

HARIJAN

16 Pages

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

GANDHI AND MARX

XII

Before concluding, let me say a word about the purpose of writing this series. The kind of propaganda, which is carried on at present against Communism, reminds one of the hue and cry which watchful villagers raise at midnight, when they perceive a pack of wolves approaching towards their village. On hearing the cry, women and children hurriedly shut themselves up in a room, cattle are hid, a few youths run out with their hatchets, sticks, etc., and the elderly men light fire all around. The purpose of the first hue and cry is to create a scare in the sleeping population; that of the second one to scare away and beat off the wolves. The way, in which Communism is sought to be fought by democratic and Fascist countries and their propagandists, is similar to this.

The United States of America and other countries of the West hope to defeat Communism with their destructive armaments and political and economic manoeuvres. In India, we advocate the "Gandhian Way" more for exploiting the public sentiments than for implementing it in our life. We also try to attract the people towards us by interpreting Gandhiji in terms of Marxism. Along with this, the State machinery works energetically to suppress the Communist activities.

But I doubt the efficacy of all these methods. I am afraid, it makes the opponents of Communism look ridiculous, and in accordance with the general experience of life, the very attempt to suppress it makes it grow strong. You cannot suppress Communism whether by atom and hydrogen bombs, by monetary aids provided with a motive, by appealing to Gandhian slogans, or by imprisonments or shootings. The last may be inevitable as an immediate step against actual lawlessness; but it will not help the Government long, even if it is totally Fascist. Communism is bound to come, unless the Gandhian way of life is actually and actively adopted. It is bound to come, because it is the only way left for the leader-forsaken, half-awakened masses to protest against the chaos and anarchy ruling in the name of democracy and orderly progress.

The difference between Gandhism and Marxism is great, but greater still is the difference between Gandhism and unbridled capitalistic, feudal and caste orders. Unless those, who enjoy privileged positions in the present system of life in the shape of abundant wealth and superior caste, relinquish them and constitute themselves true trustees of the wealth in their possession and make themselves equal in rank with the masses, reduce their standard of life in harmony with the poverty of the country, and pledge to work for the well-being of every one, Communism with all its violent force is inevitable. And in that case those, who say that Communism is a stage preceding to Gandhism, i.e. a non-violent order, will be regarded as nearer to truth. The way to avoid this violent struggle is to voluntarily make graded changes in the current way of life. Rank, caste, untouchability, etc. must go; unemployment and hunger must be abolished; provincialism and communalism must abate; nationalism must shed its selfishness, aggressiveness and imperialistic propensities; the difference between the highest and the lowest standards of life must diminish to an enormous extent; judicial and executive administration must show considerable and rapid moral improvement; the semblance of democracy must give way to real democracy and sense of responsibility. Even all these will not lead to Gandhism as such, but will be satisfactory steps towards it. If we are not earnest about these steps, the tide of Communism cannot be stemmed; and as the present state of affairs is not one, for the continuance of which a devotee might offer prayers to God, the tide would come with all its force to wash away all that stands in the way.

There is still time for the custodians of capital and holders of social rank to bring about graded changes in their lives. May it please God to grant that wisdom to every one of us.

(Concluded)

Wardha, 29-4-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

Note: It is contemplated to publish this series in a book-form. If those, who have followed it carefully till now, have any suggestions to make or desire any points to be further clarified, may please forward them to me in as concise a manner as possible at an early date.

K. G. M.

THE VALUE OF HUMAN URINE

Our average unirrigated acreage per head of population comes to 0.546, or slightly over half an acre, for which in terms of manure, 10 lb. of nitrogen would be necessary. In the following note, I have shown that if we are able to return the nitrogen passing through human urine, the requirements of our soil would be fulfilled. If this can be achieved we shall be theoretically fulfilling nature's nitrogen cycle, inasmuch as 90 to 95 per cent of the nitrogen we take through our food is passed through urine.

On 23rd October last, I had an opportunity of accompanying our Food Commissioner to attend a function near Rajghat, Delhi. The Commissioner referred in his speech to the use of urine going waste. The same day we went to a neighbouring village to give a practical demonstration of showing how the urine could be preserved for being used as manure in villages. This gave me the stimulus to go deep into the matter.

I took an opportunity to discuss the matter with Mr. Ignani of the Pusa Institute, who had studied and prepared a small apparatus for collecting urine. The following is the chart that was prepared by him :

Urea voided	30 grams per day per man.
From 300,000 people	3,650,000 tons ammonia
Equivalent to	1,680,000 „ nitrogen, and
in addition	314,000 „ P ₂ O ₅ (phosphoric oxide)
	31,400 „ K ₂ (potassium)

In the case of animals, whose diet is wholly vegetable, a greater part of the nitrogen is excreted as the so-called hippuric acid.

We have to consider how these two main-end products of nitrogen metabolism, viz. urea and hippuric acid are re-absorbed in the cycle of nature. They are not in themselves directly available for plant food and the first stage in their re-absorption by plants whose nitrogen may serve again as food for animals consists in their conversion to ammonia. The conversion of urea into ammonia is a process of fermentation which according to recent investigation is carried out by micro-organisms. Most active of these are micro-coccus ureas and also bacillus ureas. These organisms are very widely distributed and, consequently, urine exposed to the air very rapidly becomes ammoniacal. The strong smell of an ill-kept urinal or of ground which has become saturated with urine is thus accounted for. In normal health it has been found that the organisms causing urea fermentation are not present in freshly excreted urine.

It has been shown that ammoniacal fermentation of urea takes place both under aerobic and anaerobic conditions. This circumstance is of considerable importance in connection with the purification of the sewage. It is rare that urea would appear in appreciable quantity in sewage after it has passed through some dis-

tance, since it is very rapidly converted into ammonia.

Contrary to the common notion, the daily nitrogen availability from urine is more than ten times that from faeces as can be seen from the following table :

	Total in grams per head per day				
	Total	Water	Ash	Organic	Nitrogen
Faeces	100	75	5	20	1
Urine	1100	1045	33	22	11
	1200	1120	38	42	12

Urine of an average individual per day is on an average 1½ litres. It is equal to the amount of fluid taken in by the mouth less the amount leaving the body by the sweat glands, the faeces and the expired air. Thus in cold weather, the volume of urea will, other factors being equal, be larger than in hot weather.

Under average conditions, the total solids in 24 hours weigh about 60 grams.

From different tables, given by various authorities, we may easily accept 13 gms. to be the quantity of pure nitrogen in one day's urine of an average individual. Calculating at this rate, we get $\frac{365 \times 13}{450} = 10.5$ lb. per year. Besides

this, we get about 2 lb. of P₂O₅. The market value at which Government is purchasing the nitrogen and phosphatic manures, comes to about annas 12 to 14 per lb. of pure nitrogen and P₂O₅. At this rate, we may get about Rs. 10 from the urine of every individual per year.

If it can be made possible to conserve and make available to the soil the manurial ingredients derived from this source as stated above, Mr Ignani of Pusa Institute, calculates the following amounts as derivable :

Pure nitrogen	16,80,000 tons
P ₂ O ₅	3,14,000 tons

The Government has ordered this year 4 lakh tons of ammonium sulphate, yielding 80,000 tons of pure nitrogen. From the calculation shown above, it is clear that even if we can conserve 5 per cent of the human urine alone, we can have the nitrogen which we are importing from outside at a very high cost. Besides this, we can get a fairly large amount of nitrogen from the urine of domestic animals.

How to conserve the nitrogen : If we go in the right direction, it is not very difficult to conserve the nitrogen from this source. Mr. Ignani has prepared a small and simple apparatus for this purpose. A small tub is filled up with some absorbent, such as soil, saw-dust, charcoal or other. A pipe, over which the urinal is fixed, goes from above to the bottom of the tub. The urine goes from above to the bottom of the tub. The urine goes straight down and the absorbing material absorbs it from down upwards. As already said, if the urine is left exposed to the air, it very rapidly becomes ammoniacal and its nitrogen is lost. But when

it goes down as suggested in the apparatus, it does not come into contact with direct air. I would like to suggest that if a layer of some calcium salt, such as calcium phosphate or bone-meal, is put at the top of the tub, there is no danger of any nitrogen going away from the ammonia gas coming up, as this may help to fix it there. The following are the absorbents suggested by Mr. Ignani with their absorbing capacities :

100 parts of	will absorb	parts of urine
Soil		45
Ash		190
Dry farm-yard manure		225
Dry dung		225
Sawdust		300
Charcoal		300
Paddy husk		300
Dry leaves		350
Cotton		2000

There are also other methods, chemical as well as biological, of a more technical type for this conservation.

Coming up to the practical side, if some social workers come forward to do this job, they can begin the work which may be copied by others. As stated above, one person's urine gives about Rs. 10/- worth of manure; so a family of five may yield Rs. 50/-. If a worker, staying in a city, decides to collect urine from 100 to 150 families, he will have a gross income of about Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 7,500. Allowing for the expense of one or two labourers and the cost of absorbents, it may be possible that a worker may earn from 4 to 5 thousand rupees per year, —quite an attractive proposition for a middle-class worker. The thing that the Government will have to do is to guarantee the purchase of the material and give a status to the work. Social workers are not after money, though it is necessary for the supply of their daily needs. They want an appreciation of the services rendered to society. If they get that appreciation they will be ready to do any work for the country. So the success of the proposal may depend upon the status the Government and our leaders give to the work, which is at present considered unrespectable.

Secondly, if all the congregational places, such as jails, schools, colleges, offices — Government as well as private, factories, etc. take into their mind to preserve the urine of their inmates, it will be a big source of income and an easy problem to handle.

It is easy to supply drums fitted with proper urinals and filled with available absorbents. I had proposed at Lucknow about 5 such drums with the urinals from galvanized zinc sheet, which can conserve 2 or 3 days' urine of an average family. Each such apparatus cost me Rs. 6/-. If these are manufactured on a large scale, say about 50 to 100 in a district, the cost may not go over Rs. 5/-. As a container any old

kerosene tin can also be used instead of new drums.

G. R. WALUNJKAR

Note : In terms of money and material utility, the human body is not as valuable as the body of, say, a pig or a goat, — not to mention animals of bigger size. Nevertheless, the value of his excretions is not so negligible as is supposed. The value of a man's annual urine is about Rs. 10/- which means that the city of Surat, with a population of 1 *lakh*, can raise a gross income of 10 *lakh* rupees per annum from urine alone. Even if it costs as much as 3 *lakh* rupees to manage this, it would have a net income of Rs. 7 *lakhs*. The staff for doing this is already on its pay-sheet. The way in which this staff has to do this work at present is filthy and degrading. If, however, the urine is collected in the way suggested in the article, it would become a clean work which even Brahmanas might emulate or apply for.

For the Basic Education of sweepers and cleaners, the training in the collection and treatment of urine, night-soil, refuse etc., would provide a very suitable medium. There are possibilities of turning the present ignorant sweeper and scavenger into a bachelor, master and doctor of scavenging and sweeping. A trained *bhangi* can through it rise up to the position of even a clinician.

Wardha, 23-4-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

TWO SUGGESTIONS

I think I should share the following letters with the readers of *Harijan*. The first is from a Hindu in a responsible position and reads as follows :

"I was greatly cheered by the 'Letter from Dacca' which appeared in the issue of the 16th April. What was most heartening in it was the assurance that the general mass of people in Dacca completely disapproved of the riots.

"The correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian* weekly (13th April) estimates, on the basis of the knowledge acquired in his personal tours in India and East Pakistan, that in East Bengal about 1,500 persons were killed. The number of persons killed in West Bengal was, on the other hand, 600, in addition to another one thousand killed as a result of the raids by Santals on the Muslims of Goalpara in Indian Assam.

"These estimates are no doubt personal and may be wrong in detail; but, surely, they disprove the theory that East Pakistan was the aggressor or that West Bengalis or Santals are altogether innocent.

"It is a pity that Shri S. P. Mookerji, of all people, should lend his support to this theory. I read his statement in the Parliament closely and I still fail to see what his solution is. Assuming that there was 'aggression' on the part of Pakistan in the sense understood in international law, does Shri Mookerji want us to retaliate with armed force? Can he swear that there is no 'aggression' in the hearts of most Indians? And in the face of the facts as they are now coming out, does he think that we Indians are altogether innocent?

"To the extent my reading of papers goes, *Harijan* is the only Indian paper which has taken a truthful and objective view of the happenings in Bengal. But, unfortunately, *Harijan* has a very small public. Is there no way by which every District Officer

and every Superintendent of Police could get a copy of his own? He may not read it, but then the fault will not be yours.

— A READER —

I believe there are other papers also which support the views expressed in *Harijan*. It would be a misfortune if it were the only paper of its type. As to its wider publicity in Government offices, it is for the various Governments to consider the value of the suggestion.

The second letter is from Shri A. M. Allapichai, a prominent nationalist Muslim of Madras. It is as follows:

"*Harijan* is almost following Bapu's principles. I firmly believe that *Harijan* will in course of time bring peace and sanity. There are tens of thousands of men both in Pakistan and in India who believe in what Bapu taught. But they are silent and they are not in a position to influence their countrymen. What Bapu did as a patriot and as India's Sage, no other person in the near future can hope to do. But if those that honestly believe in peace and humanity unite together, much can be done. I request you to organize a group of men, who sincerely believe in Bapu's teachings, with several branches all over the country. The Congress has almost become a political party, and as such we cannot expect it not to be influenced by principles of expediency and power politics. I shall be thankful to you if you kindly send me your reaction to this suggestion."

I acknowledge the value of Shri A. M. Allapichai's suggestion and the necessity for organizing this kind of work. But if it is I, who am looked to for bringing about such organization, it is beyond my physical strength and organizing capacity. I publish the suggestion and hope that some able man will appear on the stage to do it. I believe this kind of work falls within the scope of the Shanti-Sena movement, set on foot by Shri S. N. Agarwal and other workers of Wardha under the guidance of Shri Vinoba.

Wardha, 1-5-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

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NOW AFTER STADIUM

The news of the laying of the foundation-stone by Jawaharlalji for a sports stadium in New Delhi has already been in the limelight very recently. The other day, the spectators of the Commonwealth Cricket Match at Eden Gardens in Calcutta were lustily cheered up by the powers that be, with the announcement of the permission given by the West Bengal Government for the erection of a stadium in the Eden Gardens. It has also been made public that coaches and instructors are to be brought from abroad for training up athletes in cricket, football and the like.

The network of stadia to be built in our metropolises appears to forge ahead and for that matter the job of securing splendid sites from the municipal corporations and the Governments concerned seems to be quite easy. A preliminary survey of the site facing the sea on Hornby Vellard and almost behind Bombay's racecourse has already been boosted as carried out by some of the officials of the National Sports Club of India and leading engineers and architects from England, aided by a special engineer of the Bombay Municipality, with a prominent picture on page 50 of the *Illustrated Weekly of India*, March 5, 1950.

From all this, we seem to be in a headlong speed to leave nothing undone in fulfilling the dream of Macaulay. What he wanted was to create a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour but English in taste, opinion and intellect. So we would become Macaulay's hybrid product.

Now things are different. We have our own Governments. There is no reason nor even novelty in aping and hugging customs of those who kept us enslaved to such an extent as to deprive us of even our own culture and tradition by introducing many of their ways which we have taken for granted as the acme of civilization and internationalism.

Nowadays it appears to be a fashion with a certain section of people to justify the ways foreign to us by a cry of internationalism. No doubt they lose sight of the fact that every country has characteristics of its own and the more the characteristics, the richer and more variegated the world. So internationalism is meaningless to a country if it has to become dependent on other countries by losing its own distinctive individualism — strength of self-reliance, and as a result, the world to become poorer. India is India, not England nor America nor even Russia!

The country has had to perform the Herculean task of displacing age-long slavish habits and false ways and establish our own simple and salutary activities for the revival of national things and thereby national prestige and moral calibre without which no nation can stand as independent. Instead, foreign pastimes such as cricket, racing, cinemas, cocktail parties,

cigarette-smoking, etc., are becoming increasingly popular every day so much so that we have started disliking our own customs in speech, dress and mode of living to look more English than Indian. "In short," Gandhiji has said, "if everything native is bad and everything foreign pleasing to us, I should not know what Swaraj can mean for us." If one keeps on undervaluing one's own things how can one have regard for one's own country? "Swaraj can only be built upon the assumption that most of what is national is on the whole sound," said Gandhiji.

Cricket, obviously one of the chief factors for the erection of a stadium, is out and out an English sport not known elsewhere but in Great Britain and its satellites only. Certain people of course take pride in calling it a "Lords' game". How tiresome it has also become to the thinking English public will be revealed from the statement of Lord Wavel, the ex-Viceroy of India, who as the Chancellor of Aberdeen University, said regarding cricket:

"It is a game involving prodigality of time and effort out of proportion to its importance and it seems the height of absurdity that English boys and men should spend several days at a stretch on it and go on doing this for months together."

In quoting the above statement under the caption "Sport" in the *Harijan* of February 1, 1948, Shri J. C. Kumarappa has aptly remarked,

"We presume Lord Wavel knows what he is talking about. If these sports are wasteful of money and time in Great Britain, one of the richest countries of the world, what shall we say of poor India sending out teams to show their achievements in other parts of the world?"

As a result of prodigious significance given to foreign games in India, our youth has centred its emotional expression upon them and its force has developed the idea of stadia with consequential crores of expenditure: thereby threatening to overshadow the intellectual phases of school and university education, not to speak of other creative ones, badly needed for promoting the glory of our poor land.

About football, very popular as college sports in America where there are innumerable stadia for that matter, Ralph Cooper Hutchinson, as the President of Washington and Jefferson College remarks in his article, "Let's Make Football Respectable", condensed in the *Reader's Digest* of December, 1949 from the *Gambolier*:

"The evil of subsidization and commercialism are obvious. Players are recruited by high-pressure methods which tend to implant a wrong educational ideal. Artificial jobs with fat salaries and little or no work are common. Men have been bribed to leave one campus and play at another. Financial and social pampering of players has contributed to their moral deterioration. Many good boys, subjected to this process, have become useless, thinking the world owes them a living. Faculties have wilted under the pressure. Professors hesitate to fail athletes for fear of the subtle and far-reaching influence of the football crowd."

It is to be noted that the *Gambolier* is published by the under-graduates of the institution mentioned above. If it is a serious phase of the

matter to them in the richest country of the world what are we—not free from the contamination of the evils referred to above—doing?

What do the famishing millions know of such sports? It may be verily said of us that our moneyed men are gay whilst those from whom they make money famish. The idea of flattering these foreign vanities in us is not only not compatible with the stark poverty of our land lacking fundamental things—food, clothes and education (evident from the recent education budget cut),—as at present, but also a serious impediment to retracing our steps and utilizing our indigenous materials in order to revive our sports, entertainments and all things national that are in oblivion.

So the country stands in moral danger. Unless we now cultivate the spirit of giving up things which we once thought essential out of slavish mentality, it will not be possible for us to establish a whole new set of values and build up anew our requirements in amusements and other things for the sake of our national being. In this respect, Gandhiji has said, "That which is wanting in our civilization can be supplied by proper effort on our part." Let us also say with Thoreau, "A man is rich in proportion to what he is able to do without."

KSHITINDRAKUMAR NAG

SHANTI SENA *

Its Nature and Organization

We have met here today to deliberate upon a very important subject. It is neither possible nor necessary to have a full discussion on it in one meeting. If we are able to grasp the exact nature of the work we are to do, we have done.

The Name

First, about the name. I think that *Shanti Sena* is quite an apt name. The word *sena* is apt, because we want all the merits of a *sena* (army) in the proposed organization; and to ward against its demerits, we keep the word *shanti* (peace). The two words *shanti* and *sena* present a clear concept of the organization before society. We should, however, bear in mind, that words have their own limitations in respect of their capacity to express meaning. Therefore, any name that may be selected will fall short of fully conveying the exact idea.

Members

A speaker suggested that if fifty workers came forward, the work of *Shanti Sena* could be started. I would say that it could be started even with a smaller number, or for the matter of that even with one individual. This is the virtue of *ahimsa*. Nonetheless, at least fifty workers must come forward from this place. A good number can be available from the various constructive organizations, though they are engaged in social service. The workers of these bodies have lost contact with the people. They are buried in the four walls of their institutions.

* Speech delivered by Shri Vinoba, at the Mahilashram, Wardha, on March 19, 1950.

This is not, by itself, a drawback, because the efficient management of an institution demands that some persons should bury themselves in it. All the same, the fact remains that their contact with the masses is broken, and this is not good. Having regard to this, the workers of the institutions may well join the *Shanti Sena*. Thereby, they will be able to develop their contact with the masses, and render better service to them.

Nature of Responsibility

But those who join the *Shanti Sena* should do so not on behalf of their institutions, but in their individual capacity, of their own accord, and on their own responsibility. The members of the *sena* are expected to be ready, when occasion arises, to make the supreme sacrifice of laying down their life. Hence it is a spiritual and personal responsibility. Even a member of the military force has to be always ready to die, but it is associated side by side with the readiness to kill his opponents. In the *Shanti Sena*, there can be no idea of killing. The Peace-Armyman has to be ready not merely to die, but to die without harbouring any ill-will or hatred for the opponent in his mind. Hence joining the *Shanti Sena* is an act of personal responsibility. The constructive bodies should permit such persons, as are willing to join this army, for the work of the *Shanti Sena* is conducive to their development and progress. But any one, desirous of joining the *Shanti Sena* should first search his heart and ascertain for himself whether he has the requisite strength to fulfil the condition of making the supreme sacrifice, when called for. None should join it half-heartedly.

Qualifications

Anger—A person may not be free from anger altogether; he is not debarred from joining the Peace Army for that reason, provided he can control his temper. There can be non-violent anger also. But it should not be uncontrolled display of temper. Moreover, anger is to be distinguished from hatred. This latter should not be harboured in any form.

When we expect of the volunteer such a great virtue, we need not insist on other virtues, though they will necessarily follow it.

Discipline

Joining the Army being a voluntary act, a member must implicitly observe its discipline. The individual ego must be merged in that of the *sena*. He will fully apply his skill in the work entrusted to him, but it will be strictly in conformity with the rules of discipline.

Habitual Service

The soldiers of the *Shanti Sena* will, of course, answer the call of duty, when a disturbance breaks out; but there is little wisdom in being ready only for an emergency. Theirs will be the duty to nip the trouble in the bud. For this, they must straightaway engage themselves

in some service of the people. The service of the afflicted, the Harijans and the labourers already awaits us.

Joint Action

Workers should be trained to act in unison in large numbers. For this purpose, physical training, such as drill etc., can be a part of the training. In the absence of such training, the meeting together of several persons would rather be a hindrance than a help in executing a work.

Relation with Seva Dals

What will be the relation of the *Shanti Sena* with institutions, such as the Congress *Seva Dal* and others?

Those who are pledged to sacrificing their life are with us, and we are with them. All such persons should harmonize their activities and work in co-operation. Those who are likely to go the way of violence, will naturally keep aloof from us.

I do not know exactly the attitude of political parties, like the Congress, on this subject. They have various tasks to perform, since they are political parties; ours is to rise above all parties and do the service.

Intervention in Violent Fight

Q: Can we intervene in a violent fight between two persons?

A:—*Ahimsa* has a limitation within which it succeeds. May be, intervention between two persons, engaged in fighting, may not bring any fruit. Even then, it is the duty of those connected with them and those who witness the fight, to do their best to stop it. When a fire breaks out, water does not stop to think whether it has sufficient capacity in itself to extinguish the conflagration. It only knows that its work is to plunge into the fire in an attempt to extinguish it. If water overpowers fire, it will be extinguished; if the fire is too powerful for that amount of water, it will be an act of self-immolation in the performance of its natural duty. A more pertinent question would be, suppose there is a danger to the whole country and the Government is organizing a defence on violent lines to face the danger, is it the duty of the man of non-violence to continue the application of the non-violent technique? This is a matter that deserves serious consideration. It is clear that violence and non-violence cannot well go together. It does require some favourable environment for the application of non-violence.

The Vow of Non-Possession

There is a suggestion that the volunteers of the *Shanti Sena* should observe vows, such as non-possession etc. in their individual life. The point to be borne in mind here is that it will not be proper to test a man from his external behaviour as to whether he observes these vows

or not. In an organization pledged to change the economic order of society, we are right in putting a limit to private property. But the work of the *Shanti Sena* is, in a sense, wholly spiritual. It asks its members to die, without harbouring a feeling of ill-will against the opponent. When one is prepared to lay down one's life like this, whether one has given up one's external possessions of wealth or not, is a matter of secondary importance. For, unless one has mentally freed himself from the grip of possessions, one cannot sacrifice one's life. If a wealthy merchant accepts all our conditions and desires to join the *Shanti Sena*, we should certainly admit him, for when he has prepared himself to die when the necessity arises, he has for our purposes given up the greed for wealth. I, therefore, suggest that we should not insist on external non-possession.

Resort to Police and Law

Shri Ramachandran: People who in their personal matters, do not resort to the Police and the Law Courts, which are representative of the brute force of the State, do not hesitate to make use of them,* when the affairs of their institutions are concerned. Should it not be imperative upon the members of the *Shanti Sena* that they must not resort to such institutions under any circumstances?

No; for, in a Government responsible to the people there is not that ideological conflict between resorting to ordinary constitutional channels in small matters and offering non-violent resistance at the time of serious riots and other disturbances and war. To relinquish altogether the help of even a democratic State based on violence is good, but this is possible only when we free ourselves from the bondage to money. I have been furiously thinking about this of late. Not until we are able to run organizations without the help of money, shall we be able to free ourselves completely from violence. In case of a theft in the *ashram*, we do not generally go to the Police. Undoubtedly, when we ask for the help of the Police, we weaken our mission, which is to give the right training to the people. But the case of institutions, such as the Charkha Sangh, is different. Even these institutions might follow the *ashram* rule. But, as it is, for the members of the *Shanti Sena*, I would not make that a condition of admission.

Uniform

A word about the uniform of the members of the *Shanti Sena*. I have no doubt that it should be made of *khadi*. It might be asked, "If a person fulfils all other conditions of the *sena*, will it not do if he does not put on *khadi*?" My answer is, when you organize an army, there should be an external sign of identification. We select *khadi* for this purpose, as it is a symbol of truth, *ahimsa*, self-dependance and identification with the poor. What I wish to impress upon you is that a principal condition having

been satisfied, other rules of discipline should be as few as possible. What these should be, you may meet together and decide. But once you make them, there should be no slackness in their observance; for the very slackness in their observance will be an end of the *sena*. He, who feels his inability to fulfil the conditions of the *sena*, should not join it. If through misapprehension, he has done so, he should leave it of his own accord. Here there is no question of shooting a recalcitrant.

Age Bar

There need be no bar of age in the *Shanti Sena*. Barring children, I think, all persons — young and old — should be competent to join the *Shanti Sena*. The old, indeed, have a right of priority in the transit beyond!

VINOBA

(From the *Sarvodaya* of April, 1950)

Sugar Distribution

While we are assured on the one hand, that the various States have now sufficient stocks at their disposal, the distribution of sugar in small towns and villages still remains a matter of great dissatisfaction. There does not appear to be a uniform policy even within the same State. At Bombay, I found that it was fairly well supplied; but I receive complaints from smaller towns, that they do not get it either regularly or sufficiently. Similar conditions prevail in this province (Madhya Pradesh). At the same time, in some manner not generally known to the public, some institutions and confectioners are able to get as much as they want. So also influential people, who want to celebrate marriages or similar functions. In this province there appears to be also a system of giving more sugar on "medical grounds". A man like me can take advantage of it without much difficulty. But most of such certificate-holders would have to pass through a number of gates before they can reach the permitting authority, and would have to pay a fee to every gate-keeper. At the same time, sugar is abundantly available in the black-market. This means that the method of distribution is mechanical. Those who need it are unable to get it in sufficient quantity in an honest manner. Those who do not need it take advantage of the rationing system in order to make a profit out of it. They take their share and re-sell it to a black-marketeer.

It is obvious that if there are sufficient stocks, the distribution on the ration cards should be more regular, liberal and not mechanically equal. Instead of creating a system which encourages resort to bribery and purchase in the black market for getting a needed commodity, it would be better for the Government itself to sell up to a limited quantity "extra" sugar at a higher price, and also release sugar to ordinary merchants at stipulated rates.

Wardha, 4-5-'50

K. G. M.

HARIJAN

May 13

1950

RECTIFICATION OF ERROR

In the course of his statement before the Parliament, Dr. Shyamaprasad Mookerjee said :

"There is an important difference in the approach to the problem of minorities in India and Pakistan. The vast majority of Muslims in India wanted the partition of the country on a communal basis, although I gladly recognize there has been a small section of patriotic Muslims who have consistently identified themselves with national interests and suffered for it. The Hindus on the other hand were almost to a man definitely opposed to the partition. When the partition of India became inevitable, I played a very large part in creating public opinion in favour of the partition of Bengal, for I felt that if it was not done, the whole of Bengal and also perhaps Assam would fall into Pakistan."

I do not count for much in politics. Nevertheless, I take the occasion of this statement to disclose what I have always felt about the Partitions. It will be remembered that the Cabinet Mission's original proposals sought to create a Federated India with three independent zonal sections as federating units. Bengal and Assam (Section C) would have formed one of these autonomous groups having no direct relation with the Punjab-Sind-Frontier group (Section B). According to these proposals the Bengal-Assam Section would have claimed between them more than 48 per cent Hindus (more accurately "General" population) and less than 52 per cent Muslims, — in fact both the communities in an almost equal proportion, with the additional advantage of the Hindus being more prosperous and better educated than their Muslim brethren. But Assam took alarm from the very commencement, and there commenced those legal interpretatory disputes, which ultimately ended in the Muslim League decision to revoke its acceptance of the Cabinet Mission's Plan and return to the demand for Partition.

Now suppose, instead of engaging themselves in legalistic disputes, the Hindus and Muslims of Bengal had made such gesture of friendship towards Assam as to dispel all suspicion from her mind and assure her that Bengal and Assam with so many things in common, could work together for mutual benefit, what a difference it would have made! But it did not strike any one to do so.

Then, even with Assam going out (either from the beginning or at the time agreed upon for opting out), Bengal would have been an autonomous unit by itself with as many as 45 per cent Hindus and 55 per cent Muslims. But the Hindu leaders of Bengal were nervous to face even a small majority of 10 per cent Muslims, in spite of their superiority in education and riches. I am told that the general belief is that East Bengalis are ahead of the West Ben-

galis in possession of talents, as certainly they are in the possession of jute upon which Calcutta thrives. Instead of regarding that as an advantage, there was a feeling of jealousy for the Bengalis on the eastern side of Calcutta. As a consequence the Hindu political leaders of Bengal thought in terms of East and West and of particular areas in the various districts and talukas. There was hardly a voice to be heard which said that the people of Bengal shall not be divided even if India was, but they all raised a strong agitation that, since there was to be a partition, this province should also be cut asunder. And thus they asked to do the very thing, namely, the partition of their *Bangabhumi*, to undo which they had laid down their lives from 1905 to 1912. The great slogan "*Bhai bhai ek thai, bhed nai, bhed nai*" (Let brothers — Hindus and Muslims — unite; there is no difference, indeed, no difference), which used to go up to the skies during those eventful years was altogether forgotten, and the once humiliated Lord Curzon and Sir Bampfylde Fuller were posthumously honoured by the acceptance of their once discarded arrangement.

First Assam would not stay with Bengal, and then West Bengal thought that it was best to have the Hindus of East Bengal to shift for themselves. At least West Bengal could not take the risk of living with them, if that involved living with the Muslims of East Bengal also for their sake.

Dr. Mookerjee says,

"At that time,.....I along with others gave assurance to the Hindus of East Bengal" for seeing to their safety.

With very great deference to the great leader, I am constrained to say that the assurance had not much value in the face of the relinquishment of the duty as well as the opportunity of throwing in their lot with them.

A similar thing could be said about the partition of the Punjab. After accepting the Cabinet Mission's Plan and even blessing it, the Hindus and Sikhs of Sections B and C, instead of pulling up their strength together began to study the communal census figures and maps of the different districts and talukas of their provinces to find out how many Hindus and Sikhs could be put together. And so commenced the work of drawing up new frontiers and divisions. The Muslim League also betrayed lack of even tactical sense. Instead of stooping to conquer the nervous non-Muslim communities, who had to stay in their sections, it began a campaign of hatred and threats and of arousing mob passions among Muslims. Hindus and Sikhs followed suit wherever they could do so. Where this seemed impossible, migrations commenced, first by the Hindu leaders and members of the upper classes, and then, unavoidably, by the rank and file, to the accompaniment of murder, loot, rape, abduction, defilement of temples, etc. by the people of the majority community.

In my humble opinion, the creation of the situation, which led to the cancellation of the Cabinet Mission's Plan, was a sin, for which Hindus, Sikhs and the Muslim League were all responsible. Hindu and Sikh leaders were more so, because they could not muster courage to create an organized united front in their respective sections, but let down their masses. The condition of the loyal Nationalist Muslims and the small Hindu section of the North-West Frontier Province was made extremely insecure; the Khan brothers and their Khudai Khidmatgars were absolutely deserted. And the Congress was compelled to accept a solution against which it had fought for a generation. And to add to all this, they always blamed Gandhiji for the partition and took his life for his supposed acquiescence in it.

It is not necessary to relate in detail, how heavily both the communities have paid for this sin of gross selfishness and godless communalism.

The purpose of mentioning this is not to taunt any one for the past. Much of what has been done cannot be undone. But if we take the lesson and determine to follow God's commandments at least hereafter, we might still prepare a way for future happiness, prosperity and peace of both India and Pakistan.

If we want to live in peace and be prosperous in this great country of ours, it is imperative that we live as one united family. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and others must shed their mutual jealousies and hatred and seek friendship of one another. For some of the small differences of the mode of life, thought and worship among the various communities, there might be appropriate administrative and political arrangements, but that should be no reason for regarding one another as aliens.

The two Bengals and the two Punjabs may still create machinery for securing all the advantages of a common Government, without the name. India and Pakistan may still become united, not necessarily in a regular Federal form, but still acting in all matters of common interest jointly and in a spirit of friendliness through conventions and joint commissions. If the spirit, which moved the two Prime Ministers to come to the Delhi Agreement, pervades the whole nation living in both the sub-countries, it would be possible to create conditions which will enable any Hindu and any Muslim to live in any part of the two sub-countries and the displaced persons to return to their ancestral homes. No permits, no espionage and no armies would be needed to guard the frontiers between India and Pakistan, in the same way as none are needed between Bombay and Madras. The path of communalism is suicidal. Those who lay very great stress on the knowledge of history need not be reminded of the results of the various battles of Panipat from the time of the *Mahabharata* onwards and of the family feud of the house of the Yadavas.

India cannot reconquer Pakistan, or Pakistan, India by their military forces. It is not military posts which can guard the frontiers between them, but as Shri C. Rajagopalachari said once,

"The people of West Bengal can show to the world that a frontier can be a quite different thing from what they had hitherto imagined—an outpost of love, instead of an outpost for alarm. I do mean all this most seriously because I have tested the talents of your people and I feel that you have the resources here and you have the emotional capital of affection and good understanding towards the people across the frontier." (*Harijan*, 27-6-'48).

Wardha, 1-5-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

GURUDEV RABINDRANATH TAGORE

"Let your life dance lightly on the edges of time,
Like dew on the top of a leaf"—Tagore

The sixth of May 1861 is memorable in the annals of Indian history for it was on that day that Rabindranath, the greatest poet-philosopher of our times, was born at Calcutta in the celebrated Tagore family. This is his eighty-ninth birthday anniversary and it is our duty to take at least a glimpse of his unique personality. He was a poet not of India alone but of the whole of humanity. For him "there is only one history—the history of Man. All national histories are chapters in the larger one."

Early in 1940, i.e. just a year before he passed away, a special convocation was held at Santiniketan for conferring upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Literature of the Oxford University. Then on behalf of the University Mr. A. Henderson delivered an address praising the unrivalled gifts of the Poet and ended with the following noteworthy words:

".....What more can I say? Here before you is the myriad-minded poet and writer, the musician famous in his art, the philosopher proved both in word and deed, the fervent upholder of learning and sound doctrine, the ardent defender of public liberties, one who by the sanctity of his life and character has won for himself the praise of all mankind. And so.....I present to you, a man most dear to all the Muses, Rabindranath Tagore, already a Nobel-prizeman, in order that he may receive the laurel wreath of Oxford also and be admitted to the Degree of Doctor of Literature *honoris causa*."

With the inventions of Atom and Hydrogen bombs and with the increasing tensions between different nations, mankind has not only become despondent over the attainment of world peace but has also, to a considerable extent, lost its faith in God or Goodness. In this gloomy desert atmosphere of mutual hatred, jealousies, and violence, Tagore's words are cool and refreshing. He abhorred violence. When in Japan, he was once asked to comment on the bravery of two Japanese heroes who fought each other and died, he said in his characteristic way: "They hated and killed and men praised them; but God in shame hastened to hide its memory under the green grass."

He appealed to mankind to have faith in the ultimate triumph of true values. Violence however brutal or seemingly forceful is only limited,

whereas goodness, love, beauty, truth and non-violence are infinite and eternal. Tagore said :

"In an era of mounting anguish and vanishing worth, when disaster is fast overtaking countries, with savagery let loose and brutal thirst for possession augmented by science, it may sound merely poetic to speak of any emerging principle of world-wide relationship. But a time of violence, however, immediately threatening, is circumscribed, and we who live beyond it and dwell also in the larger reality of time, must renew our faith in the perennial growth of civilization towards an ultimate purpose." (At the Convocation in Santiniketan, 1940) .

All the works of Tagore, *Gitanjali*, *Lover's Gift*, *Gardener*, *Wreck*, *Chitra* etc., are based on Love, Beauty and Truth. But for these mysterious constructive forces this world would have long back ceased to exist. Antinatural forces like violence cannot end violence, as fire cannot put out fire for they are bound to annihilate themselves. "This world," says Tagore, "is the world of wild storms kept tame with the music of beauty." "Love," he says, "is the ultimate meaning of everything around us." "The flute of the Infinite is played without ceasing and its sound is love." "Love is the one living Truth that makes all realities true." "When Love renounces all limits it reaches Truth." (*Stray Birds*). And what is this Truth if not God or Goodness ?

Rabindranath's profound, yet simple, philosophy of life is not like that of an idle dreamer or that of a secluded scholar. He is a realist to the core. He realized God not in man-made temples, churches and mosques but amongst the toiling millions. He said, "While God waits for his temple to be built of love, men bring stones." "He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground and where the path-maker is breaking stones." Is this not a sound advice for those among us, who in these days of crises, waste crores of rupees over the construction of temples, churches, mosques and on showy ceremonials when all that is needed is to love and realize His abode in His beautiful creation ?

Tagore, like the mighty prophets of old, has given, through his immortal works, an eternal message of Love, Hope and Faith for suffering humanity. Therein we find a happy synthesis of the spiritual and the material, the West and the East, and the ancient and the modern values of life. His conception, for example, of Joy and Beauty is typical of the ancient Indian *rishis*. He says,

"All the language of joy is Beauty. It is necessary to note, however, that joy is not pleasure, and beauty not mere prettiness. Joy is the outcome of detachment from self and lives in freedom of spirit. Beauty is that profound expression of reality which satisfies our hearts without any other allurements, but its ultimate value."

The whole humanity to Tagore was similar to a single joint family and he never found himself an alien in any part of the world. The world will remember him for ever for this universal humanism and love. Gandhiji, paying homage to Gurudev, said in one of his prayer meetings,

".....He has left us the *Gitanjali* — the poems which brought him world fame. The great Tulsidas left us his immortal *Ramayana*. The renowned Vedavyasa left us a history of mankind. They were not mere poets, they were teachers. Gurudev, too, wrote not only as a poet but as a *rishi*.His creative genius has also given us Santiniketan, Sriniketan and Vishva-Bharati. These breathe his spirit and are a legacy not only to Bengal but to India. Santiniketan has become, as it were, a place of pilgrimage to us all." (*Harijan*, 19-5-'46).

Rabindranath was disgusted with the prevailing system of education where matriculates and graduates are turned out every year like hard pressed cotton bales in a mill. He himself was fortunate enough to escape the rigorous mechanical discipline of schools and colleges at an early age. Even then recalling his early school days he said : "We had to sit inert, like dead specimens of some museum ; whilst lessons were pelted at us from on high, like hailstones on flowers." Thus in 1901 with only five students, he started an open school at Santiniketan.

He fully realized, in the words of Thomas Hardy, that "the exchange of international thought is the only possible salvation of the world." Therefore in 1921 he established a nucleus of a World University — the Vishva-Bharati. It may be proudly pointed out that this is the first University to be started on such humanitarian international principles. Later he gave an inspiring message to the World Peace Congress held at Brussels in 1936. He says, "We cannot have peace till we deserve it by paying the full price, which is, that the strong must cease to be greedy and the weak must learn to be bold." He clearly saw the futility of mere political world organizations without the cultural or educational background for the same. So Vishva-Bharati became an important venue for the achievement of real *shanti* or peace.

Pandit Nehru, in his *Discovery of India*, paying a homage to Rabindranath points out,

".....more than any other Indian, he has helped to bring into harmony the ideals of the East and the West, and broadened the bases of Indian nationalism. He has been India's internationalist *par excellence*, believing and working for international co-operation, taking India's message to other countries and bringing their messages to his own people. And yet with all his internationalism, his feet have always been planted firmly on India's soil and his mind has been saturated with the wisdom of the *Upanishads*.....It was Tagore's

immense service to India, as it has been Gandhi's in a different plane, that he forced the people in some measure out of these narrow grooves of thought and made them think of broader issues affecting humanity. Tagore was the great humanist of India."

After the sage passed away, the Father of our Nation, specially devoted a week for the collection of funds for Vishva-Bharati which is the Paxila of modern India deserving every official and non-official encouragement. On that occasion Gandhiji in an impassioned appeal said :

"I am not exaggerating, when I say that Santiniketan is worthy of greater support than the Bangalore Research Institute for which Tata gave 30 lakhs. I wonder if the Research Institute is known anywhere outside India. But Santiniketan is known wherever the Poet's name is known and is known as an institution that inspired the Poet's great poetry. The Poet used to call it his toy or plaything, but his poesy would have been barren without the plaything. Santiniketan whose school of art and culture attracts students from far and near has produced painters, and poets, and scholars. There are among those who humbly serve it—a scholar like Kshitibabu and an artist like Nandababu, who are both unrivalled in their respective domains." (*Harijan*, 2-5-'42).

This appeal of the Father of the Nation indicates that it is disastrous to give primary importance to scientific advancement alone. When poisonous clouds of bitter violence are threatening this world, when there is a possibility of another deadly war and when, unfortunately, international peace is at stake in the hands of a few individuals, the noble words of Tagore give us some solace and hope in goodness and in its ultimate success. In his death-bed historic message he said :

".....As I look round I see the crumbling ruins of a proud civilization strewn like a vast heap of futility. And yet I shall not commit the grievous sin of losing faith in Man. I would rather look forward to the opening of a new chapter in his history after the cataclysm is over and the atmosphere rendered clean with the spirit of service and sacrifice. Perhaps that dawn will come from this horizon, from the East where the Sun rises. A day will come when unvanquished Man will retrace his path of conquest, despite all barriers, to win back his lost human heritage."

"Today we witness the perils which attend on the insolence of might; one day shall be borne out the full truth of what the sages have proclaimed: 'By unrighteousness man prospers, gains what appears desirable, conquers enemies, but perishes at the root!'" (From *The Discovery of India*).

R. CHIDAMBARESH

GOVERNMENT AND KHADI

II

8. Government Aid

The Governments certainly wanted to help *khadi*. They, however, wanted to confine their help to commercial *khadi*; beyond that they would not go. In some of the provinces, *Khadi* and Village Industries Associations were formed at the instance of their respective Governments. In others also other *khadi* institutions submitted their plans. The main points of these plans were :

- (i) Training people in spinning, if necessary, with some monetary help;
- (ii) Training of workers as teachers of spinning;
- (iii) Granting subsidy to weaving; and
- (iv) Sale of implements at reduced prices.

I have already referred to the Government help for weaving. Concession in the prices of implements is certainly right. But it is questionable if it is right to offer monetary inducement to the trainees of spinning. Where there is a living tradition of spinning, there is no need for the teachers; the process is handed down from the mother to the daughter and from the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law. The spinning itself can bring them some income; the trainee must feel some urge to learn it. It is not the object of the spinning movement to ask any one to leave off his present occupation in order to ply the *charkha*. The art must be learnt in one's spare time. Expenditure on the training of teachers, however, is a different matter and justifiable. If people take to spinning for monetary inducement, it is possible that the spinners might abandon it after the aid is stopped. But these are minor things. The important point for consideration is that, if after all this expenditure of money, people spin for wages only, where will it take us? Commercial spinning cannot go on for long if it has no scope for disposing of its stock. After all, an occupation depends on the demand for the article, on the consumption of what it produces. Spinning was almost universal 150 years ago, but it could not stand the competition of the mill-yarn, and so hand-spinning declined and stopped.

As a matter of fact, *khadi* through Government effort can take a permanent root only if the Government advanced towards it after putting a brake on the competition between mill-cloth and *khadi*. That is to say, it should draw up a scheme of selecting limited areas and, along with propagating regional self-sufficiency, take steps to gradually banish mill-cloth from those areas. The field of the scheme should be extended from time to time, so that ultimately the whole country would depend upon self-sufficiency alone for its cloth, and the mills would be entirely closed. It was for this very reason that Gandhiji advised the Congress Governments shortly after they assumed power that the least that they should do was to stop sending

mill-cloth to villages. The Charkha Sangh is firmly of opinion that if textile mills continue to work in the country, 85 per cent of the people will be permanent sufferers, and no country which disregards the interest of 85 per cent of the population can be expected to prosper.

9. Purchasing of Khadi by Governments

Some of the Governments help the sales by purchasing *khadi* for their departments. The *khadi* workers want the Governments to do this; and it is also the duty of the Governments to help village industries. But how much *khadi* could be sold in this way? Besides, it will be very expensive to use *khadi* for the police and the army. Even ordinary varieties of *khadi* will involve an expenditure twice or thrice as much as on mill-cloth, — a fact which will have to be taken into account in the long run. Besides, hand-loom weavers of the mill-yarn too want the Government to purchase the cloth woven by them. I remember to have read somewhere that some Governments have agreed to purchase hand-loom cloth to the extent of one-third of their requirements. In this way, *khadi*, hand-loom cloth and mill-cloth — all stand at the door of the Government seeking its patronage. And they compete with one another. The Government may decide to help all the three. But then there will be neither principle nor policy in it. It will be merely a matter of benevolence. How can *khadi* succeed on mere benevolence like this?

10. Pressure from Outside

Reference has been made at the beginning to regional self-sufficiency in *khadi*. It is impossible to develop this activity, unless some check is placed on the factors which hamper its growth. The least check called for is to prohibit the entry of mill-cloth in the area where there is sufficient hand-spinning. The *khadi* scheme for the seven *firkas* of Madras is a plan based on regional self-sufficiency. It is being tried for the last three years. They were warned at the very beginning that the scheme would not succeed unless mill-cloth was banned in those areas. They were even told that if that was not possible, the plan should be abandoned. The Government twice took the decision to act on this advice, but it still remains a dead letter. May we hope that the Governments would take some such step now? It is absolutely essential for the success of regional *khadi* self-sufficiency.

11. Suggestions from the Charkha Sangh to the Governments

At a very early stage, at the time of the formation of Congress ministries in the provinces and at the Centre, the Charkha Sangh and other *khadi* workers considered the question, how best the Governments could help the promotion of *khadi*. Under Gandhiji's presidentship and upon his advice, a resolution was passed on this subject on 9-10-'46. I will quote from it portions relevant to our discussion here:

"The Governments which accept the economics of village-industries and which want to undertake *khadi*-work, must do the following:

(a) Make a five-year plan for introducing spinning as an important activity in all the primary, middle and normal schools of the State, with a loom attached to every school for weaving the yarn so produced. This will be the beginning of Basic Education which must be adopted as early and as extensively as possible;

(b) Establish a network of multi-purpose societies and through them organize village uplift work, with *khadi* as an important item;

(c) Start cotton cultivation, where it is not grown at present and make suitable arrangements for the supply of cotton and spinning implements to spinners;

(d) Train experts of *khadi* and start research in *khadi*;

(e) Since in any village-uplift programme, *khadi* is bound to figure prominently, insist upon the employees in the co-operative, education and agricultural departments, and in District Boards, Local Boards and *Gram Panchayats* to pass the *Khadi* Entrance Examination. Make no new appointment unless the candidate has passed such examination.

(f) Impose control on hand-loom cloth from mill yarn;

(g) Prohibit trade in uncertified *khadi* under the name of *khadi*;

(h) Use only hand-spun yarn in the Government textile department and in weaving schools, and introduce hand-spinning and hand-weaving in jails also.

12. Spinning in Schools

The first part of the above resolution pertains to the introduction of spinning in schools. This is even more important from the point of view of education than from that of *khadi*. Even at present, the courses of study in primary schools include a handicraft. Why should it not be mainly spinning? Ordinary teachers can learn and teach it easily. Once a building and implements are secured, the running expenses will be met by the proceeds from spinning, even perhaps, with a small balance as profit. The rising generation will have been trained in spinning and possibly they will take the *charkha* into their homes. Whether or not they spin in future, the educational advantages of the training in spinning will live with them for ever. Nearly all the Provincial Governments have accepted the Basic Education scheme with some modifications. In most of their schools, spinning is likely to be adopted as the basic craft because it is the easiest. If, therefore, spinning is introduced in schools from now, it will be easy to turn them into basic schools. About three years ago, a conference of education ministers of all the provinces was held at Poona at the invitation of the Bombay Government. It decided that one of the following crafts should be introduced in schools: (i) Card-board work and carpentry, (ii) Agriculture and gardening, and (iii) Spinning and weaving. In the Bombay Province, accordingly, spinning is being introduced in most of the schools. Teachers are being trained for this purpose. But as far as my information goes, not much seems to have been done in other provinces. If the Union Government pays its attention

to this and sends instructions to the Provincial Governments in this regard, this activity which is so vital to *khadi* may well prosper. If they do not wish to undertake even this very easy and educationally necessary work, will it be proper for them to spend money in other ways in the name of *khadi*? We may, however, take note of one difficulty which may arise as a result of the introduction of spinning. If the teachers and the authorities of the department do not evince sufficient enthusiasm, the students too probably would not feel interested in it. But we hope that the *khadi*-loving ministers will succeed in creating a favourable atmosphere. And once the subject is made compulsory, the boys will necessarily attend to it.

13. Khadi Examination for Village Service

The Governments can give effect to many other suggestions in this resolution. We have recommended that in selecting the village staff of the co-operative, agricultural and education departments, they should employ only those who have passed the *Khadi* Examination. This is not difficult to do. They will have already acquired the qualifications necessary for efficient work in their respective departments. They will have to pass only the *Khadi* Examination. It is quite likely that if the Government agrees to pay a little more to them or show preference to them in selection, they will be prepared to pass the examination at their own expense.

14. Check on Uncertified Khadi

Let us consider one more question. The resolution says that Government should ban trade in uncertified *khadi* under the name of *khadi*. This can be done under the present control laws. If necessary, a separate law can also be enacted. Gandhiji, the Charkha Sangh and lovers of *khadi* built up the *khadi* industry. It is an industry of its own type. There is a principle behind it and its policy must be in consonance with that principle. It was not built by the effort, capital and skill of the ordinary businessman. The lovers of *khadi* have made enormous sacrifices for it and have put into it a certain sentiment. Those merchants who have entered into this movement for private business do so only to exploit that sentiment for their own gain. They have no justification to trade in *khadi* in violation of the rules of the Charkha Sangh, and the Government ought to stop them. The Law, which the Government might frame for the purpose, will probably require that no one should deal in *khadi* without a licence. But who will issue the licence? Perhaps the Government will keep the authority in its own hands. For instance, the Madras Government has issued a *Khadi* Control Order and in exercise of it, it awarded licences to about a hundred merchants in Andhra alone. The Government have not the adequate machinery and the knowledge to test the genuineness of the *khadi*. They cannot also see to it that adequate wages are paid and undue profits are not made. The fear is that these licences might usurp the place of certificates.

This will turn the *khadi* market into a huge fraud. Certified, i.e. genuine *khadi* will not be distinguishable from uncertified and spurious *khadi*. To avoid this, the Government will perhaps seek the advice of the lovers of *khadi* in the matter of issuing licences. But the advice may or may not be accepted. Suppose it is not accepted. Or it is accepted but there are complaints against it. Our aim is to ensure the purity of *khadi*. And it is not made secure by all these measures. We have to think whether it would be in the interest of *khadi*, if the certificates are issued by a body other than the Charkha Sangh; i.e. the Government or any other institution.

15. Restriction on Mill-cloth in a Self-sufficiency Area

The resolution also lays down that the Government and the cloth mills in consultation with the Charkha Sangh should so direct things that mill-cloth may not reach an area where the cloth requirements can be met by hand-spinning and hand-weaving. We have already discussed above the need for this in connection with self-sufficiency in cloth. If the Governments do really mean to give real help to *khadi*, can it be said that the demand is improper? About the policy that the Governments should adopt regarding the mills, the resolution says that no new mills should be started and the old ones should not be allowed to increase the number of spindles. But that will be too big a pill for the Government to swallow; and we need not waste our time in discussing it when easier things are not done.

SHRIKRISHNADAS JAJU

(Translated from Hindi)

INDIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND GOODWILL

The Vedic Period

II

The Vedic Indians were not only truthful; they were also a gentle race, for truth is the prize reserved by nature for the gentle folk of the world. They did not exterminate the aboriginal races whom they had conquered, but assigned to them a definite though subordinate place in their society. The treatment which the Vedic conquerors accorded to the conquered aborigines compares very favourably with what was meted out to the conquered by conquerors elsewhere.

As Mountstuart Elphinstone observes in his *History of India* (Murray, 1841), book one, chapter one (page thirty-four), "The condition of Shudras was much better than that of the public slaves under some ancient republics and indeed than that of the villeins of the Middle Ages or any other servile class with which we are acquainted."

Indeed "slavery in India looked so different to the Greek observer from slavery he knew at home that he did not recognize it for what it was". (*Cambridge History of India* I, page 416).

Megasthenes reported that there was no slavery in India (26-27) and Arrian (*Indica X*) mentions with admiration that every Indian is free: "With them, as with the Lacedemonians, no native can be a slave, but unlike the Lacedemonians, they keep no other people in servitude."

The Vedic Indians established the unique institution of caste, 'a system which has made it possible for so many and so different communities to live and develop together in common political units while retaining their own social system and customs', and "whatever drawbacks that system has and whatever injuries it involves, there can be no doubt that it has enabled the peoples of India to establish a stable society which has withstood and survived all military and political disturbances and the various vicissitudes of some three thousand years" (J. H. Hutton, *Caste in India*, C.U.P., 1946, p.39).

Chaldea and Assyria, Babylon and Egypt, Greece and Rome, — all have disappeared from the face of the earth, but India is the 'eternal city' and seems to enjoy perpetual youth. The secret of this vitality is thus laid bare * by W. C. Benett (Oudh Gazetteer I, 1877, p. XXXVIII):

"The old and compact social system of the Hindus presented a barrier against which the wildest excesses of barbarian fury expended themselves in vain. Thousands might be slain, and tens of thousands led into captivity, but the Brahman still controlled the family life of the people; their Kshatriya lord collected them for battle and disposed of their disputes in a court governed by rules which appealed to their sense of justice; and the cultivator continued to till his fields, confident that when the storm was passed, he should be allowed to retain them on the payment of the customary share of the produce. The worst tyrants, whose superior energy or intelligence made them formidable to the land, had no further effect than a series of bad harvests. When they were gone, all the old elements of society resumed the exercise of their various functions and repaired a desolation which could only last for a time. It is this ancient and stable civilization which saved the fertile provinces of India from the fate inflicted by conquerors of kindred race and not more cruel or barbarous on the equally fertile plains of central Asia."

The caste system was "a sort of organic response to the requirements of the particular

* Caste acts as a political stabilizer. Abbe Dubois calls it "the happiest effort of (Hindu) legislation", and says, "It saved India from barbarism and served as the sure basis of orderly government, a defence against despotism and the means for preserving arts and the Hindu pattern of culture under the regime of alien conquerors."

"India survived a vast number of invasions, famines, revolutions and social upheavals of all kinds including conquests by invaders of alien religions antagonistic to Hinduism, and this is largely due to the caste system on which that society has constructed itself, a system which often survived even conversion to Islam or Christianity." (Hutton, p. 105).

case. Geographical circumstances have imposed a certain unity on the inhabitants of the peninsula, whereas the diverse origins of the people have dictated variety. It is caste which has made it possible for both requirements to be satisfied within a single social system. It has proved capable of absorbing any intrusive society, and no intruders have yet succeeded in revolutionizing it, though it is not so rigid that a caste cannot rise in the social scale. Some castes are so low in the scale that they are regarded as outside the pale of society and suffer disabilities accordingly, but that is perhaps an incidental rather than an essential feature of the system" (Hutton, p. 1).

The disabilities suffered by the so-called 'outcastes' have now been largely removed as a result of the great Harijan movement which was led by Gandhiji.

An Indian's caste "canalizes his choice in marriage, acts as his trade union, his friendly or benefit society, his club and his orphanage; it takes the place for him of health insurance, and if need be, provides for his funeral (Hutton, p. 97).

The caste system is "peculiarly fitted to hand on culture patterns (patterns of skill, knowledge and behaviour) and particular items of culture" (Hutton, p. 99).

It has "effectively dealt with problems — which other societies have failed to solve". "Its aspect as an integrator of peoples is not without its bearing on problems facing the world today" (Hutton, p. 104-105).

In his *Peoples of India* Gilbert says: "As a scheme of social adjustment [the caste system] compares rather favourably with the European system of warring territorial nationalities."

S. C. Hill (*Indian Antiquary*, 1930) observes that while in Europe the political and the social system are looked upon as one and the same thing, the Hindu regards them as distinct and separable in fact. "His intimate life, the life which to the Hindu really matters, is altogether independent of the political conditions which happen to prevail." Hill holds that the caste system is the only social system ever proposed upon a basis stronger than force; it puts into successful practice the only instance of a scheme of social life which is entirely independent of any form of political government. "The system is permanently stable because of the complete absence of any motive on the part of the ruler for seeking any alteration."

As Sedgwick puts it, "the Indian caste system with endogamous caste and exogamous gotras is a perfect method of preserving the 'pure line' so called in genetics". (Hutton, p. 114).

Westermarck writes that mixture of races leads to increase in the ratio of females to males.

Dr. Nagel's experiments have showed that there is an excess of male flowers where plants are self-fertilized, and that in inbreeding herds

the bull-calves greatly exceed the heifers, and fillies predominate among foals in proportion as sire and dam differ in colour.

We are painfully aware of the limitations of caste. It is antidemocratic. It stifled economic progress; it simplified intrusion of foreign invaders by opposing to them a society split up and unable to combine, lacking in national life (Hutton, p. 108). There is indeed ample room for reform in operation. For instance as Gandhiji proposed there should be equality of payment for the skilled doctor or able lawyer and for the scavenger, and no one should be permitted to change his occupation in order to amass riches.

But here we are only concerned to point out that the caste-system was a non-violent solution of the problem which faced the Aryan emigrant in India, and in order that it may be seen in its proper perspective, we shall in the next section cast a rapid glance at the reactions of other people to similar situations.

THE ROMANCE OF PALM GUR

I had studied something of palm *gur* in South India and Wardha. But what I saw at the "All India Palm *Gur* Workers' Conference" at Najibabad in the United Provinces, on the dates 12th to 15th of March was the growth of a great movement of much significance for the whole of Constructive Work.

The history of palm *gur* is a piece of romance. In South India and in Bengal palm *gur* making is a very old and extensive Cottage Industry. In the rest of India few people knew of it. Years ago, Mirabehn had her first taste of date palm *gur* in undivided Bengal. She must have found it good for she went to Babu with her discovery. Babu was then living in Maganwadi and he put it to Shri Kumarappa, who in turn found out Shri Gajanan Naik to experiment with palm *gur*-making. The A.I.V.I.A. conducted many experiments, under the direct eye of Shri Kumarappa, in all the processes from tapping to clean and delicious *gur*. For many years the A.I.V.I.A. carried on the work silently, continually improving the methods and quality of production. Then came Indian Independence and Shri Rajendrababu became the Minister for Food in New Delhi. He in turn took up the idea of palm *gur* production throughout the country and Shri Gajanan Naik was lent by the A.I.V.I.A. to the India Government as Palm *Gur* Adviser. The latter took up the work with the zeal of a missionary. A very simple person with no university education or any other similar qualification and with only the advantage of experience, he has now begun to push up palm *gur* work throughout our vast country. There are now training and production centres in the various provinces, now renamed States. In the old traditional palm *gur* tracts in South India and in Bengal, improvements in production and better organization for distribution are being undertaken. In the virgin tracts, covering the rest

of India, the work is being organized as something new. The Najibabad Conference is the second annual one of palm *gur* workers from throughout India. At Najibabad, the U. P. Government have their palm *gur* training and production centre in ideal surroundings and the conference this year very appropriately met on this spot. Palm *gur* organizers, workers and even tappers from every State attended. It was fascinating to see a Nadar tapper from Nagercoil near Kanyakumari exchanging ideas with a tapper from Bengal and with another from Rajasthan through the unspoken language of gestures and signs. Once again constructive work was creating another point of organic national unity. Therefore from the point at which the tongue of Mirabehn found the sweetness and flavour of date palm *gur* in Bengal to the point at which the Najibabad Conference met is nothing less than a romance of discovery, experimentation and achievement.

Much has already been written and spoken on palm *gur*. The case for it is utterly simple but challenging. Palm *gur* is perhaps the only rational source of sugar in India. Sugar-cane eats up our most fertile lands throwing out rice and even wheat. The total acreage thus stolen by sugar-cane from staple food is so much as to create a definite void in food production. Sugar-cane itself only becomes partly wholesome food as *gur*, the rest becoming a species of slow poison as refined sugar. The loss is thus both ways. On the other hand, we have some 5 crores of palms, other than the cocoanut palm, in India. Each palm, under favourable conditions should give from year to year 25 lb. of *gur*. That means 125 crores lb. of *gur* per year if we can utilize all the palms. Not only that, we can double and treble the number of palms in the next 10 or 15 years. These palms grow even on inhospitable soil and require no special attention or care. If we now start growing palms on the banks of streams, tanks and all kinds of river-ways, we will not only get the palms but also the best insurance against soil erosion. And then palms can be grown on every kind of dry and waste land. Palm *gur* making requires very little training and capital. Because palms are scattered and found almost everywhere in India and because palm juice cannot be collected for transport to long distances, it is almost compulsorily an ideal village industry capable of being fully developed without centralization of organization or finance. Palm *gur* work thus meets a vital need, can release much land for food production, can employ *lakhs* of people right inside the villages and is thus a national village industry *par excellence*. Along with palm *gur* development will come increased employment for potters, blacksmiths, basket makers, sweet-meat producers etc.

The five days work at Najibabad fell into three parts, the open conference for extensive propaganda, the exhibition for education and the workers' meetings for discussion and understanding

of all problems, technical and organizational, involved in the work. Among those, who took part in the discussions were the Development Minister of U. P., Shri R. K. Patil, Food Commissioner to the Government of India, Dr. K. Mitra, the Nutrition Adviser to the Ministry of Health, Prof. Walawalkar of the Indian Institute of Sugar Technology and Dr. Shirname, the Marketing Adviser to the Government of India. There was a big gathering at the open conference and those who assembled were made to realize vividly what a big item in National Economic Reconstruction, palm *gur* making has become. The exhibition was a good piece of education in itself. Various kinds of palm *gur* and processes of palm *gur* making, instruments, implements and equipments used in different provinces, an ideal *nira* stand, a good show of palm *gur* sweets and the results of researches in the nutritional values of palm *gur*, sugar-cane *gur*, refined sugar etc., were among the exhibits. It was also clearly demonstrated how every part of the palm can be utilized in a variety of ways. One specially interesting item was the aerial-rope ways connecting palm with palm which enable tappers to pass from palm to palm without coming down each palm before climbing another. But to me the most interesting of all were the discussions among the workers. They went into the minutest details regarding tapping, cleaning, boiling, storing, selling and even climbing. The discussions were of a high level and showed how the trained mind can and should be applied to village industries. The discussions were more revealing than the debates of the mighty in big places. This I thought was real research and experimentation in what at once affects the lives of millions of people. I got the vivid impression of the growth of a movement of national proportions emerging from the stage of laboratory work conducted in Maganwadi. The workers who had gathered came from Kanyakumari to the Himalayas and I think they have gone back having seen something of *Visva Roopa* of palm *gur* as a part of National Reconstruction.

We have now to do the same thing with other village industries, i.e. pluck them from the laboratory and transplant them in thousands of places in the country. Someone has to be found who will do for the *ghani* what Shri Gajanan Naik has done for palm *gur* and perhaps the *ghani* is even more important than palm *gur*. And so with the *chakki*, the *Magan chula*, soap-making, bee-keeping, improved village pottery etc. The inescapable facts are with us. It is these which keep on pushing up, now one and now another, of the items of the Constructive Programme, which come peeping up like growing seeds from the soil. The master farmer has taught us what to do to obtain a full crop of prosperity. What we need is research and the

training of workers. Who will take up research from the bottom and in relation to the fundamental data and who will train workers in sufficiently large numbers? That is the big challenge coming from the facts of India today. To the extent we meet it we shall make the new India of Bapu's vision.

G. RAMACHANDRAN

"Free of English Too"

In the course of a discussion in a Committee I argued that it was a directive principle of State policy in India, that "within a period of 10 years from the commencement of this Constitution, the State shall endeavour to provide for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years." (Clause 45, the Constitution of India). It has also been decided that Hindi is the State Language of India, and English will be dethroned from that position. These two things together provide us with a clear and definite line for re-construction of our educational system, specially in regard to the place of English. I said that at least the first seven years of a child's schooling should be free of English. Hindi has already taken its place in standards 5, 6 and 7. Even from a purely educational point of view, it will be a bad policy and an unsound step to have English also as a third language over and above the regional language and Hindi. Upon this a friend, who perhaps did not go the whole way with me humorously remarked, "You mean free and compulsory education, free of English also." I caught up the joke and replied, "Yes, thank you, for a very happy addition to the meaning of the term 'free and compulsory education'; it is to be free not of fees only, but of English as well." In free India, education has to ensure freedom from the slavery of English too.

20-4-'50

M. P. DESAI

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