

# HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

## NOTES

### Shri L. Kamesvara Sarma

I note with regret the death of Prof. L. Kamesvara Sarma, of Pudukottai (Andhra), at the young age of 38. His father Prof. K. Lakshmana Sarma is one of the pioneers of Naturopathy in India, and is regarded as an authority thereon. Shri Kamesvara after taking his M.A. degree with first class honours devoted himself to the cause of Naturopathy, and travelled far and wide in India to popularize Nature-Cure principles. He had been constantly travelling since March last, and evidently broke down under the strain.

The readers of *Harijan* might remember his article on "Internal Sanitation" published on 2nd September, '50. Who could have thought that the author would die four days later? He died at Bombay on 6th September, following a short illness.

That an advocate of "Life Natural" should expire at 38 shows that the laws of life are still rather ill-understood by us, or even if understood, we do not or cannot follow them.

His death is a loss and a blow to the cause of Naturopathy.

Wardha, 5-10-'50

### The Tyranny of Controls

A village dealer writes :

"Your recent articles seem to show that your zeal to resist the controls has become damped, and you are swerving to the views of the Prime Minister. This is strange and regrettable. Let me give you a few specific instances to reveal to you the tyranny of controls in villages.

"I shall take first the instance of gram. Recently the control rate of gram has been fixed at Rs 13/- per maund. This is the rate prevailing at Akola (Berar), which is the principal market for its wholesale purchase. My village is at a distance of 52 miles from Akola. Of these, 45 miles have to be negotiated by motor-lorries and 7 by carts. No one cares to publish for the information of villagers what the control rates are, and they are supposed to be the same both at Akola and in my village. The village dealer purchases his stock at Akola at Rs 13/- per maund and very naturally and innocently adds to it the charges of transport. This means that he can never sell gram at the controlled rate in his village. He hardly suspects that in doing so he is committing an offence. But nothing is easier for a control officer than catching one of these dealers and prosecuting him as a black-marketeer. To avoid this tyrannical prosecution the dealer feels grateful to the officer, if

he is not averse to accepting a bribe. And to make up for such eventuality he must lay by something to meet such expense. This is the reason for the so-called 'black market'.

"Take also the instance of sugar. It sold some days ago at Rs 3 to Rs 4 per seer, and even now the current price in the 'black market' (which is not a secret market) is Re 1-12 to Rs 2 per seer. The stock of sugar in small village shops is generally a reserve for officers, members of *panchayats*, and other influential people. The ordinary folk would not be able to purchase it at all, except by consenting to pay a premium over the controlled rate. But if the controls were lifted, I assure you that it would sell cheaper.

"For this we need not go far to seek an illustration. Since the removal of control on kerosene, the village-dealer adds *only one anna* per tin to his purchase price. During the control period, it had to be purchased at Rs 4 to Rs 5 'on.

"It is disappointing that a disinterested paper like *Harijan* should fail to convince the Prime Minister of this obvious evil."

The letter is in Gujarati. I have touched it up a little only to the extent of giving it a proper form. The arguments are supplied by him. I confess that I could not have presented the case more forcibly than this semi-literate frank villager, whom I do not know personally.

Wardha, 27-9-'50

### Botanical Names

In the article "Self-Sufficiency in Cotton-II" by Shri Dadabhai Naik, published in the *Harijan* dated 23-9-'50, some Latin botanical names as equivalents for annual and perennial cottons respectively have been used. I am informed that the synonyms given are erroneous. I request the readers not to accept the names given there as correct. No names were mentioned by the writer himself, but they were supplied by the editor's office, and the dictionary referred to was, it seems, not accurate; hence the mistake.

Wardha, 6-10-'50

K. G. M.

### Gandhiji's Bust

The Government Cordite Factory is situated at Aravancadu, adjacent to the road between Ooty and Coonoor. A big bust of Mahatma Gandhi is installed at the main gate and it does not fail to attract the attention of all those who pass by the road. What a great incongruity this kind of adoration of the peace-loving Mahatma is, can better be imagined than described. It is true that most of us have not imbibed Gandhiji's



love of peace and many of us have not accepted his economic, political and social theories. But should we dishonour the sacred memory of that great and peace-loving soul by installing his bust conspicuously at the entrance of a cordite factory, where arms and ammunition are manufactured on a large scale for military and security purposes?

Ootakammund, 4-9-'50

L. N. RAO,  
Member,  
Servants of India Society

### Long Vacations

[The following note of Shri Madhavlal Pandya deserves consideration. The work in schools, courts and other Government offices should be so adjusted as to suit the convenience of the people. Much has been written before on this subject in the columns of *Harijan*.  
— K. G. M.]

Our country being an agricultural one, our schools and colleges should have vacations not in summer as at present, but in the rainy season at convenient intervals. This will enable students, excepting those in towns and cities, to be useful to agriculture, and the entry of the intelligentsia in the field of agriculture will help produce better results.

The Government is not able to get out of the old beaten track. Those who are directly interested in agriculture are incapable of expression. Those who are consulted in the matter generally follow sedentary occupations. They do not realize the condition and needs of the people.

The old village schools of *pandyas* used to remain closed in the rainy season as teachers also used to work in fields. They used to reopen schools after the 11th day of *Kartik Sudi*. Foreign missionaries who run schools in poor villages have also adopted the same practice.

Courts and Government offices should remain closed in the rainy season. In the monsoon when cultivators have plenty of work in the fields, to have to attend courts adversely affects agriculture.

None of the poor students and teachers go to a 'health resort' in the summer vacations. Classes could be held in the morning and the evening without inconvenience.

In the Vinaya Mandir at Sunav we used to observe long vacations at intervals during the rainy season in a way to suit agricultural operations. All the students and teachers used to work in the fields. In such an arrangement students study, help agriculture and enjoy close communion with nature.

MADHAVLAL PANDYA

(Translated from Gujarati).

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### FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD

(By Swami Anand)

In April last I attended the great Kumbh Fair at Haradwar. It is a recurring phenomenon every twelve years. It is always an immense affair and a headache for the authorities to manage. This was the first of its kind after the advent of Freedom. The Uttar Pradesh State Government as well as the Central Government spent enormous sums over it, and social-service organizations from all over the country co-operated.

The authorities functioned with a zest. The entire area of the town, outskirts, the numerous river-bed islands and surroundings, were converted into one vast camp with several zones, each under a superintendent of police and a magistrate. Sixteen temporary bridges were constructed across the Ganga. Police was drafted from all over the State. Sanitation, food-stuffs at controlled rates, traffic-guiding, left nothing to be desired. Every one felt for the first time that we had come to our own; and but for an unfortunate accident on the D day (April 13th), when thirty pilgrims were trampled upon and crushed at a single spot, the arrangements were foolproof.

Over a million pilgrims had their dip at the Sacred Pool on the Ganga on the appointed day. *Sadhus* of every church and sect had mustered in their thousands from every part of India. They had their hours appointed for the holy bath when all civilian traffic was suspended and crowds lined the routes in perfect discipline to watch their huge processions with decorated elephants and bedecked riders—heads of various churches within the Hindu fold. They went with all the pomp and paraphernalia—ensigns of their various sects. The processions included those of nude monks who walked in twos in army discipline, and I counted over a thousand of them. They had besmeared their entire bodies with ashes. Many had huge pyramids of matted hair on their heads. They have nothing but "the 'directions' as their wearing apparel" (दिशेऽपि वस्त्रम्).

The wandering fraternity of *sadhus* and *sannyasis* constituted a big wing of the pilgrim crowd at Haradwar. Every third or fourth person on the streets and along the sacred ghats was a saffron-clad *sadhu*. 368 free kitchens, I was told, ran for their feeding. This of course, included that of a high percentage of spurious stuff—beggars, idlers, addicts, loafers and crooks who invariably infiltrate the world of *sadhus* on such occasions.

I may not attempt to record all my impressions here. It was an experience of a lifetime. The Hindu sentiment for the river and the cow, I fancy, has been somewhat akin to that of patriotism in the West. Nationalism is of recent growth and an innovation for the Hindu, whose ancients spoke and taught of the whole world—nay, of God's entire creation—as one family, one vast 'nest' of God's beings.



All this sounds flattering indeed, but for its odious counterpart, consisting of our practice as illustrated in the exercise of our privileges of birth and blood and in our treatment of the lowly who formed the large majority of our social units.

I found great consternation prevailing among the *sadhus* over the Government having covered them all, in respect of the forthcoming Census, under the denomination of 'beggars'. In their afternoon gatherings derogatory references were made and resentful epithets hurled at the nation's leaders who headed the Government, and earnest appeals were made to 'organize' against this 'affront'. Even *satyagraha* was advocated by some. Others counselled moderation and due representation of their case to the Central Government who 'were their own men after all and not without sympathy and understanding as to the place and the role of *sadhus* in Hindu society.' (This direction has been since modified. — Ed.).

These multifarious attractions apart, I was determined to search for that genuine type among the *sadhu* world who represented the highest life of Hindu conception. And I had the luck. Far from the madding crowd about a thousand *sannyasis* were camping in river-bed islands covered with thick forests of *ber* and reed. These were *Viraktas* — the detached ones. They made tiny little huts of local grass for themselves, invariably along the river-bank, from where they could regard the Holy River day and night. Many of these huts barely measured a dozen square feet, in which a single person could crouch with difficulty. Here they sat cross-legged in perfect posture, tranquil and serene, and contemplated on the eternal verities of life. Their persons, huts and surroundings were clean. Their camps looked tidy and well-planned.

They were not the menacing type who pelt stones to scare away the curious. They seemed meek and courteous, and their look was far from unintelligent. Most of them were versed in our ancient lore, and some were great saints and scholars.

There were others who simply had tiny little bivouacs or earth-caves dug out in the high river-bank, and still others who did not bother for any shelter at all. They sat under trees or lay bare on the sands of the dry river-bed night and day. They possessed nothing. Most of them had a 9' inches rag on and a spare one drying on a nearby tree, besides a bowl of dry pumpkin or cocoanut. Many of them did not go to the distant free kitchens daily for food and often declined it when brought to them. Friends had sent me some money to meet essential needs of deserving *sadhus*, such as blankets, hemp-shoes, umbrellas, eye-glasses, torches and medicines. I made an attempt to distribute some of them among these recluses, but save in 3 or 4 cases they politely declined to accept any — even food-stuffs.

Tranquility reigned supreme in their surroundings and one dared not disturb even a blade of grass without a pang. Speaking and talking seemed vulgar. One felt inclined only to inhale and drink the serenity of the atmosphere.

On the evening of the total moon-eclipse which was scheduled for the small hours of the morning, I joined a party which was to go hiking till midnight amidst the enchanting beauty of the forests and the hills in flooding moonlight, with the Ganga flowing by, and the saints meditating on the banks. The full moon rose behind the manifold mountain ranges and was to shine in full flood till after midnight. The unlit huts of the *Virakta* camp soon bathed in moonlight and the sands in the dry river-beds were one vast sheet of silver. Perfect tranquility enveloped the earth. We wandered long, squatted on the sands close to the main current and watched the Ganga flowing in hushed silence. No one spoke. The rushing current had abandoned its clamour and was inaudible as if in awe and reverence to the silent sages. The whole scene was simply bewitching. That memorable evening shall remain enshrined within me for life.

Amidst this enchanting scene we came to a large spacious hut where an elderly saint was delivering a discourse before an assembly of about 200 *sadhus* on the eternal verities. Pindrop silence reigned and every one listened with rapt attention. Subdued light of the flooding moon outside filled the unlit hut, and one could see the face of the speaker in bold outline. The delivery was in flawless classic Hindi, punctuated with apt quotations from the *Vedic* and *Upanishadic* texts. The whole atmosphere was surcharged with reverence and devotion. It reminded me of some of the most solemn occasions in the annals of the Congress when Gandhiji addressed the All India Congress Committee gatherings on momentous issues before the nation.

As I listened to the classic discourse its deliverer rose before my mind to a giant stature. He was indeed a master genius. But a greater surprise was still to come to me. As the discourse approached its conclusion, its modern cast amazed me. I rubbed my eyes and wondered if I was listening to an ancient master or to a modern Radhakrishnan. I listened :

"In spite of the various evils that have crept in the Hindu outlook and corroded our polity, I am not apologetic of our record in the march of civilizations. When I survey the history of human achievement in the field of higher values and ideals, I find that the Hindus were a people who had a sense of achievable practicality. Early in the history of human endeavour in search for happiness they realized that real happiness consisted not in the multiplicity of wants but in their abandonment, and they brought themselves to a stage where the tallest among them possessed next to nothing. Even a rag for a loincloth and a bowl of split cocoanut-shell was looked upon as an encumbrance. To the Hindu mind the object for the highest esteem was not he-



who possessed much material wealth but the one who possessed nothing.

"It is thus distressing to find the modern tendency in the country to run after power and pelf. Even our great leaders who suffered privations all their lives for their country's cause feel called upon today to maintain costly establishments devised by foreigners to serve their own purposes, their pompous banquets, embassies and other paraphernalia. This is in strange contrast with the teaching and practice of the Master who, as India's worthiest representative, insisted on appearing before emperors in his loincloth and sandals. It is all unfortunate in the extreme. I sometimes feel as if a change is coming over the Hindu soul itself. If we were to fall so easy a victim to false values after all our achievements of the past, we may justly appear in the eyes of God and men as prodigal heirs of an undeserved patrimony."

These saints and recluses do not leave their solitary abodes and come out from their seclusion for the Great Fair in order to exhibit their erudition or attainments. They in their humility come to learn, to avail themselves of the occasion to form and renew contacts, to share the ennobling environment and as if to inhale the spiritual atmosphere.

## HARIJAN

Oct. 14

1950

### PRAISEWORTHY

While I regret in the same way as Shri J. C. Kumarappa, Shri Harekrishna Mahtab's misrepresentation of Gandhian ideology, I record with great pleasure the promptness with which he *has* redressed some of the longstanding grievances and disabilities of small-scale manufacturers of salt in the States of Madras, Bombay, Saurashtra and (I believe, also,) Rajasthan, after taking office in the Central Government.

One of the first freedoms which Gandhiji had insisted upon being conceded to the villagers was that of free manufacture of salt. Upon the formation of the Congress-League Ministry, he had succeeded in getting the salt-tax abolished. In pursuit of the new policy, the Central Government published a Press Note on 23rd April 1948, which, among other things, provided as follows:

"Henceforth individuals or groups may freely produce salt in any land to which they had lawful access for this purpose, and by whatsoever process they desired, \* \* \* \* provided that the total area of land covered by the working set up by an individual or group was not more than 10 acres. No licences were needed and no applications for licence need be sent to any Government authority in such cases. The provisions of the Central Excise and Salt Act, 1944, will not stand in the way of the right of the small-scale manufacturers mentioned above."

The Press Note rightly claimed that the Government's new policy was greatly in advance of the concessions granted to villagers under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931. For instance, the Pact did not permit the sale of such free salt outside the villages, or to be carried except on foot. The new policy removed all restrictions on the sale and transport of salt produced in units of not more than 10 acres in area. Of course, the manufacturers were required to observe rules made with a view to ensure that the salt so manufactured was wholesome for human consumption. On that score, the general experience has been, I am told, that the salt of small manufacturers is superior to that of large contractors.

This Press Note is, indeed, a Charter of an important right to the villager. It should have been given very wide publicity. But somehow, I am told, it was not published even in all the State Gazettes, and people came to know of its substance slowly through rumours. They were naturally happy over it, and began to show activity to take advantage of it.

But the restriction on salt manufacture had been imposed for nearly three fourths of a century, and during this long period strong vested interests had grown up everywhere. They were known locally as *zamindars*, contractors, *ijardars*, etc. In some places, as in Bombay, several contractors had formed combines, and had virtually monopolized the trade. Salt Commissioners found it less bothering to deal with a combine than with several competing applicants. So they encouraged the formation of such combines. Indeed, during the last stages, they insisted that the various licensees must combine into one or two joint-stock companies with which alone the Salt Commissioners would deal.

In Madras, there were large areas of land which were capable of producing salt, but which had lain neglected for years on account of the Salt Laws. These lands formally belonged to a few *zamindars*, but were not regarded by them as a valuable possession hitherto. So the poor residents of villages could make any use of them they liked, without molestation by the *zamindars*. The Charter of 23rd April, 1948, gave the villagers an important village occupation. This aroused the jealousy of the *zamindars*, who began to molest them in various ways. They could drag them into Courts, and they wielded influence in Government offices.

Some of the tenants were Harijans. They had already begun to manufacture salt in exercise of the new rights. But they now found that some new rules had been made, and these came once again in the way of the unhampered exercise of the right. They did not understand what the matter was. They approached Shri S. Ganesan, a Harijan *sevak* of Madras. He inquired into the matter. After considerable



labour, he discovered that the right conceded by the Press Note of 23rd April, 1948, had been virtually withdrawn later on by what purported to be an Executive Order of the Salt Department, dated 3rd February, 1949. He asked for a copy of the order. "The Deputy Controller would not give an official copy, but after a great hesitation permitted me (Shri Ganesan) to copy the Executive Order, on 10-7-'50". The Order runs thus:

"With reference to the Press Note dated 23-4-1948, it is further clarified that if more than one small-scale factory less than 10 acres is or is grouped in a particular area, and their total acreage exceeds 10 acres, all the manufacturers shall have to get a licence before they can manufacture in the said area, and they will be subject to all the regulations governing the licensed factories."

This order was in clear contravention of the letter and the spirit of the Press Note of 23-4-'48. It was not even published in the Gazette.

Shri Ganesan immediately made a representation to Shri Harekrishna Mahtab, who had taken over charge only a few days before. Shri Mahtab was good enough to study the subject as quickly as possible, and the public will be glad to learn that the order of the 3rd February, 1949, has been cancelled, and will be pleased with Shri Mahtab for having set the matter right.

He has similarly done the right thing in Bombay, Saurashtra and Rajasthan. As stated above, combines of influential contractors had almost monopolized the manufacture of salt in Kharaghoda and Sambhar. Shri Bhupatlal Desai, a public worker near about the Kharaghoda area, took interest in the matter and pursued it with perseverance in the interest of the actual producers of salt, namely, the local *agarias* (salt cultivators). He tried to create co-operative societies among them. He explained their case to Shri R. K. Sidhwa, Chairman of an official Salt Committee, and made him take interest in the matter. Dr S. P. Mookerji, the then Minister of Industries and Supplies, had just begun to study the matter, when he relinquished office. But, I believe, he had already passed orders abolishing the system of dealing only with a few registered dealers through their combines.

After Dr Mookerjee's resignation, an attempt seems to have been made to get the above order cancelled. But Shri Mahtab has not only upheld the order, but has taken steps to see that co-operative societies of actual workers are encouraged.

Shri Mahtab deserves congratulations for this piece of service to the villagers. I hope officers of the Salt Department will work salt regulations in a manner consistent with the spirit of the Press Note of 23rd April, 1948.

Wardha, 3-10-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

## A BLASPHEMY

The Nasik Congress had decided by a majority of votes, in favour of keeping controls. There was a strong backing of the ministerial element from the Prime Minister downwards. Unaffected by such strong influence, what would have been the common man's vote it is not difficult to surmise. The President himself seems to have drawn attention to "the large number of dissentient votes". Able statesmanship does not go by counting votes. To sense the feelings of the public is the first requirement of political leadership.

Shri Harekrishna Mahtab, the Minister for Industries and Supplies at the centre, is jubilant over the numerical superiority of those who cast their votes in favour of controls and appeals for public help in support of their efficient working. In his zeal he seems to have forgotten rules of logic. He says, "If it is intended that the Government should intervene in the solution of various economic problems.....no objection should be raised to the various laws controlling production, distribution and consumption of goods." There are always more than one way of doing things. Objecting to one method is not to argue certain things should not be attempted at all. People call for the banning of *vanaspati*. Is this not also a form of Government intervention with production? They ask for prohibition of strong drinks. This is asking for interference with production, distribution and consumption. There are controls and controls and ways differ.

Shri Mahtab himself admits that unless the administration is backed by public opinion control laws cannot be administered efficiently. It should be clear, even to him, that as regards controls there is a sharp division in public opinion. Then how is he going to tackle the situation and enforce controls?

Shri Mahtab argues that if the people do not want controls they should not expect the Government to solve the problems. Is this logic? We may not want controls that lead to black markets, corruption and bribery; but we do want controls that will release lands from the cultivation of Virginia tobacco and other money crops and bring them back to growing food. We do not want a Cottage Industries Board that canalizes production to earn dollar exchange, by exporting images of Saraswati carved in ivory, so that we can import *vanaspati* mills! The name of the Board itself is illogical. We ought to call such a body either "Dollar Exchange Board" or "Drawing Room Industries Board". If this Board can induce the Government departments to use hand-made paper, that one item itself will give employment to thousands of villagers and revive an artistic craft that is dying. Are we catering to the masses by the way these Boards are administered? To criticize that does not mean we do not want Government to take



part in our economic field. Surely nothing would be more welcome than measures taken by Government to further the cause of such cottage industries as *ghani* oil mills or *khadi*.

This lack of logic manifests itself chiefly in the way Shri Mahtab has understood or misunderstood Gandhiji's principles. He states that Gandhiji's idea of self-sufficiency "means non-interference by Government in the economic life of the people." "Self-sufficiency" is not absolute; nothing is in this life. If Gandhiji wanted no Government interference at all where was the place for Government? Anything becomes "interference" only when one oversteps outside one's field of activity. There is a definite sector of economic life allocated to the Government and we do not want it to meddle with things it is not organized to tackle. He states that under the principle of Gandhian self-sufficiency "if rice or cloth is not available in any part of the country, Government should not be called upon to explain it." Even this may be partly right if the Government had itself played its part in developing self-sufficiency. It should bring about conditions conducive to self-sufficiency. In the promotion of *khadi*, if the Government engages itself in dumping mill yarn and cloth in the villages can there be self-sufficiency? In a fully developed self-sufficiency plan there will be the richest co-operation between the people and the Government. Control is one-sided, while co-operation is mutual.

It is shocking that public men of Shri Mahtab's standing should twist truth and misuse their powers to suit their own ends. It may rightly be resented as a blasphemy against Truth and an insult to Gandhiji's memory to misrepresent him.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

### Cause of Sudden Heart Failure

Referring to the article about "sudden heart failures" readers of *Harijan* will be interested to know that Dr Herbert Snow, M.D. (London), late Senior Surgeon of the Cancer Hospital, London and Consulting Surgeon of London Antivivisection Hospital says in the *Health Review* (London) :

"Of recent years many men and women in the prime of life have dropped dead suddenly, often after attending a wedding feast or banquet.

"I am convinced that some 80 per cent of these deaths are caused by the inoculations or vaccinations they have undergone. These are well-known to cause grave and permanent disease to the heart. The coroner always hushes it up with 'Natural Causes' ..... I take the many deaths of prominent people from 'heart failure' in the prime of life—which the papers are always reporting—to be merely a sequence of inoculation in some form or other."

Vaccination and inoculation are useless and dangerous.

SORABJI R. MISTRI

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Residents of Ajmer (Deducting 8 as M.O. commission)	30	0	0
<b>Donating Rs 6:</b> Udailal Kothari; <b>Donating Rs 4:</b> Manoharlalji; <b>Donating Rs 2:</b> Devilalji, Panalal Sharma, Ramprasadji Sharma; <b>Donating Re 1:</b> Bansilalji, Durgaprasadjji, Dhesukhlalji, Madanmohanji, Kailasnarayanji, Ramlalji, Chhotalalji, Badrinarayanji, Vishambharnathiji, Chhotelalji; <b>Donating 8 As:</b> R. A. Vaidya, Motiramji,			



Shivdayalji, Teckchandji, Bhatt, Samirmalji, Surendralalji, Chhotelalji, Ratanlalji			
Shree Thillaivaduvu Ammal, Madras	10	0	0
Shree Ratilal Maganlal, Junagadh	10	0	0
Shree Khandubhai Bhimbhai Desai, Navasari	51	0	0
	5,753	1	0
Sum already acknowledged	6,456	1	0
Total	12,209	2	0

### INDISCRIMINATE DESTRUCTION OF FORESTS

The western part of Rajasthan is a desert, but the south-east part of it until recent times abounded in forests and had plenty of water. For some years past, however, forests are being regularly cut down, with the result that this region has begun to experience droughts. In February last, the Rajasthan Gramodyog Mandal had arranged a village industries exhibition. The Forest Department of the Provincial Government availed itself of the occasion and made a display of charts and other literature designed to inform the public on the value of forests. It revealed that because of the destruction of forests many acres of green cultivable land every year was changing into an arid desert. The problem it raises is worth our serious consideration.

The destruction of forests is being done mainly for two reasons. The inhabitants of big cities like Bombay and Delhi use charcoal for cooking purposes. The forests in far-off regions are cut down, the wood thus procured is burnt into charcoal which is then sent to them over long distances. Besides this, there is another and a more serious reason. In our enthusiasm to increase the means of transport, the number of motor-buses is going up, and they are run with coal-gas produced from charcoal in the absence of petrol. During a day's run, a motor truck consumes two maunds of coal, which will work out at sixty maunds a month. A tree, assuming that it is properly watered and protected, takes 15 years at the minimum for growing to a stage when it can be safely cut down. This will give us some idea of the enormous waste we indulge in by permitting the consumption of coal in motor-trucks.

On the one side, we destroy thousands of trees for the so-called facilities of transport and, on the other, we talk of tree-plantation to make the loss good. The situation is ludicrous in the extreme. Clearly in this rivalry between destruction and construction, the latter is bound to go under.

In Rajasthan, besides drought and the aridity of soil, it has led to another disaster. The forests used to be the only source on which tens of thousands of *Adiwasis* living in the valley of the Aravali depended for their livelihood. They made hand-pounders, baskets, cots and other articles of domestic use, sold them in the neighbouring towns and eked out their ex-

istence. Now, since the forests are cut down, they have been reduced to the lot of the jobless refugees. The curious part of the situation is that while a *kisan* has to dance attendance on *patwaris* and *tahsildars* and wait for days on end to secure permission to take from the forest his small amount of wood useful to him for irrigation, the contractors are merrily cutting down thousands of trees every day and nobody ever seems to mind it. This is not the *kisan's* only inconvenience. His traditional and independent occupation of plying the bullock-cart is also gone, on account of the rapidly mounting number of motor-buses and trucks. Briefly the following are the main catastrophic consequences flowing from the destruction of forests: (1) scarcity of rains, (2) loss of forest manure, (3) scarcity of grass consequent on lack of rains, (4) insufficiency of fodder for cattle, (5) reduction in the quantity of *ghee* and milk and cattle manure and, last though not least, (6) scarcity of food.

I, therefore, earnestly appeal that the Government should take early steps to ban the consumption of charcoal in motor-vehicles, else there can be little meaning in the elaborate and expensive programme of tree-plantation.

DEVICHAND SAGARMAL

(Note: It is not suggested that there should be no large-scale cutting down of forests at all. But it must keep pace with the speed with which new forests are raised; rather the latter should exceed the former. It is a question of spending within the limits of one's means. The pity is that in a good many things which the Government does today this first principle of sound economy is ignored.

—K. G. M.)

(Translated from Hindi)

### A NEW EXPERIMENT IN CURRENCY

[A summary of Shri Vinoba's speech on 15-8-1950, at the inauguration of the "introduction of yarn currency" in place of money by the All India Spinners' Association, at Sevagram.]

**Beginning of a New Experiment:** Today is the anniversary of our Swaraj. Each year comes and passes, leaving new experiences in the life of an individual as also of a nation. A person who reflects upon his experience, eliminates faults, and thinks on new lines makes a progress in his onward march. One who does not do so degenerates because nothing in this world stands stationary. What is true of an individual is also true of a nation. It is therefore gratifying that a new experiment is being initiated today.

**Inspiration of Joining-periods:** To initiate a new experiment it is not necessary to find an auspicious day like this. Any day which makes us work on a new thought is auspicious. But people usually think more deeply during periods of junction. In the evening the sun sets, light slowly gives place to darkness and nature undergoes a great change. Such occasions prompt intensive thinking and making changes. Dawn also produces a similar effect. These are phenomena of experience and our ancestors took advantage of them and prescribed observances of religious rites in mornings and evenings. If during such periods the individual thinks deep and makes a new resolve his will is helped by the energies which lie in the universe. The resolve which we have made today will be backed by the Swaraj-force.



Such occasions bring out a few of the innumerable forces lying latent in the soul, which is the ultimate reservoir of all forces and from which one may draw according to one's capacity and earnestness. The soul is not anything other than ourselves. But this is not realized. So man binds himself down within the limits of the capacities of his senses, mind and reason, and tries to proceed towards the Infinite with the help of these limited instruments. The present experiment is one of such attempts.

**Collective Observances:** But the experiment possesses a characteristic feature. It is an experiment in which hundreds of individuals will participate, thus making it a collective activity. In the August 1942 revolution I was in the Vellore Central Jail. Some of us went on a sympathetic fast when Babu began his fast. My mathematical brain cast a total of the number of each person's fasts. I forget the exact number, but I think it came to about six months. I said that the Vellore prisoners had observed a sympathetic fast of six months. This reminds me of the apparently unbelievable story in the *Puranas* of a sage undergoing a three years' fast. My interpretation of it is that in those days religion was a live force and sages conducted collective experiments. If a particular experiment was inspired by a certain *rishi* perhaps it bore his name. If seventy-five *ashramites* fast for fifteen days the total fast would be of three years' duration. This is not a mere figure of speech. It has a profound meaning. An act performed collectively under the inspiration and guidance of a sage without break should naturally be regarded as the act of one man. This is the peculiarity of a collective experiment. If our experiment is carried on on these lines it will become a truly collective performance.

**Gift, Enjoyment and Loss:** For the timebeing, you have decided to use 75 per cent of yarn and 25 per cent of cash as your currency. This may do in the initial stages, but you must remember the real object of the experiment, so that not only might the start be well made but the path also might be clear. As far as possible the yarn obtained should not be converted into money. Freedom from money as a medium of exchange being our objective, if we are unable to utilize the whole yarn, the balance might be given to others or even destroyed, if necessary. But it should not be converted into money. Bhartiari's saying, 'Gift, enjoyment and loss are the three destinies of wealth', is to be made applicable here. The promoters of the experiment have reserved to the management the right to consider the question of converting yarn into money when occasion so demands; but if we resolve not to take the advantage, or rather disadvantage, of this reservation, the real merit and lustre of the experiment will be visible and give us a joy of life.

**Creative Work, a Source of Power:** If any one thinks that this experiment is merely the substitution of the word "currency" in place of "money", it is a mistake. It is an experiment of making a revolution in life. We want to produce wealth by our labour and regulate our lives through mutual co-operation. Both production and regulation are the objectives of this experiment. The resolve not to change the currency into money will bring self-restraint in our life: but we must have a scheme of production, otherwise our experiment will be reduced to the mere management of a shop and will generate no strength in the workers. If we want to increase our soul force we must apply ourselves to production.

**Joy of Completeness:** This creative work will have to be all-sided. We must prepare the whole statue. Till now we were working on component parts only. That was not wrong, but hereafter it will not suffice. All of us have to learn the essentials of all the items of the constructive work and when we work with a complete image in our mind, our lives will be filled with the joy which completeness creates.

VINOBA

(From the Hindi *Sarvodaya*, September '50)

## GOVERNMENT KHADI POLICY IN U. P.

[A few weeks ago, a Madras correspondent sent to me newspaper cuttings, which purported to say that the U.P. Government had abandoned its previous policy of encouraging *khadi*, along with an article in the *Madras Mail*, in which the Madras State was advised to follow the example of U.P. I received a similar letter from a Bombay correspondent. I felt a little doubtful about the correctness of the report and so made enquiries in proper quarters. I was glad to be informed both by the U.P. Government and the Gandhi Ashram Meerut, that the Madras report was not only incorrect, but the facts were just the opposite of those reported. The following Press Note of the U.P. Government clarifies this matter further.

— K. G. M.]

The attention of the Uttar Pradesh Government has been drawn to reports appearing in a section of the Press published outside the State, that the U.P. Government has abandoned its previous policy of encouraging *khadi* and has withdrawn its orders that all Departments of the State should use *khadi* for their bonafide requirements as far as possible. Such reports are inaccurate and misleading.

2. The U.P. Government has always been anxious to propagate the production and use of *khadi* by every means possible. A 'Khadi Development Scheme' has been in operation for the last three years under which training in spinning, the manufacture and supply of *charkhas* and a research institute for improving appliances and methods of production have been organized. Government had also ordered that Government departments should purchase *khadi* as far as possible for their requirements of textiles.

3. Under the present circumstances, when a good deal of *khadi* is lying unsold, the U.P. Government has felt that a special effort should be made to purchase *khadi* for Government requirements in order that the production of *khadi* may not receive a serious set-back. After examining the position, therefore, the State Government has ordered that Government requirements of such items as bed sheets, draw sheets, pillow cases, *dhoties*, aprons and *pyjamas* in all hospitals and dispensaries in the State should be of *khadi*. Similarly instructions are being issued that only *khadi* be used for making convicts' clothes in jails. Government has also decided that curtains, table covers, towels, furnishings, and other items of cloth in use in all Government offices, official residences and rest houses should be of *khadi*. All departments of Government have, besides, been instructed to purchase *khadi* for all miscellaneous requirements such as dusters, *bustas* etc. Extra funds from out of the *khadi* budget are being placed at the disposal of various Heads of Departments to cover the extra expenditure that may have to be incurred in implementing these decisions.

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