

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

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TWO ANNAS

CHARKHA CELEBRATIONS

The first eight days of October will witness throughout India the celebration of Gandhiji's 81st birthday. The first of October has been set apart in Bombay and Saurashtra for the observance of the Harijan Day. During the rest of the week, spinning will be at the centre of all other programmes. This is quite appropriate, as the *charkha* is Gandhiji's greatest gift to the world and the visible symbol of his message of Non-violence. It is also in accordance with the practice initiated by Gandhiji himself, who gave the name of *Charkha Dwadashi* to his date of birth. Those, whose faith in the *charkha* has grown with the passage of time, make his birthday celebrations an occasion for demonstrating their faith in it by organizing the *charkha* and *khadi* programme in various ways. Even those who are not regular spinners give it the place of honour on such occasions for expressing their love and esteem for Gandhiji.

And yet the *charkha* is the most difficult item to understand among Gandhiji's ideas and programmes. Not that his other ideas and programmes are easily understood and accepted generally. Indeed, Gandhiji is such a complex personality that he is acceptable in a general manner to very many only as dissociated from his various ideas and programmes and taken as just a good and righteous man. In association with a particular idea or programme, he ceases to be acceptable very widely. For instance, as associated with removal of untouchability he might be acceptable to one section only; with social reforms, to another only; with friendliness to Muslims, only to a third; with truth and non-violence, only to a fourth; with basic education, only to a fifth; with *charkha*, only to a sixth and so on.

But there is a remarkable feature in the acceptance of Gandhiji with this or that item only. It will be observed that generally those who are able to accept whole-heartedly his ideas and programme of the *charkha* find less difficulty in understanding and accepting most of his other ideas and programmes. But those who are sceptical about the *charkha* accept, if at all, only a particular item of his other ideas. For this reason also, the *charkha* is the centre of

Gandhiji's life-message and it is very sad that the place and importance of the *charkha* should be fully understood by all those who profess that the ultimate good of mankind lies in following the way shown by Gandhiji.

In a way, food being the first necessity of life, it would appear that agriculture should be regarded as the centre of the economic constructive programme. *Go-seva*, spinning, weaving and various village industries should all revolve and adjust themselves round agriculture. Indeed, this had been suggested by some to Gandhiji, and similar suggestions are made even now. Gandhiji had no misgivings about the importance of agriculture in India's economy and he took keen interest in it. His experiments of *ashram*-life in South Africa started with agriculture and not with the *charkha*. This he had not even seen at the time. And yet, instinctively he had placed the *charkha* in the forefront in *Hind Swaraj* (1909). With further experience, his faith in it grew to such an extent that in 1936 he declared it to be the Sun of the solar system of village industries at the Faizpur Congress. Why should it have been so?

As I think of it, the reason is this: Whether agriculture is a paying or a losing occupation, man will always need and produce food; and even if there is an ever increasing rush of villagers to cities, a greater number will yet remain and stick to agriculture; they might do so voluntarily or under sheer compulsion of circumstances, but stick they will. But even though there is as much need for the production of cloth in every home—that is, for people becoming self-reliant in the matter of cloth—the mill industry can and has destroyed the spinning wheel, and created an illusion that home-spinning is not necessary for getting cloth.

Even granting that cloth stands lower than food in the list of the prime necessities of life, it is necessary to realize that the prosperity of agriculture is linked with and dependent upon the *charkha*. The scrapping of the *charkha*—i.e., the people's capacity to produce their clothing requirements in their own homes—has been and will be ruinous to agriculture, particularly food cultivation.

Among large-scale factories the spinning mill was the first to destroy village industries and economy. The *charkha* was a small mill installed in every home. It is true that as it was driven by manual power and consisted of only one spindle, its speed of production was slow. But that slowness had the advantage of providing occupation to all. As an earner of wages, spinning was probably the least-paid labour even in old times. But because of the cheapness and simplicity of life of the age, it could yet contribute a decent share in maintaining a family with thrift consistent with decency.

The advent of the spinning mill under these conditions of life injured the villages in two ways. The large spinning factories, which had come into existence first in foreign countries, were, on their entry into India, established in cities. Their mechanism made it possible for a single labourer to throw a hundred to two hundred spinners out of employment, and a whole mill compelled several thousand spinners to discard their wheels. The spinning mill was soon followed by the weaving mill. This, in turn, did the work of nearly twenty hand-loom weavers through a single worker; thus the hand-loom weaver also became rather unwanted.

The cloth so produced had the appearance of being cheap. No wonder that it created the impression that more cloth could be consumed for the same amount of money. It was again no wonder that a better wage could be paid to the mill-labourer, who produced for the employer as much yarn as a hundred to two hundred *charkha*-spinners, and wove as much cloth as about twenty hand-loom weavers. So, in the villages surrounding the cities, people thought that there had come into the country a boon which gave better, cheaper and more cloth, and better wages to boot. The number of mills and other large-scale factories increased rapidly, and the labouring population of villages to which cities were easily approachable found that there was a good demand for them. They found their problems of unemployment and underemployment solved for a time. But the agriculture of these villages began to suffer, because the wage standard of local labour increased beyond their means. Cloth having become cheaper and more abundant than before, all those who were not compelled to stay at home unavoidably began to flock into the cities in search of employment. Agriculture became an uneconomic occupation. To add to this, a great demand arose for land surrounding the expanding cities, and it began to fetch heavy prices. As a result, agriculture first began to be given up by these villagers. The remarkable thing about it all was that all this appeared as being economically advantageous.

Meanwhile, technical science advanced at a rapid pace, and large factories of various types began to grow. The march of villages towards cities grew in pace, and it is still in progress.

Distant villages received mill cloth before they received a call for their labourers. Here was ready-made cloth, which was more attractive, of finer texture, cheaper in cost than the one they could produce for themselves only after devoting a good deal of time by way of personal labour and haggling with artisans. It is no wonder that both the wise and the simple were all taken in. The *charkha* was rapidly discarded.

With the disappearance of the *charkha* from the home of the agriculturist, other industries — weaving, colouring, cloth-printing etc. — dependent upon the *charkha* also broke. There also ran stories of high wages and "enjoyments" available in cities. So all such artisans as also other labourers and all those who had received by this time rudiments of education began to forsake the villages. Thus, agriculture in distant villages also began to suffer.

Let us remember that agriculture to a very great extent depends in our country on the mercy of nature. It is moreover a seasonal occupation only. Again, from times immemorial, it has been always subject to several taxes of customary and almost binding nature; e.g. the shares of the ruler and the landlord; the dues of religious and charitable institutions; the dues of *balutadars* or *vatandars*; *bakshis* to the servants of the State and the landlord; donations collected by *brahmans*, *bairagis*, beggars and other expectants; payment of interest on and return of capital to the money-lender; celebration of marriages, *shraddhas* and other ceremonies; entertainment of guests and the like. With all these out-of-pocket expenses, the agriculturist could hope to save something only in a particularly lucky year. All these out-of-pocket charges have continued, if not increased; the dependence upon nature has also continued; indeed, on account of heavy destruction of forests for some generations past, nature has become rather more erratic than ever before; his own domestic budget has also become more lopsided because of the lure of new narcotics, habits, fashions, expenses of education, litigation etc., which surround him on all sides. There is nothing on the credit side to balance against this. On the contrary, he has lost all those items which constituted savings; e.g., of the *charkha*, which, with all its low production and wages, was still an item on the income side; of agriculture due to low cost of cultivation on account of cheapness of labour and help of such adult members of the family, who have since gone to crowd the cities. That he has still stuck to the land is not because agriculture is economically lucrative, but because he does not know what else he would do

and where he could stay if he abandoned the land. Thus the decline of agriculture is closely linked with the destruction of the *charkha*. It is also closely linked with the huge destruction of the cattle wealth of the country.

I would like to say in this connection that the principle involved here is not primarily whether the spinning wheel should be a machine worked by human power only, as opposed to mechanical power. The fundamental point is that yarn should be produced and woven in every home, or at any rate in every unit by the joint labours of its members, for, in the first instance, their own full consumption and, only thereafter, for sale. The question whether and how far mechanical power may be employed for doing this has its own importance, which is to be considered from the point of view of the best way of utilizing human and animal labour for the advancement of agriculture, cow-breeding and village industries. It is not tabooed merely because it is mechanical. It is quite possible that the *charkha* might in course of time develop into a small mechanism of the type of the sewing or knitting machine, and become capable of being set up as a small factory of 25 to 50 workers. But if it gets divorced from agriculture, both agriculture and cow-breeding—particularly cultivation of food crops and rearing of bullocks—are bound to suffer, unless agriculture itself gives up its present character of being a seasonal occupation only, and develops into giving full employment to all who pursue it from one end of the year to the other.

It was given to Gandhiji to perceive this intimate relationship of agriculture and the *charkha*. He regarded it as his greatest discovery and present to the world. If the place of the *charkha* in Indian life is not realized, India cannot become a prosperous and fully employed country except by establishing her control over some other large nations, and exploiting them for her benefit.

Hence it is that the *charkha* occupies the centre of Gandhi Birthday celebrations. At this stage, it looks like the frantic effort of a person to swim against the current of the galloping advance of waters of a river in spate. It is not easy, therefore, to have faith in the message of the *charkha*. Those, who are in doubt, may not be found fault with. To feel anger against them is out of place. They must take their own time and find their own method to discover the truth that the *charkha* stands for. But once they discover it, they will find that it opens up before them quite a new way of thinking and evaluating life, which will help them not only in understanding the village industries programme, but also, other religious, social and political ideas and programmes of Gandhiji.

Wardha, 20-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE UNSOLVED WILD CATTLE CATCHING PROBLEM

Over three years ago I started trying to interest the Government in this urgent and perplexing problem, since when I have been continually endeavouring to get some kind of practical scheme organized for the systematic catching of wild and semi-wild cattle—but without avail! I am afraid the many friends, in various villages of India, who responded to my request through the columns of *Harijan* for information regarding herds of these wild cattle, must have long since given me up as a bad job. They sent me heart-rending tales of the damage done to crops by ever increasing herds in their areas, and begged me to get my scheme started as soon as possible, as it would be a tremendous boon to the *kisans* and at the same time would help the 'Grow More Food' campaign.

I can only assure these friends who wrote to me, that I redoubled my efforts. The Army, to whom I had appealed through the Commander-in-Chief, responded magnificently and arranged every detail for a detachment of horse-men to be kept ready at Saharanpur Remount Depot. I had hopes that this might bring the Civil Departments up to the scratch; but no! We are still where we were. I suppose the civil authorities think the work is not worth doing. The village public, however, seems to have a different opinion.

It is clear from the information I have received that there are thousands and thousands of wild and semi-wild cattle throughout India. With the prohibition of cattle slaughter their numbers are certainly going to increase. If any further delay takes place in the tackling of this matter on an All-India basis the cattle problem will get completely out of control. From my experience of wild and semi-wild bull catching in Pashulok, my belief is that this work, if handled properly, can be made to pay its way. I must confess, however, that I am worn out by my long struggles with the machinery of Government. My health is no longer what it was, and I cannot now-a-days travel about. But this work has got to be done if we, who call ourselves devotees of the cow, want not to have to hang our heads in shame. I, therefore, appeal to the Goseva Sangh and the Gosevak Samaj jointly to take up the responsibility of this tremendous task.

Just as I was writing these lines, a party of peasant pilgrims came into my room. They were on a visit to the little shrine of Nilkanth on the edge of the Garhwal mountains, where I was then staying. Typical, sturdy, weather-beaten *kisans* they were. As I looked at them I said to myself, "You people are the foundation on which the whole of society depends." I put down my pen and asked, "Where do you come from?" "Bareilly district," they replied. The wild-cattle problem being uppermost in my mind, I enquired whether they had that problem

in their village. "Oh yes," they exclaimed, "there are quantities of wild cows around our village, and they do a lot of harm to our crops." "Are the cows of good quality?" I asked. "Very fine," they said, "and they give plenty of milk. The male calves are worth a lot of money, and get caught by daring cattle dealers."

The next day, when I descended to Swargashram, on my way to Tehri Garhwal, some more peasant pilgrims came to my room. This time they were from the Meerut district. They had the same wild-cow story to tell.

So this is the present condition of things in our unhappy country.

MIRABEHN

HARIJAN

Sept. 30

1950

GRADED PRICES

We reckon that a normal labourer would need not less than 16 ounces of cereals per day for his full meal. Indeed a strong man doing hard labour might require as many as 22 ounces. Government knows that it cannot provide the full meal from its own stocks. It must, however, make sure that the Government and the people will together possess in the aggregate more than 16 ounces per head per day. It should be not less than 20 ounces and may well exceed 25 ounces. This should be ensured as far as possible by production within the State itself. To the extent it is impossible in the immediate future to do so, it must import from the surplus provinces or, as a last resort, from abroad.

Since centralization of stocks is neither desirable nor feasible, the rationing should not be on the assumption that Government is in possession of all the stocks in the State. It should become its largest stockist only; and, as explained in previous articles, it should procure through, and keep those stocks mainly in the possession of, co-operative societies, *panchayats* or such charitable institutions as serve all sections of the people impartially.

The total Government stock might be about three-fourths of the total need, and rationing, too, should extend to the partial needs of three-fourths of the population. The rest of the people should be allowed to shift for themselves, except where a sudden emergency arises. So too, the remaining needs of the masses must be met by the people themselves. Three-fourths of the total need would mean not less than 12 ounces per day or about 2½ cwts. per annum per head. Since Government must keep sufficient stocks on hand for discretionary and emergency purposes, and make due allowances for wastage and unexpected losses by fire, loot and accidents, it

is clear that they cannot ration even 12 ounces per day from the stocks which they have tried to possess. At the same time every soul would not need the full 16 ounces which is calculated as the normal need. So they should frankly say this:

"We promise to give 8 ounces per day per head to all those who come within our rationing scheme. It is not incumbent upon any one to come within it; and we do not propose to undertake the responsibility of those whose average family income is above Rs 1,800/- per head per annum in large cities, or above Rs 900/- per head per annum elsewhere in the country. The rest would be entitled to enter into the rationing system but the Government would welcome people, who, though entitled, forgo drawing upon their cards whether wholly or partially. This self-denial will make it possible for Government to give extra rations to those to whom the ration of 8 ounces is grossly insufficient and who are too poor to purchase the balance from the ordinary market. In order to encourage such self-denial, Government would pay as *bakshis*, (say), a quarter anna for every two ounces forgone.

"The rationed 8 ounces will be sold at Government purchase price — all overhead charges being borne by Government. (Let us assume that the purchase price is 2½ annas for 8 ounces). But in order to meet the needs of those to whom 8 ounces is quite insufficient or who need extra cereals for particular approved purposes, Government would be prepared to sell extra rations to the maximum extent of 16 ounces per head, if it holds sufficient stocks on hand. The prices of the extra rations will be graded and may be varied from time to time, and the sales may be suspended at any time without previous notice. The following is an illustrative scheme of gradation:

"For personal consumption on regular cards:

Rationed	8 ounces at 2 annas 6 pies
For the extra 1st 2	" " 0 9 pies
" 2nd 2	" " 1 anna 0
" 3rd 2	" " 2 annas 0
" 4th 2	" " 4 annas 0
<hr/>	
Total for 16	" " 10 annas 3 pies

"For particular approved occasions subject to such rules about numbers etc. as may be prescribed:

For	8 ounces	3 annas
Extra 1st 2	"	1 anna
" 2nd 2	"	1 anna 6 pies

"The maximum to be allowed being not more than 12 ounces per capita."

By undertaking upon itself the duty of purchasing and distributing rations, Government enters into the realm of business. It must, therefore, do it as a business. But as the purpose of

the business is to provide "unto the last" man of the State, the principles of business would be different from those of ordinary commerce. In ordinary commerce, big (wholesale) merchants get articles at cheaper rates, than small (retail) purchasers. In a business on behalf of the masses, the small purchaser should get articles at cheaper rates than the big one.

The above method will provide an effective and automatic control over profiteering and black-marketing. If merchants sell their cereals more cheaply than Government, it is all welcome. If they ask exorbitant prices, purchasers will prefer to buy from Government. There will be no need for secrecy. As Government itself would sell at profitable rates, it will be able to pay better prices for purchases by way of procurement. It will, at the same time, assure itself that none may die of starvation. As its stock increases, it will raise the scale of the minimum ration which it will sell at purchase price. These prices would also vary according to the quality of the cereals.

There are several articles, which will admit of this kind of treatment, e.g., *gur*, sugar, kerosene, petrol, cotton, oilseeds.

Wardha, 11-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

THE PROBLEM OF FOOD PRICE

The problem of food price raises a complicated issue. On the one hand every one wants that food should be available in abundance. A commodity, the supply of which is abundant, would be naturally cheap. All those who are not landholders would wish that food should be as cheap as possible. Probably more than 80 per cent of the population would come under this head. Their interest lies in having abundant food at cheap rates.

On the other hand, the owner of agricultural land, depending for his livelihood upon the sale of his produce, demands the opposite. He wishes to cultivate crops which bring higher returns in terms of money. Since cotton, tobacco, ground-nuts, plantains etc. fetch higher price, it is profitable for him to cultivate these rather than food crops. He demands that if he is to be induced to grow food crops, it is necessary that the prices of food crops should be made sufficiently attractive. Thus the interests of the landed producer and the landless consumer conflict. Indeed, some economists recommend that since India is an agricultural country the prices of food should be raised. But it seems to me that this recommendation rests on the wrong assumption that the fact that India is an agricultural country is equivalent to saying that India is a country in which a majority of the population possesses land. This is not correct. A majority of the population consists of landless agricultural labourers or landholders with so small holdings that they hardly produce enough to maintain themselves throughout the year. Hence the interest of a majority of the popula-

tion does not lie in high prices of food. It is only a small fraction of landlords who might be benefited by high food prices.

This situation indicates that there is an inherent defect in the present system of landlordship. There was a system once prevalent, at least in Gujarat and Saurashtra, in which the land belonged to the whole village, no individual being regarded as the owner of a specific plot. The village produced its requirements of food, cotton, oilseeds, (tobacco also if they used it). After providing for the shares of the ruler, customary public institutions, animals etc. and also for the requirements of the people of the village for the year, the balance was sold. Only the surplus meant for sale was subject to valuation in terms of money. The quantity of water and food necessary for the maintenance of the villagers was not capable of money value, even as air could not be valued in terms of rupees, annas and pies. Not that this system was evolved to perfection. There were many defects in the system of distribution, since society was divided into aristocrats and serfs. But in a full and just democracy, the interests of 80 per cent of the population who are not landlords and of landlords will not mutually conflict under a system like this. Such a system should be brought into existence with necessary modifications to suit the present requirements.

The world lives on food. Hence, the demand that the price of food should be raised so that the landlord could be induced to grow food crops is improper. The proper demand to make is the introduction of such a system as would make food cheap and plenty.

Wardha, 10-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

(Translated from Gujarati)

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SHRI AKSHAYA BRAHMACHARI'S FAST

I recall the readers' attention to my article "Muslims of Ayodhya" (*Harijan*, 19th August, 1950). As stated therein, Shri Akshaya Brahmachari embarked upon his fast on 22nd August last. After a full month (more exactly on the 32nd day since the commencement), he ended it yesterday (22nd September) on the advice of Shri Vinoba and myself. For want of space I refrain from giving a full account of the developments which took place during the month. Suffice it to say that in the course of a reply in the Legislative Assembly, the Chief Minister, the Hon'ble Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant, gave the following assurance at the end :

"I have said that I do not wish that there should be any obstruction to any one in the enjoyment of any right whatever. If any thing, which was improper, did take place, we tried to remedy it. We have regret for those who were put into distress on its account. We were not less worried than they for such acts. It is our object and our desire that all people should live in amity and every one should enjoy the full benefit of his rights, and the atmosphere of our State should be such that none should have any cause to feel that there is any danger to him in residing here, or that he cannot live here with honour, self-respect, joy, and peace." (Translated from the original in Hindi by the editor for want of official translation).

Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Home Minister, U. P., in a personal letter to Akshayaji, also, referred to the above reply, and added :

"You will observe that the Government have made all efforts to set right the conditions in Ayodhya. If, however, there is anything still lacking, it is our duty to make it good. This requires the co-operation and help of every one. The greatest need is that the atmosphere should be so cleared that all people residing there live in amity and goodwill." He ended with an appeal to Shri Akshaya to end the fast. (Also translated from Hindi).

In addition to this some wires and letters also passed between Pandit Pant and myself on this subject.

Shri Akshaya still felt hesitation in accepting these assurances as sufficient. His apprehensions were not quite groundless. On the other hand, the Government had also to deal with a difficult situation. It was right in asking for public co-operation.

Having regard to these assurances and other considerations Vinobaji and I advised Akshayaji to terminate his fast. We are glad he has accepted our advice.

May God give him strength and purity of body, mind and heart to render selfless service to humanity in distress. Let this fast be a call to him to attain the highest qualifications of a true *satyagrahi*. There is much in this context, which I should like to say to the Hindus and Muslims of Fyzabad and Ayodhya. But for this I shall choose another occasion.

Wardha, 23-9-'50

K. G. MASHRUWALA

ASSAM EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FUND

From 18-9-'50 to 23-9-'50

Name & Place	Rs	as	ps
Shree M. R. N. Swami, Calcutta	25	0	0
Shree Gulabsingh Jaysing Parmar, Shuklatirth	10	0	0
Shree Chhatrasingh Jaysingh Parmar, Shuklatirth	10	0	0
Shree Bilasrai Kandodia, Chapra	15	0	0
Shree Ramanlal S., Ernakulam	11	0	0
Shree Badrinarayan, Jodhpur	5	0	0
Shree Bhikhalal Gokaldas, Visnagar	4	0	0
Shree Jagjivan Kasalchand Seth, Pachora	100	0	0
Shree Champaklal Rewashanker Modi, Pachora	25	0	0
Shree Labhshanker Durlabhji Gandhi, Pachora	25	0	0
Shree Rajaram Dhanji Patil, Pachora	11	0	0
Shree Sukhlal Ramnath Gupta, Pachora	5	0	0
Shree Chandulal Girdharlal Modi, Pachora	5	0	0
Shree Bharatiya Gopilal Hiralal, Pachora	5	0	0
One Harijan gentleman, Ahmedabad	100	0	0
Shree Krishnaji Shyamrao Kulkarni, Dhulia	5	0	0
Miss Edelji Sukhia, Bombay	35	0	0
Shree Shantilal Harilal Desai, Mehmdabad	5	0	0
Shree Harmanishanker Padmakar Shukla, Bombay	1	0	0
Dr Jagmohan G. Parekh, Bombay	101	0	0
Shree Dhanlaxmi G. Parekh, Bombay	25	0	0
Messrs Jayantilal Jagjivandas & Co. Bombay	51	0	0
Shree Krishnalal Rewashanker Acharya, Sidhpur	10	0	0
Miss Jayabehn Vasanji Desai, Hanumanbhagda	2	0	0
Shree D. C. Thanawala, Vile Parle	2	8	0
Shree Kantabehn Nandlal Shah, Ahmedabad	251	0	0
Shree Sunanda R. Prabhu, Bombay	25	0	0
A gentleman, Bhavnagar	2	0	0
Shree Vamanbhai Asharam, Ahmedabad	5	0	0
Shree Hirabhai Dajibhai Patel, Jalalpure	5	0	0
Shree Gopalji Pragji, Borivli	101	0	0
A gentleman, Ahmedabad	2	0	0
Shree Mangalbhai Savdas, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Santabhai Talsibhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Adityabhai Somabhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Narsibhai Sambhubhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Muljibhai Kalidas, Thamna	2	0	0
Dr Vanraj, Thamna	3	0	0
Shree Ambalal Krishnaram, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Ambalal Bhulabhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Adityabhai Laxmidas, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Somabhai Ashabhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Gordhanbhai Dahyabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Bhailalbai Motilal, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Motilal Ghelabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Muljibhai Dwarkadas, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Mangalbhai Shankerbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Muljibhai Nathabhai, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Jayantilal Ranchodhbhai, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Satabhai Dwarkadas, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Bhogilal Girdharbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Ganpatram Krishnaram, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Adityabhai Somabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Chhotabhai Kalidas, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Manubhai Chunilal Modi, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Anantkumar Narshibhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Ranchhodhbhai Dwarkadas, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Chhanabhai Shivabhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Chaturbhai Bhulabhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Secretary, Bhojva Co.-Op. Co. Society, Bhojva	26	0	0
Shree B. N. Gupta, Morar	5	0	0
Shree M. N. Gopalan, Tatanagar	51	0	0
Late Ramila Narsibhai Phulabhai, Thamna	51	0	0
Shree Parshottam Motibhai Patel, Thamna	25	0	0
Shree Pitambar Shivrul Shah, Thamna	21	0	0
Shree Bhailalbai Shankerbhai Patel, Thamna	11	0	0
Shree Dhirajlal Parshottam Patel, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Harehji Galabhai Patel, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Santabhai Narsibhai, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Savdas Kahandas, Thamna	2	0	0

Shree Gokulabhai Santabhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Chunibhai Dungarbai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Gordhanbhai Khusalbai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Dhulabhai Becharbhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Chhotabhai Shankerbhai, Thamna	5	0	0
Shree Ambalal Narsibhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Ambalal Zaverbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Becharbhai Megjibhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Zaverbhai Girdharbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Maganbhai Somabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Shankerbhai Ranchhodhbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Adityabhai Shankerbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Chunibhai Himabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Narsihbhai Somabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Shivabhai Venibhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Somabhai Prabhudas, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Ambalal Vallabhbai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Zaverbhai Shankerbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Madhabhai Shankerbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Shankerbhai Girdharbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Dahyabhai Harmanbhai, Thamna	1	0	0
Shree Adityabhai Hirabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Motibhai Shankerbhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Shree Narsibhai Bhulabhai, Thamna	2	0	0
Sum already acknowledged	4,087	12	6
Total	5,376	4	6

NOTES

Harijan Day

The first of October has been declared by the Bombay and Sourashtra States as Harijan Day. I believe, once the Harijan Day used to be observed on 26th September, the date on which Gandhiji broke his fast against the Macdonald Communal Award. Whatever be the day, it is desirable that the people and States of All-India (i.e. Pakistan also) should fix a common day for a nationwide programme to remove the barriers which still separate Harijans from the rest of the people. In this connection, it is necessary to realize that though untouchability took its birth in the Hindu social structure, it has infected more or less other Indian communities also. Muslim, Sikh, Christian, and Parsi — no community is entirely free from the contagion. All communities must, therefore, make equal efforts to see that Harijans enjoy the same status in society as they themselves do. Various types of programmes have been suggested, and new ones can be devised. The essential thing is that the programmes should be whole-hearted and for the purpose of giving free and complete admission to the Harijans into the hearths and homes of the touchables.

Wardha, 19-9-'50

Money Orders to Assam Fund

A notification of the Government of India announces that money orders addressed to the Governor's Assam Earthquake Relief Fund, Shillong, and Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (Assam Earthquake), New Delhi, are exempted from money order commission.

Donors who are unwilling to trust any private agency making collections can thus send their help directly without any extra charge.

In addition to the above, moneys can also be paid in any branch of the Imperial Bank for being credited to any of the above accounts.
Wardha, 18-9-'50

K. G. M.

Garlands — Floral or Yarn ?

For years Gandhiji had ceased allowing people to put flower garlands round his neck. When any person came forth to garland him he received it as a token of love but never allowed it to be put round his neck. This attitude of Babu was most probably due to his non-violence.

But when Shri Jagadishchandra Bose, the world-famous scientist, demonstrated to Babu with the help of experiments that trees and plants also have life like the animals and they too go to sleep at nightfall just as we do, Babu became more particular in the matter ; he began to say that except when absolutely necessary one should not pluck even a leaf from a plant or tree, more particularly after sunset. So also whenever he found a wreath of flowers withering on account of the heat of the hand he used to say, "The real beauty of these flowers lasts only so long as they are on the trees and plants," and so he did not like to receive a gift of flowers whenever it was made to him.

In view of this attitude of Babu towards plant life, is it proper for us now to garland his photograph, bust etc. with flowers? There should be no question of *decorating* his picture or image with flowers. If we would express our love for him by garlanding his image with flowers we should know that by doing so we would be offending his feelings in the matter.

The best way to pay our homage to Babu, the object of our devotion and love, would be to offer garlands of hand-spun, if not self-spun, yarn instead of flower garlands, because the *charkha* was the dearest object to him and he had identified himself with it to such an extent that he chose to call his birthday the *Charkha Jayanti*.

Hence my humble request to all lovers of Babu, of *khadi*, of the *charkha* is that they should try to spread this idea and insist on putting yarn instead of flower garlands round the images and pictures of Babu during the forthcoming Gandhi or *Charkha Jayanti* celebrations.

KANU GANDHI

(Abridged from the original Gujarati)

"Ban the Atom Bomb"

The World Peace Committee, Stockholm, has issued the following appeal :

"WE DEMAND the absolute banning of the atom weapon, arm of terror and mass-extirmination of populations.

"WE DEMAND the establishment of strict international control to ensure the implementation of this banning measure.

"WE CONSIDER that any government which would be first to use the atom weapon against any country whatsoever would be committing a crime against humanity and should be dealt with as a war criminal."

I have no hesitation in endorsing this appeal.

Wardha, 15-9-'50

K. G. M.

SELECTED LETTERS

Second Series

(By M. K. Gandhi)

XI

Chivalrous Knight is he who is exquisitely correct in his conduct towards perfect strangers who are in need of help, but who can make no return to him and who are unable even to mutter a few words of thanks.

(Written in English)

XII

As we acquire more skill, we are able to put in more work with less strain on our physical and mental resources. For instance when I began to turn the spinning-wheel with my left hand I spun only 93 rounds on the first day; I took much time and experienced great fatigue. But when I had acquired some skill I spun 200 rounds in less time than I had taken over only 93 rounds at first and also felt lesser strain. I am now spinning on the Magan spinning-wheel on which my output yesterday was only 24 rounds and I took heaps of time over it. But today I spun 56 rounds in less time than what I gave to spinning yesterday, and with less fatigue as well. What is true of a single individual and his insignificant looking activity is true of big institutions and their extensive activity.

योगः कर्तु कौशलम् — 'Yoga is skill in actions,' as the Gita puts it (II-50). Action here is service or sacrifice (*yajna*). All our troubles arise from lack of skill. When we acquire the requisite skills what is at present, troublesome will be a source of pleasure. I am strongly of opinion that one should not feel any strain in a well regulated institution.

This is what you are in the Ashram for. But no one else can impart it to you. Every one should extract it from the atmosphere for him or herself. If you are unable to do it, you cannot stay in the Ashram for long, though unambitious persons might drag on. The Ashram is really an institution where a person is free to rise according to his capacity. You should yourself create an atmosphere favourable to your growth. You may invite your friends to keep you company in the Ashram but that would be a selfish thing. As a matter of fact you should make friends with every one in the Ashram. Give him what you have got and take from him whatever he has to give. You will be blundering badly if you think that most of the Ashramites have nothing to teach you. For I feel that there is no one in the world from whom we may not learn something or other.

XIII

[To a new Ashramite who suggested that we should ask thieves to stay in the Ashram, and allow stray cattle to consume the food crops in the Ashram farm for the Gita asks us to cultivate equimindedness (समत्व) in chapter II, verse 48.]

The questions you have raised cannot be settled with the help of logic alone, for if they

are, the legitimate conclusion would be this that a man should fast unto death. The idea of *sannyasa* (renunciation) appears to be a consequence of this train of thought, and is only the half-way house to such a fast. But this heroism is impossible to man; even if he makes this impossible possible, his mind will rise in rebellion and create several worlds of its own. I think that the Gita teaching arose from some such line of thought. The Gita first of all points out the *summum bonum* of life and secondly tells us how we should live so as to make continuous progress towards it. Its teaching may be thus summarized: 'Discharge fully whatever duty comes your way as you march to your goal, but be detached from the fruits of your actions.' This is the principle we apply in solving the problems which face the Ashram. As for thieves, we would certainly invite them to join the Ashram if we could, but as we have not still acquired the capacity to assimilate such refractory material, we deal with them as we think fit in view of our spiritual poverty. As regards stray cattle and insects which damage our crops, we have not still been able to devise non-violent methods of dealing with them. We therefore do some violence to them out of sheer helplessness. To drive out stray cattle by shouting at or beating them; to frighten birds away by throwing or pretending to throw stones at them, to destroy insects in course of ploughing operations or otherwise, to catch hold of snakes and carry them out of harm's way or to permit people to kill them if that is impossible, — all these things are, I am aware, a negation of the Ashram ideal. But the Ashram and its members are far from perfect. Therefore they take such action, although it is wrong. Thus alone can they find out the way to the Eternal City. I have not the shadow of a doubt that to give up all activity is very much worse than to act as we are doing. The author of the Gita says, 'all action is clouded by defects as fire by smoke' (XVIII-48). Therefore, we should be humble, do our allotted duty in a spirit of service and realize that we are mere tools in the hands of the 'Great Carpenter'.

(XII and XIII translated from Gujarati by V. G. D.)

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