Crop pests are often a menace to the farmer and the Government must carry on research on the methods of prevention of crop pests for a whole group of people. The agriculturist requires farm implements like the plough, cart tyres, timber etc. The Government must see that these materials are available to the farmer.

In agricultural work there is a partnership between society and the individual. So long as the Government functions in this way as the representative of society there is no difficulty at all. The farmer too must feel that his duties are towards society. If he is working for his own selfish ends and profit and if the Government is working for itself, both of them are on the wrong track. The farmer must produce to supply the needs of society. If the sugarcane growers are merely coming forward to fight for their rights to get more money for their sugar-cane, they are anti-social just like the capitalist. They can have no claims to our sympathy. We must understand that it is our duty to feed society as members of society.

We can be partners only in a venture of which we approve. A drowning child cries for help. We should help the child out of the water. Suppose, a pick-pocket wants your help in distracting the attention of the man to be pickpocketed by which time he wants to do his job. You cannot help him. There is no difference between a sugarcane grower who grows sugarcane for his own profit and the mill-owner who runs the mill for his own profit. Neither of them can claim our help. You have to keep out of the struggle between them both. When two wolves are fighting with each other, the best thing you can do is to keep out of it. If you get between

them both, you will lose your head. We cannot go to tobacco growers. If we are to involve ourselves in a venture it must be a worthy venture. Personally I do not like the agreement you came to with the Government. A mill does not serve the community, and the capitalist is one who is working for himself. It is only a question of choosing between a mill and a village industry. There is no question of a share between the two. The Government is entrusted with certain powers. If it does not serve its purpose and misuses the power to benefit the mill-owner instead of the people, we have to fight against the Government.

First find out whether there is a cause for *satyagraha*. The Sugar Act has been issued to benefit the mill-owner. We must resist that Act. There is a worthy cause for *satyagraha*. Analyze the situation carefully and understand the duties and rights of the agriculturist. If he is producing any crop not for service but for exploitation he has no claim on our sympathy. Let me tell you my reaction to this question. How are you going to close the sugar mill? Even if the mill-owner gives Rs. 5 for a sugar-cane, you should not supply it to the mill. Let the mill-owner grow sugarcane in Timbuctoo and import. Approach the problem in the way I have indicated, then, you will find the way of action.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

(Address to the workers among the Agriculturists,
Mathurai District)

SOME GOOD DEEDS IN EAST BENGAL

When one is face to face with the cruelty that man inflicts on his neighbour, it is good sometimes to find selfless courage and other noble qualities asserting themselves even in the very teeth of the forces of evil.

Thus, during a week's visit to some of the worst affected areas of East Bengal in the middle of March, the following examples of human goodness came to my notice.

A Hindu friend in Dacca told me the following story. At the big Hindu refugee camp close to his home in Dacca, amongst those who were driven there during the first outbreak of violence were all the Hindu inhabitants of a village a few miles away. Their Muslim neighbours had driven them out and had burnt and looted their homes and property. A week or two later the Hindu camp was visited by a deputation from the village, who came to tell the Hindus that they were ashamed of their conduct, and wished them to return. But the Hindus said they were afraid to return. Who could say what might happen again soon? However, next day the Muslims from the village came again. They pleaded with the Hindus to return, assuring them that they would restore their stolen property and help in rebuilding their homes. Still the Hindus were afraid to go. On the third day, again the Muslims came. This time their persuasion was effective, and they took their Hindu neighbours back with them, and the restitution took place, and the rebuilding began. My informant said that he believed the action of the villagers was entirely spontaneous.

In the Barisal District as already reported in some Indian papers, a Muslim Union District President gave shelter to the Hindus of his vil-

lage when the angry mob came and demanded their surrender. Far from surrendering them he fought for them and was killed. But his self-sacrifice was availing. Other Muslims came to the rescue in time, and the Hindus were saved. During my brief visit to Barisal I heard this story from those who knew the village.

Near Barisal I saw a poor Hindu widow, who had lost her husband and son, come and take hold of the arm of a young Muslim social worker, and pour out her sorrows. Something had evidently made her feel that he would befriend her and help her in any way he could. Knowing the young man as I do, I know that her confidence was not misplaced.

I talked to a police officer who had been specially drafted to a badly affected *thana* near Barisal, and he told me something of the measures he was taking, both punitive and ameliorative, to restore the confidence of his Hindu friends in the area. He had been there as a junior officer some years earlier, and evidently had many Hindu friends. He evidently took special satisfaction in the recovery of valuables, including gold ornaments, which the village people were now bringing back. I myself saw by the roadside a few miles from Barisal two piles of restored property including corrugated iron sheets, benches and other wood-work, etc. which the villagers were bringing to appointed places. It seems clear that in some areas at least, the simple village people, after being led astray and committing grievous crimes, have been rather quickly brought to a sense of guilt and shame, and are showing their penitence in concrete form.

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