

HARIJAN

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(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

FATE OF THE VANASPATI PROHIBITION BILL

The papers have announced that Shri Thakurdas Bhargava decided not to move his Anti-Vanaspati Bill in the present session of the Parliament upon the promise of the Prime Minister to appoint a committee to suggest suitable methods to stop the adulteration of *ghee*. The Prime Minister, according to PTI, gave three assurances: (i) The Government recognized that "in case of *ghee*, there had been much adulteration"; (ii) "Government were anxious to put a stop to it"; and (iii) "experiments carried out on hydrogenated oils had shown that these were not harmful".

It is gracious of the Government that even at this late stage they admit that there does exist much adulteration in case of *ghee*, and have not thrown the burden of proving it on the public. It is doubtful if the people will be able to show as much grace in return by accepting at its face value the assurance that the Government are really anxious to stop it. The public have not known anything hitherto to indicate that the Government ever carried such anxiety in their minds. It is more than 18 months since the Working Committee of the Congress asked the Government to take steps to stop adulteration. But nothing whatever has been done. The least that they could have done was to appoint a committee now contemplated. One does not know why this was not done. Nor will the people feel satisfied with the results of the so-called experiments of scientists. It might seem uncharitable to suggest, but I cannot help feeling, that if a Prime Minister like, say Dr P. C. Ghosh, with an opposite mind, were to succeed Shri Jawaharlal, the reports of experiments would very probably take a different shape. Possibly, the last assurance is not meant for the general public, but for those interested in the manufacture of *vanaspati*. They will certainly feel assured that the Industry is safe in the hands of the Government.

The public are not likely to feel quite satisfied with Shri Bhargava's performance. Very likely, it is a preliminary to the total abandonment of the Bill later on. But the result need

not surprise the public. I had anticipated it. To all those friends and correspondents, who were working enthusiastically to elicit and collect public opinion in favour of the Bill, I used to warn not to build too much hope on that piece of effort being able to influence the fate of the Bill. In *Harijan* of 5th August 1950, I had said,

"in the modern set-up of party Governments, even the opinions of legislators become often a mere farce. However deeply a member might feel convinced of the merits of a Bill, he has not to vote in obedience to his own head, but to that of his party's head, that is, as the whip of the party might direct. So, the present Bill will meet such fate as would be decided by the present ruling party in the Government of India. Perhaps, its mind is already made up."

This has come true. Supporters of the Bill inside and outside the Parliament spared no pains to canvass support to the Bill. They wrote to, and personally interviewed several ministers and not a few hundred legislators in the Central and the several State Legislatures to find out their view on this subject. Various State Cabinets had expressed their opinion in its favour. Besides members of various State Assemblies, a good majority of the members of the Parliament (out of 318 members, 172 with about 20 more, whose formal signatures could not be obtained) had signed in favour of the Bill. But the Central Government (as a body) was of a different opinion, and that decided the matter. It considered the interests of the large-scale industry and the urban middle class and the financial income to the Government to be of prior importance. It is a glaring instance of a clear majority both at the Centre and in the States having been brushed aside by the Central Cabinet. Unless one is convinced that this is a case of one person being right and nine wrong, what a farce of Democracy it is!

We are told that the Government will now appoint a Ghee Committee. Doubtless, it will take some months to do its work. May be, its report will not be presented until after the next elections. In the meantime the trade of *vanaspati*-mixed *ghee*, curds, (even milk?) will go on as it has till now. From the way in which such committees usually do their work, the Ghee Committee might be expected to travel

throughout the length and breadth of the country, examine numerous witnesses, personally examine several tins of various types of *ghee*, study all the literature from *Vedic* times till now to show how *ghee* has been adulterated from very ancient times, and what measures were adopted in the times of Manu, Buddha, the *Mahabharata*, Chanakya, Asoka, down to the Mughals and the Marathas to control it. What was done by the British will also be recorded. It will also, perhaps, feel satisfied that *vanaspati* is the cleanest of the adulterants ever used; that it cannot be banned any more than water. And they will recommend that the Penal and Crime Investigation machinery should be tightened in a particular manner and results awaited. No doubt, also, the enquiry will be made at public expense, which will come to a good many thousand rupees. Their labours will merit the thanks of the Governments, and they will retire with the feeling that they had thoroughly performed their duty. So far as prevention of adulteration is concerned, it is a subject in which the several State Governments can take action on their own initiative. The appointment of the Ghee Committee by the Centre will be a good reason for them not to do anything until the Committee reports.

The whole episode presents the picture of a pseudo-democratic form of Government. The so-called representatives do not necessarily represent the opinion and interests of even the majority of the people, except where superstitious and irrational prides, prejudices, emotions and customs are concerned. They represent only the class interest of the strongest section of the people. In a country full of depressed, suppressed and unassertive people like ours, this form of party-governed democracy might prove to be a treacherous factor for the all-round well-being and development of the masses.

Incidentally the episode also reveals that the present Government has ceased to represent even the principles of the Congress, in whose name it functions. It discloses elements of ruling by exploiting the hero-worshipping qualities of a nation of easy believers and superstition-worshippers. They rate highly the homage which they receive from the people wherever they go. It is taken as a due recognition of their merits and services. In India such homage is not an index of intrinsic value. They will pay the same homage to a great leader like Jawaharlal Nehru, and to a supposed miracle-healer like the shepherd boy of Angul. A people suffering from poverty, disease, worries, troubles etc., unaccompanied with the knowledge, means and energy to fight them by their own efforts, will, in order to obtain even temporary and psychological relief, expectantly look to every one without discrimination.

The episode also shows how representatives become incapacitated to do their duty to the people, their true principal, when they become mere wheels of a party machine. Nothing can be made a matter of personal conscience or principle, except at the risk of being punished for it. It reminds one of the opinion which Gandhiji expressed about this type of Parliamentary Government, in ch. V of *Hind Swaraj* (reproduced in these columns below.)

Shri Nehru would have India not join any bloc in the U.N.O., but maintain an independent attitude. This is a right attitude. But the same must prevail at home also. Our democracy also should be similarly fashioned. The party system must not be so stiff as to operate as a gag on the conscience of its members. Representatives who are unable to be loyal to their own convictions cannot be loyal to the people they claim to represent.

The people and the workers must not get disheartened by this delay in stopping this evil. They must understand that these are the conditions in which they have to work out their destiny. An intelligent, determined and self-acting nation has to be constructed in the midst of this situation. The people have to be so trained that they do not wait till Governments condescend to hear their petitions. They should be a people who begin to act and Parliaments and Governments are obliged to execute their decisions or ratify their acts already executed. And this has to be done in a determined, but, truthful and non-violent manner. In fact that is the only way people will establish their own strength. But it is a long journey, and no quick results may be expected.

Wardha, 14-12-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

GANDHIJI ON PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM

[Referring to the Parliamentary system of Government, as obtaining in England, Gandhiji has said as follows in *Hind Swaraj*, ch. V:]

Let us examine it a little more closely. The best men are supposed to be elected by the people. The members serve without pay and therefore, it must be assumed, only for the public weal. The electors are considered to be educated and therefore we should assume that they would not generally make mistakes in their choice. Such a Parliament should not need the spur of petitions or any other pressure. Its work should be so smooth that its effect would be more apparent day by day. But, as a matter of fact, it is generally acknowledged that the members are hypocritical and selfish. Each thinks of his own little interest. It is fear that is the guiding motive. What is done today may be undone tomorrow. It is not possible to recall a single instance in which finality can be predicted for its work. When the greatest questions are debated, its members have been seen to stretch themselves and to doze. Sometimes the members talk away until the listeners are disgusted.

Carlyle has called it the "talking shop of the world". Members vote for their party without a thought. Their so-called discipline binds them to it. If any member, by way of exception, gives an independent vote, he is considered a renegade. If the money and the time wasted by Parliament were entrusted to a few good men, the English nation would be occupying today a much higher platform. Parliament is simply a costly toy of the nation. These views are by no means peculiar to me. Some great English thinkers have expressed them. One of the members of that Parliament recently said that a true Christian could not become a member of it. Another said that it was a baby. And if it has remained a baby after an existence of seven hundred years, when will it outgrow its babyhood?

ILLICIT DRINKING

No doubt considerable illicit drinking is going on all over the area where prohibition has been introduced. There is reason to believe that a good deal of it goes on with, if not the active co-operation, at least the connivance of officers, both important and petty. This is put forth as an evidence of failure of prohibition and a ground for the reversal of the policy.

This is as much a mistake as to say that since so many child marriages take place in spite of the Sarda Act, that Act should be repealed, or that since adultery and rape will always take place in human society, these should not be regarded punishable crimes, but just taxable practices, yielding a good revenue to the Government.

These are social evils, and ultimately demand social and moral regeneration. All laws against them, in whatever form promulgated, are in the nature of enabling legislation and not absolutely effective by themselves. They should be regarded as not making social work superfluous and dispensable, but as giving an impetus to that effort by the backing of the Government. However much illicit drinking might be going on it cannot be as extensive and heavy as when drink is provided under Government management with an eye to revenue and trade. A large part of the rising generation would be saved from falling victims to the habit, as also a considerable section of women drinkers.

Injurious social practices and habits must not be made sources of acquiring revenue. It is tainted money. High taxation, instead of preventing their spreading, gives them greater respect and prestige and make them more coveted by people who like to imitate their superiors. Those who can afford them are regarded as privileged and high-class people. Practices, which it is desirable to stop totally, must be prohibited absolutely, and not allowed on payment of a tax. It is nervous toleration and not non-violence, which makes Governments hesitate to prohibit them, when sought in the name of a religion.

Wardha, 25-12-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

"KEY TO HEALTH" v. RAMANAMA

Shri P. Laxminarain Rao writes :

"Referring to the note 'Key to Health' (*Harijan*, 1-7-'50) by Shri Sorabji R. Mistri, I would say that it was a posthumous publication and I doubt if Gandhiji would have permitted it to be published had he been alive today. As the publisher himself says Gandhiji had completed this book on 18th December 1942. But "the subject was so important that he all along hesitated to release them."

"My belief is that by the year 1947, there was a radical change in his conception of Nature Cure. The careful reader would not have failed to notice that in this book Gandhiji like other Scientist-Naturopaths had eliminated God from his curative system. But later on he said, 'My conception of Nature Cure, like all others, has undergone a progressive evolution.' 'Perhaps I am right in saying that the potency of *Ramanama* was brought home to me in Uruli-Kanchan. It was there that I asserted that the surest remedy for all our ills was *Ramanama*.' (*Harijan* 22-6-'47). My point is that those who make a fetish of this one book *Key to Health*, as is done by Shri S. R. Mistri, cannot but misconceive the basic principles of Gandhian ideology on health. I am afraid that unconsciously the Navajivan Press has done a positive disservice by publishing *Key to Health* * without a necessary supplement from Gandhiji's own teachings.

"Gandhiji himself observed that no amount of reading his writings would give people power to live his principles. People must first have a burning desire to live his way of life and next they must produce conditions and environments where it is possible to practise his mode of life.

"Look at his words:

'There is no royal road (to train others) except through living the creed in your own life, which must be a living sermon. Expression in one's own life presupposes great study, tremendous perseverance and thorough cleansing of all impurities.....But, why worry even if it means several lifetimes? For, this is the only permanent thing in life, the only thing that counts, and, whatever effort you bestow upon it, is well spent.' (*vide Harijan* March 14, 1936) 'The Propagation of Truth can be done less by books, than by actually living those principles. Life truly lived is more than books.' (*Harijan*, May 13, 1939.)

"Lately Gandhiji believed that *Ramanama* was the sovereign remedy for all ills, and, therefore, superseded all other remedies."

As a matter of fact, Gandhiji himself had handed over the manuscript of *Key to Health* a few days before his death for publication. His views in this book are not inconsistent with those emphasized in *Ramanama*, but they would be inadequate without the latter. The taking of *Ramanama* does not exonerate a person from a strict observance of the rules indicated in *Key to Health*. *Ramanama* does not consist in merely incessant utterance of the name of God. It is being and living in Truth, and in accordance with Truth. And if the mode of living transgresses the rules of Nature, it is not being and living in Truth. It is not, hence, *Ramanama* also, even if the name is ceaselessly uttered.

It must also be remembered that Faith, too, grows from stage to stage. Man advances from animism to reliance on the Ego, and, thence, to

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absolute surrender to God. Most of us are animists, no matter how strongly we might deny it. We rely on money, power, medicines, favourable planets and gods and a thousand other supports.

A few increasingly incline towards self-reliance. Those who rely on God alone might be counted on one's fingers.

Let there be Faith; but in their own interest let not the so-called Faithful think low of those who seem to lack it. A low estimate of others is inconsistent with Faith, on account of its adulteration with the pride of the self.

Wardha, 16-10-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE TRAGEDY OF THE MEOS

Shri Satyam, who is working on my behalf for the last more than two years among the all-robbled Meos of Alwar and Bharatpur, writes:

"The Matsya Pradesh Land Commission which was appointed by the Maha-Rajasthan Government to examine the problem of rehabilitation on the evacuee lands of the Alwar and Bharatpur districts has submitted its report. It is probably now before the Government of India. It appears from the questionnaire issued by the Commission that the Government want to determine how the rehabilitation work, now in hand and to be done hereafter, can be put on a satisfactory basis.

"In my opinion there is enough land in this region. Nevertheless, it has so happened that the land appears to be less than the demand for it. The reasons for this are:

- (a) land was distributed equally to all displaced persons, irrespective of their callings; for instance, even to people engaged in commerce and service; and
- (b) the census of the original Muslim owners still residing in India was incomplete.

"The result was that—

"(1) The holdings allotted to land-owning displaced persons were insufficient for their maintenance. This has led some people to register fictitious names as family members and get larger holdings. Moreover, while in Pakistan they owned good canal-irrigated lands, the land received in India is less fertile and more difficult to develop. It is necessary that they get here land adequately answering in yield the land left by them in Pakistan.

"(2) A large number of non-agriculturist displaced persons have disappeared from the scene leaving their lands after pocketing the *takavi* money in quest of other suitable employments; those who are still there, being ignorant of the art of agriculture, pass their days in misery having consumed the *takavi* money long ago. On the one side, there are among displaced persons so many people who do not produce any food and, on the other, considerable cultivable land remains fallow for want of proper cultivators.

"(3) Land should also be given to displaced Hindu and Muslim landless agriculturists. They know agriculture and would like to do it. But I am afraid that they may not find place in the evacuee land areas under the present rules. Perhaps a large number of such people may get absorbed in agriculture (without legal aid), but the land law should be amended suitably to provide land to such as remain unabsorbed.

"(4) During the communal disturbances, Meos and other Muslims of Alwar and Bharatpur had taken refuge in U.P., Punjab, Rajasthan, etc. In

July 1948, a census was taken of only such of them as were found in the districts of Gurgaon, Alwar and Bharatpur. Even that census was not accurate. But even to such Meos and other Muslims who were included in the census or furnished proofs of their title, their previous lands have not been restored. There are several difficulties in accepting land belonging to others or take allotments elsewhere; for instance, they lose their wells and houses. They wish to get back their own old fields, and this is a natural desire. They are sons of the soil and stick on somewhere near their own homes in the hope that their ancestral land will some day come back to them. The Government will do well to respect their longing. "In Gurgaon, these problems have been, to a large extent, tackled in a satisfactory manner by the Punjab Government. The same can be done in the neighbouring districts of Alwar and Bharatpur. Happily the Government of Maha-Rajasthan has also directed its active attention to the subject and it is hoped that the Government of India will advise them to take early steps to do what is right and needful. (Alwar, 25-11-'50.)"

I endorse all the above grievances and suggestions so courteously made by Shri Satyam. I have myself visited the villages of Meos three or four times, and have seen with my own eyes the conditions prevailing there. Although I have not been travelling for the last twelve months, I am in constant correspondence with Shri Satyam. He also comes to see me frequently at Patnar and was with me for a week in November last. The above letter was sent by him from Alwar after the last visit.

Indeed, if the rehabilitation work had been conducted properly and with a definite plan, it should have been over long ago. The problem was not a difficult one. The straight course was to rehabilitate everybody on his own land and in his own home. This would have solved the problem justly as well as immediately. But to allow Meos to live among Hindus was regarded then as dangerous. Our leaders in office, having lost living contact with the general public, accepted as authoritative the advice given by intermediary authorities and decided at the outset to make arrangements in keeping with this fear. I had tried to impress upon them that the disturbances had taken place on both sides from momentary excitement, and that the problem was capable of easy solution by returning to the Meos their own lands. They were after all peasants and knew nothing but agriculture and knew it well. This would have been the most fitting way to resettle the Meos, if they were to be allowed to live in India. But barring a few men like Jawaharlalji, others in the Government were not inclined to accept this view. Attempts were, therefore, made in the beginning to rehabilitate a large number of Meos in a concentrated area. But neither the Meos would accept this plan nor were the conditions favourable for it. The result was that some people were rehabilitated in their homes, some at places away from their homes and some were left homeless. Even those who were rehabilitated in their own homes got only a part of their

previous holdings. The remaining went into the possession of others. Thus it was all a confusion. It is heartening to note that the Punjab Government have recognized the justice of rehabilitating the Meos of their area (i.e. in Gurgaon district), in their old homes and lands. But a majority of the Meos belong to the State of Rajasthan. There the States Ministry, the Rehabilitation Ministry and the Rajasthan Government, and the three-fold officers of these three authorities have somehow put 78,000 Meos somewhere or other, and the remaining, nearly 30,000, are still awaiting arrangements. It is something like the famous "twelve-brothers' business" of the time of the Peshwas in Maratha history. Finally, the Government have appointed an Investigation Commission referred to above in Shri Satyam's letter.

What is strange is that the land of the Meos was even allotted to those displaced persons from West Punjab who had never cultivated land and had no land of their own before. In consequence, not only the Meos were deprived of their land but the land itself could not be properly cultivated. Besides, some portions of Meos' land were gifted to local Hindus having no land of their own. Now the problem is how to provide land for the displaced Meos. The suggestions made by Shri Satyam in his letter, are quite sound. If the gift of land had to be made to the local landless Hindus, whose number is large in India, it should not have been done at the expense of the Meos. The privilege of being donors should have been given, as in Kashmir, to the big zamindars. Again, it is manifest that injustice has been done not only to the Meos by granting their lands to those who did not possess any land in West Punjab, but also to those land-owning refugees of West Punjab, who could not be given sufficient land here. And, above all, the land itself has been unjustly treated, for it could not be well cultivated. Hence Shri Satyam's second suggestion that the land which has been unreasonably given to displaced persons must be returned to the Meos is very proper. In East Punjab, the holdings of Meos, temporarily given to Hindu evacuees, have been restored to the Meos.

Euclid has taught us that the shortest distance between two points is the straight line joining them. This maxim has a wider application, as has been amply proved in the case of the Meos. Had the straight path of justice been followed, there would have been the least amount of trouble. I am clearly of opinion that even now, instead of seeking a thousand by-paths, if the just course of re-settling, as far as possible, everybody in his original home and land is adopted it will be most helpful in arriving at the right solution of the whole problem.

VINOBA

(Translated from *Sarvodaya*, December 1950).

CAUSE OF THE CHAOS

Often the means, irrespective of its intrinsic merit or comparative effect, is tried to be justified on the ground of its leading to the attainment of a high aim or a great object. A means which is worse than the end, is readily comprehended and straightway condemned. But it does not appear to have been as easily grasped that the means has got to be, not only not worse than the end, but it is not enough even if it be as good as the end. Because in that case, too, there will be no net gain; and therefore, the effort becomes wasteful, which in the other case would have been harmful. Hence the urgency of the means being definitely or substantially better than the end—i.e. pure or correct, humane or humanitarian—for the achievement of an end howsoever high.

Even granting, therefore, that the object of Communism is laudable, since its method of achieving the object is violent, it is a menace or curse to society, rather than a blessing. And as such, it deserves to be resisted.

The reference to Communism is made only as a current example. The principle enunciated applies to all kinds of isms, schemes or systems, supposed to have been designed for the amelioration of the human race, but sought to be enforced without much consideration about the means.

China's invasion of Tibet is stated to be a "domestic" affair of China. It is common knowledge that a petty quarrel between husband and wife or father and son, is ignored by the public and the local judiciary on the ground of its being a domestic affair. However, when one of the parties gets killed in such a "domestic" affair, it is difficult to understand why the murder also is not ignored on the same ground of domesticity. Since the murder is nothing but a logical consequence of an insensate quarrel, the stupidity of ignoring the original quarrel—which was the root of the subsequent trouble—on the ground of domesticity, is crystal clear.

The fact is that, any wrong, crime or quarrel—individual or collective, national or international—whether it be a simple murder or a serious brawl, a domestic aggression or a national massacre, is clearly bad and wrong, unjust and unjustifiable, highly injurious to society at large, as it is to the parties involved. And as such it calls for interference and remedy.

If one can effectively interfere in any such stupid quarrel or heinous crime and settle or set it right, one would be perfectly justified in doing so—whether the quarrel or crime be domestic or public, individual or international. A person or a State may be unable to interfere—whether on account of the traditional notions of jurisprudence, or for want of sufficient strength or moral courage—and, so, might keep aloof, but

in that case, to attribute — and justify — such pusillanimous non-interference, in a clear case of crime or a dangerous quarrel, to high philosophy, insuperable technicality, or prudent policy, is a clear case of self-deception — if it be not a crude attempt at imposture.

Small wonder, therefore, if the current kind of discussions — and consequential half-baked solutions — of devastating moral problems, carried along the narrow lines of ignoring the root and clipping the leaf, or ignoring the spark and struggling to put out the flame — in other words, along the lines of old traditions, misconceived notions of philosophy, or self-interest called politics, only aggravate the problems and lead to an eternal elongation of the futile controversy — punctuated by beastly wars and beastlier brawls.

V. S. MUDVEDKAR

TRANPOSED 'A'

The story of the establishment of the English rule in India is now well known. The adventurers that came here for petty trade profits practised fraud, forgery, political chicanery, created splits, aided one party as against its rival, used violence to destroy their enemies and killed the industries that gave life and sustenance to the people in general. Whatever the name of the policy and process employed by them, it was essentially based on *Asatya* and *Himsa*.

In the wise dispensation of God, Mahatmaji was sent to fight this terrible evil of foreign subjugation and rescue the country from its after-effects. In nature, there are *dwandvas* (pairs of opposites) like heat and cold, fire and water, pleasure and pain etc. and one destroys its opposite. So Gandhiji had to invoke the aid of *Satya* and *Ahimsa* to uproot the British rule.

A scientific study of the Indian Independence movement will disclose that Mahatmaji made only a slight change in the weapons used by the British. He removed the *A* from *Asatya* and prefixed it to *Himsa*; and the result was *Satya* and *Ahimsa*. The alteration was slight but the effect was tremendous.

After his deplorable departure, the pendulum has swung back to the left side. People seem to be tired of the new experiment and have re-transposed the *A* to its original position. With the *A* thus reverted to its old place, *Asatya* and *Himsa* have become supreme, working as though with a vengeance. Wherever we turn, these twin companions, legacy of the past slavery, stare us in the face. This is also a small change, but the result is dreadfully catastrophic.

There is an amusing story in Telugu. A man was asked to write a letter in which the words *Mahabharata* (Great Epic) and *Adiparva* (its First Canto) had to be mentioned. But due to his ignorance he wrote *Mahabhara* (a great burden) and *Adiparvat* (First Mountain). When the mistake was pointed out to him, he was not repentant, but justified it saying that *t* was there, in one place or the other. His letter did not

produce any dire consequences; it only created fun at his expense.

The change made by Mahatmaji was divine but that made by us is satanic. The people are seriously affected by it and the leaders are rack-ing their brains to find some way out of the morass created by the new situation. Let us resolve to restore the *A* to the proper place, and pray to God that our minds and instruments may be purified.

Camp Madras,

21-11-'50

SITARAM

APPROACH TO THE ABORIGINAL

[In the first of the following sections is the gist of a letter of Shri Mahavirprasad Poddar raising important issues on the subject of work among the *Adivasis*. Having regard to their importance, it was considered advisable to send it to a few of the organizers of the All-India Adimjati Sevak Sangh for eliciting their views. In the second section (which will be printed subsequently), is given the reply of Shri V. Raghaviah of Nellore.—K.G.M.]

I

Workers in the aboriginal tribes should try to collect as much information and data regarding them as possible, but they should never profess to 'civilize' these people. An important question arises: Should they be called 'depressed and backward'?

They live at present on leaves and roots of trees and lead a healthy and simple life. If workers in these tribes infect them with the so-called civilized and modern habits, they will do disservice to them. With a simpler life, they are more sturdy and healthy than the so-called civilized city-dwellers habituated to tasty dishes and hotel food.

They now live under the trees in jungles. Should they be asked to settle in overcrowded cities where people stay in congested, dirty and suffocating chawls? They are happier where they are at present. It is more prudent that energy and resources are directed towards resettlement of refugees.

Open air, sunshine and hard work have made them strong and well built. But the so-called civilization will make them hospital-minded. They will also require silk shirts and costly *sarees* as we do. They are today habituated to hard work but our education will create in them a dislike for physical labour and turn them into clerks. At present they neither exploit others nor are exploited by others. But education will make them exploit others and be exploited by others.

I have seen the budgets of several institutions serving the aboriginal tribes. I have seen that major portions are spent on medicines, *hakims* and compounders. *Vaidyas* are there today to serve them. Tomorrow doctors will reach there as their saviours with injections and vaccines. Ultimately the result will be that the aborigines will lose their health and foreign chemists will gain by the sale of their medicines and injections.

There is no Hindu-Muslim problem with them. But education will spread communalism and disrupt them.

I do not mean to say that reforms are not

necessary. But I am afraid that on account of zeal for civilization, we might make their life still worse than what it is now.

MAHAVIRPRASAD PODDAR

(Based on the original in Hindi)

THE SECRET OF HAPPINESS

[The following is taken from an article by Howard Spring in *Woman's Magazine* reproduced in the *English Digest* of July, 1950. — V. G. D.]

.....In my view intelligence is primarily produced by happiness, and if we are a less intelligent people, it is because we are a less happy people.

This necessarily leads to an inquiry into the causes of happiness. The chief cause, I think, is the performance of creative work. When we speak of creative work we tend to think of the writing of books, the painting of pictures, the compositions of music, the moulding of statuary and so forth.

The point about all these things is that our mind conceives them and does them. You look at the finished thing, and there is a supreme satisfaction, a deep happiness in the thought, and 'Mine!' even if you have to say: 'A poor thing, but mine own.'

The fact is that *out of yourself* something has come that would not have been there without you. To that extent you are a creator.

Though this feeling is primarily experienced by the artist, it is participated in by everybody who sees a job through from beginning to end. The farmer and his helpers—the horseman, the ploughman, the shepherd, the thatcher—all have a part in creation. So has every sort of craftsman: the wheelwright and the mason, the carpenter and the builder.

Even a gypsy sitting beneath a hedgerow whittling pegs is nearer to the happiness of creation—and therefore in my view to happiness and intelligence—than the man who makes or operates some infinitesimal bit of a monstrous machine whose nature and purpose he no more comprehends than he comprehends the inscriptions on an Assyrian monolith.

Watching a great cathedral rising to the sky, the men in centuries which our 'intellectuals' regard with pity, as lacking a sense of social justice, understood what it was all about. It was fundamentally as simple as A. B. C.—a matter of resting stone on stone, of fitting wood to wood, and letting the joy of light stream in through glazed openings. There was nothing mysterious in any of this, nothing that a man could not comprehend and feel happy about.

In the first statement made to the world about atomic bomb factories, Mr Truman used these significant words: 'Few know what they have been producing. They see great quantities of material going in, and they see nothing coming out.'

These words....throw a flood of light on mechanical man's frustration because he has no part in creating things and therefore on his increasing lack of intelligence.

You can go through all the educational apparatus that the state provides, but if you end up as nothing but a 'directed' helot, then you have no happiness, and your intelligence shrinks as certainly as a leaf shrinks that does not find the sun.

We are faced by a.....dilemma. 'Social justice' demands that education should be available to all, and few of us would resist that claim. It demands that all sorts of things should be done for all sorts of people, and yet we find ourselves heading for a people duller, less gay and vital, than those who knew none of these things.

I do not see on the one hand how we can go back; on the other I do not see how we can resist the conclusion that the application of 'social justice', as we now conceive it, has not necessarily any connecting link with human happiness and therefore with the circumstances in which human personality blooms into intelligence.

We shall never find this link till we have found the way by which men can play a creative part in life.

SELECTED LETTERS

Second Series

(By M. K. Gandhi)

XVIII

[Message sent to Shri Duncan Greenlees, Head Master of the Theosophical High School, Madanapalle, on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the School circa March 8, 1938.]

Education is of no value which does not develop the character of boys and girls, and which does not evoke in them a passion for service, for without that passion all talk of freedom is moonshine.

XIX

[The following five extracts are taken from letters addressed to Shri Duncan Greenlees, and form part of a long record of two-ways correspondence and interviews between him and Gandhiji which is at present unpublished. He reserves full copyright in them while permitting me to make use of them here. — V. G. D.]

For itch you should use sulphur ointment. Mix flowers of sulphur with vaseline, or get the ointment ready made. Wash well with boiling water, dry well and rub the ointment (February 19, 1934).

XX

If you are not in the habit of sleeping under the sky, you should cultivate the habit now, taking care that you are well covered from foot to neck. You may cover the head too if you feel cold on it. The object....is to drink in the freshest air. This you do if you have the nose quite unobstructed (February 23, 1933).

XXI

You should sleep right under the sky. The roof is an obstruction....The morning dew will not hurt you if your body is well covered.

Newcomers find the routine [at the Sabar-mati Ashram] a stiff business, but we are trying to live the life of the billions of the earth. They are toilers all the day long. They have to do their thinking whilst their bodies are working. When the routine becomes natural, it becomes pleasant and does not interfere with hard thinking. All thinking is not useful. Clear thinking is the need. That can only come through continuous sacrifice, i.e. toiling for the service of others (March 1, 1933).

XXII

Green vegetables, bread or *chapati*, milk and a little fruit is perfect food. When one gets milk pulse is a harmful superfluity. One gets all the protein needed in milk (March 21, 1933).

XXIII

It [the fast] can do you no harm whatsoever if it is properly taken. As much water as you can drink, hot or cold, should be taken. You know the best and cheapest method of keeping water cold. Wrap the vessel in which it is kept with wet cloth. You have to take a full enema daily, and if there is a feeling of nausea you will take a few drops of lemon with water and even honey if you have a sweet tooth (April 6, 1933).

HARIJAN

Jan. 6

1951

TAXATION AND HIGH PRICES

The main plea that is usually put forth for the policy of controls is that they help to check the price level and curb inflationary tendencies. The Government attempts to do so by fixing the ceiling prices and in some cases undertaking distribution. They have been in existence for more than five years now. It is high time Government should study the results of the system to ascertain how far they have been able to check the price level.

The facts reveal the opposite of what is pleaded as a ground for controls. At best it may be assumed that they make a small part of the total stock of the controlled commodity available at a price lower than that of the remaining and greater part which goes underground. This is almost an invariable experience and needs no illustration. The black market comes in the wake of controls. While discussing the price level this black market cannot be ignored. The black-market prices are always higher than what they were before its control. For example, *gur* used to sell at Re 1 or 1-2-0 per seer formerly; but after the control it is not to be seen in the open market; its black-market price prevails, I hear, between Rs 2 and 2-8 (in Wardha). Thus the control raises the price level, so far as the needy consumer is concerned. Besides, it deprives the Government of its Income-tax, Sales-tax etc.

What are the causes that lead to the rise in prices? Are they entirely due to the production going very low and/or the demand going very high? Does the seller raise his prices out of a wanton desire to exploit the situation to make as great a profit as possible? Not that these causes do not exist. It should also be remembered that these causes are availed of not at the lower end of the trades, i.e. retail dealers, but at the highest level, i.e. the kings and princes of trade and speculative markets. In either case, in the absence of an actual war creating exorbitant demands by belligerent nations, there would be a much lower level at which increase of prices would stop on account of these causes alone. After the end of the war, they should come down again considerably, unless there were other causes to keep them permanently high and make them always go on rising. Such causes are found to exist in the schemes of taxation and currency prevailing in our country.

Speaking of the first, in the course of a letter discussing these matters, Shri M. N. Narielwala, a prominent merchant of Bombay, writes (I give a free translation):

"I shall give you an instance showing the res-

ponsibility of Government for high prices. Take *kopra* (coconut). It comes from Ceylon. The Ceylon Government charges on it a duty of Rs 300 per ton. To this are added India Government's duty of Rs 350, and Bombay's Sales tax of Rs 50 per ton. The duties alone thus amount to Rs 700 per ton. Before the war *kopra* was priced at between Rs 150 and 200 per ton in Bombay. The present high price of it which is four times as much as the previous one is due to customs duties and taxes. Is it then the Government or the traders who are responsible for its high price? The pre-war price of coconuts in Bombay was Rs 40 to 45 per thousand. This was after payment of all freights, taxes etc. Now the freights alone amount to Rs 90 to 95 per thousand, i.e. more than 2½ times its former selling price. Add to this Sales tax etc., and you know at once why the prices cannot come down.

"The Ceylon Government imposed control on *kopra*; but when it was brought to its notice that it was a mistake, it immediately lifted the control and saved its people from the loss of crores of rupees. I believe that Shri Aney, the then representative of India in Ceylon, would be able to testify to my statement.

Similar stories can be related about various other articles. Let me give a few comparative tables:

	Pre-war prices	Present prices	Rise
Pepper	Rs 70	3,500 per md.	50 times
Ginger	" 10	300 " cwt.	30 "
Betel-nut	" 10	165 " cwt.	16.5 "
Kattha	" 40	200 " <i>khandi</i>	5 "

"A very large part of this rise is due to heavy increase in freights and duties payable on movement from one province into another."

The above figures show that the rising tide of prices cannot be stopped by merely proclaiming ceiling prices any more than could King Canute bid the tide of the sea to recede. The whole system of customs duties, freights, sales-tax, etc. must be examined to cure the evil.

In addition to this, the system of currency also plays a prominent part in raising the prices. I shall discuss it next week.

Wardha, 13-12-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

GANDHIJI ON BISMARCK

[Several writers have compared Sardar Patel to Prince Bismarck of Germany. It will be interesting in this connection to read from Mahadev Desai's diary, the following conversation between Gandhiji and Mahadev-bhai about Gandhiji's estimate of Bismarck, and incidentally also of President Kreuger of South Africa. The conversation took place on the night of 8-8-1918, and has been recorded under date 9-8-1918.]

The talks turned on President Kreuger and Coates. (Gandhiji) referred to the kick, which he had received, as he tried to pass by Kreuger's house. This led to a talk on Kreuger. He held Kreuger in very great esteem. I compared Bismarck's features with Kreuger's. He said at once, "How can Bismarck compare with him? Bismarck was an image of vanity and cruelty. He wanted to establish a World Empire. Poor Kreuger wanted only to preserve his own nest, and struggled utmost for that. None can stand with him in his firmness of will and courage. You can see his firmness in his photos. But along with it, you will also see that there is gentleness along with firmness." This was followed by a comparison between Kreuger and

Gladstone. "You do not see that iron will in Gladstone. And how simple Kreuger was! He lived in a wretched house on a dustless (or, should it be, wretched?—ed.) road similar to the one we are walking upon. It had a storey with a dilapidated parapet, an humbler house than the Orphanage (of Nadiad) where we are lodged. Kreuger bore his whole life with great courage. Bismarck was a terror, while the smallest man could go and talk to Kreuger. The only thing which I could not understand about him was his last act of life, namely, his visit to England to seek her aid."

(Translated from the Gujarati
Mahadevbhai's Diary, vol. IV.)

M. D.

A GREAT CAPTAIN OF OUR FORCES

[Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's tribute to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel when he announced the demise of the Sardar in the Parliament at 10-45 a.m. on the 15th Dec., 1950.]

Mr Deputy Speaker, I have to convey to you, Sir, and to the House mournful news. A little over an hour ago, at 9-37 this morning, the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, passed away in Bombay City. Three days ago many of us saw him off at the Willingdon airfield and we hoped that his stay in Bombay would enable him to get back his health which had been so grievously shattered by hard work and continuous worry. For a day or two he seemed to improve, but at last early this morning he had a relapse and the story of his great life ended.

It is a great story as all of us know, as the whole country knows, and history will record it in many pages and call him the builder and consolidator of the New India and will say many things about him. But perhaps to many of us here he will be remembered as a great captain of our forces in the struggle for freedom and as one who gave us sound advice in times of troubles as well as in moments of victory, as a friend and colleague on whom one could invariably rely, as a tower of strength which revived wavering hearts when we were in trouble. We shall remember him as a friend and a colleague and a comrade above all, and I who have sat here on this bench side by side with him for these several years will feel rather forlorn and a certain emptiness will steal upon me when I look at this empty bench.

I can say little more on this occasion. My colleague Mr Rajagopalachari and I are going almost immediately, to pay our last tribute and homage to him in Bombay. I understand that the President has also decided to go to Bombay immediately, and the Speaker, Sir, went early this morning. I have no doubt that many of my colleagues and Hon. Members of this House would have liked to go to Bombay on this occasion to pay their last tribute, but I feel that he, magnificent worker that he was, would not have liked us to leave our work and just go in large

numbers to Bombay at this moment. So I have asked my colleagues to stay here, except for Mr Rajagopalachari who was perhaps amongst all of us here the oldest of Sardar Patel's colleagues and comrades. And it is right that he should go, and it is right that that other old colleague of his, the President, should also go. For the rest it is up to us to carry on the work here and elsewhere; for the work of the country never stops, never should stop. And so, in spite of this grievous sorrow that has come over us we have to steel ourselves to carry on the work in which the great man, the great friend and colleague who has passed away, played such a magnificent part.

REAL VALLABHBHAI NOT DEAD

[Shri C. Rajagopalachari, in a funeral oration, just after the pyre was lit said:]

It is my 'melancholic privilege' to say a few words on this occasion as Sardar Patel's oldest living friend.

Thirty-two years ago, when Gandhiji was with me at Madras, one morning, he asked me, "Have you seen Vallabhbhai Patel? Do you know that I have found in him a most trustworthy man, staunch and brave? You should see him." I did see him some time after; and since then I have been seeing him almost without a break.

What was Vallabhbhai Patel who departed from us early this morning? We have only his body before us, and it is soon to disappear into air, into water and into earth. That is where we all have come from and that is where we all must go back.

But what inspiration, courage, confidence, and force incarnate Vallabhbhai was! Let us not think that Sardar is dead. Let us imagine that the real Vallabhbhai has survived even after the Vallabhbhai we knew breathed his last this morning.

We have assembled here now to give vent to our grief and take courage and confidence from his ashes. We will not see the like of him again. But let us not think he lived in vain. He has left large fruits of work—honest, brave, persistent work which we can enjoy and share in, provided we have the character.

Let us be brave. Let us not shed tears. Let us not give way to fear and depression. I am an old man and I am given this privilege of addressing you first on this occasion because I am his oldest friend left behind.

I have seen many pass away, and this one is the most illustrious of them all. May his spirit bless us and our friends assembled here.

My brother (Jawaharlal Nehru) who is standing beside me will now guide the country all alone. It is difficult for me to say anything more in our grief. May God help us.

"LIVES FOR ALL TIME"

[Babu Rajendraprasad's speech at the Sardar's funeral.]

President Rajendraprasad in a voice quivering with emotion said: "Sardar's body is being consumed by fire; but no fire on earth can consume his fame."

Supporting himself on the shoulders of the sobbing Prime Minister, Babu Rajendraprasad continued, "The earthly body of Sardar Patel has gone. But in the form of the services he has rendered to his country, he would live for all time. Those left behind would have to continue the work left by him unfinished."

"Today we, his associates, are weeping," the President said, "but it is not for Sardar's sake that we are weeping; we are weeping for ourselves. Let us not forget that Sardar Patel has left a large family — the entire nation is his family. Let us pledge ourselves today to serve the cause of the nation as he has done. May his soul rest in peace."

RECONSECRATION

Fellow-seekers of the Truth:

I had never that privilege of knowing the Sardar. As many of you, I admired him from afar. Would that all of us had the discipline and the devotion to service that was his! His going has left a tremendous burden, fortunately to be shared by many of us. May we accept that burden with joy and renewed consecration.

The going of the Sardar has touched many of us very deeply, I am sure. It makes me want to cry out: "Let us get rid of our petty bickerings! Let us join hands, as never before, in the wonderful and challenging task of building the first nation that would make Truth and Love its method and goal. Where we differ let us exhibit that difference in an incarnation of the Truth that may be peculiarly ours. Let us bless those who have their own genius and understanding of the Truth that they may make their unique contribution. Let us stop this miserable quarrelling over the graves of the great! Rather let us use the strength spent in useless quarrelling in living the Truth as we see it. Someone has said recently, 'More than anything else, India needs to learn teamwork.' Whatever that may be, one of the great privileges and arts of great living is that of striding with the sincere pioneers of life on to greater heights of creative living. May we so consecrate ourselves in these moments of sorrow, when a great leader has left us — in these moments of thanksgiving for such a great life, in these days when we strive for the greater freedoms of life."

RALPH RICHARD KEITHAHN

By Mahatma Gandhi

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SPINNING AS A HEALING INSTRUMENT

Shri A. N. Rajan was an in-patient of the Erskin (Mental) Hospital of Madhurai in the year 1946. He was a regular spinner and did not give up his spinning even during his ailment and convalescence period. From the benefit it brought to him, it struck him that it can be helpful to other patients also. He, therefore, tried to introduce it amongst other patients of the hospital. The floating number of those, who took to spinning, has been about 500 and the period of their stay in the hospital was from about a week to three months. A regular spinning club has been organized there, costing about Rs 500 a year. The hospital authorities have kindly allowed him to carry on his activities of the club.

The effect of spinning on the patients was closely watched and its soothing influence was clearly felt. Major Happer, the District Medical Officer and Superintendent of the Hospital, remarked that it has been a great boon to the patients and has, by the mental and physical exercise involved, shortened their stay in the Hospital and speeded up their cure. Shri K. Rama Menon, M.B., F.R.C.S., another District Medical Officer and Superintendent of the Hospital, remarks: "To many patients who can, spinning is a very pleasant recreation, and can be and is availed of both by the literate and the illiterate. In fact it is popular among the illiterates and the young. The newspapers and books given as amenities are useful only to a handful of literates. In my experience there is nothing like the *charkha* club and spinning which all patients who can, both literate and illiterate, take to, with equal enthusiasm." A retired civil surgeon remarked: "Spinning has helped in curing lunacy. Those who were in a quiescent stage took to spinning on the *charkha* straightway. Their mental condition improved appreciably and proportionately with the gradual improvement in the quality of their handiwork." The Honourable Minister Dr T. S. S. Rajan says: "It is indeed a revelation in therapeutics that spinning could be used as a curative agent in ailments that defy ordinary treatment. It has made hospitalization bearable and pleasant."

The following are the figures of progress in spinning amongst the patients of the Erskin Hospital:

Year	No. of patients who took to spinning	No. of hanks produced
1946-47	355	1,014
1947-48	377	2,593
1948-49	427	2,659
1949-50	639	3,453

The above experiment should make hospital authorities consider, if it would not be greatly beneficial and in the interest of the patients to introduce spinning in their respective hospitals.

JAJU

"I AM ONLY A FARMER"

Alas! A prince among men, the maker of post-war political India, has departed from his terrestrial existence. This son of an humble farmer of Gujarat was destined to play the role in Independent India, not only of a prince, nor even of a king, but of the supreme arbiter of the destinies of hundreds of 'Their Highnesses', in India. This beloved 'Sardar' of the people has been compared by many, with Prince Bismarck of Germany. There was of course a similarity between these two remarkable men, but there was a difference as well. Prince Bismarck brought about the merger of the German States, under the hegemony of Prussia, thus moulding the Empire of Germany, under the suzerainty of William I, Kaiser of Germany. His ways smacked of both trickery and crookedness.

Sardar Patel, on the other hand, used the clean and democratic methods of argument and persuasion and only wielded the big bludgeon when the gentler methods failed, as in the case of Junagadh and Hyderabad. Junagadh was an eye-opener to the rest of the princely community, who thought that 'discretion was the better part of valour'. And a very important feature of even his coercion was that as soon as they yielded to him, they found that he was really their true friend, philosopher and guide. That was the greatest contribution of the Sardar to the history of post-independence India, though he helped solve other equally knotty problems. But the making of the greatest Sovereign State of the Indian people—I mean the Indian Republic—extending from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal and from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, was the glorious achievement of this prince of Indian farmers. He took pride in his *kisan* origin, saying "I am only a farmer" (હું તો ખેડૂત છું), and the only 'culture' that he knew was agriculture. By the by, it shows the streak of humour underlying his rugged countenance, which gave him the epithet of the 'Iron Man' of India.

His father Jhaverbhai was reputed to be a rebel against the British rule, having taken part in the War of Independence of 1857 on the popular side. This may or may not be true, for ought we know to the contrary, but if the adage, 'like father like son', has any truth in it, this must be true. For, Jhaverbhai gave to the nation not only one but two sons, who proved to be greater 'rebels' against the British Empire than himself. It may be a difficult question to answer, as to who carries the palm—Viththalbhai Patel or Vallabhbhai Patel,—in 'gin the (British) Government!'

After returning from England, where he passed the barrister's examination, standing first class first, he set up a lucrative legal practice at Ahmedabad. Then the 'naked fakir' of

India came as a strange influence in his life. Sardar Patel came to scoff at Mahatma Gandhi, but remained to pray and become one of his greatest disciples. What John the Baptist was to Christ Jesus, that Patel was at Bardoli to Gandhi.

The epic struggle, which the farmers of Bardoli waged relentlessly against the bureaucracy, has been immortalized by the late Shri Mahadev Desai, in his *Story of Bardoli** "Bardolize the country" came to mean, organize the farmers. It was in Bardoli that the national struggle for independence found a new and clean substitute for armed rebellion. This weapon was forged by Gandhiji in South Africa, but its practical application in India was reserved for Sardar Patel. Organize the farmers for Satyagraha and Swaraj will follow as surely as day follows the night, was the lesson of Bardoli. It was in Bardoli that he won the title of 'Sardar', as, before him, Tilak had become the 'Lokamanya' at Poona during his anti-liquor campaign. Both these titles were as spontaneously given by the people, as 'Le Petit Corporal' was the title affectionately given to Napoleon Bonaparte by his soldiers.

The Karachi Congress session found in the Sardar a worthy president and the Haripura Congress was a triumph of his powers of organization. He came to be recognized as the steel frame of the Congress organization and the 'steel frame' of the British empire had ultimately to subordinate itself to this new master of the Home department in the Central Government.

As an after effect of the World War II, the 'diamond of Kashmir', Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, came to be entrusted, as the right hand man of Gandhiji, with the formation of the first cabinet under Swaraj, and he chose Sardar Patel as his second in command. Nehru won his laurels in the field of foreign relations and Patel was equally successful on the 'Home front'.

Although we do not have a second leader to completely fill up Sardar Patel's vacancy, democratic Government will have to go on and a substitute will have to be found for him. The task of his successor is certainly not going to be a bed of roses. But we shall wish him success in his arduous labours.

Let us, of the common people, follow the worthy example, set by the departed leader and do our duty to our motherland, as her worthy sons and daughters. In the words of Yajñavalkya, अतो न रोदितव्यं हि क्रियाः कार्याः स्वशक्तः । (Enough of sorrow now. Perform your tasks according to your capacity).

A. V. BARVE

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FIFTEEN YEARS OF ORGANIZED VILLAGE WORK

[The following report of the work done in Pedaravur village during the years 1936 to 1950 to improve the condition of the villages was presented to Sri Gopabandhu Choudhary, Sri Shrikrishnadas Jaju, and Sri Krishnadas Gandhi, on their visit to Pedaravur (Guntur District, Andhra) on the 7th November, 1950. It is worth study by workers for Sarvodaya.]

A Panchayat Board, a Co-operative Society, a Katai Mandal (Spinning Club) and a Library Committee are functioning in the village. The duties of the Panchayat Board are, under the Act, mainly, to lay out roads, to provide drinking water, to construct latrines, to dispose of the filth and rubbish and to maintain the village in proper sanitary condition. I happen to be its President from 1936 to this day. I had a plan for improvements in the village to be taken up. They were:

- (1) Shifting the burial grounds from within the village to places outside the village;
- (2) Constructing Vehicular Bridges;
- (3) Construction of latrines for females;
- (4) Acquiring house sites for Harijans to ease the congestion in the *cheri*;
- (5) Construction of wells for drinking purposes;
- (6) Lay out of roads.

First of all, I had to investigate the possibilities of the sources of income, other than taxation. I had to rely upon the manual labour of the villagers for the works of laying out roads, levelling pits and clearing the drains. For the construction of bridges, wells, and latrines, money was essential. Therefore I was compelled to seek money. I had to depend upon the villagers' goodwill for the contribution of money and their leisure periods for the contribution of labour. Manual labour is the best kind of income. Quality of the work depends upon it. I have faith in it and hope that I can complete the improvements suggested in the plan without either taxing or begging. I have to take up the works needed, and make the villagers feel the necessity for them. The manual labour has to be obtained in their leisure periods. The following sources of income were tapped to make the Panchayat Board financially sound:

- (1) Taking on lease the grass over P.W.D. Porambokes, and its re-sale for profits;
- (2) Sales of wind-fallen and withered trees;
- (3) Sale of night-soil and rubbish;
- (4) Sale of silt for brick-making;
- (5) Doing contract works for the L.F. and P. W. Departments;
- (6) Purchasing a standard balance to weigh the paddy and a rolling stone to make roads and to give them on rent;
- (7) Giving the right of measuring and weighing and carting of paddy to one who pays to the Panchayat Board;
- (8) Collecting certain fees from soda, coffee and mutton vendors;
- (9) Issuing permits to oil engines on payment of fees;
- (10) Sale of fish in tanks and other water sources;
- (11) Government's grant and aid.

By the above sources the Board was able to collect Rs 71,760 in all during these fourteen years, and spent them towards the improvement of the village. I want to state here that Rs 4,200 worth of manual labour only had been recorded. The Board was able to get the manual labour from the villagers of all classes to the maximum extent, which was not recorded. The following works were completed by their co-operation and help.

- (i) The Board provided metal to the roads nearly two miles in length at an estimated cost of Rs 16,000.
- (ii) Five dry-earth latrines were constructed at a cost of Rs 3,000.

(iii) A pagk named after Vinobaji was constructed, costing about Rs 4,000.

(iv) Three wells were constructed in Harijan quarters. Sanitary arrangements to dispose of the drainage was provided, costing nearly Rs 1,500.

(v) Constructed a building for the Board Office at a cost of Rs 4,500.

(vi) The vehicular bridges over canals were constructed on an expenditure of Rs 5,000.

(vii) Construction of a building to instal Radio and a compound wall for enclosure to the listeners at a cost of nearly Rs 1,000.

(viii) Five furlongs of earthen roads were formed costing about Rs 5,000.

(ix) Providing compost pits, squatting slabs, and Wardha-type latrines at various places, costing about Rs 600.

(x) Construction of a drain in streets Rs 250.

(xi) A vacant site around the latrine is under the control of the Board. To make it useful casurina plants are planted in the site over 80 cents of land.

(xii) Nine persons are appointed on pay incurring an expenditure of nearly Rs 4,000 per year for

- (1) Scavenging,
- (2) Sweeping,
- (3) Watering the roads,
- (4) Maintenance of roads and bridges,
- (5) Radio and Survey maintenance,
- (6) Protecting parks and tanks,
- (7) Keeping accounts and regular correspondence.

There are carpenters, blacksmiths, masons, weavers, shoe-makers, potters, barbers and washermen in the village doing their dutiful service to the villagers. These professionals are paid in kind. Agriculturists use their periods of leisure in rope- and gunny-making.

Two District Board elementary schools and three aided schools are working for the education of children. The *katai mandal* is doing its work with faith and devotion. There are 52 ordinary members and *swavalambi* spinners. They were able to get 871.4 sq. yards of cloth woven for themselves, during the year. From July 13th to October 2nd, 70 wheels worked for two hours every day. They were able to spin 1,024 hanks. Instruction in carding and *tunai* for the teachers and pupils in the girls' school was given for 100 days. There are two looms for cloth, a loom for *dari* or a carpet with rags, and another for tape making. Shrimati Tulasamma with two other colleagues of the *katai mandal* is doing the work throughout the year under the auspices of the *katai mandal*, consisting mainly of the women of the village. They have collected Rs 237-14-0 for Assam Relief.

There are nearly 1,500 books in various languages in the library. It has its own building and is equipped with the necessary furniture. The younger people in the village are keen on its improvement and are serving the institution. It has its own board of management, consisting of youths.

A multi-purpose Co-operative Society, with thirty-five members, has nearly Rs 5,000 as assets to its credit and is doing the service of supplying manures and seeds.

Two thousand acres of wet land producing 7000 maunds of paddy are under cultivation in the village. There are 2500 cattle of which 1000 are of the cow family and the rest of the buffalo. There is a breeding bull and a he-buffalo for breeding purposes. There is no dearth of milk and its products.

Till now the bright side of things has been presented. I feel it my duty to give you the other side also. The ryots are dependent on foreign chemical manures and have not taken enthusiastically to producing compost in their own village. The human excreta is not properly exploited to turn out the best manure, but on the contrary allowed to injure the health of the village. Milk and milk products are sold to the neighbouring town, though their need is no less in the village itself. There is

leisure of 3 clear months in the year for the ryots. It is not utilized in any constructive or productive manner, but wasted away in gossip and other harmful activities.

I close my report with a fervent prayer to the Almighty, to be merciful towards the peasants. I seek your kind blessings and advice.

Pedaravur, 7-11-'50

P. RAMAKRISHNAIAH

RELIGION AND POLITICS

"Keep religion out of politics," said the Congress President recently, replying to an address of welcome by the Delhi State Congress Committee. "He who says religion has nothing to do with politics understands neither religion nor politics," said Gandhiji years ago. But the conflict between these two categorical and contradictory statements is more apparent than real, as is seen from the full text of Shri Tandon's speech. For the two had two entirely different aspects of religion in mind when they used the time-worn word *religion*. When the Congress President spoke of religion he was referring to religious traditions and ceremonials, centring round acts of worship and looking for sanctions in infallible books and unalterable customs. This kind of religion has in all countries been the enemy of progress and the source of strife. Communalism finds its sanction in this type of rigid, narrow, fanatic faith. Rightly did Shri Tandon condemn this kind of religion. And no advice is sounder than his that we should let our intellect play freely upon the traditions and practices of religion, however hoary and sacred they may be. "People should weigh every old religious dictum and custom in the scales of intellect and find out whether it stood the test of reason or not. If it did not stand the test of reason, then such a dictum or custom should be thrown aside and not blindly followed."

Strangely enough, this was exactly what such an exemplar of true religion as the Buddha said centuries ago. How surprisingly modern and scientific sound his words:

"Do not accept my teaching as true because it has been handed down from generation to generation; or because it is in accordance with your past traditions; or because it seems probable; or logical; or is in accordance with practical justice; or because it seems very good; or because it strengthens your faith; or because I am a celebrated and respected sage. But accept my teaching only if it appears right to your discriminating intelligence".

When Gandhiji advocated in theory and demonstrated in practice that religion should permeate politics he had a totally different view of religion from the one that Tandonji rightly condemns. Religion, to Gandhiji, was a disinterested quest of truth and an uncompromising application of truth to every aspect of life, whatever it might cost. Such a religion is the very breath of life to one who holds it, and there can be no question of cutting out such a religion from the life of an individual or a nation. We want not less, but more of that kind of religion. That the secularism of the Indian State does not mean the cutting out of this basic belief that the

universe rests on the bed-rock of truth and that righteousness alone exalts a nation is seen from the motto that independent India has chosen for herself: सत्यमेव जयते। Does not that express the nation's conviction that truth alone triumphs and its firm determination to hold on to the way of truth, whatever the consequences? In this profound sense *India is not a secular, but a truly religious State*.

But it is necessary that people's minds should be exercised over this conflict within religion itself and their ideas made clear as to where they stand with regard to it. This conflict in religion is nothing new. Students of the history of religion know of it as the conflict between priest and prophet. At every stage in the path of progress in religion, the prophet, the instrument of progress, has been opposed by the priest, the custodian of tradition. And every step in religious advance has been paid for by the blood and tears of the religious pioneer and prophet. The greatest enemy of true and progressive religion has ever been the *Sanatanist*, the upholder of the *status quo*, of the lower, the limited view. Socrates was condemned as a corrupter of youth and a disturber of the faith. It was not the irreligious among the Jews, but the rabidly orthodox, who were responsible for the death of Jesus. And Gandhiji, the prophet and pioneer of true religion in politics, was a victim of the false defenders of Hinduism, of those who would guard the faith once for all delivered to the saints of old from all contamination by other cults and traditions.

On this point, too, the Congress President had some words of wise counsel to give. Referring to culture he said, "it was not a dead brick or a stagnant pond, but a flowing stream." Earlier he had said of religious fanaticism: "We cannot let ourselves remain in the rut of any sect or faith. We have to change with the times, which, of course, we can only do when we develop a sufficient incisiveness of intellect to guide us." This again is in line with the judgment of one of the greatest minds of modern times, Prof. A. N. Whitehead, who has said: "The worship of God is not a rule of safety — it is an adventure of the spirit — a flight after the unattainable. The death of religion comes with the repression of the high hope of adventure."

Indian culture has been a flowing stream, enriched by various currents that have flown into it. The genius of India has been one of assimilation and synthesis. But assimilation and synthesis are poles apart from passive acquiescence and tolerance born of indifference. They are something positive and active, demanding alert open-mindedness and incisiveness of intellect to discern essentials from non-essentials. During centuries of decadence Indian religion has been lethargic, unable to make the effort for active assimilation of the militant faiths like Islam and Christianity that made inroads into

its precincts. But even during these periods of decadence and political subservience Indian religion had given glimpses of the reconciliation it can effect among the conflicting creeds within its borders. Now that the land is free and the people are awake and alive there should be a genuine effort made to effect a real and satisfying synthesis of the faiths that have met on Indian soil. Not to face this problem, on its ideological as well as its practical side, is to allow reactionaries to exploit and abuse differences in religion. India has paid dearly for her failure to effect such a synthesis. But amputation of the worst-affected parts of the body politic has not removed the danger, the germs of the disease, in other parts. Religious differences are being fomented and exploited to trouble the peaceful waters of our independent existence. They need to be frankly faced and rightly resolved. Will not the *Sarvodaya* give a lead in this matter, along the track blazed by Gandhiji by his life-long confession and his martyr's death?

S. K. GEORGE

ASSAM EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND

From 18-12-'50 to 30-12-'50

Name & Place	Rs	as	ps
Shree B. D. Patel, Dandeshwar	5	0	0
Shree B. M. Patel, Bhasana	3	0	0
Shree P. M. Patel, Bhasana	2	0	0
From the Gurjar Grantharatna Karyalaya and friends, Ahmedabad	50	0	0
Secretary, Kapadvanj Vanik Mitra Mandal through Bulakhidas Shah, Ahmedabad	11	0	0
From Poona: Donating Rs 7: Mahadev G.; Re 1 each: Balakrishna Raje Inamdar, Shridevi B. Inamdar, Bharati B. Inamdar, Abhay B. Inamdar, Manekchand G., Hiralal B., Chandrakant R.	14	0	0
From Gram Seva Kendra Shivrapalli: Donating Rs 10: Ramkrishnaji Dhut; Rs 5: N. R. Raghavendra; Rs 3: Keshavamurti T.; Re 1 each: Bhaskarrao, Narshi Pantulu, Chitari Mistri, Anneyya Badai, Mubarakali, Devidas Rao, Viramanidevi; As 8 each: Kumarappa, Kasimsaheb, Hussainsaheb, Tulsayya, Madire Balappa; As 4 each: Imamsaheb, Kuyalamma	28	0	0
From Gram Seva Kendra, Kotdhangao: Donating Rs 5 each: Venkat Reddi, Guddi C. Reddi; Rs 2: N. S. Reddi; Re 1 each: Mohmed Hussain, Rajappa, Gollayalamma; As 8 each: Mohmed Jogir, Mohmed Jalal, Jegappa Kalal	16	8	0
Shree Mohanlal M., Bombay	10	0	0
Shree Shriram V. Subbarao, Guntur	4	0	0
From Jain Osaval Panchayat through H. Sul-tanmal Jain, Shigapurmal Koil	41	6	0
Shree S. S. Kumte, Shripur	10	0	0
Shree Narottamdas G., Jawala	1	0	0
Shree B. Shreenivas Murthy, Bangalore	5	0	0
Shree B. Girdharlal & Co., Bombay	50	0	0
Shree Dahyabhai D., Surat	25	0	0
Shree A. J. Chokshi, Dhandhuka	10	0	0
Shree Sarvodaya Sahitya Mandir, Hyderabad	2	0	0
Shree Navabharat Co-op. Society, Khadaklat	40	0	0
Shree Harbans Kumari, Delhi	25	0	0
Sum already acknowledged	25,946	9	0
Total Rs	26,299	7	0

AFFORESTATION IN MYSORE

Vanamahotsava, celebrated throughout the country last July, for which every Indian ought to be grateful to our Food Minister, compelled various State and Provincial Governments to examine the position about the forests in their respective areas. International standards require that every civilized country should possess a good reserve forest of not less than one-fourth of its total area. Without exception it was found, that throughout India, nowhere was it more than 12 per cent of the area which is less than half the international standard. Mysore State proved no exception. Recently at the Forest Officers' Conference, it is reported that the Chief Conservator of Forests deplored the alarming state of the fuel position which was becoming critical due to the indiscriminate felling of trees without corresponding replanting. The Conference resolved to plant about 4,000 sq. miles of forest on a ten year plan and bring the forest area to the international standard.

Fortunately, if properly done, there is a good scope for fuel sufficiency in Mysore. Nearly half the area of the State comprising of the Malnad Districts of Chikmagalur, Hassan, Shimoga, is extensively planted with coffee and tea. The popular shade tree in the plantations is the "silver oak", which is very well adapted to our soil, is quick growing and of late has acquired an additional timber and industrial value.

The two varieties best suited for fuel are casuarina and silver oak. The casuarina plantations are very common round about Bangalore in the dry parts and are very lucrative. Fuel plantations are not to be found in the Malnad area. This is a new line, useful for the people, lucrative, and is an urgent necessity. The vacant lands otherwise unsuited for coffee can be usefully planted with hard growing silver oak for fuel and timber purposes.

But a fuel plantation needs a good initial outlay, and requires proper working for ten years for the trees to be ready for cutting. Hence the general public is unwilling to venture out in a new line. It is here that the Government should come forward and encourage private individuals by liberal concessions to open up fuel plantations. Once the fuel plantations are established, the Government Department can usefully concentrate its attention on costly timber plantations like teak, rosewood etc., which have a large internal and attractive export market.

A fully worked out scheme to open an economic fuel plantation in Chikmagalur, Taluq and District, Mysore State, is given below:

The area to be planted is 25 acres. The trees being silver oak, preferably, and casuarina planting to be done on a five-year plan.

The non-recurring expenses for cost of land	Rs	1,500
The non-recurring laying out of cart roads etc.	Rs	1,000
The non-recurring small forest lodge	Rs	750
	Rs	3,250
The recurring expenses for 5 years for planting 25 acres at Rs 150 per acre	Rs	3,750
The recurring expenses for 5 years for two watchmen at Rs 600 per year	Rs	3,000
Total Rs		10,000

The income expected — calculated on the basis of a minimum yield of 150 tons of fuel per acre at Rs 10 per ton, for 25 acres is Rs 37,500.

The concessions to be granted by the Government are: liberal grant of the working expenses as a long-term loan on easy terms as regards interest and instalments, and free grant of vacant land for the purpose.

Lastly, the advantages. Fuel position is made secure. Private enterprise to a large extent avoids the unnecessary delay that is usual with the Government Department. Valuable manure like cowdung, indiscriminately burnt as fuel nowadays, will be available in a large measure for lands. Soil erosion will be checked. There will be a healthy change in the average mentality of the general public and particularly the farmers and fuel suppliers, who at present indiscriminately waste Government forest. No private individual will allow his plantation to be wasted like the Government forest which, being Government property is "everyman's estate and no one's concern".

H. P. R. IYENGAR

Rectification

Referring to the article "Praiseworthy" (*Harijan* 14th Oct., '50), the Deputy Controller of Salt, Madras, has taken exception to a passing reference to the effect that he "would not give an official copy (of an Executive Order of the Salt Department), but after a great hesitation permitted Shri Ganesan (the Harijan *sevak* mentioned in the article) to copy the Executive Order." The Deputy Salt Controller writes that the statement is incorrect. No official copy was asked for, and he could not have refused the official copy of a document, which he permitted to be taken unofficially.

On enquiry I find that from some discussion which took place on the occasion Shri Ganesan inferred that he could not get an official copy, and must be satisfied with one made by himself. As a matter of fact all that was meant to be conveyed was that an official copy could not be immediately supplied, and some formalities would have to be gone through, involving delay. As Shri Ganesan did not wish to lose time, he was permitted to take a private copy. No official copy was actually demanded and refused. I rectify this in fairness to the Deputy Controller.

Wardha, 25-12-'50

K. G. M.

SPINNING WAGES

The Gram Seva Mandal, Wardha, passed a resolution to the following effect on 22-10-'50:

"The Gram Seva Mandal has noted the contents of the letter about raising spinning wages, received from Shri Vinoba, in which he has drawn the attention of the Mandal to his note 'Paradox of Money' published in the September issue of *Sarvodaya* (*vide Harijan*, 4-11-'50). The substance of the note is that the current rate of eight annas of spinning wages approved by the Charkha Sangh, is the equivalent of only two annas of old. At that time it was decided that on the principle of the living-wage, it was incumbent, according to the prices then prevailing, to pay three annas at least. Hence, proportionately, the present rate ought to be twelve annas.

"The Mandal has given its earnest consideration to this matter from all points of view. The fact is that even with the current wages the sale of *khadi* is diminishing. Under these circumstances, the question of raising the wages is beset with serious practical difficulties. But, inasmuch as, on principles of justice, the logic of Vinoba's letter is unassailable, the Mandal resolves that the spinning wages be increased to four times the old Charkha Sangh rate of annas three. As there is no need to change the carding rates, they will remain the same. The new rates will be put into effect at the end of the six-monthly account, i.e. from 1st December, 1950."

I congratulate the Gram Seva Mandal on this resolution. As said therein, they have done nothing more than justice. But when the sense of justice has to grapple with actual practice, it becomes entitled to a compliment, though without much reason. The Gram Seva Mandal operates in the Wardha district. This resolution puts increased responsibility upon the *khadi*-lovers of Wardha. For, *khadi* will now be more costly than hitherto, and they must willingly bear the increase. All India looks upon Wardha with a degree of esteem. When the living-wage resolution was passed by the Charkha Sangh I had written an article captioned, "Now Commences Justice". Be it *khadi* or something else, an activity can be considered as well carried on, only if it does so justly; otherwise it is as good as stopped. I hope that the Wardha people will keep this in view and give their active support to this resolution of the Gram Seva Mandal.

Compared to the Charkha Sangh, the Gram Seva Mandal has a small area to cover. The Sangh has a very large sphere of activity. The latter may, therefore, have to meet more difficulty. There is another reason also for it, which I was not aware of before. I took it that the Charkha Sangh was paying the full wage of eight annas referred to in the above resolution. But now I gather that this is not the case. The spinning wage is eight annas only in some provinces; in others like Tamilnad, where *khadi* is produced on quite a large scale, the rate is only six annas. The Charkha Sangh might, therefore, find it an uphill task to pay twelve annas.

Really, there is nothing like climbing up a hill in this. It is returning to the level from a pit into which one had slipped in the course of climbing.

Analogies apart, it cannot be denied that there are real difficulties. But intellect is superior to difficulties, and it must solve them. And we can solve them only when we contemplate the problem in its entirety. If we isolate village industries from the whole view of life, *khadi* from village industries, and, again, in *khadi* we isolate spinning from carding and from weaving, carding from ginning, and ginning from cotton-growing and thus go on breaking every operation into pieces, verily the intellect will also be torn into pieces and we shall not be able to find a solution.

But the solution must needs be found, otherwise the very prestige of *khadi* is in jeopardy.
(Translated from *Sarvodaya*, Nov. '50) VINOBA

WITH ALL THY HEART

I saw in Marathi a Berlin news item to the following effect :

The Communist Youth League in the Soviet-occupied Germany have declared that it was futile in present times to celebrate the birthday anniversary of Jesus. Instead it would be in the fitness of things to celebrate 21st December, the birthday of the present great man of the age, Marshal Stalin.

The Independent German Youth League also has supported the idea and decided to celebrate Stalin's birthday on a grand scale.

The sincerity underlying the statement attracts attention. Minds of young men are generally transparently candid. They cannot tolerate hypocrisy, and are strongly impelled to discard old customs and institutions, when they find them tainted with hypocrisy. And hypocrisy has entered the observances of practices of all religions including Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam. Hence young men inspired with a new ideology detest such celebrations, condemn the religions responsible for starting them, and hate their great founders along with the deity worshipped by them.

It reminds me of the story of the *Sarpa-Satra* (Serpent-Sacrifice), when Takshak, the prince of the serpents, took refuge with Indra. The enemy of the serpents was prepared to sacrifice even Indra along with Takshak. But Indra being invincible Takshak also was saved with him. Hypocrisy is not eliminated by condemning the principles and the great founders of religion or God. It simply permeates the condemners themselves.

It would have been a different matter if these young men, having refused to celebrate Christ's birthday, had freed themselves of the slavery to all such celebrations. But when they evince such enthusiasm to pay devoted homage to an ordinary human leader, who is not free from the influences of passions, their condition is pitiable. Such worship of man is the worst of all idol-worships.

But the educational system, that has prevailed till now in most countries is so designed that it does not allow the growth of independent thinking in students, which is at once suppressed if it is found to develop. In the name of national education only Government education is imparted in all the places. And this is the result.

In our country, we never celebrated on a national scale birthdays of any one, except those

of Rama, Krishna and others clothed with divinity. Even great saints had their death-anniversaries celebrated. Hundreds of great men were born during the last five thousand years in our country ; but it was unusual among us to celebrate their birthdays. We did celebrate birthdays of young children. But of late we have begun to fondle grown up people and even very old ones. We have all as it were become babes.

Jesus and Stalin are at the ends of two poles. The well-known message of Jesus was, "Love thy enemy with all thy heart and soul." That of Stalin is just the opposite. In an order of the day, during the recent great war, he said to his soldiers, "You are fighting the Germans with all your weapons, but that is not sufficient. You must hate them with all your heart and soul."

That is why this deity is now to replace Christ who was Love incarnate.

"Love with all thy heart," and "Hate with all thy heart," are contrary messages. But even there, there is a common factor in them, viz. doing so "with all one's heart". I take this common factor itself and say, do whatever you like, but do it with all your heart, and experience will show you that it is impossible for a human being to hate with all his heart. He will then take to the path of Love. Maybe, Jesus might be forgotten, but if Love survives, Jesus will still feel extremely happy.

Paramdham, Paunar, 15-12-'50 VINOBA
(Translated from Hindi)

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