

1. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, CHICACOLE

December 3, 1927

You seem to be dividing all the good things with poor Utkal¹. I flattered myself with the assumption that my arrival here is one of the good things, for I was going to devote all the twenty days to seeing the skeletons of Orissa; but as you, the Andhras, are the gatekeepers of Orissa on this side, you have intercepted my march. But I am glad you have anticipated me also. After entering Andhra Desh, I have been doing my business with you and I know God will reward all those unknown people who have been co-operating with me who am a self-appointed representative of *Daridranarayana*. And here, too, you have been doing the same thing. Last night, several sister came and presented me with a purse. But let me tell you this is not after all my tour in Andhra. I am not going to let you alone so easily as this, nor will Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya let me alone, because I have toured in some parts of Ganjam. I am under promise to tour Andhra during the early part of next year, and let me hope what you are doing is only a foretaste of what you are going to do next year.

You have faith in true non-co-operation. There is the great drink evil, eating into the vitals of the labouring population. I would like you to non-co-operate with that evil without a single thought and I make a sporting proposal, viz., that those who give up drink habit should divide their savings with me on behalf of *Daridranarayan*. Then I see that many of you are making chimneys of your mouths by the vicious smoke habit. You, who smoke, do not know what a filthy habit it is. I saw that many of the people, when I made the appeal, threw away their cigars and cigarettes. The elderly people by indulging in this vicious habit do not know what a legacy they are leaving to their children. You know, as I know, that many children steal money in order to satisfy their curiosity to smoke. I ask you therefore to non-co-operate with the smoke habit, and again divide your savings with me.

So also must Hindus non-co-operate with the devil of untouchability. I give you my assurance that devil is keeping us from God, and it is a barrier created for our own destruction.

¹ Another name for Orissa

Mahatmaji then proceeded to answer some questions handed to him by someone in the audience. The first question was: “What are the means now to be adopted by young men for the uplift of the Mother country?” Mahatmaji said:

There are many things that I can suggest, but there is one thing which is the easiest for them to do and that is khadi work. They can set apart a certain sum every month or every year to be devoted for khadi work. If they have the time, they can devote it to organizing khadi work in their own district. If they cannot do so or if they have given what is best in them. If they cannot do so or if they have not confidence enough to be able to do organizing work, they can give half an hour a day to spinning and their yarn to the All-India Spinners’ Association and become a member.

The second question dealt with the educational and other qualifications required for a public worker. Mahatmaji said:

So far as educational qualifications are concerned, besides knowing the provincial vernacular, they must know also the *Rashtrabhasha*¹—Hindi. But the other qualifications are even far more important. They must be strictly honest and their private character must be pure. Men whose eyes are not straight and whose heart is full of animal passion are not fit for doing political work. And in my opinion, unless he believes in truth and non-violence at any cost, he has no business to be a politician.

Answering the third question, Mahatmaji said :

Whilst all our leaders are conceiving and cooking all kinds of schemes, we, the rank and file, cannot do better than achieving the message of khadi to its fullest extent. It is not a small thing for you and me to take part in an effort to save sixty crores of rupees. You and I cannot pack the Councils, Assembly and Municipalities. Even if we would, we could not have all the qualifications. But every one of us is born with the qualification for khadi. It requires not much training except the training of the heart. By doing khadi work you will find that the power is descending upon you.

The Hindu, 9-12-1927

¹ National language

2. ESSAY ON KHADI

Readers will recall that essays in English were invited on the subject of khadi, in view of the prize announced by Shri Revashanker Jagjivan¹. Accordingly, the essay written jointly by Professor Puntambekar and Shri Varadachari was awarded the prize. As this is well worth study, it has been translated [into Gujarati] for the Jamnadas Bhagwandas Memorial Series. Shri Chhaganlal Joshi of the Satyagraha Ashram has done the translation and it has now been published. It is priced at Re. 1. The total number of pages is 260. The translation runs into 215 pages, the rest being appendices. All the appendices are useful. The last appendix gives a short history of khadi in Gujarat; in other words, it shows where khadi was formerly produced in Gujarat and how that priceless industry came to be ruined. The language used in the translation is simple. Gujarati readers will have no difficulty in understanding it. Those who wish to understand well the secret underlying the activity of spinning must positively go through this book.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-12-1927

3. SPEECH AT WOMEN'S MEETING, BERHAMPUR²

Decembr 4, 1927

SISTERS,

You have presented two purses for the khadi work. I acknowledge your present with gratitude. You must not think that I consider some of you as Oriyas and some as Telugus. You should feel that all are Indians. Some say that they belong to Andhra and some say that they belong to Orissa. Let all of you belong to India. Let all of you share each other's misery and happiness. Only thus can you become like Sita. Sita did not consider herself a citizen of Ayodhya. She always considered herself as belonging to the whole of India. I am really glad that you have written this welcome address in the national language, that is, Hindi. Let all of you give up foreign saris. Let all of you use only khadi. There is no necessity for a woman to wear beautiful saris and ornaments. The only thing a woman needs is purity. Let all of you wear khadi. Let all of you be pure and truthful.

¹ Revashanker Jagjivan Zaveri of Bombay

² In Orissa

You should not consider anyone as untouchable. In India, that is, Bharatvarsha, it is a great sin to consider anyone as an untouchable. For heaven's sake do not commit that sin. Love those who are poor, diseased and hungry. Let all of you prove that you love them by spinning yarn on the charkha for at least half an hour every day. I appeal to those who have not contributed anything towards this Khadi Fund to contribute money or ornaments.

[From Oriya]

The Samaj, 10-12-1927

4. SPEECH AT STUDENTS' MEETING, BERHAMPUR

December 4, 1927

PROFESSORS, STUDENTS AND BROTHERS,

Our programme in this meeting will be unlike the programmes followed in other meetings. In our Satyagraha Ashram, for many years now, at 4.15 a.m. in the morning and at 7 p.m. in the evening, we hold congregational prayers. When the Ashramites go to other places this schedule is observed even there. Knowing that it is difficult to hold prayers at 7 p.m. in the evening regularly [during tours], we have ruled that prayer must be held at night before going to bed.

On Friday, December 2, it was very late in the night when we entered into Ganjam district. I forgot to pray before going to bed due to heavy work. When I woke up in the dawn, I trembled in fear. I could see that I had committed a great mistake before the Lord. So we decided that anyone forgetting to offer prayers must do some kind of penance. We also decided that wherever we were, we must remember the name of Rama at least once in the evening. I was scheduled to come to this meeting at 7 p.m. and we were supposed to pray together; but while coming the motor car from Chhatrapur I found that it was already 7 p.m. So I prayed by myself in the motor-car; but when we have decided on collective prayer, I beg you to pray here and now. Those students and others who have faith in prayer, let them pray with closed eyes. After the prayer, I will try to explain its utility. Those who are unwilling to pray, I request them to sit quietly.¹

¹ The first two paragraphs are translated from *The Samaj*, an Oriya paper. What follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", published in *Young India*, 15-12-1927. Mahadev Desai adds: "The students' meeting had been timed at 7 p.m. Although we did not reach the meeting at 7 and had to have our prayers whilst in motion, Gandhiji decided to have the congregational prayer at the meeting. So we had it, the students keeping pin-drop silence. . . ."

As food is necessary for the body, prayer is necessary for the soul. A man may be able to do without food for a number of days,—as MacSwiney did for over 70 days—but believing in God, man cannot, should not, live a moment without prayer. You will say that we see lots of people living without prayer. I dare say they do, but it is the existence of the brute which, for man, is worse than death. I have not the shadow of a doubt that the strife and quarrels with which our atmosphere is so full today are due to the absence of the spirit of true prayer. You will demur to the statement, I know, and contend that millions of Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians do offer their prayers. It is because I had thought you would raise this objection that I used the words ‘true prayers’. The fact is we have been offering our prayers with the lips but hardly ever with our hearts, and it is to escape, if possible, the hypocrisy of the lip-prayer, that we in the Ashram repeat every evening the last verses of the second chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The condition of the ‘Equable in Spirit’ that is described in those verses, if we contemplate them daily, is bound slowly to turn our hearts towards God. If you students would base your education on the true foundation of a pure character and pure heart there is nothing so helpful as to offer your prayers every day truly and religiously.

The Samaj, 10-12-1927 and *Young India*, 15-12-1927

5. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

BERHAMPUR,
December 5, 1927

JAMNALALJI BAJAJ,

ASHRAM

SABARMATI

| | | | | | | |
|----------|------|-------|--------------|-----|------|--------|
| MOHANLAL | DID | MEET. | SENT | HIM | HOME | BEFORE |
| WIRES | FROM | YOU | JAYADAYALJI. | | | |

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 68

6. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

BERHAMPUR,

Silence Day [December 5, 1927]¹

SISTERS,

I got your letter written by Manibehn. I have very little time to write today. I am convinced that we should not permit jewels in the Ashram. As long as there is terrible starvation in our land it is a sin for us to keep or to put on a ring weighing even a grain. Our clothes must be just sufficient to cover our nakedness and to protect us against heat and cold. All of you should try to reach this ideal.

I shall not write today about how the desire for ornaments arises. It looks as though you have also not understood my question properly.

How is it that Lakshmibehn is ill? She never used to fall ill.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3679

7. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 5, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I missed one mail this time. I could not attend to things regularly while I was in Ceylon. There was plenty of travelling to do. When, however, I miss a mail you should not feel worried or followed my example. You will be free to miss a mail when both of you become as busy as I am if you have not learnt by then to get over my weaknesses. Truly speaking, however, a real heir is one who enhances the legacy he has inherited.

Sushila is right when she says that in the realm of art there can be no distinction between indigenous and foreign, but her statement calls for some reflection. Lovers of art take a superficial view of art and use it as a cover for many weaknesses. We should, therefore, examine what we mean by art. Not everything which appeals to the eye is art. What is accepted as art by many expert may not be art. I have read conflicting opinions about many paintings and statues

¹ Gandhiji was in Berhampur on this date.

expressed by art-critics who have become famous in the world. We should, therefore, think what art means. The book *What Is Art?*¹ has been translated [into Gujarati]. Sushila should read it. If you cannot get it there, Please write to me.

Devdas suffered very much during his illness. There is some affection in the nose. There was temperature again. He is better now. Ba has gone to stay with him. I am in Utkal today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4731

8. *SPEECH AT CHHATRAPUR*²

[On or before *December 6, 1927*]

I am pining for a day when all this unhealthy competition between sister languages of India will have ceased. Why should we not love all of them equally, as a brother holding a number of sisters in the same affection? The result of the wretched competition has been that we forget our vernaculars and are jealous of others, and fondly believe that English would take the place of the common language of India, and even of the vernaculars. Indeed a suggestion had come to me to address the meeting here in English. Well, I take this as disaffection towards the daughter language of the motherland, and an unhealthy affection for a foreign tongue. Not that I hate English, but I love Hindi more. That is why I am beseeching the lettered classes of India to make Hindi their common language. It is through Hindi that we can get into touch with and promote the growth of the other vernaculars of the provinces. If our intellects and hearts had not been atrophied owing to our having to learn through a foreign medium, there would be no reason why we should not all be knowing five or six vernaculars. And my remarks regarding the competition between languages apply also to our narrow provincialism. It is that provi-

¹ By Leo Tolstoy

² Mahadev Desai says in his "Weekly Letter": "In Chicacole the youngsters sang the *Janaganamana*. The lines enumerating the provinces including Madras and Utkal were mutilated by some parochial Andhra who had dropped Utkal and added Andhra instead ! . . . The Chhatrapur meeting was the first quiet meeting we had after many noisy ones, and Gandhiji took an opportunity to animadvert upon this narrow spirit."

ncialism that has prevented the full growth of nationalism in us. The golden rule for the promotion of nationalism is that the stronger should help and sacrifice for the weaker as much as is possible. And now you will understand the rationale of khadi, which is intended to promote a healthy nationalism, and which embraces within its fold the poor and the downtrodden.

Young India, 15-12-1927

9. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [December 6, 1927]¹

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I got your letter. I look forward to a letter from you on the due dates; if, however, I don't get one, I understand. Your name is always on my lips. When it becomes necessary to say anything unpleasant like a note out of tune, even then it will, in fact, be perfectly in tune since it will be the truth and truth is always in tune. Do not, therefore, omit to tell me what you think I must be told. I did not receive the letters which you mention. Letters addressed to me do not generally get lost, but these ones at any rate did not reach me. I am sure many errors remain in *My Experiments with Truth*. I exercise great care but, when memory betrays me, to whom shall I complain about the misfortune? Please to not omit to draw my attention to any fact, whether important or unimportant.

“So tenacious is life, it does not leave even now.”² I do fear this. Mahadev, of course, sang the line for his own purpose. You may hear the history behind it when he narrates it to you. You have done very well in absorbing yourself in your present work.³ It is also a good thing that you get an opportunity to visit the Ashram from time to time. Do continue to send your suggestions and criticisms. Give your very life in making a model village a really model one; men with real life will then come and live in it.

Ba has gone there, that is, to live with Devdas. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7769. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

¹ From the reference to Kasturba Gandhi having gone to live with Devdas, it appears that this letter was written about the same time as “Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi”, 5-12-1927.

² The opening line of a song from Dadu, a Hindi poet of the 16th century

³ The addressee had taken up constructive work in villages.

10. DISTORTION OF TRUTH

A correspondent has been endeavouring with the help of the head master of a high school to introduce the teaching of the *Gita* among its boys. But at a recent meeting convened to organize *Gita* readings a bank manager got up and disturbed the even tenor of the proceedings by saying that students had not the *adhikara*, 'qualification', for studying the *Gita*; it was not a play-thing to be placed before students. The correspondent sends me a long and argued letter about the incident and sends in support of his contention some apt saying from Ramakrishna Paramahansa from which I cull the following :

Boys and youths should be encouraged to seek God. They are like unpecked fruits, being totally untainted by worldly desires. Once such desires have entered their minds, it is very difficult to make them tread the path to salvation.

Why do I love young men so much? Because they are masters of the whole (16 annas) of their minds which get divided and sub-divided as they grow up. One half of the mind of a married man goes to his wife. When a child is born it takes away one-fourth (four annas), and the remaining one-fourth (four annas) is scattered over parents, worldly honours, dress, etc. Therefore a young mind can easily know God. It is very difficult for old people to do so.

The parrot cannot be taught to sing if the membrane of its throat becomes hardened with age. It must be taught while it is young. Similarly, in old age it is difficult for the mind to be fixed on God. It can be easily done so in youth.

If a seer of adulterated milk contains a *chhatank* (sixteenth part of a seer) of water, it can be thickened into *kshira* (condensed milk) with very little labour and consumption of fuel. But should there be three *paos* (quarter seer) of water in a seer, the milk cannot be easily thickened and a large consumption of fuel will be required. *A young mind, being but slightly adulterated with worldly desires, can be easily turned towards God; this cannot be done with the minds of old people which are highly adulterated with such desires.*

The tender bamboo can be easily bent, but the full-grown bamboo breaks when an attempt is made to bend it. It is easy to bend young hearts towards God, but the heart of the old escapes the hold when so drawn.

The human mind is like a package of mustard seed. As it is very difficult to gather the seeds that escape out of a torn package and are scattered in all directions, so when the human mind runs in diverse directions and is occupied with many worldly things, it is not a very easy task to collect and concentrate

it. The mind of a youth, not running in diverse directions, can be easily fixed on anything; but the mind of an old man being totally occupied with worldly things, it is very hard for him to draw it away from them and fix it on God.

I have heard of *adhikara* in connection with the Vedas, but I never knew that the *Gita* required the qualifications that the bank manager had in mind. It would have been better if he had stated the nature of the qualifications he required. The *Gita* clearly states that it is meant for all but scoffers. If Hindu students may not read the *Gita* they may not read any religious works at all. Indeed the original conception in Hinduism is that the student life is the life of a *brahmachari* who should begin it with a knowledge of religion *coupled with practice* so that he may digest what he learns and weave religious conduct into his life. The student of old began to live his religion before he knew what it was, and this conduct was followed by due enlightenment, so that he might know the reason for the conduct prescribed for him.

Adhikara then there certainly was. But it was the *adhikara* of right conduct known as the five *yamas* or cardinal restraints—*ahimsa* (innocence), *satya* (truth), *asteya* (non-stealing), *aparigraha* (non-possession), and *brahmacharya* (celibacy). These were the rules that had to be observed by anybody who wished to study religion. He may not go to religious books for proving the necessity of these fundamentals of religion.

But today the word *adhikara* like many such potent words has suffered distortion, and a dissolute man, simply because he is called Brahmin, has *adhikara* to read and expound Shastras to us, whereas a man, if he is labelled an untouchable because of his birth in a particular state, no matter how virtuous he may be, may not read them.

But the author of the *Mahabharata* of which the *Gita* is a part wrote his great work for the purpose of meeting this insane objection, and made it accessible to all irrespective of the so-called caste, provided, I presume, that he complied with the observances I have described: I add the qualifying expression “I presume” for, at the time of writing, I do not recall the observance of the *yamas* as a condition precedent to a person studying the *Mahabharata*. Experience however shows that the purity of heart and the devotional frame of mind are necessary for a proper understanding of religious books.

The printing age has broken down all barriers and scoffers read

religious books with the same freedom (if not greater) that the religiously-minded have. But we are here discussing the propriety of students reading the *Gita* as per of religious instruction and devotional exercise. Here I cannot imagine any class of persons more amenable to the restraints and thus more fitted than students for such instruction. Unfortunately, it is to be admitted that neither the students nor the instructors in the majority of cases think anything of the real *adhikara* of the five restraints.

Young India, 8-12-1927

11. GOD'S TEMPLE

Here in Ceylon where I am writing for *Young India* amid surroundings where Nature has bountifully poured her richest treasures, I recall a letter written by a poetically inclined friend from similar scenes. I share with the reader a paragraph from that letter.

A lovely morning! Cool and cloudy, with a drowsy sun whose rays are as soft velvet. It is a strangely quiet morning—there is a hush upon it, as of prayer. And the mists are like incense, and the trees worshippers in a trance, and the birds and insects pilgrims come to chant *bhajans*. Oh! how I wish one could learn true abandonment from Nature! We seem to have forgotten our birthright to worship where and when and how we please. We build temples and mosques and churches to keep our worship safe from prying eyes and away from outside influences, but we forget that walls have eyes and ears, and the roofs might be swarming with ghosts—who know!

Good Gracious, I shall find myself preaching next! How foolish, on a lovely morning like this? A little child in the garden adjoining is singing as unconsciously and joyously as a bird. I feel inclined to go and take the dust of its little feet. And since I cannot pour out my heart in sound as simply as that little one, my only refuge is in silence!

Churches, mosques and temples, which cover so much hypocrisy and humbug and shut the poorest out of them, seem but a mockery of God and His worship, when one sees the eternally renewed temple of worship under the vast blue canopy inviting every one of us to real worship, instead of abusing His name by quarrelling in the name of religion.

Young India, 8-12-1927

12. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 8, 1927

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I am having such a hectic time that I have no leisure at all. Your letter has come to me here at an obscure place. Now you must leave Pattani Saheb's bungalow, and that without intimating him. You must inform him only after you have left. Isn't that what we decided in Bombay? If you must stay in Panchgani you must take whatever other accommodation you can get. My advice is that you should only go to Almora or some place that side. If Taramati refuses to go along, she must be left at Bombay. As for Dilip, now he can be taken even without her.

The fact that you got temperature again suggests that you are still in a delicate state of health.

I am all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

My address is uncertain at the moment. Hence the best thing is to write at Berhampur.

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

13. SPEECH AT BANPUR

December 8, 1927

I thank you for your address and the purse you have presented. I had given up the idea of visiting Banpur, considering the advice of my doctors. But, when I learnt that the Police were threatening the villagers and warning that if they come to the meeting they would be trampled upon by horses and shot down by soldiers, I resolved to come to Banpur.

Why should you fear? A man who is innocent of crime need not fear. And remember that there would be no one to frighten you if you refused to be afraid. After all the policemen are our kith and kin. When they come to intimidate you, ask them what they want to achieve thereby. If they take you to jail do not resist them. If they abuse you don't abuse you don't abuse them but laugh away. If they belabour you, don't return blow for blow, but go and report the matter to the nearest representative of the people. I would warn you

against going to law for after all we do not want the police to be punished but to repent. But if you feel that you must go to law you may. Do not in any case be cowed down. For fear is worse than disease. The man who fears man falls from the state of man. Fear God alone. I am here until two o'clock tomorrow. You can come and tell me all you have to say.¹

Your address mentions that you have got no khadi work here. Consult the khadi workers of other parts in your district, and till you can produce khadi locally, buy khadi made in Orissa.

The Hindu, 12-12-1927 and *Young India*, 22-12-1927

14. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

[BOLGARH,
December 10, 1927]²

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I am now going through the whole programme. Sambalpur will be dropped. I am thankful you are not sending me to Jamshedpur. I am here till Monday. I reach Sakshigopal Monday night and Balasore Wednesday. The rest is uncertain. Yes, indeed, the Kharagpur victory was God's gift.³

With love,

MOHAN

[PS.]

I am better.

C. F. ANDREWS

BALASORE

From a photostat: G.N. 2625

¹ This paragraph is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" published in *Young India*.

² From the postmark

³ In August-September 1927, the Bengal Nagpur Railway Administration decided to reduce the labour force in the Kharagpur Workshop by 1,600 hands. The workmen adopted passive resistance. The workshops were closed on 12th September and were reopened on 8th December when, as the result of an enquiry, some workmen who had been discharged were reinstated and in a few cases the compensation payable to the discharged workmen was enhanced (*India in 1927-28*, pp. 177-8).

15. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

BOLGARH,

December 10, 1927

MY DEAR C.R.,

You will be surprised to know that at least I have three days of quiet in a beautiful little village. Before that the Ganjam programme was worse if possible even than the Ceylon programme, though it yielded twenty thousand. Then a doctor came to take my blood-pressure. Niranjan Babu has made the same arrangements for examination of blood-pressure that you had. And when the doctor read 190, he got frightened and the whole of the programme has been rearranged. Hence the rest. Personally I am inclined to disbelieve the doctor's reading. However, even if it was wrong reading, it has done good. A new doctor who has come today from Cuttack has read anything between 155 and 165. His own reading is between 155 and 160. Mahadev and Pyarelal read 165. The diastolic is 90-100. If these readings are correct, the blood-pressure is the same as before, and there is nothing to worry. However I am not writing this to tell you about the blood-pressure. Enough for you to now that I am all right.

I am dictating this in order to send you the enclosed. If you can send someone to inspect the village and find out whether we can take up the proposition, please do so. In any case correspond with the writer Mr. G. Subramaniam yourself. I am sending him a postcard telling him that he may expect to hear from you.

I send you also Dr. Joseph's letter. His suggestion commends itself to me. I think we must do some work in Nagercoil, and unless you have anything to the contrary, please enter into correspondence with him telling him that his suggestion is acceptable and that it will be put before the Council of the Association¹ and you will let him know at an early date. Meanwhile you may send the sample of yarn he wants. We ought to be able to take up the yarn, and if there are local weavers, we may be able to get it woven there. Please write to Dr. Joseph early. I have told him that his suggestion commends itself to me and that I have forwarded his letter to you for consideration.

I hope you have fixed up the quarters in Madras. Satis Babu was with me for a day. He will be in Madras and stay with us. You should

¹ All-India Spinners' Association

have ready a moderate amount, no more than one pound at the outside, of goat's milk butter.

Here is a letter from . . .¹ Please ack. to him. I am not writing to him. His proposal seems to be quite good. Of course we will be with you.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 12647

16. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, BOLGARH

December 10, 1927

Fear is more deadly than disease, such as cholera, smallpox or malaria. Disease wastes only the body, while fear destroys the soul; and men of fear cannot understand God. He who is godfearing, takes the name of God, cannot fear men. I cannot dismiss as untrue reports of friends who have informed me that you have been frightened by the Police and others who have told you that Government would arrest all those who came to me. I am aware of nothing for which Government should make arrests and for aught I know Government has not till now asked people not to contribute to funds raised by me. I understand that Orissa being poor, zamindars and officials want to keep people under fear for their own selfish interests. I have found something striking in the atmosphere since Banpur. I cannot make out how it will satisfy Government if people are kept off from me, or khadi work is interfered with, I cannot bear the thought that anyone should oppress another and feel ashamed that such poor unsophisticated people receive such treatment. I feel humiliated that whereas I cannot put up with oppression from foreigners, my own country's zamindars or officials have been frightening people. If the names of those who have been frightened are given to me I propose visiting them and if the names of the zamindars are also given I shall go and discuss the subject with them. Fear is more deadly than diseases, and I ask them to give up fear, so that the work of those who frighten might automatically cease. Give up drink, gambling and prostitution, so that you can be pure enough to attain God. Though I have not come to raise purses in Orissa I do not hesitate to beg even from the poor for the sake of khadi. May God bless you.

Orissa Government Records

¹ The source has a blank here.

17. LETTER TO ADA ROSENGREEN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹ for which I thank you. You may translate the book *Self-restraint* v. *Self-indulgence*. As to the terms, I leave them to you. Whatever is given will be devoted to public use.

What you say about the women of the West is only partly true and true also perhaps to an extent for the women of India. But these are society women and very few. So far as the vast majority of women are concerned, they are too engrossed in their own occupations even to think of animal passions. It is reserved for man to become aggressive when animal passion forces him. What you say about passivity is unfortunately too true all the world over, and I do not know that the majority of women will ever be able to overcome that passivity. Perhaps the very construction of their bodies prevents the development of active resistance except under certain well-defined circumstances which are created by special culture. And it is because woman is passive that I have contended that it is man who is the more to blame than woman. And even the society woman of the West does not go beyond subtle attraction and blandishments. I have not known many cases of violence done by women to men. She has a remarkable capacity for controlling herself and pining away rather than be aggressive even under raging passion within her breast.

Your sincerely,

M. ADA ROSENGREEN

LIDINGO, SWEDEN

From a photostat: S.N. 12541

¹ Dated 28-9-1927, in which the addressee sought Gandhiji's permission to translate his book into Swedish.

18. LETTER TO HENRY NEIL

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter¹ and enclosures. I do not feel that I can really write anything that would suit you. You will therefore excuse me for not complying with your request.

So far as the question of child welfare is concerned, it is quite true to say that in the sense Lord Lytton means I have not interested myself in the problem, but in a sense, which I consider higher and which takes in not a few thousand children but millions of children, I am continually occupied in attending to their welfare. For, the hand-spinning movement is designed to affect the starving millions of this land including little children. And if I succeed, I know that the child welfare of the type known to you and Lord Lytton is assured.

With reference to the printed sheet by you, it is difficult to reply to it because the writer has seen the same thing from a different angle of vision. I have no desire therefore to enter upon a criticism of the writing which in accordance with your wish I return herewith.

Your sincerely,

JUDGE HENRY NEIL

From a photostat: S.N. 12545

19. LETTER TO THE SECRETARY, SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS, COCHIN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to continuous travelling I have been able to reach your letter only today. Whilst I have no hesitation about condemning the *Devadasi* institution, it would not be proper on my part to say

¹ The addressee, in his letter dated 8-10-1927, sought from Gandhiji "a full and complete statement as to the effects of the teachings of Christ on the people of India" and also his views on certain other matters.

anything about your appeal seeing that I do not personally know any member of your society. If you are unknown there, you are still more unknown to me. Your duty therefore is to make yourselves known by your honest and strenuous work. And I am sure that there will be benevolent men enough in Cochin to take up your cause.

Yours sincerely,

THE SECRETARY
SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF MINORS
COCHIN

From a microfilm: S.N. 12642

20. LETTER TO D. R. BHANDARKAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Owing to my continuous wanderings I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. The time-limit you have given me makes it well nigh impossible for me to overtake the task imposed by you on me. Only Mahadev Desai can cope with the work, if I don't do it myself, but I have not the heart to add to the strain already put upon him. Neither he nor I have a moment to spare till February.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. D. R. BHANDARKAR
35, BALLYGUNGE, CIRCULAR ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12643

21. LETTER TO J. N. JINENDRADAS

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your long letter. It is not possible to prevent or regulate by pressure of public opinion the emigration of people in distress from one place to another, and it would be wrong to prevent it by legislation. But wise ameliorative legislation in Ceylon can certainly

do a great deal to check evils inseparable from the immigration of poor labourers no matter to what race they belong. You should create a public opinion in Ceylon which would demand from the employers of labour a humane treatment, payment of adequate wages and construction of sanitary and commodious dwellings. Instead of regarding Indian labourers as foreigners, you should treat them as your own. After all the labourers go to Ceylon because they are wanted.

Yours sincerely,

J. N. JINENDRADAS
45, PARANAWADIYA ROAD
MARADANA, COLOMBO

From a microfilm: S.N. 12644

22. A LETTER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 11, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not consider the embracing of Christianity as in any way essential for salvation. I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of Jesus Christ. I do not consider that the lives of all Roman Catholic bishops are above suspicion. In my opinion, it is taking a low view of marriage to think that it involves indulgence in animal passion at the instance of either partner. Marriage has far nobler uses. I am not aware that religion enjoins upon one partner the obligation to indulge at the instance of another. On the contrary, physical union is not permitted till both are equally desirous.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12645

23. LETTER TO SRI PRAKASA

BOLGARH (ORISSA),
December 11, 1927

MY DEAR SRI PRAKASA,

You must forgive me for not replying to your letter for such a long time, but I have been worked beyond my strength and have had no time left for dealing with voluminous correspondence. It is only

because I am having enforced rest at an unknown and out-of-the-way village in Utkal, that I am able to deal with the arrears, and in the natural course I have come upon your letter. Here is the receipt sent to me with your letter from the Ashram.

The *Aaj* people should not complain. Complimentary copies have been sent only to well-known English papers. Even well-known friends have not been supplied with copies simply because after all *Young India* and *Navajivan* are at present very poor concerns. They do not command the circulation of 1920 and 1921, and yet the rigid rule of remaining self-supporting in spite of the handicaps in the shape of not taking advertisements, etc., is observed, and whenever there is anything left over from the running of these papers, the whole of it goes for public cause. Should *Aaj* then expect a free copy, it would be simply taking so much out of poor people's pockets. If, in spite of this explanation, you or the workers at the *Aaj* office expect a free copy, tell me and I shall ask Swami Anand to send one. Of course I know that *Aaj* is a leading paper on your side as is *Basumati* for instance in Calcutta. But so far as I am aware, no vernacular paper has had the English copy.

Do please take me in your confidence either by letter or by coming to me. I would love to share your burdens. Do regard me therefore as a friend who would treasure your confidence and endeavour to lighten your burdens. I am at Sabarmati in January. I am sorry I shall have to go to Kathiawar for a few days during that month.¹ But if you will be there for the whole of the month you can go with me to Kathiawar also and see that weird country.

Do take up the charkha regularly and once you have obtained mastery over it, you will not want to give it up, and it will be a faithful companion speaking to you only at your behest. But you will find all the joy in the handling of it only if you will connect it and through it yourself with the meanest of our people. And why should there be any shame in carrying on the *takli*, if there is no shame in identifying with the poorest. I suppose you do know that the shepherds in Almora and in many other parts of India carry their *taklis*, spinning wool wherever they go.

Yours,

SJT. SRI PRAKASA
BANARAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 12646

¹ Vide "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

24. LETTER TO HARJIVAN KOTAK

BOLGARH, ORISSA,
December 11, 1927

When the mind is disturbed by impure thoughts, instead of trying to drive them out one should occupy it in some work, that is, engage it in purposeful thoughts. Or one may engross it in Ramanama, engage it in reading or in some bodily labour which requires mental attention too. Never let the eyes follow their inclination. If they fall on a woman, withdraw them immediately. It is scarcely necessary for anyone to look straight at a man's or woman's face. This is the reason why *brahmacharis*, and others too, are enjoined to walk with their eyes lowered. If we are sitting, we should keep steady in one direction. This is an external remedy, but a most valuable one. You may undertake a fast if and when you find one necessary.

It is not necessary for you to go to Satavalekarji. He will certainly teach you some *asanas*. If you wish to go to him to learn them, you may certainly do so. I know him very well. He is a fine man.

You should not be afraid even if you get involuntary discharges during a fast. Vaidas say that, even when impure desires are absent, such discharges occur because of pressure in the bowels. But, instead of believing that, it helps us more to believe that they occur because of impure desires. We are not always conscious of such desires. I had an involuntary discharge in sleep twice during the last two weeks. I cannot recall any dream. I never practised masturbation. One cause of these discharge is of course my physical weakness, but I also know that there are impure desires deep down in me. I am able to keep out such thoughts during waking hours. But what is present in the body like some hidden poison, always makes its way, even forcibly sometimes. I feel unhappy about this, but am not nervously afraid. I am always vigilant. I can suppress the enemy but have not been able to expel him altogether. If I am truthful, I shall succeed in doing that too. The enemy will not be able to endure the power of truth. If you are in the same condition as I am, learn from my experience. In its essence, desire for sex-pleasure is equally impure, whether its object is one's wife or some other woman. Its results differ. At the moment, we are thinking of the enemy in his essential nature. Understand, therefore, that so far as one's wife is concerned you are not likely to find anyone as lustful as I was. That is why I have described my

pitiable condition to you and tried to give you courage. If Ba is as a mother to me now, this is the result of long struggle and God's grace. The legacy of that unclean life, however, afflicts me. I, in return, try to overcome it and, with God's grace, shall overcome it in this very life.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

25. A NOTE

[On or after *December 11, 1927*]¹

I have been thinking about him constantly. His wife is very intractable and very obstinate. On the whole therefore if he works at the Ashram, i.e., in Gujarat, for the time being, it will relieve- Narandas of some anxiety.

On further considering the matter, I think it will be better till we meet to postpone setting apart sums for mother and Kishan. I would make some other suggestions.

From the original: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

26. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

BOLGARH,

Silence Day, December 12, 1927

SISTERS,

There is profound solitude around me, but it is the solitude of a sick man's room. When I see the state of people here my heart burns within me, and I very much long to stay on here. If any of you is willing to come here, I would invite her to do so. All the women here observe *purdah*. The people have neither enough clothes to wear nor food to eat. When Mirabehn suggested, before I went to Orissa, that it was our duty to put on still fewer clothes, I felt embarrassed. But when I see things here, I feel that her suggestion was indeed proper. Women here put on only one dhoti, one half covers the lower part, and the other half the upper part of their bodies. They get neither milk nor ghee. They are terror-stricken. Because of some policeman's threat, they do not even come anywhere near me. I left Mirabehn in a house

¹ This was written on the letter-head of the All-Parties Convention, Allahabad which was held on 11-12-1927.

and went out; immediately about fifty women surrounded her and began to ask her questions. If someone of you is willing to work here among these women, she can, I am sure, do a great deal. But all this is about the future. For the present, all of you should get fully trained. 'Training' means forgetting oneself. If you do that, you can then go anywhere you like.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3680

27. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Silence Day [December 12, 1927]¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL

I had your letter. Today I am in an unknown village of Utkal. There is so much to do here that I myself feel like devoting some time. Tomorrow, I will reach the place where there were floods. What I will get to see there will be something different. Will you come here if I want to utilize your services? Perhaps it would be necessary to keep someone in the affected area to supervise the work. He has to maintain the accounts, too. Is there a marked improvement in your health there? Has the mental fatigue gone?

There are certain difficulties in Nimu's marriage² but I would not involve you in those worries. I am writing to Lakhtar. I expect to reach the Ashram on January 1 or before that.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Now send your letters to Madras. The best address is:

Hindi Prachar Office

Triplicane, Madras.

There, too, I would not stay for more than five days.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32862

¹ From the contents, from 'Silence day' in the dateline and from reference to Gandhiji's presence in an unknown village of Utkal; *vide* "Letter to C. Rajagopalachari", December 10, 1927 and "Letter to Sri Prakasa", December 11, 1927.

² To Ramdas Gandhi, the youngest son of Gandhiji, They, however, got married on January 27, 1928.

28. LETTER TO RAMESHCHANDRA

ON TOUR,
December 13, 1927

BHAI RAMESHCHANDRAJI,

I preserved your letter till now in the hope of answering it. Only today can I do so.

Eating flesh and eating vegetables both involve violence but without the latter man can survive nowhere, while without the former he can ordinarily survive anywhere. If sensitivity to pain differs among creatures, the pain experienced by a cow in the throes of death cannot be experienced by plants. For all living beings, violence in some form is unavoidable. The votary of non-violence will commit the minimum of violence. The other religions do not enjoin flesh-eating; they just do not forbid it. It is well to know the custom in the other religions or even in Hindu dharma, but if our reason considers vegetarianism superior from the moral point of view, we must accept it. The votary of non-violence will progressively restrict himself, even in the use of vegetables. It is difficult, not impossible, to remain a vegetarian in places like Greenland. Even if proved impossible, it cannot establish the necessity of flesh-eating everywhere. Though our acts are seldom without a fault, we abstain from many on the basis of comparative merit. Abstinence is constantly on the increase in the life of a seeker after *moksha*, and it is essential too.

Eggs and milk differ. Eggs are not essential. Milk too is not essential for crores of people. I have eaten eggs in England under a delusion, as I ate meat in India. But on coming to my senses I left them and even in the company of vegetarian friends I accepted only those dishes that did not contain eggs. I have now come to know that a great number of unfertilized eggs are laid. This can be systematically checked and generally unfertilized eggs alone are eaten. But this cannot make eggs an item of our food.

Non-violence is a comprehensive dharma. Violence does not consist only in taking life away from the body. Abandoning *brahm-acharya* too is violence in my eyes. It is well known that a *brahm-achari* must abstain from fleshdiet, eggs and milk too. *Brahm-acharya* is more easily attainable with vegetable diet alone.

In conclusion, though the question of diet is very important for a religious man, yet it is not the be-all and end-all of religion or non-violence; nor is it the most vital factor. The observance of religion and

non-violence has more to do with the heart. He who does not feel the necessity of abstaining from meat for inner purification need not abstain from it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6279

29. TELEGRAM TO SAKARCHAND

BALASORE,
December 14, 1927

SAKARCHAND SHETH
KENILWORTH COLLEGE
PANCHGANI

HOPE YOU ARE BETTER. WRITING. GOD BLESS YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 7159

30. LETTER TO CAPTAIN J. W. PETAVEL

(CAMP) BALASORE,
December 14, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter written on the train. It is pathetic, for, though I believe that I have a most accommodating temperament, I see vital differences between us, where you seem to say only differences in mere matters of detail. Our outlooks appear to me to be wholly different. Whereas you have before your mind's eye that microscopic minority, the educated Indian, I have before my mind's eye the lowliest illiterate India living outside the railway beat. Important as the former class undoubtedly is, it has no importance in my estimation except in terms of the latter and for the sake of the latter. The educated class can justify its existence only if it is willing to sacrifice itself for the mass. Your scheme therefore makes no appeal to me. I have read Sir P. C. Ray's preface and I have read the other writings you have been sending me; but though I admire these great men, they cannot move me from my fundamental position. I want you therefore to recognize the fundamental difference between us and love me in spite of that difference if you can. For my part, the existence of that difference does not prevent me from loving you and therefore writing to you as often as I can in reply to your communications and striving

to make clear the differences between our temperaments so that we may quickly agree to differ and hope one day that one or the other will become a convert.

Yours sincerely,

CAPTAIN J. W. PETAVEL
BAGHBAZAAR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12648

31. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

Wednesday [December 14, 1927]¹

BHAI RATILAL,

Chi. Narandas has sent me your letter. It is good you wrote to me. Chi. Mathurads had given me news of Sakubhai's illness when I was in Bombay. But I did not think it was anything serious. Of course a T.B. patient has to be extremely careful. Therefore please make arrangements so that proper care is taken of him. Inform me regularly. Give the enclosed letter² to Sakubhai if you think it proper. I have sent a wire today. You will have received it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7155

32. LETTER TO SAKARCHAND SHETH

Wednesday [December 14, 1927]³

BHAISHRI S. SAKUBHAI,

I have been distressed to read about the deterioration in your health. Get well quickly now. Illness is inseparable from the body. Therefore while we should try to overcome illness we must not be scared of it or worry on account of it. Illness can only end in death. That also is our companion from birth. Therefore we should ever be prepared to embrace it. Death is not extinction but only a change of state. I want you to ponder this so that fear of death does not make

¹ The letter evidently followed Gandhiji's wire to Sakarchand Sheth of the same date. December 14 in the year 1927 was a Wednesday.

² *Vide* the following item.

³ *Vide* the preceding item

you get worse. Fear of illness makes our illness worse. If we remain light-hearted and cheerful it helps to overcome the illness.

I want you to get well soon and be free from anxiety.

Don't reply to this letter.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7156

33. INDICTMENT

Do you agree that it is the primary duty of an ideal Government and more so of a Great Soul to put down the wicked and to protect the righteous? If so, may we know how your political philosophy is consistent with this age-long dictum? Was not this the keynote of Shri Krishna's preaching to Arjuna on the battle-field of Kurukshetra?

Was this not the shrewd policy of the avatars¹, that brought about the dethronement of the renowned Bali, the destruction of Vali, and the annihilation of Jarasandha?

How can you expect ordinary mortals, and and that too large numbers at a time, to withstand the attacks of unscrupulous enemies without retaliation? In view of the above, are we not justified in considering your emotional preachings and teachings as impracticable and not within the realization of ordinary persons? Your temporary and piecemeal success in South Africa had been exaggerated greatly by your admirers, and the Indians of average intelligence, innocently (sheep-like) following your lead, have been entangled in difficulties, not realizing that the parrallel of South Africa does not hold good in the case of a vast country of different languages and religious sections like India. Have you not yourself realized, at the cost of the life-interests of a large number of young patriots, that all your talk of "swaraj within a year" has proved vainglorious? Don't you admit that your somersault² in the Bardoli³ affair caused much havoc to the people of Guntur who boldly and manfully withheld payment of taxes for a considerable period,⁴ in pursuance of your programme?

May we know the net result of your participation in the Khilafat agitation

¹ Vaman, Rama and Krishna

² *Vide* "Speech on New Congress Creed, Nagpur", December 28, 1920 and Appendix "Brahmin-Non-Brahmin Question", November 24, 1927.

³ That is, suspension of satyagraha in Bardoli on February 12, 1922; *vide* "Working Committee's Resolutions at Bardoli", February 12, 1922.

⁴ *Vide* "Note on Civil Disobedience in Guntur", before February 10, 1922.

and the consequent playing of the Congress into the hands of a few fanatical Mussalmans? Has not the Hindu-Muslim unity of which you spoke and wrote so much, and in the name which you appealed to all Hindus to join their Mohammedan brethren in the hour of their trial, proved a veritable castle of cards, the moment the need of the Mohammedans was over? Can you ever expect by your pious teachings to bring about any real unity between the bigoted and brave Mohammedans and caste-ridden and timid Hindus? Have you ever realized the fact that the communal feuds are increasing all the more, ever since you came into prominence in the Congress by virtue of your creed of non-violence?

Will you not admit that Pandit Malaviya, C. R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Vijayaraghavachariar, Kelkar, Dr. Moonje and other all-India leaders were disgusted with your political philosophy, however much it might be garbed in the language of dharma?

Have you not recognized the leadership of that great soul Tilak at least at the beginning? But how is it, you are today raking up intricate controversies of a social and religious character, to the detriment of the national cause? Do you not realize that these tend only to accentuate dissensions all the more among the docile Hindus? Are you not thereby indirectly playing into the hands of the enemies of our cause, whose one argument against us is that we are socially unfit for political freedom?

It is worthy on your part to set up and encourage *Panchamas* to enter the holy temples of caste Hindus for whom and by whom they were built exclusively? Do you consider yourself to be a Trinetra (God Rudra) to set at naught those time-honoured customs at one stroke? Recently, we are surprised to note that you have taken up the cause of widows and boldly advised immature youths to marry widows. Don't you consider that Swami Vivekananda and others were prudent enough not to advocate widow marriage as they realized the difficulties which confront us even in the case of the marriages of maids, as they are taking place today? May we know how far it will help to create harmony by mixing up such highly controversial problems with the question of swaraj which is purely political and on which all of us are expected to make a united stand?

Your charkha cannot be popularized in this advanced age of science. Don't you think that you will do well, in the light of practical experience, to confine your activities to the field of labour organizations?

As a real believer in ahimsa dharma is it not your clear duty to refuse addresses from municipalities which are harbouring slaughter-houses?

The foregoing is a condensation of a letter sent to me by a

correspondent while I was in Berhampur. As I have reason to think that the correspondent has boldly voiced what many are harbouring in their breasts, I feel that the indictment deserves an answer.

It is hardly necessary to answer the questions in detail. Many of us make the very serious mistake of taking literally what is accepted as scriptures, forgetting that the letter killeth and the spirit giveth life. The *Mahabharata* and the Puranas are neither history nor simple religious maxims. They appear to me to be wonderfully designed to illustrate the religious history of man in a variety of ways. The heroes described therein are all imperfect mortals, even as we are—the difference being one of degree only. Their alleged actions are not infallible guides for us. The *Mahabharata* sums up its teachings by declaring emphatically that truth outweighs everything else on earth.

But I do not seek to justify everything written under the name of scriptures. I take, as all to be true must take, the sum-total of the effect produced on me by a prayerful reading of such books. Thus I hold that my belief in truth and non-violence is derived from and based on the scriptural teaching of the very books from which the correspondent presents me with conundrums. Nay more, my belief today having become part of my fundamental being is capable of standing independent of these books or any other. Surely there must come a time in the life of a very religiously minded man when his faith must be self-sustained. Whatever therefore the avatars may be proved to have done or not done is of little moment to me. My experience daily growing stronger and richer tells me that there is no peace for individuals or for nations without practising truth and non-violence to the uttermost extent possible for man. The policy of retaliation has never succeeded. We must not be confounded by the isolated illustrations of retaliation, including frauds and force, having attained temporary and seeming success. The world lives because there is more love than hate, more truth than untruth in it. This is a proposition capable of being verified by everyone who will take the trouble to think. Fraud and force are diseases, truth and non-violence is health. The fact that the world has not perished is an ocular demonstration of the fact that there is more health than disease in it. Let us, then, who realize this, live up to the rules of health even in the midst of circumstances the most adverse.

My preaching and teaching are not emotional or impractical, for I teach what is ancient and strive to practice what I preach. And I

claim that what I practise is capable of being practised by all, because I am a very ordinary mortal open to the same temptations and liable to the same weaknesses as the least among us.

The success in South Africa was complete according to the standard then aimed at. And what is true of small groups must be true of larger groups with correspondingly larger effort of the same types.

I have faith enough in my method to be able to prophesy that posterity will consider the years 1920 and 1921 as among the most brilliant in the pages India's history, and among them the Bardoli 'somersault' the most brilliant of all. The Bardoli decision has enabled India to look the world square in the face and to hold up her head. With her creed in the Congress constitution, it was the only correct, bold and honourable course for the nation to take. The battle for swaraj was no camouflage. And if any suffered involuntarily, they suffered because they played with fire.

The participation in the Khilafat agitation has made both the parties strong and has resulted in a mass awakening which would have otherwise taken ages. If real unity is to come, it will come only by a due adherence to my teachings. The present Hindu-Muslim feuds and inter-Hindu feuds and even inter-Muslim feuds are a sign of the mass awakening. What we see happening today is nothing but the coming of dirt to the surface in the process of purification. Let the correspondent watch the process going on in a sugar refinery, and he will understand my meaning. This froth in the shape of feuds had come to the surface only to be thrown out in the end.

I am unaware of the fact that Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviyaji and the other leaders mentioned by the correspondent are disgusted with my political philosophy. Of some at least I know to the contrary. But even if they are disgusted I hope that my faith will stand the strain of the disgust of all friends whose opinion I have learnt to value and cherish.

The correspondent betrays his ignorance of the Lokamanya when he imputes to him policies which I know he was never guilty of. I know that there were fundamental differences between us but not what the correspondent imagines. What we should learn from our heroes is not a slavish imitation of their actions which we may not know or understand. We need to assimilate their bravery, their great self-sacrifice, their equally great industry, their love of their country and a steady pursuit of their own ideals. We make fatal blunders when without relevance or without adequate knowledge we copy their

isolated actions.

I hold that without the social reforms that I am advocating, thank God, in common with many of our distinguished countrymen, Hinduism is in danger of perishing.

The charkhas is making steady progress in spite of the correspondent's unbelief. The charkhas work is my contribution to the ocean of labour.

When I receive addresses from municipalities, I claim to remain untouched by the slaughter in the municipal slaughter houses. On the contrary, their addresses give me an opportunity of preaching my doctrines to them, and I am happy to say that they never resent them and some of them even adopt the suggestions I humbly place before them.

Young India, 15-12-1927

34. LETTER TO H. A. J. GIDNEY

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter¹. I have not any time at my disposal to send you a long message, but this I can say.

The present and the future policy of the Anglo-Indian community should be not to strive for recognition as Europeans, but strive to make common cause with India's masses to whom they owe everything. The fact of European blood should be treated as a handicap and turned to good account not by aping the superficial veneer of Europe, but by striving to assimilate the good qualities of the Europeans and sharing them with the masses. The attempt on the part of some Anglo-Indians to treat themselves as a class apart and wrest special privileges will be found in the end to be vain and inglorious.

Yours sincerely,

LT. COL. H. A. J. GIDNEY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 12639

¹ Dated 25-11-1927; the addressee had asked for a message for the Christmas issue of the *Anglo-Indian Review*.

35. LETTER TO I. SANYASA RAZU AND OTHERS

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARAMATI,
December 15, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have secured from Deshbhakta Venkatappayya the names of these Andhra friends who gave proper legal guarantees for the moneys advanced by the Khadi Board, now Charkha Sangh, for khadi work. I understand that you are one of these guarantors and that there is difficulty in securing payment from you. I would make a fervent appeal to you to discharge your obligation which is not merely legal but also moral. And we who profess to serve the country are in my opinion more bound by moral obligations even than by those that are merely legal. I therefore hope that you will discharge this obligation as if it was a first charge upon all your assets and induce other friends to discharge their responsibility.

Your sincerely,

- (1) IVVATURI SANYASA RAZU, DEVADI
- (2) GADEY RAJAMANNAR, BERHAMPUR
- (3) UNNAVA RAMALINGAM PANTULU, MUNICIPAL CHAIRMAN,
BERHAMPUR
- (4) MALLADI KRISHNAMOORTHY PANTULU, VAKIL, BERHAMPUR
- (5) THAKUR RAMAKRISHNARAO (Now gone to Kashi)¹

From a microfilm: S.N. 12649

36. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BALASORE,
December 16, 1927

You acted very wisely in opening your heart before Jamnalalji, Maganlal and others. A person who has realized his or her own error, has changed into a new body, why should he or she feel ashamed of talking about the old one? Even sin is a disease. Conversely, every disease is a sin. You may feel embarrassment in talking about your mental appendicitis if I feel it in talking about my appendicitis. Yes, of

¹ Letter was not sent to him.

course, so long as we cling to the disease we shall feel shame, embarrassment and remorse. But, just as the body feels light after the cause of the disease has been expelled with an operation, so too should the mind.

[From Gujarati]

From a manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

37. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

December 16, 1927

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

Since Shri Govindji Cheda is under your charge, I do not worry about him. Kindly write from time to time, and tell me what Dr. Jivraj Mehta says, who is to perform the operation, etc.

You must have recovered by now.

Blessings to you both from

BAPU

[PS.]

18-21 Cuttack

23 Madras

From a Gujarati original: C.W. 5011. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

38. ARTICLES ON COW-PROTECTION

Some readers have made a request that articles written by Shri Valji Desai on cow-protection, in Gujarati in the *Navajivan* and in English in *Young India*, may be published in book form. Shri Rameshwardas of Dhulia has promised to contribute Rs. 35 towards the expense. It is doubtful whether the book would fetch the cost of publication; hence it could be published only if other cow lovers contribute towards the cost. It is not possible for the *Navajivan* to undertake this venture without others' help. The funds at the disposal of the All-India Cow-protection Association are not sufficient to meet the expenses of its constructive activities; hence, I do not dare to meet the deficit out of these funds. The book will be published immediately if readers send in small contributions. If any profit is left over, it will be handed over to the *Gorakshamandal*¹. The book will be brought

¹ All-India Cow-protection Association

out in Gujarati, English and Hindi, depending on the help that is received.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-12-1927

39. LETTER TO P. THIRUKOOTASUNDARAM PILLAY

CUTTACK,

December 18, 1927

MY DEAR THIRUKOOTASUNDARAM,

I received your letter¹ when I was about to finish the Ceylon visit. I could not reply to you earlier as your letter was mislaid and therefore escaped my attention. I have made full enquiry into the matter and I have come to the conclusion that Sjt. Varadachari counted the purse as soon as it was humanly possible. In rapid tours, it is not possible to count purses in the presence of donors or even during the night of the day on which the purses are received. The donors give purses only when they have full confidence in the integrity of the donees and their ability to choose honest instruments for their keep as well as disposal. This is not the first time that the purses have been found to contain less than the amounts announced, and the deficiencies occur often without any fault of the persons who keep the purses before they find themselves into the hands of the donees. All the consolation therefore that I can give you is that you should not agitate yourself over the deficiency. It means no reflection on you, nor should it carry and reflection upon those who are associated with me in the conduct of the khadi organization.

Sjt. Varadachari is one of the most trusted amongst khadi workers and I assure you that you have no reason whatsoever to suspect his honesty or doubt his diligence. I had not known a more diligent and honest worker in the All-India Spinners' Association. He tells me that he did count the purse at Palamcottah, but you were not available after he had counted the purse. There is evidently therefore some misunderstanding regarding the date of counting as understood by Sjt. Viswanatha Pillay. And if you are still not satisfied, you may

¹ The addressee had drawn Gandhiji's attention to a deficiency of Rs. 2,000 in the Palamcottah purse and requested him to make enquiries (S.N. 12640).

see me whilst I am in Madras and I shall try to give you a few minutes.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. P. THIRUKOOTASUNDARAM PILLAY
SINDUPOONDURAI
TINNEVELLY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12640A

40. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

CUTTACK,

Sunday [December 18, 1927]¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have been able to read carefully the copies of the articles on sugar and malaria sent by you only today.

Per capita = per head

The bone powder used for cleansing sugar seems to be harmless. Not a trace of it remains in the sugar. It is thrown out with the impurities. It is not necessary to kill even a single cow for obtaining bones for this purpose. This should be regarded as the same thing as the use of bones for fertilizers. It is therefore wrong on our part to object to it on religious grounds. Sugar worth Rs. 18 crore is imported into India. The quantity would have perhaps increased now. It is impossible to produce sugar worth Rs. 18 crore in India. No one has ruined our sugar industry. We use up all the sugarcane we produce. The use of sugar has increased disproportionately in India as well as in the whole world. . .² Whatever sugar we produce is like a drop in the ocean. If you want to ask me more on the subject, please do. Write to me if you know more.

I am sending the copy of the article on malaria to *Navajivan*. There is some mistake in the copy. I constantly think about why we have not been able to control malaria in the Ashram but am unable to find a solution. I have talked to Kakasaheb. He is carrying on correspondence on the subject with Dr. Talwalkar. I feel it is due to our fields and the inept method of burying the night-soil of our

¹ From 'Cuttack' and 'Sunday' in the dateline, and Gandhiji's programme of reaching the Ashram before January 1; in the year 1927, Gandhiji was in Cuttack from December 18 to 21, and Sunday was on the 18th. He reached the Ashram on the 31st of the same month.

² A few words here are illegible in the source.

toilets. Only experiments can ascertain the causes. But how can we conduct the experiments? I intend to give more thought to this on reaching the Ashram. Only God knows how much I will be able to do.

I hope to reach the Ashram before January 1.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32867

41. LETTER TO GOPARAJU SATYANARAYANA MURTHI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

December 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I cannot give you anything better than Ramanama. Each time you have the fear of ghosts creeping over you, you must think of Rama and they will disperse like mist before the sun. If I were you, I should not give to an able-bodied beggar whether he is a Brahmin or what not. If your body permits it, a cold bath early in the morning even in winter is a nice thing. I see no harm in cycling for a good purpose. If you want to go to the Ashram, you should write to the Secretary.

Your sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. GOPARAJU SATYANARAYANA MURTHI

VARAHAGIRI HOUSE

BERHAMPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 6090

42. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

CUTTACK,¹

December 19, 1927

MY DEAR REHANA,

I have your letter. I must dictate today. This is being dictated in a jolting train which is taking us to Cuttack.

I now you are capable of living down Hindu prejudices. The poor servants know no better. I suppose the bitterness that you noticed amongst Mohammedan sisters is not absent amongst Hindu sisters of the same type. Your account of the unsuccessful attempts of these sisters to help themselves is very good, very funny and painful. How the riches spoil so many of us.

I hope the peeled potato was none the worse for the strain you put upon the poor thing. I am glad you have got over the 'blues'. You now that as a reader of the *Gita*, you have no business to have them at all.

With love,

BAPU

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
C/O LALA RAGHUBIR SINGH
KASHMIRI GATE, DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 9606

43. LETTER TO S. HANDY PERINBANAYAGAM

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARAMATI,

December 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am glad of the enthusiasm for khadi. The only way you will keep it up is to work it in a thoroughly efficient business-like manner, and for this purpose, you must have someone who is an expert in all the processes. You have in Colombo Sjt. Jairamdas Jayavardana. If you want to train more workers, perhaps Sjt. C. Rajagopalachariar will be able to take one or two at his Ashram at

¹ The letter, which was dictated in the train which took Gandhiji to Cuttack, was probably typed and signed on this date.

Tiruchenogodu. I know that you will not allow the enthusiasm to die out on any account.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. HANDY PERINBANAYAGAM
JAFFNA COLLEGE
VADDUKKODDAI
CEYLON

From a microfilm: S.N. 12622

44. LETTER TO K. S. KARANTH

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 19, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Of course if you wish to publish your book, there is no harm. Perhaps my own experience is that it is better to wait for publishing such books till one has obtained greater and more accurate experience.

Your reference to different kinds of *asanas*¹ seem to me to have been taken from various books. I have been in correspondence with the writers of such books and I have found that whatever they have written is not capable of being borne out fully either by their own experience or the experience of others on whom one can rely. But if you have confidence in what you have written, I have no desire to dissuade you from publishing the book. If *asana* and *pranayamas*² are really efficacious as they are claimed to be, why don't you give them a thorough trial yourself? I intended to do so myself but experts themselves dissuaded me owing to my illness.

I see no inconsistency between advocating *brahmacharya* and widow remarriage at the same time so long as I do not do so in connection with the same persons. Whilst I would like all young men to be and remain *brahmacharis*, I did not hesitate to advocate, countenance and even officiate at marriages of those who find it impossible to practise self-restraint. Of course when I advocate the marriage of child widows, I presume that they want the pleasure which all animals seek and some human beings only can restrain themselves from seeking. *Brahamacharya* is not a thing that can be superim-

¹ Yogic postures

² Breathing exercises

posed, and it is sinful to *compel* child widows to remain unmarried.

If the fallen sisters to whom you refer will not mind marrying a person belonging to any caste, there should be no difficulty and they ought not to object to any caste. My asking them to observe celibacy, if they cannot secure a proper match, has a meaning. That is to say, if they will restrict themselves to a caste or a province, and yet lead a pure life, naturally they must observe celibacy or they must accept any person of any character.

You may publish a translation of *Self-restraint* v. *Self-indulgence*. But please ask the Manager of *navajivan* before you do so lest he might have given the permission to somebody.

I do not know what you wrote about Ramakrishna Paramahansa. In spite of your information, it would not be wrong to say that he was an embodiment of ahimsa. He believed in that dharma and tried to follow it to the best of his lights. That he did something which to us today with our fuller experience appears to be repugnant to the doctrine of ahimsa, does not take away from the merit of Ramakrishna inasmuch as he could not think out of the custom prevalent around him, so far as food was concerned. It is not¹ possible that future generations will condemn the eating of cooked food as contrary to ahimsa and yet the existing authorities of ahimsa will not be liable to condemnation for not having discovered the inconsistency of eating cooked food. No person is able to practise completest ahimsa. Possession of a material frame involves a certain amount of unavoidable *himsa*. A votary of ahimsa therefore continually strives to reduce the extent of *himsa* to a minimum.

Please tell me if you want me to return the manuscript of your book.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. KARANTH
C/O, K. S. ACHARLU, M. A.
TEACHER, DAVANGERE

From a microfilm: S.N. 12652

¹ Perhaps "not" was a slip.

45. LETTER TO OLIVE DOKE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 19, 1927

MY DEAR OLIVE,

I was delighted to hear from Miss Schlesin all about the family and your exploits. Now I would like to shake hands with Clement who is now Dr. Clement and to hear you singing to me “Lead Kindly Light”. You may not remember the scene, I do and I could paint it if I was a painter, so vivid is the recollection of that scene.¹

Your venturing out in the wilds of Africa does not appear at all strange to me, for, I should expect nothing less from Joseph Doke’s children.

You must forgive this dictated letter. I had to choose between postponing writing to you and dictating. I have made a better choice. Please write to me occasionally.²

My love to you all,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9227. Courtesy: C.M. Doke

46. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

CUTTACK,
*Silence Day [December 19, 1927]*³

SISTERS,

God willing, there will be only one more Monday for me to write to you.

I have received Manibehn’s letter. You suggest that I should discuss the question of dress in greater detail. I shall not do so now, but you may reopen the point when we meet. As long as we retain an attraction for fineries in the deepest recesses of our heart, it is useless

¹ *Vide* “Satyagraha in South Africa (Chapter XXII: Opposition and Assault)”.

² The addressee acknowledged this letter on March 2, 1928 (S.N. 11968).

³ From the discussion about dress and finery; also from Gandhiji’s being in Cuttack on this date.

to give up wearing them or adopt any other change just to imitate others who have given them up. But if our infatuation for fineries passes off, and still the mind is drawn towards them, then we should make the necessary outward changes, whether through a sense of shame or by way of imitation of others, and ultimately root out this craving. Infatuation and things like that are our enemies; they harass us so much that we should protect ourselves against them with help secured from every possible quarter. I am writing all this for those who are honest and sincere. The *Gita* says somewhere that those who deny themselves pleasures and crave for them in their hearts, are foolish and deceitful. This refers to the hypocrite. To those who are really honest and sincere, the *Gita* says that they should constantly control the passions that agitate them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3674

47. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [December 19]¹ 1927

CHI. NARANDAS,

Read the accompanying letter and reply to it, send it on afterwards to Shri Fulchand and request him to reply to it. He should send to me the original letter too, so that I may reply to it. Address the reply to me at Madras.

Purushottam must have completely recovered now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7713. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

¹ In 1927 Gandhiji reached Madras on December 23.

48. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

CUTTACK,
December 20, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

These papers are for you to read and consider and to tell me whether there is anything in the suggestion.

Though the doctors say that the blood-pressure is high, I notice no effects of it. And three doctors and three instruments gave different readings yesterday—200, 180, 160! What is one to do when doctors differ? Anyway you should not be anxious.

Love,

MOHAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2626

49. *LETTER TO M. FRANCES H. LUKE*

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹. I cannot think of anything better than that you should attach yourself to some hospital where you could easily come in contact with those whom you have in view.

I remember your visit to the Ashram. I am travelling just now and I have no photograph such as you want. You may not know that I never was photographed, but of course there are many snapshots available in the bazaar.

Yours sincerely,

M. FRANCES H. LUKE
THE MATRON'S OFFICE
ST. THOMAS'S HOSPITAL S.E.1.
LONDON

From a photostat: S.N. 12554

¹ Dated 26-9-1927; the addressee, an educated Englishwoman, had stated that she wanted to serve the downtrodden and the untouchables.

50. LETTER TO S. N. GHOSE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 20, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am asking the Manager of *Young India* to put you under free list.

I do not write anything about your fight there because I am at sea myself as to what can be done. If you are a regular reader of *Young India* you must have noticed that I do not write an idle word. I feel so helpless about many things and therefore leave them. Believe me that it is not due to want of desire to help that I do not write.

Yours sincerely,

S. N. GHOSE, ESQ.
THE INDIA FREEDOM FOUNDATION
799, BROADWAY, NEW YORK (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 12555

51. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING

CUTTACK,
(ORISSA)

December 20, 1927

I have your letters which have remained unanswered owing to the constant tour in which I have been engaged. Nor have I much time to say anything useful beyond telling you that somehow or other I am still holding on though doctors tell me that my blood-pressure is rising. I hope to reach the Ashram early next year. I expect to hear from you any day that you have now thrown into the Danube all the weakness of the flesh that you took away from India and that your chirp is as vigorous as it was before you reached this land of sorrows.

MISS HELENE HAUSSDING
HERRSCHING A. AMMERSEE
BEI MINCHEN (GERMANY)

From a photostat: S.N. 12556

52. TALKS TO KHADI WORKERS, CUTTACK¹

December 20, 1927

I

The directors should be as vigilant and as jealous of the interests of their concern as the directors of the Bank of England, one of the greatest co-operative corporations in the world. But they have to be even more unselfish than they, inasmuch as the khadi company was not for exploitation, but for service of the poorest in the land. Their ability lay in attention to the most minor details in mastering the science of spinning. It is impossible for them to achieve any result unless they were expert spinners and expert organizers.

Some of the questions you have asked showed how unpractical you are. Some of you want to know if I would have you put on loin-cloth and to have a particular diet. Well, I have no desire to regulate either your dress or diet. What I want you to do is to realize the spirit of the movement and shape your life accordingly.

To you who want to serve Orissa I say, make Orissa a khadi depot for the whole of India. And you cannot do so until all the spirit of rivalry goes out and all concentrate on production. There can be no rivalry between khadi and khadi. I can understand your objection to khadi from other provinces, but you should make no distinction between khadi produced in different parts of Orissa. Concentrate on unifying your efforts and co-ordinating your sales.

I heard the other day some young men talking of the development of agriculture. If someone can prove to me that it is practicable and for the millions we have in view now, and can keep all the impoverished population from poverty and want, I will change my opinion about spinning. But I warn you in the present conditions you will not be successful. I have been working to build a model farm. There are foolish friends to entrust me with money to indulge in experiment, and I squander money on them. I had a talk with the late Sir Ganga Ram and supplied him with all the information about my lands, but he could not present me with a ready-made workable plan

¹ These talks were delivered on 18th, 19th and 20th December, 1927. They are here reproduced under the date of the last talk. Mahadev Desai says about these talks: "Advice to those who wanted to run a khadi joint-stock company was on the lines to the Rajapalayam merchants"; *vide* "Speech at Khadi Vastralaya, Rajapalayam", 4-10-1927.

to improve our agriculture. I ask you to go to the villages and bury yourselves there, not as their masters or benefactors, but as their humble servants. Let them know what to do and how to change their modes of living from your daily conduct and way of living. Only feeling will be of no use just like steam which by itself is of no account unless it is kept under proper control when it becomes a mighty force. I ask you to go forth as messengers of God carrying balm for the wounded soul of India.

II

Do not be troubled by the question of the disposal of your production. I could, if need be, disengage you from the obligation of selling. Go on producing as much as you can. There cannot be a better field for the production of khaddar than Orissa. Only Orissa can make khaddar a proved proposition. Intuitively of course it was a proved proposition to me in 1908, but you should demonstrate it practically. Show to the world that you cannot exist without khadi. Don't derive your faith from me, but derive it from yourselves and then refuse to be moved even if Gandhi changes his faith. Show to the people that they must work if they want more food, and the work can be none else than you can give them and on your terms. Remember that you cannot go on indefinitely relying merely on the patriotism of the people. You must produce khadi which is in quality superior to any other cloth.

I ask you to remember that unless the people understand that khadi is their only salvation, unless they feel that they cannot be without khadi, you cannot succeed. Mind you, I am not conducting this campaign to bring about a boycott of foreign cloth for its own sake. It is a necessary condition of our living, and an incident of our producing our own cloth if we must live.

Go then to the villages and become villagers. The story that the schoolmaster revealed at Charbatia was an eye-opener. It was a typical village. What a field of operation he has! You can take charge of the village school, make the children flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone and work amongst the villagers through the children. You will enter into their sorrows, ask them why they send their men to those pestilential hovels in Calcutta instead of working for their bread in their own homes. Go and get into their homes, handle their wheels, their carding-bows, show them their defects, see how they live, teach them the elementary principles of sanitation. It is this spinning of a constructive type that can bring swaraj and it is in this land that the charkha can sing its finest music. Make every village self-contained, make every home produce and use its own khadi, and as for the

surplus khadi, take a written guarantee from me to sell it all if it is of standard quality. Remember that only that worker will be worth his salt who makes the village he lives in self-reliant. The upshot of it all is the personal equation. No learning is necessary, except learning in the school of love. Have we workers honest, true, defiant, and burning with love of the country?

III

One word, that I would like to leave with you, doubly afflicted people of this afflicted land, is that you will lose yourselves in the ocean of the submerged humanity about you. Because it is submerged, the problem is simple. The way is straight, even though it is narrow. And you must treat it in the right and prayerful spirit. We have been praying here for three days. Prayer brings a peace, a strength and a consolation that nothing else can give. But it must be offered from the heart. When it is not offered from the heart, it is like the beating of a drum, or just the vocal effect of the throat sounds. When it is offered from the heart, it has the power to melt mountains of misery. Those who want are welcome to try its power.

Young India, 29-12-1927

53. LETTER TO DEVI WEST

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

December 21, 1927

I have your letter¹. The floods² have indeed made a terrible havoc, but it has also brought to the fore the best qualities of the people afflicted. An organization grew up all of a sudden which battled with the calamity with great decision and equally great success.

Miss Schlesin has been of late writing to me regularly, and of course she is as mad and as good as ever. Albert³ never writes nowadays. I did however get accounts of him and know that he and his are doing very well indeed. Manilal and his wife have been writing to me regularly.

I am keeping fairly well. Perhaps I shall never regain the original health, but I am thankful for whatever strength God has yet left me.

¹ Dated 2-10-1927; the addressee had written to Gandhiji on his birthday.

² In Gujarat in July 1927

³ W. West, addressee's brother

I hope you are getting *Young India* as also *Indian Opinion* regularly. If not, please let me know. Prabhudas is now much better. He is at a hill station with his father. The others whom you know are doing well. If you are photographed do send me one. I am sure all at the Ashram who know you and love you well, love to see you in the spirit if they cannot see you in the flesh. I have had a strenuous tour in the south of India including Ceylon as you must have seen. I hope now to reach the Ashram on or before new-year's day.

Yours,

MISS DEVI WEST
23, GEORGE STREET
LOUTH, LINCS

From a photostat: S.N. 12543

54. LETTER TO NIRMAL CHANDRA DEY

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I can quite see that unless you have a living faith in God you cannot get rid of sinful thoughts much less sinful acts. The only way I can commend to you to have that belief is to realize man's littleness and therefore your own and persist in believing. . .¹ assuming that there must be a 'Being' who is perfect and who is responsible for the wonderful phenomenon, the world.

I have no capacity to argue with you about the origin of evil. It is enough for me humbly to recognize evil as evil and strive to combat it. For, I know that God in Whom I believe helps me always in the combat. Victory lies in striving. To find honestly a guru and the striving necessitates the living of a pure life.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NIRMAL CHANDRA DEY
ENGINEERING COLLEGE HOSTEL, SHIBPUR
P.O. BOTANICAL GARDEN
HOWRAH

From a microfilm: S.N. 12653 A

¹ The source has a blank here.

55. LETTER TO VISHWAMBHAR SAHAI

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I am able to reach your letter only today. So far as my recollection serves me right, I have not given anyone any exclusive right to publish a translation of my *Guide to Health*¹ in Hindi or Urdu. I am aware that many people have published translations of that book both in India and in Europe. You should ask Messrs N. D. Saigal & Sons, Lahore, to show you my authority and if any such authority is produced to you, please send me a copy for my verification.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. VISHWAMBHAR SAHAI
PREM SAHITYA BHANDAR
MEERUT

From a microfilm: S.N. 12654

56. LETTER TO DEVICHAND

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. Your enquiry is quite pertinent. The money that I collect or is sent to me for khadi must be spent on khadi, unless I may commit a breach of trust. But I do collect and receive moneys for untouchables which are used only for their uplift. I collect moneys in this manner for activities which are controlled by me directly or indirectly.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. DEVICHAND
PRESIDENT, DAYANAND DALIT UDDHAR MANDAL
HOSHIARPUR, PUNJAB

From a microfilm: S.N. 12655

¹ An English translation of a series of Gujarati articles on general knowledge about health published in *Indian Opinion* from January 4, 1913 to August 16, 1913

57. LETTER TO MANINDRA CHANDRA ROY

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have been unable to deal with your letter earlier. I cannot help feeling that your judgement is warped according to your reasoning that there should be no effort on the part of mankind for self-improvement. A prisoner who is innocently convicted you would say should not try to secure his release. I see no distinction between a helpless innocent girl being given away in bondage to a person whom she has never known and a prisoner. Your arguments seem to be on a par with the first.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MANINDRA CHANDRA ROY
HEAD MASTER
BERHAMPUR NATIONAL SCHOOL
BERHAMPUR, P. O. KHARGA

From a microfilm: S. N. 12656

58. LETTER TO T. K. RAMUNNI MENON

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier.

I would like you, if you can, to see me whilst I am in Madras. I do not want you hastily to throw up the job that you have.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. RAMUNNI MENON
CO-OPERATIVE OFFICER
POST PUTHIYARA
(MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12657

59. LETTER TO PEAREYLAL

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 21, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have not been able to deal with your letter earlier. I do not think you need a scheme so much as proper workers, and since you have Miss Gmeiner and Babu Jugal Kishore, I think you cannot do better than be guided by them. One mistake I would ask you to guard yourself against, namely, making the Widows Home a mere literary school where widows will have everything done for them. I should give the widows some industrial training and make them self-reliant and ultimately self-supporting. I shall also guard against making them sectional.

Yours sincerely,

PEAREYLAL¹, ESQ.

NO. 2, METCALF HOUSE ROAD
DELHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 12658

60. OUR SHAME AND THEIR SHAME

The long deferred Orissa visit has come to fill the bitter cup of sorrow and humiliation. It was at Bolgarh, thirty-one miles from the nearest railway station, that whilst I was sitting and talking with Dinabandhu Andrews on the 11th instant, a man with a half-bent back wearing only a dirty loin-cloth came crouching in front of us. He picked up a straw and put it in his mouth and then lay flat on his face with arms outstretched and then raised himself, folded his hands, bowed, took out the straw, arranged it in his hair and was about to leave. I was writhing in agony whilst I witnessed the scene. Immediately the performance was finished, I shouted for an interpreter, asked the friend to come near and began to talk to him. He was an untouchable living in a village six miles away, and being in Bolgarh for the sale of his load of faggots and having heard of me had come to see me. Asked why he should have taken the straw in his

¹ Died in 1933; a philanthropist

mouth, he said that was to honour me. I hung my head in shame. The price of honour seemed to me to be too great to bear. My Hindu spirit was deeply wounded. I asked him for a gift. He searched for a copper about his waist. "I do not want your copper, but I want you to give me something better," I said. "I will give it," he replied. I had ascertained from him that he drank and ate carrion because it was custom.

"The gift I want you to give me is a promise never again to take the straw in your mouth for any person on earth, it is beneath man's dignity to do so; never again to drink because it reduces man to the condition of a beast, and never again to eat carrion, for it is against Hinduism and no civilized person would ever eat carrion."

"But my people will excommunicate me, if I do not drink and eat carrion," the poor man said.

"Then suffer excommunication and if need be leave the village."

This downtrodden humble man made the promise. If he keeps, it, his threefold gift is more precious than the rupees that generous countrymen entrust to my care.

This untouchability is our greatest shame. The humiliation of it is sinking deeper.

But this never-to-be-forgotten incident was only part of the shame and sorrow. Never since the days of Champaran (in 1917)¹ have I witnessed such death-like quiet as I did on entering political Orissa through Banpur. And I fear that the quiet of Orissa is worse than that of Champaran. There was spirit in the ryots of Champaran after a few days" stay in their midst. I doubt if the Orissa ryot would respond so quickly. I was told that the zamindars, the rajas and the local police had conspired to frighten the ryots out of coming near me. I had begun to flatter myself with the belief that the rajas, the zamindars and the pettiest police officials had ceased to distrust or fear me. The experiences of Orissa have chastened me. Being too weak to go about much, I sent my friends among the people and ascertained the cause. They brought the news that people were told, on pain of punishment, not to come near me or to take part in any demonstration in my honour. Such warnings have been issued before and in other provinces, but they have had little or no effect in normal

¹ The source has "1916".

times such as these. The ryots in Orissa, however, seemed to me to be living in a perpetual state of fear and liable to be acted upon by the slightest attempt.

This is a shame both we and the foreign rulers have to share. It is true that the rajas and zamindars and the petty officials are our own kith and kin. But the primary source of fright is in the rulers. Their system is based on 'frightfulness'. In the name of prestige they have compelled somehow or other the tallest among us to bend low. They have intensified, where they have not created, demoralization. They have known the existence of abject fear among the ryots. But they have done nothing to remove it and the causes, where they have not hugged the condition of things in the alleged interest of their rule. Whilst therefore they may not be directly responsible for the pathetic scenes I witnessed, they cannot be acquitted of a considerable share of responsibility for them.

But our shame is greater. If we were strong, self-respecting and not susceptible to frightfulness, the foreign rulers would have been powerless for mischief. Those only who are susceptible to fear are frightened by others. And it has to be confessed that long before the British advent we were habituated to fear by our own zamindars and rajas. The present rulers have but reduced to a science what was in existence before in a more or less crude share. The workers in Orissa have therefore to teach the ryot to shed the oppressive nervous timidity bordering on cowardice. And this they will not do by swearing at the zamindar, the raja or the police officials. These latter become docile and even friendly when they find that the ryot has unlearned the unmanly habit.

Young India, 22-12-1927

61. *NOTHING TOO SMALL*

A friend sends me for publication a charkha dialogue. I am not printing it as I have discovered no plot about the story, but I gladly publish the following instructive verses the writer has quoted and put into the mouth of a little girl telling her little brother that they should begin to work the charkha for the sake of the poor even though they were youngsters :

Suppose the little cowslip
Should hang its golden cup,
And say, 'I'm such a tiny flower,

‘I’d better not grow up :’
How many a weary traveller
Would miss its fragrant smell?
How many a little child would grieve
To lose it from the dell ?

Suppose the glistening dewdrop
Upon the grass should say,
‘What can a little dewdrop do?
‘I’d better roll away :’
The blade on which it rested,
Before the day was done,
Without a drop to moisten it,
Would wither in the sun.

Suppose the little breezes,
Upon a summer’s day,
Should think themselves too small to cool
The traveller on his way :
Who would not miss the smallest
And softest ones that blow,
And think they made a great mistake
If they were talking so?
How many deed of kindness
A little child may do;
Although it has so little strength
And little wisdom too.
It wants a loving spirit,
Much more than strength, to prove
How many things a child may do
For others by his love.

These beautiful verses apply equally to many of us grown-up people who talk no better than the little children in the imaginary story. We may not excuse ourselves from sacrificial spinning on the flimsy excuse that it is too little to be of use. Not for us thus to argue ourselves into laziness; ours is but to do our little best and leave to God to use it as He wills.

Young India, 22-12-1927

62. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

December [22]¹, 1927

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. You are needlessly worried. I am hopeful that health will be restored. But if it does not happen and I remain bed-ridden then....

I began this letter four days ago. Just then the doctor² arrived and it was left there. I now take it up in Madras where I arrived today. We shall see about that. For the present let us resolve that on the Vasant Panchami³ day you will be entering a new life and shouldering a new responsibility in the name of God and with His help.

Apparently there is nothing wrong with my health. But the blood-pressure is very high. There is no doubt of that. All I need is rest. It is not also true that I do not observe the rules about health which I prescribe for others. But I shall explain this to you one day if you ask me.

Today I wish to write about one point in your previous letter. Why should Nimu not do independent work? You know that millions of our poor people work like that. We have become sweepers and scavengers! What about Ramjibhai and Gangabehn? In countless peasant families both husbands and wives earn. In factories both men and women work. Here both Anna and his wife Gomatibehn take salaries and also do the Hindi work. By following this practice your family life will become not difficult but smooth and you will become an ideal couple. Thousands of people have children while they work. Yes, it is true, that they are not able to live in comfort. But you must ask me for further clarification on this point. I wish you to have a happy, simple, useful and interesting life. The circumstances are also favourable. Everything depends on your education and Nimu's. I wanted to train her but could not manage it. There were obstacles in the way. I fell ill and on returning to the Ashram could not cope with three obstacles at the same time. But Nimu is herself a good girl and hence I am not worried. The only question is how far your body will co-operate.

I shall not write anything more now. Imam Saheb has fallen ill

¹ Inferred from the reference to Gandhiji's arrival in Madras.

² Dr. M. A. Ansari

³ January 27, 1928, on which day the addressee was to marry Nirmala

and has come here. I am going to meet him. I hope to reach the Ashram in January or earlier.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Motana n Man, pp. 3940

63. LETTER TO SUBHADRA TULJAPURKER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

December 23, 1927

MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND,

I was unable to reply to your letter¹ earlier. I congratulate you upon your being able to recite the whole of the *Gita* without a mistake and for having earned prize for the recitation. The best way to study the *Gita* apart from recitation is to take it verse by verse, understand its meaning fully and apply it in the working of one's own life. Some time when I come to Bombay, perhaps you would come and recite some of the chapters to me.

Yours sincerely,

MISS SUBHADRA TULJAPURKER

N. P. PATHARE'S HOUSE

NEAR PORTUGUESE CHURCH

DADAR, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 12635 A

64. LETTER TO ZAIBUNNISA

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to reply to your letter earlier. I have the information from the Ashram that your drama has been received. But as you might have noticed I have been continually on the move. Although I expect to reach the Ashram in January, I have no notion when I shall get the time to go through your manuscript. All therefore I can promise to you is that I shall try my best to deal

¹ Dated 6-10-1927; the addressee was aged 16 years.

with it as early as I can. But if you propose to have it printed, I would ask you not to wait for my opinion, but send it to the press, if friends like Maulana Mazharul Haq and Dr. Syed Mahomed approve of it.

Yours sincerely,

BEGUM ZAIBUNNISA¹
C/O SYED AHMAD ALI SAHAB
MAHALLA, SAHEBGANJ
CHAPRA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12637

65. LETTER TO PICHAPPA SUBRAMANIAM CHETTIAR

MADRAS,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to hear from you the wedding for which you had to go away from me at Colombo had been duly celebrated. Please convey to the married couple my good wishes again and tell them that I expect them both to work for the service of the country.

Yes, the contributions from Ceylon were exceedingly good. I do not need to commend any particular thing to you, for I know that your whole heart is in khadi service which is the most universal and practical service of the country at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PICHAPPA SUBRAMANIAM CHETTIAR
AMARAVATI PUDUR
GANDHI NAGAR
RAMNAD DT.

From a microfilm: S.N. 12659

¹ A Muslim lady who wished to dedicate her Urdu play to Gandhiji

66. LETTER TO KAMALA DEVI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like your letter.¹ What you say about the girls and women of India is largely true. But you and other girls in your position can do a great deal in order to remove the bondage. If you are firm in your resolve and at the same time gentle, I am sure that your father will let you follow your own bent of mind. But in order to achieve the result, you must be patient. Live there the life of simplicity that you have pictured to yourself in the Ashram at Sabarmati. After all mind is the greatest factor. And if your mind is married to the idea of simplicity and purity no power on earth can divorce it from their idea.

I note what you say about your idea of necessities of life. Do you want me to speak to your father and even correspond with him? You should not be afraid to talk to your father freely and give him your full confidence.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI KAMALA DEVI
AKHIL MISTRY LANE
CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 12660

67. LETTER TO S. G. DATAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter and your communication on *shraddha*² and I have not published it because your viewpoint has been so often dealt with in the pages of *Young India*. In my opinion, the best *shraddha* that a son can perform in respect of his departed parents is to weave

¹ Addressee's parents wanted her to marry, but she wished to go and stay at the Ashram. *Vide* also "Letter to Kamala Das Gupta", July 10 and August 23, 1927.

² Ritual offering to the spirit of a deceased ancestor

into his life all the good qualities of his parents. To merely repeat the letter of the scriptures is to destroy their very soul.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. G. DATAR
PLEADER
BAGALKOT

From a microfilm: S.N. 12661

68. *LETTER TO R. RAMASWAMI*

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter enclosing an article on khadi. I do not think it is necessary to publish it in *Young India*. I therefore return it. In my opinion, khadi will not become popular by publishing general statements of the kind you have prepared. It requires organization and personal propaganda both of which are being attended to as far as is possible.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. R. RAMASWAMI
6, SHIVAPPA MANSION
DADAR, BOMBAY

From a microfilm: S.N. 12662

69. *A LETTER*

AS AT THE ASHRAM
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is the receipt for ten rupees sent through you by your mother. Please thank her for the donation.

For one who wants to become a true *brahmachari*, he should avoid all exciting foods, exciting conversation, exciting shows and occupy his body in some useful labour such as spinning, carding, weaving, occupying his mind in reading or writing pure things, and

continuously think of God and believe that He witnessed all our thoughts and actions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT.
TEEON
OLD SUKKUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 12663

70. LETTER TO S. V. VISVANATHA IYER

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

I was unable to reply to your letter earlier. I shall see what can be done with reference to your suggestion about having an examination. What, however, is now necessary is practical work rather than theoretical knowledge.

With reference to the ear ornaments, I have succeeded in inducing many women to dispense with them in spite of the prejudice you refer to. We have to deal with customs which have no moral basis or which are immoral, no matter how ancient they may be and how much backed they may be by prejudice.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. V. VISVANATHA IYER
VAKIL, TUTICORIN

From a microfilm: S.N. 12664

71. LETTER TO CHERUKANDY KUTTAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

DEAR FRIEND,

Here is a copy of the letter from the Commissioner for Immigration and Asiatic Affairs, Pretoria, in reply to my enquiry. If

you can give me fuller information, I shall communicate with the Natal authorities.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. CHERUKANDY KUTTAN
ENGLISH COMPOSITOR
“MALABAR SPECTATOR” PRESS
CALICUT (S. MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12665

72. LETTER TO K. KELAPPAN

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
December 23, 1927

MY DEAR KELAPPAN,

I have not heard from you as it were for ages. Here is a letter¹; please read it and tell me if you know anything about this colony and, if you do not, you must visit it, and report.

What have you done about the committee that I proposed and what have you done with the fund left with you?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. KELAPPAN NAIR
PAYOLI
N. MALABAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 14624

73. SPEECH AT KHADI AND HINDI EXHIBITIONS, MADRAS

December 23, 1927

Mahatmaji, before declaring the Exhibition open, made a speech in English which was translated into Tamil by Mr. C. Rajagopalachari. He said that it was a great privilege to be called upon to open the exhibitions. He was not physically fit to raise his voice to such a pitch as to be heard by all. He was not going to make a long speech and he was not able, in his present state of health, to address such a large

¹ From V. K. Sankara Menon, Manager, Pulaya Colony, Chalakudi, a colony run by the Depressed Classes Development Society. He had invited Gandhiji's suggestions and advice.

audience. He need not dwell long on the necessity for khaddar for he was just returning from Utkal where he had seen with his own eyes emaciated men and women on account of starvation. To such people khaddar would do an immense good. If the people present at the meeting has seen those famished people of Utkal they would readily agree with him that khadi was the only thing that could save them from such a low condition. Khadi was a movement in which Tamils and Telugus, and people of the north and south of India could take part without any distinction of caste or creed. A visit to Utkal would make them instinctively support the khadi movement. The khadi exhibition by the side of the industrial exhibition looked like an ant before an elephant. In the bigger exhibition there were both foreign and indigenous articles. In the khadi exhibition they would find only indigenous goods, hand-spun and hand-woven and there was no competition here, the only competition being 'how shall I serve, how shall I serve best'. In the khadi exhibition they would find goods manufactured by poor men and women and those goods must have given food to a number of poor people. Manchester goods and Indian mill-made goods went to enrich English and Indian capitalists, whereas khaddar provided food for the poorest labourers who had no other means of living. The khadi movement had given food to seventy-five thousand spinners scattered in 2,000 villages and also six thousand weavers lived by weaving khaddar cloth. He had mentioned only spinners and weavers in connection with the movement and had not taken into consideration others engaged in printing, dyeing, etc., who were benefited by it. In addition to these poor people about one thousand young men belonging to middle-class had also taken up the khadi work. Khadi would also give employment to the unemployed and solve the problem of unemployment among the middle classes which was agitating the minds of many. Khadi would give work to the people of India—Brahmins and Non-Brahmins, Hindus and Mussalmans and the so-called untouchables. Very soon they would go round the stalls to see the exhibits for themselves. When they did so, he would ask them to go round the exhibition with a feeling of sympathy for the poor and to consider what amount of energy and time must have been spent upon those products by the poor people to earn something to keep body and soul together. They would also find that the cost of the khaddar products was much reduced.

Next to the khadi exhibition, they would find the Hindi exhibition. The Hindi movement was conceived in the interests of millions of Indians. Hindi or Hindustani was spoken by 21 crores of people and it was the mother tongue of many Mussalmans. It was the only language which could be inter-provincial. For some time past attempts had been made to propagate Hindi in South India. The Hindi Prachar Sabha had been instituted and had been giving instruction in Hindi to a large number of people in the Tamil Nadu and Andhra Desha. Many people in those two provinces had learnt Hindi and passed examinations. The Hindi exhibitions was to have been opened by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya but, he having not arrived, he (Mahatmaji)

had been asked to open the exhibition. He would ask them to learn Hindi and would inform them that it could be learnt easily. After learning it, they would find it a beautiful language.

With these words he declared the khadi and Hindi exhibitions open.

The Hindu, 24-12-1927

74. NOTE ON AN ARTICLE¹

When shall we get rid of this stigma? Has even the last deluge² not opened the eyes of Hindus? Who created Dheds and Bhangis as low castes? When did the Brahmins and the Banias attain the status of higher castes?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1927

75. THE INDRARAJ SPINNING-WHEEL

In the issue of the *Khadipatrika* dated 1-12-27 Shri Harjivandas Kotak has written an article on the place that khadi occupies in Kashmir. I would recommend the article to all lovers of khadi. Its merit lies in Shri Harjivandas's personal experience. He has written the article after having observed things for himself during his stay in Kashmir. Three facts become clear from this.

- (1) The importance of the spinning-wheel,
- (2) The place it still occupies in Kashmir,
- (3) The ruin of this invaluable industry in Kashmir.

We can get proofs of the value of the spinning-wheel in the south in Nagercoil right up to Kanyakumari. We get these right up to Assam in the east and we have now found them as far north as Kashmir. In the west, we find them right up to Kathiawar. I do not mention Karachi in the west because Karachi is a new city and, it is natural that people there being enamoured of wealth do not realize the value of the spinning-wheel—although even there, because of the efforts of such lovers of khadi as the late Shri Ranchhoddas even up to this day, propaganda for the spinning-wheel is being carried on in a

¹ This note follows M. K. Pandya's article complaining that untouchables were forbidden to enter the temple of Ranchhodaraiji at Dakor and to bathe in the Gomati tank near the temple.

² Heavy floods in Gujarat

new manner and khadi is being used.

Shri Harjivandas's article reveals that the silk produced there (in Kashmir) is not hand-spun. Until this day some of us who are fond of good clothes wore Kashmiri silk under the impression that it was hand-spun; however, it is clear that those who wish to use clothes of only hand-spun cotton, silk or wool must give up the use of Kashmiri silk. One should spin oneself as much as is necessary to prepare what one wishes to wear of the finest stuff; one should get cloth of medium quality spun at the nearest possible place, while inferior cloth could be bought from whatever in an honest dealer sells under the name of hand-woven fabric.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1927

76. WHAT SHOULD A HINDU WIDOW DO ?

A gentleman from Ajmer writes in Hindi to say :

I wish you to answer the following questions of mine, in *Navajivan* :

How should Hindu widows not wishing to remarry spend the rest of their lives?

Maharshi Dayanand has written to say that they should practise celibacy, educate themselves and also educate young girls.

Do you agree with this view? If so, keeping in mind the present plight of our country, what would you like to add to this?

Maharshi Dayanand did not hold that all widows should spend their time in learning and teaching; this could only be by way of an example. In this case teaching means imparting a knowledge of letters. This knowledge is necessary to some extent; in my opinion, however, the more important teaching is how to stave off starvation. And every day, I am more firmly convinced that this lies in the spinning-wheel. If we of the middle class who are educated, and who look upon ourselves as belonging to the higher castes give a thought to the condition of the poorer classes, nothing else but the spinning-wheel will occur to us. The spinning-wheel will be plied mainly by women as it is primarily they who have time to spare. Hence I have been crying from the house-tops at various places, day and night, that

it is through them that we would prevent crores of rupees from being drained out of the country and secure true swaraj—*Ramarajya*¹.

It is women who can readily approach others of their sex. Here in the Province of Orissa where I happen to write this, and where even the poorer women observe *purdah*, who can set aside *purdah* and approach them? I sent Mirabehn who has accompanied me to the women of a certain village. About fifty women surrounded her and became crazy with joy they started asking her about many things and the spinning-wheel came up for discussion. These women were absolutely naive, simple and ignorant. It is innumerable women of this type who should really be educated. Widows with pure character can readily impart such education, serve their own interest and, at the same time, help India solve its problems. Widows who are benevolently inclined can easily learn this work and do justice to it. However, an important prior condition for this is that they should be keen on going to villages and, while living there, should not get impatient. A widow who takes the vow of celibacy is not a helpless, crippled individual. If she is fit for self-realization, she is a strong independent woman capable of protecting herself. Compared with this, the education given to girls today is, I think, of little consequence. If however a widow refuses to go to the villages, idles away her time or, year after year, runs' from one place of supposed pilgrimage to another, mistaking this for dharma, it is obviously better if she stayed even in the city and engaged herself in teaching children. She has before her the vast field of nursing the sick. Very few Hindu women take up the profession of nursing. Widows in Maharashtra are found undergoing this training. Outside Maharashtra, very few widows are prepared to undergo this training. However, the jobs that I have suggested should also be regarded only as examples. Every sensible widow who wishes to practise celibacy should seek out some useful activity for herself and devote her whole life to it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-12-1927

¹ Traditionally regarded as the ideal political order; literally, Rama's rule

77. *LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI*

December 25, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I had a long chat with Malaviyaji. The resolution on the cow and the music as it stands does not satisfy him, nor does it satisfy me. I have suggested two formulas to which he agrees and thinks the Hindu Mahasabha will agree.

The first is this: the preamble instead of mentioning rights should say “without prejudice to the rights of either party, etc.”¹

The second which I consider to be the most important and the true solution is that Mussalmans should forgo cow-slaughter and the Hindus should forgo music before mosques. They should be part of legislation by common consent. Malaviyaji thinks that if the second proposal can be accepted by the Mussalmans, he will be able to carry the Hindu Sahba with him.

If you think that there is anything in the two proposals please postpone passing the unity resolutions and let us discuss the proposals in all their bearings.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12391

78. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

December 26, 1927

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have altered your resolutions. The Orissa resolution should not be in the Congress. Because there are so many places that have suffered. The special poverty of Orissa is chronic. I shall see what can be done about Gregg's book proof-reading. I have not attended any sittings of the Congress Committee. Am having good rest. Doctors here see no special rise in blood-pressure. I leave tomorrow or the day after. Expect you at the Ashram on or before 13th January. Tucker is with me.

Love.

MOHAN

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.

SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: G.N. 2627

¹ This suggestion seems to have been accepted; *vide* Appendix “Part B—Section 1 of the Resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity”, December 26, 1927.

79. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

CENTRAL STATION, MADRAS,
*Silence Day [December 26, 1927]*¹

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I got your letter. It is worthy of you. I had no doubt at all, and did not worry about the thing.

I hope to reach the Ashram on Saturday at the latest.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 2832. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

80. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

*Monday [December 26, 1927]*²

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

From Devdas's letter, received today, I gather that you, too, have fallen ill and have returned to Bombay. I intend to leave this place tomorrow and will arrive there on Thursday. If I don't I shall arrive on Friday without fail. May God protect you.

Pranam from
MOHANDAS

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI
MANIBHUVAN
7, LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1266

81. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

MADRAS,
*Monday [December 26, 1927]*³

DEAR SISTERS,

I have your letter. I had in fact intended to leave this place this very day. But now I do hope to leave tomorrow or Wednesday at any rate. That is, let us say we will meet at the latest by Saturday.

¹ From the postmark

² *ibid*

³ From the reference to Utkal and Gandhiji's return to Ashram

I can understand that just now none of you can set out for Utkal. Ultimately many of the women workers must come from the Ashram.

I do not understand what you say about committing the mistake of having a telegram written for you. Well, now you will explain it when we meet.

We never forget the work that is dear to us. I have seen devout men and women offering all manner of service at temples with great love and interest. Out faith, it is said, is that the *yajna* of spinning enjoys pride of place among all forms of service. If you have any doubts regarding this, do by all means question me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 7770. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

82. RESOLUTION ON INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

[December 27, 1927]¹

This Congress, while acknowledging the relief received by the Indian settlers in South Africa and regarding the signing of the Indo-Union Agreement as a token of the desire of the Union Government to Accord better treatment to the Indian settlers, cannot be satisfied till the status of the settlers is brought on par with that of the enfranchised inhabitants of the Union and appeals to the Union Government to consolidate the goodwill created between the two countries by repealing all class legislation, especially the Colour Bar Act of 1926, the clause in the Liquor Bill of 1927 prohibiting the employment of Indians as waiters in hotels and the Municipal Land Alienation Ordinances or Natal in so far as the latter involve racial segregation.

This Congress places on record its sense of deep gratitude to Deenabandhu C.F. Andrews for his great and humanitarian work in South Africa and East Africa in connection with the status of the Indian settlers in those countries.

Report of the Forty-second Indian National Congress at Madras, 1927, p. 59

¹ The resolution was drafted by Gandhiji. Dr. M. A. Ansari, the President, moved it at the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Madras on 27-12-1927. The resolution was carried unanimously.

83. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

December 28, 1927

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

The Cow Resolution has shaken me to the marrow. I could read it carefully only last night. The more I think of it, the more I shrink from it. The draft¹ I sent with M. A. Azad is no substitute. I have told the Maulana Saheb that it does not in any way satisfy me. The only solution that I can see is the one I have suggested. I would therefore urge you not to proceed with that resolution at all during this session. I must have a chat with the Mussalman friends who are here and whom I know, and place before them my awful position. But I won't trouble you at this stage. You have so many things on your hands. I am, however trying to see the Brothers. I came to help. I am now becoming a hindrance. My grief is indescribable.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12392

84. A LETTER²

December 28, 1927

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHERS,

The cow resolution has left a deep scar on my heart. I would like to discuss it with you and explain to you my difficulty. I want you both and if possible Shwaib. You may bring the other friends who may be available.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 12393

¹ Presumably Part B—Section 1 of the Resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity adopted by the Congress; *vide* Appendix "resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity", December 26, 1927.

² Presumably addressed to Maulana Mahomed Ali; *vide* the preceding item.

85. POLITICAL PRISONERS

Lala Dunichand of Ambala has sent me a copy of the statement published by him in England about political prisoners who are undergoing incarceration in the various jails of India. The statement contains nothing new for the Indian public and might easily have been fuller and more precise for the purpose intended by the author. In a converging note he administers to me a gentle rebuke for rarely mentioning these prisoners. If the absence of mention of these countrymen of ours means apathy or negligence on my part, the rebuke is well deserved. But I claim that I yield to no one in my desire to see these prisoners released. But the omission to mention these cases is deliberate. I hope that the pages of *Young India* do not contain any idle words. Whatever is written in these pages has a definite purpose. Time was when I used to analyse these cases and expose the injustice done in many of them. But that was when I had faith in the British system and when I used to take pride in its ultimate goodness. Having lost that faith, I have lost also the power of making an effective appeal to the administrators of that system. I can no longer write about British fair play and the British sense of justice. On the contrary, I feel that the administrators are precluded by their system from dealing out fair play or justice when their system is or seems to them to be in jeopardy. It is still possible, I admit, to secure justice from them when their system is not at stake in any shape or form. But when that system is or is felt by them to be in danger they lose not only their sense of justice and fair play but they lose their balance and no means appear to them to be too dishonourable or despicable for adoption to sustain it. Dyerism and O'Dwyerism¹ were no isolated phenomena. Only I was blind to them before Jallianwala. As a matter of fact, they have been resorted to in all climes and at all times whenever they have felt the need of them.

I am satisfied that the political prisoners who are held under restraint with or without trial, decorous or farcical, are so held in the interest of that system. The administrators would far rather discharge a murderer caught red-handed and found guilty of murder committed for private ends than discharge a political prisoner suspected of designs on their system, especially if he, the suspect, is believed to

¹ General Dyer and O'Dwyer were responsible for the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh in April 1919.

have violent means in view.

It seems to me therefore to be waste of time and inconsistent with respect to make any appeal to the administrators in behalf of the political prisoners Lala Dunichand has in view. And he has in mind the prisoners of the Gadr party, the Punjab Martial Law prisoners and the Bengal detenus. Nor need we be led astray by solitary discharges like that of Sjt. Subhas Bose. In spite of the agitation that was set on foot he would in all probability not have been discharged if his precarious health had not come to the rescue. Indeed, have they not said in the plainest language possible that they were released purely on grounds of ill health? Has not Earl Winterton¹ flatly declined to release the Bengal detenus in answer to the appeal to create a favourable atmosphere for their precious Statutory Commission?

Let those who still have faith in the system by all means make an appeal to the British sense of justice and fair play.

My course is clear. We have not yet paid anything like adequate price for the freedom we would fain breathe. I therefore regard these imprisonments as only a small part of the price we have to pay if we would have the freedom which is the birthright of man. And we shall have to march as willing victims to the slaughter-house and not helplessly like goats and sheep. We may do this violently or non-violently. The way of violence can only lead us to a blind alley and must cause endless suffering to unwilling ignorant men and women who do not know what freedom is and who have no desire to buy the valuable article. The way of non-violence is the surest and the quickest way to freedom and causes the least suffering and that only to those who are prepared for it, indeed would gladly court it. But suffering, intense, extensive and agonizing, there must be in every case. What we have gone through is but a sample of what is to come.

Therefore the task before those, who share my views about the inherent evil of the system, is to cease to appeal to the administrators, and ceaselessly and with unquenchable faith in our cause and the means to appeal to the nation. Not until the nation has developed enough strength to open the prison gates, can these prisoners be released with honour and dignity for it and them. Till then let us with becoming patience and courage submit to the imprisonment of the prisoners and ourselves prepare joyfully to share their fate. We shall certainly not hasten the advent of freedom by appealing to deaf ears

¹ Under-Secretary of State for India

for mercy and thus unconsciously inducing in the people a mentality that would dread the prisons and the gallows. Lovers of freedom have to learn to regard these as welcome friends and deliverers.

Young India, 29-12-1927

86. INTERVIEW TO "INDIAN DAILY MAIL"

BOMBAY

December 30, 1927

In reply to a question by the interviewer as to which of the three draft constitutions¹ drawn up by the Madras leaders he considered best suited to India, Mr. Gandhi said that he had no decisive opinion about the future Constitution of India. He, however, added :

The Constitution of India is not a matter for a single individual to decide.

Seated in the midst of his friends and disciples, playing the inseparable charkha, Mr. Gandhi politely invited our representative to put questions to him. "What are your impressions of the Madras Session of the Congress?", was the first question by the interviewer.

ANSWER: The Madras Session was a unique one inasmuch as it seems to have laid the foundation of Hindu-Muslim unity. This, I say, not because of the quality of the resolutions, but because of the manner in which they were presented and accepted. Pandit Malaviyaji's happy speech and the still happier response made by Ali Brothers appeared to me to be a good augury for future. I was not present when the scene of Maulana Mahomed Ali in ecstasy falling at Malaviyaji's feet and Maulana Shaukat Ali fanning him after he had finished his great speech took place; but it was described to me by the President of the Congress. It filled me with great joy and hope. I hope this spirit of cordiality and mutual trust will prove infectious and we shall be able to find such trust amongst the rank and file. Both Dr. Ansari and Mr. S. Aiyengar deserve the gratitude of the nation for this happy event.

Asked why he was not present when the Independence Resolution² was

¹ Submitted before the Madras Session of the Congress; the Working Committee was given power to confer with other bodies and place a revised draft before a Special Convention for approval.

² In a separate resolution, the Congress declared "the goal of the Indian people to be complete National Independence".

discussed, Mr. Gandhi said that he was not expected to be present at any of the meetings of the Committee because of his health. It was against the instruction of doctors and against the wishes of his friends that he had gone to Madras which he did only in order to help to the best of his ability Mr. Srinivasa Aiyengar and Dr. Ansari and to be available to them if at all it was necessary. He was not supposed to take any part in the deliberations of the Working Committee, Subjects Committee or even in the open Session. He never attended any of the Committee meetings except one informal meeting and attended the Congress at the opening only for a few minutes.

Our representative asked: "But is it true that you did not approve of the Independence Resolution?"

ANSWER: That is an open secret. But my disapproval of the Independence Resolution is based upon grounds that are not common to those who generally condemn the Independence Resolution. I dealt with the subject last year when the Independence resolution was passed and I have given my reasons for my attitude towards it. Let me, however, guard myself against any possible misunderstanding. I do not for one moment consider that India is not fit for independence, or that she is not ripe for it.

Our representative next mentioned the death¹ of Hakim Ajmal Khan and Mr. Gandhi made the following statement :

It is a great and grievous loss at this juncture. Hakim Ajmal Khan was one of the truest servants of India and for the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity he was one of the most invaluable men. I can but hope that what we did not do and learn during his lifetime we shall now learn after and by his death. If the accounts that have been published, viz., that Hindus took part in paying respect to the memory of the deceased in just as large numbers as the Mussalmans, are true, it is a very healthy sign and I hope that the spirit of brotherhood and friendliness that has been evoked in Delhi by his death will continue and become permanent and percolate throughout the length and breadth of the land.

For me the death of Hakimji is a deep personal loss. I entirely associate myself with the appeal issued by Dr. Ansari and other leaders that the National Muslim University at Delhi which Hakimji nursed with very delicate care should be placed beyond any risk by patriotic Indians subscribing to the Fund that Hakimji was raising for putting its finances on a firm footing. But, of course, the best monument to be raised to the memory of the great patriot would be to

¹ On 29-12-1927

bring about unbreakable unity between, Hindu, Mussalmans and other communities residing in India.

The Searchlight, 6-1-1928

87. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

December 31, 1927

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got both your letters. I have now returned to the Ashram, and shall know, therefore, what letters arrive. You gave at least one particular in your letter, and that was good. I understand what you say about Sastriji. You can boldly, but courteously, tell him what you may wish to. You have given a good description of your conversation with him.

I certainly like the idea of closing the Durban Office. Personally, I believe that, if the paper does not run on its own merit, we should not be too eager to continue it. If it runs on its own merit, it should without difficulty run even from Phoenix. Do not run it by incurring debts or simply for the sake of running it. In this matter, at any rate, please do accept my advice. If you find it difficult to stay there on this condition, both of you should return here. Do not wait till it is too late.

You have not replied to what I said about the money you owe to the Ashram. This is to remind you again.

And now to Sushila :

Your letters are dull. Manilal is justified in saying that, being very busy with work, he cannot write much, but you certainly ought to write. If you have interest in life, you will find much to write about. Sons and daughters fill sheets and sheets when writing to their parents about their happy and unhappy experiences, but your letters contain no more than a few lines. Your physique does not seem yet to have become stronger. If you wish, you may consult some doctor there. Do anything, but get strong. If you wish to return here, discuss the matter between you two. So far as I am concerned, you have my permission. It will also be for you to decide where you will live. You may live either here or at Akola. Think of me not as a father-in-law but as a father. In order that you may be able to do some service, it is also your duty to take care of your body. Do not neglect that duty.

I saw Nilkanth¹ yesterday. He has returned from Japan. You must have got his letter. Balubhai, too, saw me.

Let me know :

The time when you get up and the hours of meals. How often and what you eat. The day's time-table, the contacts you have made there, the expenses, etc. I had the cable signed by four of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4732

88. A NOTE

[1927]²

Pandit Satavalekar³ is a famous name. He is a great scholar of Sanskrit. Although he is a Maharashtrian, he publishes a Hindi periodical⁴ from Maharashtra and serves the cause of Hindi. He rejoices in the study of the *Vedas* and in discovering their hidden meaning. He cherishes ahimsa. He has sent to me the following thought-provoking letter⁵ in view of the current controversy.

From a photostat of the Hindi original: G. N. 1081

89. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday, 1927⁶

CHI. MANI,

I don't like your having an attack of fever and the persistent weakness since then. Undertake nothing beyond your physical capacity. I do not know if there is still time for it, but I shall be glad to know if you are elected a delegate to the Congress.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ Mashruwala

² From the contents, it appears that this was written around mid-1927, when there began a controversy surrounding the subject of cow-slaughter.

³ S. D. Satavalekar

⁴ *Vaidika Dharma*

⁵ Not available

⁶ For this and the subsequent letters of 1927, precise dates are not ascertainable.

[PS.]

If you see any newspaper reports about my health, be sure that they are exaggerated. There has been at times a rise and at other times a fall in the blood-pressure during this tour.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 58

90. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

1927

CHI. MANI,

Should people leave the Ashram when they fall ill? I do not even know where you have gone. Now that you have run away you must at any rate get well soon. Remember you are free to join me if you are not at ease. Self-denial pays only to the extent that it is endurable. If it does not pay, it is no good. Every day I wait for some news of you.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

You know the tour programme, don't you?

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 57

91. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

Monday [1927]¹

CHI. JAMNALAL,

Here is the letter from Rajendrababu. I had written to him that he might, if he liked, withdraw the case. But now it cannot be done because Baijnathji had already been told that it would be pursued. I am sorry about this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2881

¹ *Panchama Putrane Bapuna Ashirvad*, (p. 42) also places this along with letters for 1927.

92. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

*Saturday, [1927]*¹

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

Your letters come regularly and are a great help to me.

I knew that you would not misunderstand what I said to you about the diet.

You must win over Sarojini Devi with love. I have come to feel that she is a good-hearted lady.

Tell Pannalal that he should not spend money right now on building a new house, but should stay on Ashram land. He may pay rent or do whatever he thinks is right. A wealthy man should use the wealth in his possession as a trustee.

Your studies have now got into stride. All of you must give your utmost attention and gain as much as possible. One can progress a lot by doing this.

I am not defeated in our experiment with the children as I seemed to be with our women's wing. For the present, I can say that you have saved me from defeat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3128

93. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

*Silence Day, [1927]*²

CHI. GANGABEHN JHAVERI,

You stayed out for a sufficiently long time. You must have come back with greater peace of mind. I assume that you will have certainly improved your health. Make the Bal Mandir a beautiful place. Take care of Radha. She is without doubt an arduous worker.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 3121

¹ From *Manavtana Prahari*—Pannalal Jhaveri

² *ibid*

94. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[1927]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I am glad to have your letter.

Why do you have that swelling in the leg? You must make your body strong as steel.

If you are willing, I want to take a lot of work from you. For that, you must be completely absorbed in your work. If you absorb yourself in your work, you can conquer your attachment and passion. In this age there is no greater religion than service. In my view it is the greatest religion in all ages.

If you wish to equip yourself for the religion of service, master all the aspects of processing cotton. You must know to recognize the quality of cotton. You must know how to repair the spinning-wheel. You must know how to prepare the *mal* for the spinning-wheel. You must know ginning and carding. You must know how to determine the count, the strength, etc., of the spun yarn. Then only can it be said that you have become an expert.

Along with these, your study of Gujarati, Hindi and Sanskrit should continue. I need countless such girls. A widow who can be put on the path of self-development is in my view a maiden.

Feel free to write to me, like a daughter writing to her mother. Nanibehn should get well.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3134

95. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[1927]²

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I got both your letters. I have accumulated a pile of letters. I have been hoping every day to leave for the Ashram; meanwhile, I got your second letter.

You have done well in going back to the store. Put only as much

¹ From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Ashram Women", January 17, 1927 and "Letter to Gangabehn Jhaveri", about September 12, 1927.

² From the contents; *vide* and "Letter to Gangabehn Jhaveri", about September 12, 1927

burden on your body and mind as you can bear.

Give up your eagerness to learn many languages or pursue other studies. It is more necessary to improve one's mastery over what one has already learnt. You should learn Sanskrit even if you have to work by yourself. Your Gujarati is good enough, but why can't you learn it as well as the most learned teachers? If a rope can make dents on a granite rock, why can't we train ourselves by constant practice? If you have not gone far in your study of Marathi and if you have no special reason for learning it, give it up, but only if the time you save on it can be given to Gujarati and Sanskrit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 3125

96. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
*Monday [January 2, 1928]*¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got both your letters. On my part, I have tried my best to bring you here and am still trying. Let's see what God wills. Keep in mind the verse from the second chapter of the *Gita*: "Whose mind is untroubled in sorrows and longeth not for joys"².

My health is fair. I shall certainly be here for the next three months at least. Mrityunjaya³ and Vidyavati⁴ are both doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3303

¹ From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed stay at the Ashram "for the next three months", the letter appears to have been written in the first week of January 1928; *vide* "Letter to G. D. Birla", 5-1-1928.

² II. 56

³ Rajendra Prasad's son

⁴ Mrityunjaya's wife, Prabhavati's sister

97. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU¹

Not Revised

SATYGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 4, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I feel that you love me too well to resent what I am about to write. In any case I love you too well to restrain my pen when I feel I must write.

You are going too fast. You should have taken time to think and become acclimatized. Most of the resolutions you framed and got carried could have been delayed for one year. Your plunging into the ‘republican army’ was a hasty step. But I do not mind these acts of yours so much as I mind your encouraging mischief-makers and hooligans. I do not know whether you still believe in unadulterated non-violence. But even if you have altered your views, you could not think that unlicensed and unbridled violence is going to deliver the country. If careful observation of the country in the light of your European experiences convinces you of the error of the current ways and means, by all means enforce your own views, but do please form a disciplined party. You know the Cawnpore experiences. In every struggle bands of men who would submit to discipline are needed. You seem to be overlooking this factor in being careless about your instruments.

If I can advise you, now that you are the working secretary of the Indian National Congress, it is your duty to devote your whole energy to the central resolution, i.e., Unity, and the important but secondary resolution, i.e., boycott of the Simon Commission.² The Unity resolution³ requires the use of all your great gifts of organization and persuasion.

¹ This was published along with the following note from Jawaharlal Nehru: “I returned from Europe in December 1927 and went straight to the Madras Session of the Indian National Congress. A number of resolutions were passed there at my instance. This letter was written by Gandhiji because he did not approve of some of my activities at this session.”

² *Vide* Appendix “extract from Statement by the Viceroy on the Indian Statutory Commission”, November 8, 1927.

³ *Vide* Appendix “resolution on Hindu-Muslim Unity”, December 26, 1927.

I have not time to elaborate my points, but *verb. sap.*
I hope Kamala is keeping as well as in Europe.

Yours,
BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 55-6

98. *IN MEMORIAM*

In the death of Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan the country has lost one of its truest servants. Hakim Saheb's was a many-sided personality. He was not merely an able physician who practised his art as much for the rich as for the poor. But he was a courtier patriot. Though he passed his time among potentates, he was a thorough-going democrat. He was a great Mussalman and equally great Indian. He loved equally Hindus and Mussalmans and was in turn equally respected and loved by both. Hindu-Muslim unity was the breath of his nostrils. His later days were soured because of our dissensions. But he never lost faith in his country or his people. He felt that both the communities were bound in the end to unite. Having that unchangeable faith, he never ceased to work for unity. Though he took time, he finally threw in his lot with the non-co-operators and did not hesitate to put in peril his fondest and greatest creation, the Tibbia College. He loved this College with a passion which only those who knew him well could realize. In Hakimji I have lost not merely a wise and steadfast co-worker, I have lost a friend on whom I could rely in the hour of need. He was my constant guide in the matter of Hindu-Muslim unity. His judgement, sobriety and knowledge of human nature enabled him for the most part to give correct decisions. Such a man never dies. Though he is no longer in the flesh with us, his spirit shall be ever with us and calls us even now to a faithful discharge of our duty. And no memorial that we can raise to perpetuate his memory can be complete until we have achieved real Hindu-Muslim unity. May God grant that we may learn to do through his death what we failed to do in his lifetime.

But Hakimji was no idle dreamer. He believed in realizing his dream. As he realized his dream about medicine through the Tibbia College, so he sought partially to realize his political dream through the Jamia Millia. When this national university was almost on the point of dying, he, almost single-handed, carried out a plan of removing the institution from Aligarh to Delhi. But the removal meant more worry

for him. He believed himself hence forward to be specially responsible for the financial stability of the College. He was the principal man to find support for it either from his own pocket or by way of contributions collected from personal friends. The immediate and indispensable memorial that the nation can raise is to put the financial condition of the Jamia on a stable basis. Both Hindus and Mussalmans are and should be equally interested in it. It is one of the four national universities still struggling for existence, the other three being the Bihar, Kashi and Gujarat Vidyapiths. When the Jamia was brought into being Hindus subscribed liberally to it. The national ideal has been kept intact in this Muslim institution. I commend to the attention of the reader the note¹ prepared by Sjt. Ramachandran² out of his own experience covering over twelve months. In Principal Zakir Husain it has a learned Principal of liberal views and undoubted nationalism. The Principal is ably assisted by a chosen staff some of whom have travelled abroad and possess foreign degrees. The institution has grown since its transfer to Delhi and if it is well supported, it promises rich results. There can be no doubt that it is the duty of those Hindus and Mussalmans who wish to honour the memory of Hakim Saheb, who believe in the constructive side of non-co-operation and who believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, to give as much financial assistance as is possible for them to give. Dr. Ansari, Sjt. Srinivasa Aiyengar, Seth Jamnalal Bajaj and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru have already issued an appeal in this matter. I am now trying through Principal Zakir Husain to find out the exact condition and placing myself in correspondence with Dr. Ansari, and as soon as I have collected enough information, I hope to lay it before the readers. In the mean time I invite subscriptions so as not to lose time. The subscriptions received will not be handed to anyone unless a proper committee is formed and an absolutely correct administration of funds is assured. I do hope that Hindus and Mussalmans will vie with one another to well the subscription list.

Young India, 5-1-1928

¹ "What I Saw in the Jamia", published in *Young India*, 5-1-1928

² G. Ramachandran, a Gandhian educationist

99. THE NATIONAL CONGRESS

UNITY

The special feature of Dr. Ansari's speech was its intense hunger for unity. He knew that he was expected to bring it about. And if any single person could do it, it was certainly Dr. Ansari. He accepted the highest honour in the gift of the nation because he had confidence in the nation, the cause and himself. He certainly left no stone unturned to achieve his ambition. Stars favoured him. Sjt. Srinivasa Aiyengar helped him by his very recklessness. No other president would perhaps have dared as he did after the partial failure at Simla. But Sjt. Aiyengar was not the man to shrink. He took Dr. Ansari, the Ali Brothers, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and others with him and with his accustomed impetuosity carried his resolution. He was not committed to any formula. When the almost fatal flaw in the resolution about the cow and music was pointed out and a substitute submitted, he wholeheartedly, frankly and generously admitted the flaw and accepted the substitute as a great improvement on the original. The Mussalmans present rose to the occasion and, though not without some reluctance and hesitation at first, accepted the substitute without reserve. Pandit Malaviyaji had come with the full intention of accommodating himself to the general wish so far as it was possible for him. He knew and everybody realized that it was within his power to block the way. He did not. True, he had many amendments which he considered were necessary but he was not going to resist the resolution if his amendments could not be carried. Pandit Malaviyaji is probably the oldest Congressman. His loyalty to the Congress is beyond compare. His patriotism is of the highest order. But my Mussalman friends have hitherto always belittled my faith in his *bona fides* and nationalism as against communalism. I have never been able to suspect either even where I have not been able to share his views on Hindu-Muslim questions. It was, therefore, a great joy to me that the Ali Brothers warmly acclaimed his great speech on the unity resolution. So long as Hindu and Mussalman leaders distrust one another's motives, speeches and actions, there can be no real unity in spite of perfect resolutions. Let us hope that the trust generated at the meeting will continue and prove highly infectious. Maulana Mahomed Ali, in his joy over Malaviyaji's speech, said that the Mussalmans no longer wanted protection of minorities from Earl Winterton for it could be

better secured by Malaviyaji. If there be one Hindu who can guarantee such protection on behalf of Hindus it is Malaviyaji. But whether he can 'deliver goods' or not, I would like the Maulana and the other Mussalmans and all minorities once for all to renounce the idea of expecting or getting protection from a third party. It were better, if such protection be not given voluntarily by the majority, to wrest it by force from unwilling hands than that a third party should be invited to intervene and should weaken and humiliate both and hold the nation under bondage. The greatest contribution of the Congress then to me was this apparent change of heart.

So far as the vast mass of Hindus are concerned, they are interested only in the cow and music resolution. It was wholly bad in its original form. As it has finally emerged from the Subjects Committee and passed, all that can be said for it is that it is innocuous and that it is the best that could be had at this stage of the national evolution. But I for one cannot enthuse over it. I can only tolerate it as passable. Nevertheless it has great possibilities. If the appeal of the Congress penetrates the hearts of Hindus and Mussalmans and if each party spares the feelings of the other in terms of the claims advanced by each, peace is in sight and swaraj within easy grasp. A definite realization of the folly of fratricide and corresponding action will be the best and the most dignified answer to Lord Birkenhead's insolent flaunting of British might in the nation's face.

It is, therefore, profitable to examine the meaning of the Congress appeal. I know what would spare the Hindus' feeling in the matter of the cow. It is nothing short of complete voluntary stoppage of cow-slaughter by Mussalmans whether for sacrifice or for food. The Hindu dharma will not be satisfied if some tyrant secured by force of arms immunity of the cow from the slaughter. Islam in India cannot make a better gift to the Hindus than this voluntary self-denial. And I know enough of Islam to be able to assert that Islam does not compel cow-slaughter and it does compel its followers to spare and respect to the full the feelings of their neighbours whenever it is humanly possible. For me, music before mosques is not on a par with cow-slaughter. But it has assumed an importance which it would be folly to ignore. It is for the Mussalmans to say what would spare Mussalman feelings. And if complete stoppage of music before mosques will be the only thing that will spare the Mussalman feelings, it is the duty of the Hindus to do so without a moment's thought. If

we are to reach unity of hearts, we must each be prepared to perform an adequate measure of sacrifice.

If this much-to-be-desired consummation is to be reached, Dr. Ansari will have to send out peace parties with definite instructions to preach the message and secure for it the approval of the masses. Have we sufficient energy for the mission, have we enough honest, industrious and willing missionaries? Let us hope.

IRRESPONSIBILITY

Though I was not able to attend any of the Committee meetings, I could not fail to perceive that irresponsible talk and work were the order of the day. Indiscipline was not a rare feature. Resolutions involving great consequences were sprung upon the Subjects Committee and readily accepted by that august body without much thought or discussion. The Independence Resolution¹ that was rejected last year was passed almost without opposition. I know that its wording was harmless but, in my humble opinion, it was hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed. I hope to deal with this resolution separately in an early issue.²

The boycott of British goods resolution was passed with an equally light heart. The Congress stultifies itself by repeating year after year resolutions of this character when it knows that it is not capable of carrying them into effect. By passing such resolutions we make an exhibition of our impotence, become the laughing-stock of critics and invite the contempt of the adversary.

Let me not be misunderstood. The Congress has a perfect right to boycott British goods if it so wishes. But as the most representative assembly in India, it has no right to expose itself to ridicule by using threats which it cannot carry into effect. I have singled out but two out of the several irresponsible resolutions passed by the Congress.

The conception behind the Congress constitution was to make it the most representative and authoritative body in all India, and by its commanding voluntary obedience on the part of millions, automatically, almost imperceptibly to replace the sham enslaving assemblies and councils and other foreign machinery masquerading under the name of representative bodies. But the Congress cannot become the irresistible force it was and is intended to be, if its resolutions are ill-conceived and are to remain merely paper resolutions having no

¹ Vide footnote to "Interview to *Indian Daily Mail*", 30-12-1927

² Vide "Independence v. Swaraj", 12-1-1928.

response from the people or having no correspondence to the popular wants and aspirations and if the members are not to observe the rules of discipline, decorum and common honesty. If they only knew, if they would regard themselves as servants of the nation, the members of the All-India Congress Committee have the rights and opportunities of service equal to those of the members of any parliament in the world. But at the present moment, we have almost sunk to the level of the schoolboys' debating society.

The Working Committee is the national cabinet. It has to enforce the resolutions of the Congress and the All-India Congress Committee. It must, therefore, be the body responsible for bringing before the A.I.C.C. resolutions required for the attainment of the Congress goal. Any non-official resolutions sprung upon the A.I.C.C. must be carefully scrutinized and should have but a remote chance of passing, if opposed by the Working Committee. Every resolution, official or unofficial, must have behind it a working plan. When, therefore, an unofficial resolution is brought forward, the sponsor must be prepared to disclose his plan of action if his proposal is to be accepted. A resolution proposing the establishment in every village of a free night school for its adult population has everything to commend itself to a body like the Congress. But if the proposer has no definite feasible plan of action behind it, the A.I.C.C. would be justified and bound to reject it summarily. If then the Congress is to retain its prestige and usefulness, the members of the A.I.C.C. will have to revise their attitude and realize their great responsibility.

THE ELEPHANT AND THE ANT

In my humble opinion, the Reception Committee of the Congress at Madras committed a grave blunder by permitting and countenancing the so-called All-India Exhibition under its aegis. That it received Government patronage and *imprimatur* adds nothing to its merit, if it does not rob it of what little merit it otherwise might have had. The Congress long ago outlived Government favours and frowns. The ideals for which the Congress has been working since, say, 1918, to go no further back, were almost all ignored in the plan of this Exhibition. Let me point out what the All-India Exhibition contained. Among the pavilions were several assigned to foreign firms for exhibiting their wares, one assigned to machinery and mechanical contrivances, some to textiles containing foreign yarn, others to foreign clocks and watches. There was little of swadeshi, much of

foreign and British goods about the Exhibition, and this in the name of and under the patronage of a Congress which promulgates the gospel of swadeshi and which has on its programme a boycott of British goods! There was hardly anything to interest or instruct the villagers. The Exhibition represented not the rural civilization of India, but the exploiting city civilization of the West. It was a denial of the Congress spirit and was in marked contrast to the khadi and swadeshi exhibitions of the past six years. The textile court seemed to have been designed to ridicule khadi although the Congress still retains the khadi franchise and lends its name to the activities of the All-India Spinners' Association. As if the visitors were to be all English, all the notices were printed in English. Here is one designed to belittle khadi.

Feed the poor and work the able.

Let the charkha spin the weft

And the mill the warp.

In this combination lies the solution

Unless the author of this notice has a deliberately mischievous intention, he has demonstrated his ignorance of the evolution of khadi. The fallacy of charkha weft and mill warp has been often exposed and refuted in these columns. Suffice it here to say that the charkha would have died a well-deserved death if the policy of using charkha yarn for weft only had long continued. Experience has shown that the combination was bad in every respect.

Here is another equally, if not more, mischievous poster :

To force a weaver to use hand-spun warp yarn

Is like forcing him to fight a battleship with a knife.

To cut a weaver off from best methods of work

Is like cutting off his thumbs.

This poster betrays venomous prejudice against khadi and ignorance of the art of weaving and the condition of weavers. The writer forgets that all the world over, a time was when weavers took delight in using hand-spun yarn both for weft and warp and that the art then exhibited by the weaver has never yet been excelled. The writer could easily have corrected himself by visiting the khadi court outside the precious All-India Exhibition court. He would there have seen weavers actually working fairy tales on hand-spun warp with the same ease and facility that they would have with mill-spun yarn. It is easy of proof that, whereas mill-spun yarn must in time—not far off—

kill out the weaver, hand-spun yarn must revive and is reviving the weaver and has already rescued some of them from the butcher's trade and closet-cleaning work. Every ten hand-spinners mean an addition of one whole-time weaver, one whole-time carder, not to mention more work for dhobis, tailors, carpenters, blacksmiths, dyers, printers, etc.

The coming into being of this foreign and anti-India-spirit exhibition under the Congress aegis is an ocular and forcible demonstration of the irresponsibility to which I have already adverted. I do not think any Congressman deliberately countenanced this white elephant. Want of thought, want of care, want of responsibility are answerable for—I cannot help calling—this scandalous creation.

There was no doubt the ant of the Khadi Exhibition was happily thrown outside the elephant court. Rumour has it that the Madras Government would not have a Khadi Exhibition inside the all-india court. It certainly suited me. For, having gained a knowledge of what this all-india exhibition was, I would have found it difficult, if not impossible, even for opening the Khadi Exhibition to enter what was chiefly a foreign court—a reminder of national humiliation. The Khadi Exhibition on the other hand was, though like an ant, a work of indigenous art. It was a school for study and demonstration of the potency of khadi. There was beside it an Indian fine arts court, a result of the devoted labours of Dr. J. H. Cousins. No doubt there were a few other things purely Indian or a result of Indian enterprise in the so-called All-India Exhibition. But they only served to entrap the unwary and as a shield for the predominant foreign show.

Let future Reception Committees beware.

Young India, 5-1-1928

100. A CALL TO INDIA'S POETESS

Shrimati Sarojini Devi has received a call¹ from America chiefly for the purpose of undoing the mischief created by Miss Mayo's untruthful and libellous production. No writing undertaken in India can possibly overtake the mischief done by that sensation-monger who has the ear of a gullible public—hungering for and living on sensation. No serious American can possibly be taken in by Miss Mayo's scurrilous writings. The seriously-minded American does not

¹ Vide "Cable to Dhan Gopal Mukerjee", 14-11-1927.

need any refutation. And the general public that has been already affected by *Mother India* will never read the refutations, however brilliant, attempted in India. The idea, therefore, has been happily conceived in America of bringing out Sarojini Devi on a lecturing tour by way of reply to *Mother India*. If Sarojini Devi would respond to the invitation, her visit is likely to undo some at least of the mischief wrought by Miss Mayo's novel. That the Poetess would draw crowds wherever she goes and command a patient and respectful hearing need not be doubted. She is as sure by the magic of her eloquence to captivate American imagination as she captivated South African and paved the way for the Round Table Conference, and finally for the great work that the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri is doing in South Africa. Let us hope that the way would be clear for her to accept the invitation and that Dr. Ansari would be able to spare her for the foreign mission that seems to call this gifted daughter of India.

Young India, 5-1-1928

101. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 5, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

You must have received my letter sent with Jamnalalji. I had also sent a telegram asking you not to attend the Assembly till your health returned to normal. I wanted to mention this to the *pujya* Malaviyaji but we were so busy with other things that I did not remember you. I see no need of writing to him now. You must have sent the money to Jamnalalji? I have not yet heard about it.

The *pujya* Malaviyaji's speech had a magic effect and he proposes to make a mighty effort in this matter. Let us see what happens. Up to the end of March, I shall be at the Ashram itself. On the 17th I shall have to leave for Kathiawar on a five days' tour.¹

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6151. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹ For the Kathiawar Political Conference

102. FOREWORD TO 'SRIMAD BHAGAVADGEETHAI' ¹

SABARMATI,

Paush Shukla 14, 1984 [January 6, 1928]

I am not conversant enough with the Tamil language to be able to say anything on the merits of this translation of the *Gita*. But this I can certainly say, that no Hindu should let a single day pass without the study of *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita*. The translation will be of use to those who cherish the *Gita*.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 11167. Courtesy: C. Vishvanathan

103. LETTER TO MAGANLAL GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Friday [January 6, 1928]*²

CHI. MAGANLAL,

I cannot give a full reply to your letter just now. More when we meet.

The wool and sericulture businesses are good. We can take them up to a certain extent. Talk it over with me further.

I shall not have to give my blessings to Kusum, as I will not be attending that marriage. It seems to me that we must break the walls which divide the communities. But you may discuss this matter further with me. You may also talk to me about Navin and Dhiru. If Maneklal and others bear their own expenses, we should certainly keep them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9167. Courtesy: Radhabehn Choudhri

¹ A Tamil version of the *Bhagavad Gita* done in 1912 by Subramania Bharati, a Tamil poet and patriot, *Srimad Bhagavadgeethai* was published in 1928. Gandhiji wrote this foreword in Hindi at the request of Bharati's brother, C. Visvanathan.

² The letter was received by the addressee on January 7, 1928.

104. LETTER TO RATILAL

Friday [January 6, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI RATILAL

I passed on your telegram to the Committee here and then wired to Maganlal. We do feel Chi. Narandas's absence here. We must leave off our attachment to friends and relatives. I know that this is difficult to do, but we should try and overcome it as much as we can. Tell Sakubhai to have the utmost patience.² It is but the nature of the body to wear away. Tell Chi. Narandas that I got his letter.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 7160

105. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 7, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have been waiting to hear from you. It is clear that you are not yet fit for travelling. This fever must have brought on additional weakness and retarded convalescence. I hope however that the fever has not recurred.

I am glad Jawaharlal and Bharucha passed some time with you.

You will have seen that I anticipated you about the precious exhibition and many other things.

How is Nikhil³ and how did Hemaprabha Devi feel?

I seem to be keeping well.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1580

¹ As in the G.N. Register

² *Vide* also "Letter to Ratilal", January 18, 1928.

³ Addressee's son who was seriously ill and later died in July 1928

106. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

Saturday [January 7, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. I am all right. You will be surprised to know that I have not yet been able to see Moti or the child. I am completely engrossed in my daily work. Come and pay a visit when you can. Kusumbehn told me that you were suffering from megrim. It is a bad disease. A mud-pack helps in curing it. The diet should of course be light. Kusumbehn's manner of working is a bit too fastidious. She has not yet chosen her work. She takes up whatever work she feels like doing. But there is no need to worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL CHOKSI

SEVASHRAM

BROACH

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12142

107. DISCOURSES ON THE "GITA"²

January 7, 1928

This chapter³ is as sweet as the manner in which it has been sung. It is balm for people like us who suffer from inner torments. We are all troubled by evil desires, and the Lord holds out an assurance here to all those who seek refuge in Him that He will free them from such desires. We can also see from this chapter that at the time when the *Gita* was composed, distinctions of high and low had already made their appearance in the varnashrama system and some had come to be regarded as lower than others. In truth, however, can we describe anyone as higher or lower than others? Let him who is completely free from evil desires point an accusing finger at another. All of us are equal in this regard, and this chapter points out the unfailing means of winning-freedom from evil cravings, namely, total surrender to the

¹ From the postmark

² *Young India*, 12-1-1928, and *Navajivan*, 15-1-1928, also carried reports of the discourses which were delivered on January 6 and 7.

³ IX

Lord. We should not of course conclude from this that such surrender will by itself, without further effort on our part, purify us of our evil. If a person who is dragged by his senses, against his will, to objects of pleasures turns to God for help, with tears in his eyes, as he ceaselessly struggles against them, the Lord will certainly free him from the evil desires which trouble him.

Another thought also arises out of it, but we shall consider it tomorrow.

That thought is that this also explains the means of expiation of one's sins. Such expiation consists not in fasting, but in *bhakti*, in self-surrender. I fully understand the usefulness of fasting but there are also limits to it. Fasting can never expiate a sin; it may, on the contrary, serve to cover it up. A sinner is one who has committed a sin, but *papayoni* means one born of sin itself and therefore the most wicked of all sinners. We cannot say to whom this notion first occurred, but everyone is assured of freedom through total surrender to the Lord. Expiation of sin consists in *bhakti*. Fasting may seem necessary sometimes as a means of filling the heart with *bhakti*, and everyone may decide for himself when it is so. The real means, however, is *bhakti*, and *bhakti* means reducing oneself to a cipher, erasing the 'I'. If we can do this, no matter how many our sins in the past, they will not stand in the way of our freedom. The thoroughly wicked mentioned in this chapter are none else but ourselves. We, who commit all manner of sins in our hearts and move in the world as respectable people, are sinners, all of us, and in this chapter the Lord holds out an assurance to us.

Chapter XIV contains a description of the three *gunas* and Chapter XV a description of *Purushottama*¹. Thirty years ago I read Drummond's² book in which he had established by means of several examples that the rules of the material world apply to the spiritual world also. We see it proved in this world which is made of the three *gunas*. There are not three *gunas* but many; those three are the major divisions of the many. He who transcends those three becomes one with *Purushottama*. None has been born in this world who could exist with only one *guna*. Even if a man possesses a high degree of the *sattvik guna*, the latter still includes something of the *gunas* of *tamas*

¹ The Supreme Being

² Dr. Henry Drummond, author of *The Natural Law in the Spiritual World* and *The Greatest Thing in the World*

and *rajas*. The example of water occurs to me. In the form of ice, it remains like a stone. But when it boils and becomes steam, it rises in the sky. As ice it lacks the capacity to rise, but as steam, it ascends higher and higher. Its highest power appears in the form of steam. And finally, ceasing to be steam, it becomes a cloud and benefits the world in the form of rain. However, if steam becomes ice, it lies dead and still. Ice too has its uses. Melted ice flows in the form of rivers. It also causes floods but we are not concerned with that. It is a proven fact that without the sun, even water cannot turn into steam. But that shows that it cannot do without someone else's help. The long and short of what I want to say is that steam points to a state of *moksha*. It benefits the world in its state of *moksha*. This is how we should understand the meaning of these two chapters.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

108. ARTICLES ON COW-PROTECTION

The following are the details¹ regarding the Rs. 150/- received from Dhulia as aid towards publishing the articles on cow-protection.

In addition, the *Navajivan* has received Rs. 50-8-0, details² of which are given below :

The publication of this book will be taken up early. However, those wishing to serve the cause of cow-protection should bear it in mind that more money received by way of aid will bring down the selling price of the book.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1928

¹ Not translated here

² *ibid*

109. THE EFFICACY OF MUD

In my book on health and hygiene¹ I wrote at length on the use of mud in treating ailments. Having read it, Shri Vithaldas Purushottam who has been giving a trial to this treatment writes to say :²

On reading this, I asked him to enlighten me about his own experience whereupon he wrote the following letter³ :

The suggestions put forward in both these letters may be freely utilized in treating many ailments. I am of the opinion that mud cannot be placed directly on the skin where there is an wound or the skin has peeled off. It can certainly be applied in this manner on the lower part of the abdomen and those who do not benefit by using a pack of mud wrapped up in cloth may certainly place it directly over the skin. Even at present, I am experimenting with mud in ordinary cases and am getting good results. This remedy is so simple, inexpensive and so easy that everyone could make use of it within limits. True, the treatment of placing mud on the abdomen can be carried out only on an empty stomach. One should also remember that the mud should always be taken from a clean place. Ice is used for headache or fever; in such cases, mud is generally more efficacious than ice.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-1-1928

110. LETTER TO RAJA OF KANIKA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was sorry that during my recent tour in Utkal I was not able to visit your Raj and see for myself whether there was anything in the allegations made to me about the oppression of the ryots. These allegations were vehemently repeated by many people during the

¹ "General Knowledge about Health"; later published in book form.

² The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had written that mud treatment was quite effective even in ailments like appendicitis and that he had personal experience in the matter.

³ Not translated here

tour. But I have said nothing about them before putting myself in communication with you once more. Could you entertain the idea of a representative being sent to find me the truth about the allegations?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

THE RAJA OF KANIKA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13035

111. LETTER TO W. H. PITT

[January 8, 1928]¹

DEAR MR. PITT,

I wonder if you received a letter² to you now some weeks ago inquiring whether any headway was being made with the matters of Tiruvarppu and Suchindram? I am having constant inquiry.

M. K. GANDHI

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13035A

112. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI, B.B.C.I. RY.,

January 8, 1928

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I was delighted to hear from you. I have often wondered why you had been silent. You must take care of yourself and preserve the body for future use. I am keeping well enough for the work. The reports were exaggerated.

Do please come to the Ashram as to your own home and stay as long as you like. You will tell me what conveniences you will need in the interest of your health. The weather just now is cold, dry and good.

As for the help for khadi work please continue to knock at the

¹ This letter is drafted on the reverse of the preceding item which is dated 8-1-1928.

² *Vide* "Letter to W. H. Pitt", 14-10-1927.

door of the A.I.S.A. You know that I am not exercising administrative control for reasons of health. You have therefore to convince Sheth Jamnalalji and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker. I shall speak to them. Of course the financiers of the A.I.S.A. are not over-flourishing. What I collected in Karnataka and Tamil Nad has to be spent mostly in those provinces.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 11034

113. MESSAGE TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA¹

[Before January 9, 1928]

MY DEAR PROFESSORS AND BOYS,

Thakkar Saheb asks me to send you a message of hope, when the calamity in the death of Hakim Saheb has overtaken us. Let the deceased's spirit ever abide with us. Let us keep his memory for ever green by making the Jamia a living temple of unity. You must not lose hope. The Jamia cannot perish so long as the professors and the boys are true to it. For my part you have my promise that, God willing, I shall use all the powers that He may give me, for putting the institution on a sound financial basis.

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 9-1-1928

¹ This was read out at a meeting of the staff and students of the Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi, held to mourn the death of Hakim Ajmal Khan.

114. TELEGRAM TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA¹

[On or after *January 9, 1928*]

TIBBIA WELL PROVIDED. JAMIA BEING GROWING INSTITUTION
REQUEST YOUR SUPPORT. REFERENCE UNITY THINK YOU ANSARI
SHOULD TRAVEL HOLD JOINT MEETINGS PASS RESOLUTIONS
DELHI OTHER PLACES. OTHERS MAY ALSO BE SENT ELSEWHERE
SAME ERRAND. YOU MAY COMMENCE WITH BENARES.

GANDHI

Show me the clean copy before despatch. This telegram to be sent by the carriage that will presently come. If it does not, then it only be sent to Sabarmati.²

From a photostat: S.N. 14905

115. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

SABARMATI,

January 10, 1928

MY DEAR BHRRR,

Yes, Hakim Saheb's death is a serious national loss. Let us hope the nation will turn it to good account.

Wednesday or Thursday between 3.5 p.m. will quite suit me.

With love,

BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9561

¹ In reply to the following telegram received from the addressee on January 9: "Thanks for letter. Lala Sultansingh of Delhi met me Calcutta told me Jamia Islamia would not appeal Hindus. Tibbia College will agree with this opinion but I will support whatever you decide. What do you propose regarding Hindu-Muslim work? Agree should not delay action."

² These were evidently instructions to a secretary.

116. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Monday [January 10, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

It is good that you have started the mud-pack treatment. After moistening the earth once, you need not do it again. If the pack dries up and if it is still necessary to continue the application, you may prepare another pack. If the pack is about an inch thick, it does not dry up. A pack applied on the stomach at night remains damp the whole night. One applied on the head during the noon is likely to dry up. Never put a pack on the stomach during the day, because the process of digestion is going on then. My experience about fragrant, i.e., clean red earth is good, but you may use black earth if you can get only that. The only thing is that it should be clean.

You should be careful about two things only as regards blood-pressure. You should not overwork either physically or mentally, and the motion must always be clear. If you do not have a clear motion every day, take an enema or a laxative. Never strain. Eat very light food. One need not worry about blood-pressure at all, if there is no other complaint. Since, however, you have had an attack of paralysis, you should certainly be careful. In addition to what you are doing, you may certainly take the injections, if advised by the doctor, since they have helped you. The headache should certainly be cured by the mud-pack. Even for this purpose, however, the stomach should be light.

Prabodh seems to be a very fine boy. May God fulfil all our hopes about him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12143

¹ As entered in the source; however, January 10 was a Tuesday.

117. LETTER TO KANTIPRASAD C. ANTANI

SABARMATI,
[January 10, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI KANTIPRASAD²,

I have received your book. It will be difficult for me just now to find time to read it carefully. The remedies for the evils of the Indian States are not different. I therefore find it hard to spare time for a study of their special problems.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Purushartha Kantiprasad Antani, pp. 79-80

118. LETTER TO KUNVERJI K. PAREKH

*Tuesday [January 10, 1928]*³

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. Rami⁴ will reach here today. Let me know what work is being done there and how it is progressing. Tell me how you found Rami this time and also make whatever suggestions you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9705

¹ From the postmark

² Kantiprasad Chandrashankar Antani, a political worker of Cutch

³ As in the S.N. Register

⁴ Addressee's wife

119. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI¹

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I have your sweet letter. It reminded me of the head master in Tiruppur who, having been your pupil, told me that you were as much master of Sanskrit as of English. I did not know this. I have read Valmiki only in translation and that indifferently. It is Tulsidas I swear by. But I admit all you say and would yet hold that Sita did go to the forest in spite of Rama's wish to the contrary. And in doing so, she excelled herself. Similarly did Rama excel himself in carrying out the promise of Dasharatha. But I am arguing to no purpose. For we are alone in the homage we owe to Rama and Sita.

I am watching your movements and prize copies of your letters to Sir Mohammad Habibullah².

You will have to prolong your stay if you are to put your great work on a sure foundation. Please do.

With love,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 171

¹ The following is an extract from a letter from Sastri to T. N. Jagadisan (1940): "Gandhi's letter to me on the *Ramayana* question is really in his best style. I was in South Africa at the time. In a speech to women in Travancore State, he had told them that Sita disobeyed her husband in following him to the forest, and that a husband's order could therefore be set aside when there was sufficient cause. I wrote protesting against the obvious misreading of Valmiki. . . ."

² Member, Viceroy's Executive Council and leader of the Indian delegation which went to South Africa in November, 1926

120. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 11, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. It would be enough if the Maulana can secure you more custom.

Love,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS BABU

KHADI PRATISHTHAN

CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G.N. 1581

121. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 11, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You letter.

I hope Chand¹ is out of the wood.

My point² is not that you had not thought out any of your resolutions, much less the Independence one; but my point is that neither you nor anyone else had thought out the whole situation and considered the bearing and propriety of the resolutions. The finest resolutions may be irrelevant or out of place. But you should read carefully my article on the Congress. The special article on Independence will be out tomorrow.

The Unity resolution need much working out.

Do come whenever you can and when you come bring your work here and give yourself enough time.

This is scrappy but can't give you more just now.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Eldest daughter of Vijayalakshmi Pandit

² *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 4-1-1928.

122. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI¹

[Before January 12, 1928]

I have to give you this evening an instance of a folly of which three of us have an equal share. Or rather my share is the biggest inasmuch as I, as the head of the Ashram, am expected to be much more vigilant than anyone of you.

Mnay of us could not imagine what this would be. But he narrated it in vivid and, as he is wont to describe his mistakes, in exaggerated detail. Those who have seen Gandhiji's room in the Ashram will remember that between the wall which faces the river and the roof there is a piece of lattice work. It is meant for ventilation, but it also lets in the sun's rays straight on Gandhiji's face. So he asked one of us to put something there as a screen. This friend asked another who immediately brought in the carpenter with a board. He naturally thought a shutter would be better than a screen, and asked if Gandhiji would like it. Gandhiji agreed, but soon after the carpenter began his work, he seemed to have perceived that he had not done the right thing. . . .

Now this is not what we who are pledged to poverty may do. It ought to have occurred to me that a piece of cardboard or a piece of cloth would serve as well as this shutter which costs a couple of rupees and three hours' labour for the carpenter. The cardboard or the piece of old cloth would have cost nothing and anyone could have fixed it there with a couple of nails. It is in these simple little things that our creed is tested. The Kingdom of Heaven is for those who are poor in spirit. Let us therefore learn at every step to reduce our needs and wants to the terms of the poor and try to be truly poor in spirit.

Young India, 12-1-1928

123. SPEECH ON HUMILITY²

SABARMATI,

[Before January 12, 1928]

Well, I do not remember the exact words of the song. But no one can forget the substance of the song. It is not only the music, but the substance that has been haunting me the whole day. You do not come to prayer to listen to music, or to admire this man's or that

¹ From Mahadev Desai's article "The Week", which reported the speech under the caption "The Poor in Spirit"

² Extracted from Mahadev Desai's account of a prayer meeting

man's voice, but in order that you may carry with you for the day something from what you hear to guide and inspire you in all your actions. If we do not do so, all our prayers would be like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. What a great song was today's! Kabir, in his homely telling way, has described the treasures of the humble. It is not he that exalteth himself, but he that humbleth himself that shall see God, says Kabir. We have to be humble like the ant and not proud like the elephant.

Young India, 12-1-1928

124. SPEECH ON FORGIVENESS¹

SABARMATI,

[Before *January 12, 1928*]

This talk of passive non-resistance has been the bane of our national life. Forgiveness is a quality of the soul, and therefore a positive quality. It is not negative. "Conquer anger," says Lord Buddha, "by non-anger." But what is that "non-anger"? It is a positive quality and means the supreme virtue of charity or love. You must be roused to this supreme virtue which must express itself in your going to the angry man, ascertaining from him the cause of his anger, making amends if you have given any cause for offence and then bringing home to him the error of his way and convincing him that it is wrong to be provoked. This consciousness of the quality of the soul, and deliberate exercise of it, elevate not only the man but the surrounding atmosphere. Of course, only he who has that love will exercise it. This love can certainly be cultivated by incessant striving.

Young India, 12-1-1928

¹ From Mahadev Desai's article "The Week", which reported the speech under the caption "The Essence of Forgiveness". It was preceded by the following paragraph: "One of the candidates for the Khadi Service went in one day with his own ailment. He said he was very much prone to anger and he wanted to cleanse himself with fasting. 'I warn you,' said Gandhiji, 'that fasting is not always a penance for sins. Humble surrender to God is the only escape from sin, and all fasting, except when it is undertaken to help that surrender, is useless. I would suggest a better remedy. Go and apologize to the man you were angry with, ask him to prescribe the penance for you and do that. That will be much better expiation than fasting.' The friend went and did likewise. But what should the man who has been wronged do in this case? Simply forgive? Forgiveness, we have been told, is the ornament of the brave, but what is that forgiveness? Passivity? Taking the blow lying down? Is that the meaning of not resisting evil? This was the subject of a talk one evening and I summarize it briefly :"

125. *INDEPENDENCE* v. *SWARAJ*

It is said that the Independence Resolution is a fitting answer to Lord Birkenhead. If this be a serious contention, we have little notion of the answer that we should make to the appointment of the Statutory Commission and the circumstances attending the announcement of the appointment. The act of appointment needs, for an answer, not speeches, however heroic they may be, not declarations, however brave they may be, but corresponding action adequate to the act of the British Minister, his colleagues and his followers. Supposing the Congress had passed no resolution whatsoever, but had just made a bonfire of every yard of foreign cloth in its possession, and induced a like performance on the part of the whole nation, it would have been some answer, though hardly adequate, to what the act of appointment means. If the Congress could have brought about a strike of every Government employee beginning with the Chief Judges and ending with the petty peons, not excluding soldiers, that act would have been a fairly adequate answer. It would certainly have disturbed the comfortable equanimity with which the British ministers and those concerned are looking upon all our heroics.

It may be said this is merely a counsel of perfection which I should know is not capable of execution. I do not hold that view. Many Indians who are not speaking today are undoubtedly preparing in their own manner for the happy day when every Indian, now sustaining the system of Government which holds the nation in bondage, will leave the denationalizing service. It is contended that it is courage, it is undoubtedly wisdom, to restrain the tongue whilst one is unprepared for action. Mere brave speech without action is letting off useless steam. And the strongest speech shed its bravery when, in 1920, patriots learnt to court imprisonment for strong speeches. Speech is necessary for those who are dumbstruck. Restraint is necessary for the garrulous. The English administrators chaff us for our speech and occasionally betray by their acts their contempt of our speeches and thereby tell us more effectively than by words: 'Act if you dare.' Till we can take up the challenge, every single threatening speech or gesture of ours is, in my opinion, a humiliation, and admission of impotence. I have seen prisoners in chains spitting forth oaths only to provide mirth for their jailors.

Moreover, has independence suddenly become a goal in answer

to something offensive that some Englishman has done? Do men conceive their goals in order to oblige people or to resent their action? I submit that, if it is a goal, it must be declared and pursued irrespective of the acts or threats of others.

Let us, therefore, understand what we mean by independence. England, Russia, Spain, Italy, Turkey, Chile, Bhutan have all their independence. Which independence do we want? I must not be accused of begging the question. For, if I were told that it is Indian independence that is desired, it is possible to show that no two persons will give the same definition. The fact of the matter is that we do not know our distant goal. It will be determined not by our definitions but by our acts, voluntary and involuntary. If we are wise, we will take care of the present and the future will take care of itself. God has given us only a limited sphere of action and a limited vision. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof.

I submit that swaraj is an all-satisfying goal for all time. We the English-educated Indians often unconsciously make the terrible mistake of thinking that the microscopic minority of English-speaking Indians is the whole of India. I defy anyone to give for independence a common Indian word intelligible to the masses. Our goal at any rate may be known by an indigenous word understood of the three hundred millions. And we have such a word in 'swaraj' first used in the name of the nation by Dadabhai Naoroji.¹ It is infinitely greater than and includes independence. It is a vital word. It has been sanctified by the noble sacrifices of thousands of Indians. It is a word which, if it has not penetrated the remotest corner of India, has at least got the largest currency of any similar word. It is a sacrilege to displace that word by a foreign importation of doubtful value. This Independence Resolution is perhaps the final reason for conducting Congress proceedings in Hindustani and that alone. No tragedy like that of the Independence Resolution would then have been possible. The most valiant speakers would then have ornamented the native meaning of the word 'swaraj' and attempted all kinds of definitions, glorious and inglorious. Would that the independents would profit by their experience and resolve henceforth to work among the masses for whom they desire freedom and taboo English speech in its entirety in so far as mass meetings such as the Congress are concerned.

¹ In his presidential address at the Calcutta Congress in 1906, Dadabhai Naoroji used the word 'swaraj' as a synonym for 'self-government'.

Personally, I crave not for 'independence', which I do not understand, but I long for freedom from the English yoke. I would pay any price for it. I would accept chaos in exchange for it. For the English peace is the peace of the grave. Anything would be better than this living death of a whole people. This Satanic has well-nigh ruined this fair land materially, morally and spiritually. I daily see its law-courts denying justice and murdering truth. I have just come from terrorized Orissa. This rule is using my own countrymen for its sinful sustenance. I have a number of affidavits swearing that, in the district of Khurda, acknowledgments of enhancement of revenue are being forced from the people practically at the point of the bayonet. The unparalleled extravagance of this rule has demented the Rajas and the Maharajas who, unmindful of consequences, ape it and grind their subjects to dust. In order to protect its immoral commerce, this rule regards no means too mean, and in order to keep three hundred millions under the heels of a hundred thousand, it carries a military expenditure which is keeping millions in a state of semi-starvation and polluting thousands of mouths with intoxicating liquor.

But my creed is non-violence under all circumstances. My method is conversion, not coercion; it is self-suffering, not the suffering of the tyrant. I know that method to be infallible. I know that a whole people can adopt it without accepting it as its creed and without understanding its philosophy. People generally do not understand the philosophy of all their acts. My ambition is much higher than independence. Through the deliverance of India, I seek to deliver the so-called weaker races of the earth from the crushing heels of Western exploitation in which England is the greatest partner. If India converts, as it can convert, Englishmen, it can become the predominant partner in a world commonwealth of which England can have the privilege of becoming a partner if she chooses. India has the right, if she only knew, of becoming the predominant partner by reason of her numbers, geographical position and culture inherited for ages. This is big talk, I know. For a fallen India to aspire to move the world and protect weaker races is seemingly an impertinence. But in explaining my strong opposition to this cry for independence, I can no longer hide the light under a bushel. Mine is an ambition worth living for and worth dying for. In no case do I want to reconcile myself to a state lower than the best for fear of consequences. It is, therefore, not out of expedience that I oppose independence as my goal. I want India to come to her own and that state cannot be better

defined by any single word than 'swaraj'. Its content will vary with the action that the nation is able to put forth at a given moment. India's coming to her own will mean every nation doing likewise.

Young India, 12-1-1928

126. TAKING UNLAWFUL LIBERTY

A Sindhi friend writes :

I am enclosing herewith a cutting from the *Sind Observer* of Karachi wherein you will find your name among others used in support of medicines sought to be popularized and sold through the medium of such advertisements.

I can hardly believe you could have spoken or written appreciatively of the medicines, mixtures, pills or potions of the pharmacy in question.

I hope you would write in *Young India* about this matter.

I have seen the advertisement too. It is taking an unlawful liberty with my name and, I doubt not, the names of other leaders. It is remarkable the freedom these pharmacies take in order to find custom for their wretched traffic. In my opinion this use of names of persons without their permission is an illegality punishable in law. Since, as a non-co-operator, I may not seek the protection of the law, I must be satisfied with warning the public against being misled by the use of my name in connection with any drug whatsoever. My disbelief in drugs in general is as strong as ever notwithstanding the very limited use by me in recent times of one or two comparatively harmless and well-known opening drugs and quinine. I have no desire to see pharmacies multiplied in this country, I would rather see people freed from the slavery of drugs.

Young India, 12-1-1928

127. MADRAS KHADI EXHIBITION

Mr. Polak being in Madras during the Congress Week, I invited him to visit the Khadi Exhibition and give me his criticism. He has now sent me a letter from which I take the following extract ¹ :

Though the criticism is not a considered opinion it will be useful to the organizers of future exhibitions. I do not share the view that educated Indians will not patronize khadi unless they have it supplied

¹ Not reproduced here. Polak had criticized the Exhibition for the bad site and defective arrangements.

to them on the same terms as machine-made cloth as to price, quality, durability, etc. Whilst they do expect a particular standard to satisfy their artistic taste, they are gladly paying extra cost, and are by no means insistent on equality with machine-made cloth in point of quality.

The knowledge that khadi supports the poorest of the land who would otherwise be without such support is a great determining factor with the educated and well-to-do classes in buying khadi. But that of course is no reason for khadi producers to be remiss in their attempt to improve the quality. Indeed the advance made in this direction is highly encouraging. The workers are not going to be contented with anything less than the excellence that khadi had when there was no machine-made cloth and which no machine has been yet able even to equal.

Young India, 12-1-1928

128. MUKUNDAN'S PENANCE

One of Chakravarti Rajagopalachari's ambitions seems to be to write touching stories for *Young India*. The one that follows has like all his stories a moral behind it. This one is an 'untouchable' story¹. May it melt some stony 'touchable' heart!

Young India, 12-1-1928

129. MYSORE GOVERNMENT'S KHADI CENTRE

The Mysore Government have taken up an experiment in khadi production and have started work in real earnest at a centre called Badanval, taking advantage of help from the A.I.S.A. in regard to workers and plan of work. Sjt. Rajagopalachari has received a letter from one of the workers from which the following interesting account of progress of work is extracted.² It shows how easily khadi spreads if the work is started on right lines in rural areas where the need for a supplementary occupation is keenly felt.

Young India, 12-1-1928

¹ Not reproduced here

² The extracts are not reproduced here.

130. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 12, 1928

RESPECTED SISTER,

You must have heard about the three-day convention of the International Fellowship¹ we are going to hold here. We shall be grateful if you can make available your Ford car on the 13th, 14th and 15th. It should remain with us for the whole day. It will be a convenience if the guests want to go some where .

Bapuji has further suggested that Ambalalbai and you should invite the guests for tea on the last day, that is, Sunday, in the evening at 3.30 or 4, or later at 7.30 or 8. I am enclosing the list of all the members. You may come here tomorrow or the day after and meet them and personally invite the Secretary of the convention, Mr. Paul². But Bapu feels it would be nice if you could meet all of them and on the occasion of their visit invite a few of your friends in Ahmedabad.

Do send a reply.

Yours obediently,

MAHADEV DESAI

From the Gujarati Original: C.W. 11158. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

131. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

SATYAGRAHASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Thursday, January 12, 1928

DEAR BROTHER,

Seeing your letter I should neither answer it nor go there. But I cannot help replying. We are both stubborn. We would both consider each other obstinate. Your obstinacy lies in writing to Gujaratis in English. I am obstinate in writing to Gujaratis in Gujarati. In the case of one of us the obstinacy will be justified. Shall we ask the poet Nanalal to judge? If not, I am willing to make

¹ For Gandhiji's address at the convention of the Council of Federation of International Fellowship held at Sabarmati, *vide* "Discussion on Fellowship", before January 15, 1928.

² A. A. Paul

Saraladevi the judge, provided she does not show partiality. I would certainly like to come to your place on Sunday. I am sure I am still the same as I was in 1915. Even then, though I used to be hard pressed for time, people dear to me did take my time by stealing or snatching it, and I let them do so. Even today they have not abandoned their ways and I am not able to go against them. What else can a non-violent man do? Hence, even though, mercifully, there is no illness in your family and even though to a Mahatma an occasion like Saraladevi's birthday is of no importance, I would come if I could manage it. I do not know what I would be having to eat, though I would certainly lose some time. But I am really sorry. Some twenty men and women belonging to the International Fellowship are starting their work in the Ashram from tomorrow. Sunday is the last day for them. So as soon as I return from my visit to the Vidyapith, I have to present myself among them. What can I do now? I have suggested that you should invite all of them one evening and call a few friends.¹ Surely, I can take that much liberty with you? But if this is inconvenient I would not wish you to do it. The letter about your small car was also being despatched, but your letter came in the meantime and so I am sending that letter along too. You are free to take my time whenever you wish. Please do so.

Surely you do not think me such a fool as not to understand the affection dripping through your letter?

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11120. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

132. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *January 15, 1928*]²

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters.

Only today I had a letter from Akola which gives the news of Sushila's miscarriage. Manilal has written neither to Ba nor me about it. There should be no shyness or hesitation in writing to me about such matters. It will not help you to keep back such things from me

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

² It appears this letter was written before the Council of International Federation met in the Ashram; *vide* the succeeding item.

because of my views about them. In any case, I would come to know about the thing indirectly. I might feel hurt for a moment. People may hold the same views as I do about this matter and yet not be able to refrain from indulgence. If they could, would they ever marry? The wish to marry comes from the desire for self-gratification. Our *rishis*, however, tried to make marriage a means of learning self-restraint, or say that regulated through marriage a relationship which was unregulated. But man is more inclined towards self-gratification and he turned marriage also into another means of self-gratification. However, from a couple like you I can expect nothing more than that you should remain vigilant and constantly strive for self-control. There is, therefore, no need for you to keep me ignorant about the fruits of marriage.

Sushila must be better now. If after a miscarriage proper treatment is taken, its harmful effects can be controlled. You may trust me that one such treatment, and a very effective one, is the Kuhne Bath. It removes the cause of miscarriage and makes future deliveries easier and less painful. Sushila should have plain food and regular sleep, and should keep away from things that excite the body. I should like both of you to read Kuhne's book, as also Juste's. Dr. John Nicholson's book, too, is worth reading.

The Ashram has started filling up and in two days it will be full. Nearly thirty persons are coming. Among them there will be twelve to fifteen Europeans too. Ramdas arrived today. Rami, Manu came yesterday. Devdas is still in Bombay taking treatment for one of his bones.

I do not know why you did not get the chapters of the *Gita*. I have finished the translation. I will tell Mahadev.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4728

133. DISCUSSION ON FELLOWSHIP¹

[Before January 15, 1928]

In order to attain a perfect fellowship, every act of its members must be a religious act and an act of sacrifice. I came to the conclusion long ago, after prayerful search and study and discussion with as many people as I could meet, that all religions were true and also that all had some error in them, and that whilst I hold by my own, I should hold others as dear as Hinduism, from which it logically follows that we should hold all as dear as our nearest kith and kin and that we should make no distinction between them. So we can only pray, if we are Hindus, not that a Christian should become a Hindu, or if we are mussalmans, not that a Hindu or a Christian should become a Mussalman, nor should we even secretly pray that anyone should be converted, but our inmost prayer should be that a Hindu should be a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Christian a better Christian. That is the fundamental truth of fellowship. That is the meaning of the wonderful passion, the story of which Andrews read out to you, of the song and verses that Khare, Shastri and Imam Saheb recited. If Andrews invited them to give their song and verses for mere courtesy or by way of patronizing toleration, he was false to the fellowship. In that case, he should not have done so, but I have known Charlie Andrews too well, and I know that he has given the same love to others as he has for his own, and thereby broadened his Christianity, as I broaden my Hinduism by loving other religions as my own. If however there is any suspicion in your minds that only one religion can be true and others false, you must reject the doctrine of fellowship placed before you. Then we would have a continuous process of exclusion and found our fellowship on an exclusive basis.

¹ Members of the Council of International Federation and their friends stayed in the Ashram and held discussions on "the fundamental objective of the fellowship". Mahadev Desai in his article "The Week" under the caption "The Foundation of Fellowship" records: "The discussion lasted for two days It led to a free and frank exchange of views ultimately bound to establish a better understanding. . . . There was no difference of opinion as to the object of all to work for the widest toleration, to combine and side with the forces of light against the forces of darkness, or as Deenabandhu Andrews said, those who blankly leave God out and become materialists. Everyone seemed to be agreed on this, but many seemed to run away from what would appear to be the necessary corollary of the proposition. This was defined by Gandhiji at some length at this and other meetings. . . ."

Above all I plead for utter truthfulness. If we do not feel for other religions as we feel for our own, we had better disband ourselves, for we do not want a wishy-washy toleration. My doctrine of toleration does not include toleration of evil, though it does the toleration of the evil-minded. It does not therefore mean that you have to invite each and every one who is evil-minded or tolerate a false faith. By a true faith I mean one the sum total of whose energy is for the good of its adherents, by a false I mean that which is predominantly false. If you, therefore, feel that the sum total of Hinduism has been bad for the Hindus and the world, you must reject it as a false faith.

Gandhiji's insistence on a member of the fellowship not even secretly wishing that a member of another faith should be converted to his own led to a general discussion on the question of conversion. Gandhiji again defined his position more clearly than before :

I would not only not try to convert but would not even secretly pray that anyone should embrace my faith. My prayer would always be that Imam Saheb should be a better Mussalman, or become the best he can. Hinduism with its message of ahimsa is to me the most glorious religion in the world—as my wife to me is the most beautiful woman in the world—but others may feel the same about their own religion. Cases of real honest conversion are quite possible. If some people for their inward satisfaction and growth change their religion, let them do so. As regards taking our message to the aborigines, I do not think I should go and give my message out of my own wisdom. Do it in all humility, it is said. Well, I have been an unfortunate witness of arrogance often going in the garb of humility. If I am perfect, I know that my thought will reach others. It taxes all my time to reach the goal I have set to myself. What have I to take to the aborigines and the Assamese hillmen except to go in my nakedness to them? Rather than ask them to join my prayer, I would join their prayer. We were strangers to this sort of classification—"animists", "aborigines", etc.,—but we have learnt it from English rulers. I must have the desire to serve and it must put me right with people. Conversion and service go ill together.

The next day early morning the friends met for an informal conversation with Gandhiji when again the same question was asked by many of them.

"Would you have a ruling of such a character that those who had a desire to convert should not be eligible for membership?"

Personally, I think they should not be eligible. I should have framed a resolution to that effect as I regard it as the logical outcome

of fellowship. It is essential for inter-religious relationship and contact.

“Is not the impulse to proselytize God-given?”, inquired another friend.

I question it. But if all impulses are God-given, as some of our Hindus believe, He has also given us discrimination. He will say, ‘I have given you many impulses so that your capacity to face temptation may be tested.’

“But you do believe in preaching an economic order?”, inquired one of the fair sex.

I do, as I believe in preaching laws of health.

Then why not apply the same rule in religious matters?

It is a relevant question. But you must not forget that we have started with the fundamental principle that all religions are true. If there were different but good and true health laws for different communities, I should hesitate to preach some as true and some as false. I am positive that, with people not prepared to tolerate one another’s religious belief, there can be no international fellowship.

Moreover, physical analogies when applied to spiritual matters are good only up to a certain point. When you take up an analogy from Nature, you can stretch it only to a certain point. But I would take an illustration from the physical world and explain what I mean. If I want to hand a rose to you, there is definite movement. But if I want to transmit its scent, I do so without any movement. The rose transmits its own scent without a movement. Let us rise a step higher, and we can understand that spiritual experiences are self-acting. Therefore, the analogy of preaching sanitation, etc., does not hold good. If we have spiritual truth, it will transmit itself. You talk of the joy of a spiritual experience and say you cannot but share it. Well, if it is real joy, boundless joy, it will spread itself without the vehicle of speech. In spiritual matters we have merely to step out of the way. Let God work His way. If we interfere, we may do harm. Good is a self-acting force. Evil is not, because it is negative force. It requires the cloak of virtue before it can march forward.

Did not Jesus Himself teach and preach?

We are on dangerous ground here. You ask me to give any interpretation of the life of Christ. Well, I may say that I do not accept

everything in the gospels as historical truth. And it must be remembered that he was working amongst his own people, and said he had not come to destroy but to fulfil. I draw a great distinction between the Sermon on the Mount and the Letters of Paul. They are a graft on Christ's teaching, his own gloss apart from Christ's own experience.

Young India, 19-1-1928

134. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

Sunday [On or before January 15, 1928]¹

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. I shall come there on the 24th or 25th. But I understand that they will take me directly to Vartej. Aren't you coming to Porbandar? Isn't there any remedy to put your health right. Mine is all right. One cannot rely upon newspapers even about this.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5905

¹ Gandhiji was in Vartej on January 23, 24, 1928 to lay the foundation-stone of a temple for untouchables.

135. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 15, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter which I appreciate more than anything else you could have written to me, because you are absolutely frank and I am glad for having written that article if only to draw from you what you have been keeping to ourself fall these long years. But of this later.

This I am dictating merely to tell you that poor Brockway is in a bad way. I understand that he will have to undergo another operation of a far more serious nature and might have to stay in India for may more months. I understand too that he has come with an understanding with the A.I.C.C. arrived at by Father that his passage to and fro should be paid by the Congress. If that is so, I suppose we should defray his hospital expenses also and perhaps these in any case seeing that he was coming to the Congress. I understand that he will be soon in arrears about his hospital charges. Will you please inquire and do the needful, even set the wire in motion if necessary.

I understand that the Madras Committee has already paid nearly Rs. 400. The hospital charges alone are said to amount to Rs. 12 per day. I am writing to Srinivasa Iyengar also.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library.

136. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 15, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I remember Akhil Babu well. I am writing to him about the accident to his wife. I remember the incident you refer to. I have

¹ This letter is referred to in "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1928, as not available.

always liked him. Whilst I accepted Monmohan Babu's repudiation, I thought none the worse of Akhil Babu. What you now say about Monmohan Babu certainly makes me sad.

Dr. Ray has sent me two letters. In the first he refers to khadi admiringly and in the second he declares his firm faith in it and looks forward to Jamnalalji's visit. If I can, I shall send you copies of the letters.

I am glad Hemaprabha Devi is cheerful now. It is strange Tarini should still be unwell. Can he not conduct his researches in a better climate?

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1582

137. SPEECH AT CONVOCATION OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

January 15, 1928

Deenabandhu Andrews¹ is not only a good Englishman who has sacrificed everything for this country; he is also an artist, poet and fluent orator. Those who have studied his speeches and his deeds can realize that there is art in whatever he does. He is a poet because he understands what the future should be and what it may be. He is a fluent orator, not because he can speak volubly or because his style and pronunciation are excellent, but because all his words flow from his heart. One may form a certain impression on reading his speeches, but they must have made a different impression on his immediate listeners. Ordinarily we take it that one who can speak continuously for hours together is a fluent orator. Some may think that Mr. Andrews read out a written speech because he could not speak extempore. But it would be foolish to think so. He made his written speech so interesting that we got completely engrossed in it. It was so absorbingly interesting because his speech came straight from his heart.

He referred in his speech to the late Hakim Saheb. On a superficial view one may wonder what a convocation address has to do with the death of Hakim Saheb; reference to it would show a lack of artistic sense! I feel that in this very thing he has revealed his artistic skill and has achieved his aim. Andrews is quite old compared to you.

¹ C. F. Andrews delivered the convocation address.

He talked about his childhood. He spoke of the beginning of his training under Hakim Saheb. Hakim Saheb had become a well-known physician, and used to serve the rich and the poor through his knowledge of medicine; then it was that Andrews realized that he was taking training from him. He spoke from his own experience and said that he did not remember the lectures delivered by his teachers, but the greatest and the holiest thing he remembered was how one of his teachers whose memory he cherished was able to penetrate his heart. It was to show this very purpose of education that he narrated the story of Hakim Ajmal Khan. Therein lies wonderful art. Compassion is certainly there in it. And while reading his speech he made us taste the sentiment of courage and in the end taught self-sacrifice.

Moreover, he narrated the story of his own life. Our hearts have sunk into the value of despondency and though at present we have these buildings we apprehend that perhaps two years hence only pigeons might haunt them. He understands this feeling of anxiety. I have not told him about this, but he is able to smell it in the air around us. Therefore he said to you, "You have buildings, money and land; you will go on receiving money in a province like Gujarat. But if I tell the origin of the college in which I had studied, you will be surprised and you will see a ray of hope, because it was started in a mere small cottage and that too by a brave widow, who had lost her husband on the very day of her marriage. She could have remarried, but she dedicated herself to the religion of service. She found out saints and sadhus and asked them to give education to students; she had huts built for them to stay in. From those very huts developed the present great Pembroke College which gave us poets like Spenser and Gray, outstanding statesmen like Pitt and philosophers like Browne." He has tried to comfort you by saying that his own college and your college have had a similar history, that if you work in patience your college too can produce great men. And the remedy that he has suggested is self-confidence. It is born of faith in God and patience. The finest things cannot be produced all at once. The seed-tree remains hidden in the ground and a big strong tree takes long years to grow. But the gardener knows that the tree will take its own time to grow, that he has to let the grass grow on the ground. The gardener does not get disheartened, because he knows. Andrews does not expect such knowledge from us, but he expects faith. He placed before us the definition of faith in the Bible, faith is the evidence of things not seen. If you have such faith, then the Vidyapith will never collapse. The

Vidyapith has not taken as many years to grow as Pembroke. You may well say: 'Here is our achievement; fifteen kumar mandirs¹ have been disaffiliated! And that some more may yet be disaffiliated! But if you have faith you will not be disheartened. The kumar mandirs had to be disaffiliated because we would not bend, we insisted on our conditions and said: 'If you wish the affiliation to continue, the students must spin; otherwise it will be terminated.'" A day may come when no one would stay here; only the chancellor would be sitting, he would be the teacher and the student; a spinning-wheel would be in front of him; then he may have a visitor; but if no one comes, monkeys at any rate would come and if he has faith he would speak to them like Vaidarbhi² and find comfort. What is the evidence of my faith? The only evidence is that it does exist. If anyone asks you then you may refer him to the one who is never tired of speaking about the spinning-wheel. If you have that much faith, then according to Andrews you can create not one but a thousand Pembrokes here. How can you compare England with India, a country which can hold many Englands within it? But do we have such courage? Do we have such patience? Without courage and patience, faith cannot be fruitful. We must always adhere to our principles and have confidence. We do not wish to behave like a deceitful businessman. He fixes the price and prepares the packets after seeing the customer. If we yield this much, then students will come; let us then be that much lenient. This kind of business will benefit neither the public nor the Vidyapith. If the teachers have faith, then they will speak with one voice. Even the student will chime in and say: 'What does it matter even if I am left alone, the teachers will pass on to me everything that they have. God is one, but in His creation there is infinite variety.' Thus, if one student, though all alone, cultivates fearlessness, there will be a hundred to follow him. That is the substance of Andrews's speech, the burden of his song.

You may take his speech as mine. Be proud of your college, cherish the Vidyapith and enlighten your life. Wherever you may be, remember the Vidyapith. Soon you will know what turn it will take in the future, but I want you to wait with faith and patience and I promise you that, so long as any one of us is alive, we will not let the Vidyapith close down. I am ready to die, to be buried alive, if the Vidyapith

¹ Boy's schools

² Damayanti, wife of King Nala, in the *Mahabharata*

lives. If you can bear the austerities of the Vidyapith, then rest assured that it will always offer a shelter for you; but if you cannot, do not blame me or the teacher but blame your fate. But if we fail to fulfil our pledge, then I must tell you that, although we are wedded to non-violence, you have the right to kill us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-1-1928

138. MESSAGE TO SECOND GRADUATES' CONFERENCE

January 16, 1928

I regret I am not able to participate in the gathering of the Graduates' Association¹. I hope that the graduates will make the Association a potent instrument of service and, while bringing credit to it as well as to themselves, will substantial contribution to the *yajna* of our motherland.

[From Gujarati]

Sabarmati, Vol. VI, Issue 4

139. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU²

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I must dictate and save time and give rest to my aching shoulder. I wrote to you on Sunday about Fenner Brockway.³ I hope you got that letter in due time.

Do you know that it was because you were the chief partner in the transactions referred to that I wrote the articles⁴ you have criticized, except of course about the so-called 'All-India Exhibition'? I felt a kind of safety that, in view of the relations between you and me, my writings would be taken in the spirit in which

¹ Of Gujarat Vidyapith

² In reply to the addressee's letter, dated 11-1-1928; *vide* Appendix "Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru".

³ *Vide* Addenda—2, "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 15-1-1928

⁴ *Vide* "The National Congress", 5-1-1928 and "Independence v. Swaraj", 12-1-1928.

they were written. However, I see that they were a misfire all round. I do not mind it. For, it is evident that the articles alone could deliver you from the self-suppression under which you have been labouring apparently for so many years. Though I was beginning to detect some differences in viewpoint between you and me, I had no notion whatsoever of the terrible extent of these differences. Whilst you were heroically suppressing yourself for the sake of the nation and in the belief that by working with and under me in spite of yourself, you would serve the nation and come out scatheless, you were chafing under the burden of this unnatural self-suppression. And, while you were in that state, you overlooked the very things which appear to you now as my serious blemishes. I could show you from the pages of *Young India* equally strong articles written by me, when I was actively guiding the Congress with reference to the doing of the All-India Congress Committee. I have spoken similarly at the All-India Congress Committee meetings whenever there has been irresponsible and hasty talk or action. But whilst you were under stupefaction these things did not jar on you as they do now. And it seems to me, therefore, useless to show you the discrepancies in your letter. What I am now concerned with is future action.

If any freedom is required from me, I give you all the freedom you may need from the humble, unquestioning allegiance that you have given to me for all these years and which I value all the more for the knowledge I have now gained of your state. I see quite clearly that you must carry on open warfare against me and my views. For, if I am wrong I am evidently doing irreparable harm to the country and it is your duty after having known it to rise in revolt against me. Or, if you have any doubt as to the correctness of your conclusion, I shall gladly discuss them with you personally. The differences between you and me appear to me to be so vast and radical that there seems to be no meeting-ground between us. I can't conceal from you my grief that I should lose a comrade so valiant, so faithful, so able and so honest as you have always been; but in serving a cause, comradeships have got to be sacrificed. The cause must be held superior to all such considerations. But this dissolution of comradeship—if dissolution must come—in no way affects our personal intimacy. We have long become members of the same family, and we remain such in spite of grave political differences. I have the good fortune to enjoy such relations with several people. To take Sastri for instance, he and I differ in the political outlook as poles asunder, but the bond between

him and me that sprung up before we knew the political differences has persisted and survived the fiery ordeals it had to go through.

I suggest a dignified way of unfurling your banner. Write to me a letter for publication showing your differences. I will print it in *Young India* and write a brief reply. Your first letter I destroyed after reading and replying to it, the second I am keeping, and if you do not want to take the trouble of writing another letter, I am prepared to publish the letter that is before me. I am not aware of any offensive passage in it. But if I find any, you may depend upon my removing every such passage. I consider that letter to be a frank and honest document.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13040; also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 56-8

140.LETTER TO R. RAMACHANDRA RAO¹

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter is proof of the fact that a leopard cannot change his spots. I detected in it the old Collector parrying blows and making out a plausible case out of indifferent material. Let me take an analogy. The floor space that the English rulers occupy in India is infinitesimal, their numbers still more infinitesimal compared to the teeming millions. There are more “natives” in the Government employ than Englishmen. According to your reasoning, Englishmen will be able to call their rule therefore swadeshi rule. And yet you and I would repudiate any such preposterous claim. And it was certainly very clever of you to have 62 thousand square feet allotted to khadi part of the indigenous thing. Whilst I was glad that khadi was outside the elephantine court, it was disgraceful if what I was told by reliable men was true, namely, that the Government had stipulated that khadi should be outside that court. And, is it proper for you to say that I ‘permitted’ the exhibition of foreign textiles? Do you not recall the

¹ This was in reply to the addressee’s letter of January 9 in which he had refuted Gandhiji’s criticism of the Exhibition put up at the Congress Session at madras as being anti-Indian; *vide* “The National Congress”, 5-1-1928.

very great reluctance with which, when I heard of the proposed exhibition of foreign textiles, I consented to hold the Khadi Exhibition? Do you not remember that I did not care to have the Khadi Exhibition at all during the Congress Week? I yielded only because you, an old friend, were insistent that I should hold the Khadi Exhibition and told me that you would be embarrassed if I did not hold it. After I gave you my consent to hold it, I received letters of protest, but having given my word, I did not wish to withdraw.

If this does not satisfy you and if your letter was written for the public eye, I would gladly print it and reply.

I need hardly assure you that in all I have written I had nothing personal against you. You were but one of the parties to the performance which in the present chaos is nothing extraordinary. I would even have kept silent but for the fear of the same thing being repeated at the next Congress. Out course, it may be repeated in spite of my warning and protest. If it is, I shall not accuse myself of cowardice.

Yours sincerely,

DEWAN BAHADUR R. RAMCHANDRA RAO, B. A., C.S.I.
SECRETARY, THE A.I.A.I.K. AND ARTS EXHIBITION
MADRAS CENTRAL URBAN BANK
MYLAPORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13041

141. LETTER TO. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARAMATI,
January 17, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I had your telegram. I must not reply by wire. The whole of the translation of the History of Satyagraha¹ is now ready. You gave me the date when you could commence the printing, I want you to give me the date when you can finish. Please, therefore, give me the absolute date when you can get the History ready for sale. It must be all bound in khaddar cloth or it may be paper cover. Do not take this thing up unless you can cope with it both in point of time and finance. I am in a hurry to see the History out; for, without it I am

¹ *Satyagraha in South Africa*

hampered in writing the bio-graphical chapters¹.

As for *Self-restraint* v. *self-indulgence*², paper has already been bought and resetting has already commenced.

Please be quick and precise about this letter. I may tell you that you have not yet regained your lost prestige with Swami Anand and it is a pity. For, until you get that, it is difficult for me to help you as much as I want to.

You are printing Mr. Gregg's essay on hand-spinning. Please tell me when it is likely to be published.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13042

142. TELEGRAM TO DEWAN OF PORBANDAR

SABARMATI,

January 18, 1928

DEWAN SAHEB

PORBANDAR

AM GRATEFUL HIS HIGHNESS INVITATION. SHALL BE ACCOMPANIED BY PARTY OF TWENTY INCLUDING PRESIDENT PARISHAD³ AND SEVERAL LADIES. ARRANGEMENTS HANDS RECEPTION COMMITTEE. MAY I ASK YOU CONSULT COMMITTEE?

GANDHI

From a microfilm: MMU. XX. 25

143. LETTER TO S. D. NADKARNI

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. I have kept some to your letters in my *Young India* file yet for use.⁴

¹ Of the Autobiography

² This was a collection of Gandhiji's writings on self-control, *brahmacharya* birt-control, etc., and included a series of articles published in *Young India* under the title "Towards Moral Bankruptcy"

³ Kathiawar Political Conference

⁴ *Vide* "Correspondence", 16-2-1928.

About the proposed *smriti*, I cannot yet see eye to eye with you. You often seem to emphasize the letter rather than the spirit. When I use the word ‘inspired’, I do not give it a technical meaning. When I feel ‘inspired’, you will find that nothing would deter me from giving a new *smriti* to Hinduism, and let me secretly tell you that I am aiming at such inspiration. Till then I must wait.

It gave me such pleasure to be able to see you face to face in Madras.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. S. D. NADKARNI

From a photostat: S.N. 13043

144. LETTER TO RATILAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 18, 1928

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

I have sent you a wire. I got today a letter from Chi. Devdas in which he tells me that you are very unhappy. I can understand it. But you must have patience. I did not know about Sakubhai’s children, etc. I know that he has left a big family. You are the only one who can give them courage. Birth and death are inseparable; why, then, should we rejoice at the former and mourn the latter? We shall have done our best if we do our duty and, when our own time comes, meet death with a smiling face. Be calm.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7161

145. A LETTER

January 18, 1928

BHAI . . .¹

As long as the very sight of . . .² disturbs you, avoid even looking at her. All this must not be forced. Talk to me about this at the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original C.W. 1639. Courtesy: Ramaniklal Modi

146. AJMAL JAMIA FUND

I have now heard from Dr. Ansari regarding the fund to be raised in memory of the late Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and for the purpose of putting the Muslim National University on a firm footing. Dr. Ansari authorizes me to say that he and Principal Zakir Husain join me in making this appeal. Sheth Jamnalalji Bajaj has consented to be the treasurer of the Fund. In the existing raw state of feeling between Hindus and Mussalmans, it has not been thought advisable to issue this appeal under many names. But our hope is that all those who revere the deceased's memory and who approve of the idea of connecting the proposed memorial with the National Muslim University will help the movement as if they were joint partners in this appeal.

In my humble opinion, it is the duty of Hindus and Mussalmans who believe in unity to perpetuate Hakim Saheb's memory in the tangible form proposed. It is their duty to ensure the stability of the Jamia, for it was a creation of the times when it was thought that the two communities were united for ever. And if the non-co-operating national colleges do not stand for, work for and finally ensure unity, nothing else can or will. I hope, therefore, that all the lovers of unity will liberally subscribe to the Fund.

There are today two hundred students studying in the central institution and seventy-four in the city branch. There are more-over two night-schools which draw nearly two hundred students. The Jamia

¹ Names are omitted.

² *ibid*

has a staff of twenty-three workers. The highest salary being paid is Rs. 265, the lowest being Rs. 35. The idea constantly before the Principal is to have volunteers who would draw just enough for their wants. The salaries amount in all to Rs. 2,300 per month, the house rent is Rs. 425 per month. The total monthly expenditure is Rs. 4,800. The regular income, including boarding fees Rs. 1,300, is Rs. 2,700. There is thus a deficit of Rs. 2,100. This was somehow met whilst Hakim Saheb was alive. Before the teachers create for themselves a name and a prestige enough to command help, the deficit must be met by the public. And the memorial cannot be considered lasting till the Jamia has a building of its own. The subscribers will, therefore, in deciding the amount of donation bear in mind what is required.

Dr. Ansari tells me that the Central Bank has generously offered to receive subscriptions for the Ajmal Jamia Fund and to cash all cheques and drafts at par in all its branches. The address of the treasurer is 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay.

Finally, all donations received will be held by the treasurer on behalf of us four as trustees and will be given only after a proper trust-deed is created on behalf of the Jamia.

Young India, 19-1-1928

147. TO NO-CHANGERS

I see that the news that there was to be at Sabarmati a meeting of 'No-Changers' some time this month has found its way to the Press. Perhaps this was inevitable. But I am sorry to have to inform all concerned that the idea has been dropped for the time being at any rate. Many No-Changers have been long suggesting such a meeting with a view to the formation of a programme and a general interchange of views. The demand became insistent at Madras when the No-Changers who attended the Congress felt that on several resolutions they should have a definite joint policy and that they should be able to act as a distinct party within the Congress. Though I was not enamoured of the idea of forming a party, I was not averse to the calling of a meeting of No-Changers for the purpose of discussion. But as I came to the drafting of a circular letter, I saw that it was a difficult performance and it was an equally difficult thing to select the names of invitees. I found both to be hopeless tasks. On going into the thing deeper, I found that the convening of such a

meeting might embarrass Dr. Ansari and make the working of the national programme of boycott more difficult by drawing the attention of country away from the boycott and distracting it by a discussion of matters that may well await a better opportunity. I discovered further that the formation of a 'No-Change' party without me in it was not likely to function fully and vigorously so long as I was alive, available and retained a fairly healthy and active mind. And the idea behind the suggested meeting was to form a party in which I need not take any part. It may be theoretically possible, but in practice reference would always be made to me for opinion on many matters, which opinion would be more likely to be faulty than it would be if I was present at the discussion from which the matters for opinion might have risen. These considerations made me incline to the view that the meeting might at least be postponed. Vallabhbhai, with whom I first shared my revised opinion, agreed with me. Other friends came to the same conclusion on other and independent grounds. The idea of the meeting, therefore, remains under suspension for the time being.

I hope that the suspension will not disappoint the No-co-Change. I am not sure that it is not a better arrangement. Whilst non-operation as a national programme is partially suspended, individual non-co-operators have an opportunity of testing the strength of their faith. Their faith will be all the stronger for standing alone without the warmth of a party. When anything assumes the strength of a creed which non-co-operation must be with those who still remain true to it, it becomes self-sustained and derives the needed support from within. Let us also have faith in the country that, when a forward movement becomes possible, all those who left non-co-operation will rejoin it whole-heartedly. I have no forward step to suggest at the present moment. Anything intermediate I can suggest may disturb the joint programme that various parties in the country are trying to evolve. Meanwhile, I can only invite the attention of No-Change to the great constructive programme of khadi. Those who do not appreciate it do not understand the most potent and the most operative part of non-co-operation, viz., non-violence. Non-co-operation without non-violence can never rise to the dignity of a creed and becomes merely one among many strategies in a campaign. Non-violent non-co-operation has been conceived as an infallible remedy replacing all others. And khadi is the corner-stone of its positive side. Here is a reluctant testimony in favour of khadi given by Mr. Harcourt Robertson in the

Daily Despatch. The writer is claimed by the editor to be “one who has spent many years in British India where he was engaged in occupations demanding an intimate knowledge of market conditions and the Indian psychology”. I am indebted to *The Leader* of the 12th instant for the following:¹

He (Mr. Robertson) ascribes the heavy drop in the amount of British cotton fabrics purchased by India not to post-war dislocation and economic stress, nor to the poverty of the masses, . . . nor to famines . . . but to the competition of Indian and Japanese mills and most of all to khaddar. . . . He regards khaddar as the real enemy. . . . He says:

“Khaddar is a native-made cloth, woven on primitive looms from hand-spun yarn by unskilled, amateurish workers. It is coarse, stiff, full of knots and faults, and always looks dirty—yet there is a positive vogue for it, even wealthy natives taking a pride in garments made from it. For khaddar represents in concrete form the slogan of the rapidly growing Nationalist party: ‘India for the Indians’. Not a penny of the money spent on it leaves the country. He who wears it helps to feed India’s starving millions, proclaims his country’s independence and shows himself a patriot of the first water. . . . Khaddar is one of the weapons used by, and, indeed, invented by, Mahatma Gandhi in his fight against foreign rule in India. Half saint, half fanatic, and wholly patriot, Mahatma Gandhi now speaks, in his person and through the native Press, to the very hearts of India’s educated classes. Non-co-operation is not dead in India because it is no longer talked. It has now reached the stage of silent and dangerous activity. . . . Let Mr. Gandhi’s missionaries once rope in the masses, and India will no longer be a poor buyer, she will be no buyer at all. . . . The blow is aimed not only at cotton. It is a definite attempt to ruin the market for all British goods.”

These remarks cannot but hearten those who have been working, under the inspiring leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, for the spread of khaddar Mr. Robertson is alarmed and . . . he suggests that something should be done to give wide publicity in India to ideas such as “Lancashire fabrics of Indian cotton”, “India’s best customer is Lancashire”, “To buy Lancashire cloth is to help India’s cultivators”. . . . It is not by interested propaganda but by substantial concessions to the national demands of Indians that the relations of the two countries can be placed on a healthy footing and the causes which are operating to the detriment of Lancashires’s trade with India removed.

Needless to say that khadi is not a threat. It is the breath of national life like swaraj. The khadi movement like swaraj cannot be

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

given up against any concessions however generous. To give up khadi would be to sell the masses, the soul of India.

Young India, 19-1-1928

148. LETTER TO V. K. SANKARA MENON

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 19, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter I send herewith Sjt. Kelappan's report¹ which please return after perusal with such remarks as you may wish to make.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1

SJT. V. K. SANKARA MENON

PULAYA COLONY, CHALAKUDI

(MALABAR)

From a microfilm: S.N. 14627

149. LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 19, 1928

DEAR DR. ROY,

I thank you and Dr. Sircar for your letter and the medicine you have kindly sent me. You know my repugnance to medicine. I would not take anything that contained something taken from the human body except mother's milk. The tabloids sent by you contain kidney and pancreas. Isn't this something taken from a human body? Supposing that it is taken from a sub-human animal, my objection will still stand. You know my weakness for dietetical experiments. And ever since your discovery of excess of uric acid in my system, I have felt impelled to make a radical dietetic change. The comparative stability in the Ashram has given me the opportunity and I am now taking simply fresh fruits and nuts. The diet now consists of raisin-tea,

¹ About the Pulaya Colony; *vide* "Letter to K. Kelappan", 23-12-1927.

which means about 40 raisins boiled and the skin and seeds removed. This I take three times a day, and I add to it half an ounce of almond paste each time and twice two *tolas* of coconut milk and one or two oranges each time. Coconut milk is prepared by pounding a fresh ripe coconut and extracting the juice by adding a little water and straining it through a stout piece of khadi. This I had been doing for a fortnight without any way coming to harm. The bowels are much more regular. I have not been weighed nor have I had the blood-pressure taken, but the feeling about me is good. I have purposely refrained from taking the blood-pressure and weight because it seems to me to be of no consequence, if I otherwise keep fit.

As you have taken so much interest in my health, I thought I owed you the information of the change I have made and the reason why I will not take the medicine so thoughtfully sent by you. I wish Indian medical men would make original researches and explore the possibilities of dietetic changes. It may be that the general body of people will not take to what may be called austere ways of treating diseases, but may not poor fanatics like myself have a corner in the minds and hearts of medical men? Has Indian medicine no fresh contribution to make to the medical science? Or must it always rely upon the patented nostrums that, together with other foreign goods, are dumped down upon this unfortunate soil? Why should the West have a monopoly of making researches?

This letter is not written to you for acknowledgement and reply unless you want to give me any direction. You may therefore throw it into the waste-paper basket if there is nothing more to be said to me by way of advice and guidance.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13044

150. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANNERJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 19, 1928

MY DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have your letter¹. I am glad at the happy termination of the Comilla affair. Is it a reform from within or a reform super-imposed?

With reference to my health, I have not seen my way to taking the medicine sent by Dr. Roy. It is something extracted from the human body and I have the greatest repugnance to taking any such medicine. But I have made radical change in my diet. I am now living on simply fruits and a little almond-nut paste and coconut milk. So far I have not come to grief.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13045

151. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 20, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have read Malaviyaji's reference to foreign-cloth boycott and mills. I recollect your reference to mill-cloth and influenza. I hope to deal with boycott in *Young India*².

I have now tested the new travelling-wheel. The spokes have become shaky and the axle never moved freely and it remained as rigid as when you first saw it. You should have someone there constantly working at the wheel to test results. I want you to produce a perfect wheel and this you will not do unless one person always works at it and suggests improvements.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1584

¹ Dated 11-1-1928, which said: "As a result of satisfactory compromise of all communal cases at Comilla, we have all been acquitted. . . . I hope as a result of this . . . perfect harmony and peace will prevail at least for some time to come. . . ."

² Vide "Boycott of British Goods", 26-1-1928.

152. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Pausa Krishna 13 [January 20, 1928]*¹

BHAISAHEB,

I had sent a reply² to your telegram. Now I want your opinion regarding the Jamia Fund.

You have raised the subject of boycott of foreign cloth. But in the same context you also mention mill-cloth. How shall I convince you that, as long as the mill-owners do not come to terms with us and we are not able to control their prices, their help will be not only useless but positively harmful. On the contrary, what happened in Bengal will be repeated and the public will lose faith in the power of boycott.

You will please tell me if you find any difficulty with my language or my handwriting. I shall write in English only if I am helpless. For my part, I perfect my imperfect *Rashtrabhasha*.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8682

153. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 20, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am very happy to learn that you are tranquil. I have no faith in the *shraddha* at it is performed these days. On the day of Anil's *shraddha* take only fruits. Regard the occasion as a sacrifice and do extra spinning. Recite the "Uttarakanda" from the *Ramayana* and meditate well over the twelfth chapter of *Bhagavad Gita*.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1653

¹ From the reference to Jamia Fund; *vide* also the preceding item.

² *Vide* "Telegram to Madan Mohan Malaviya", On or after 9-1-1928.

*154. SPEECH AT KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE,
PORBANDAR¹*

January 22, 1928

With a view to avoiding the possibility of any misunderstanding between the rulers and the ruled, and with a view to fuller recognition of its own limitations, as also in confirmation of the custom which has been for some time in operation, this Conference resolves that it shall not pass any resolution condemning or criticizing any individual State.²

Moving the above resolution Gandhi said:

Young people would not appreciate the restriction imposed today, but I must realize my responsibility before I suggest that swaraj means the right to make mistakes. Not only have I thought over it and then suggested it, but I have drafted the resolution myself. Day before yesterday I advised the Subjects Committee not to pass the two resolutions criticizing individual States when the resolutions were moved in the Committee. It came to me as an after thought that the advice given by me should hold good for some time more for the same reasons for which it was tendered. If we do not resolve to this effect, our existence is in jeopardy. But one may also argue why we should have such a restriction only to postpone the death. The Committee would have turned down the resolution if it had been sponsored by any other person, but the Committee and the Kathiawaris have added to my responsibility by reposing faith in me. I hope you would do the same by passing the resolution. Young people will have to tolerate words such as ‘misunderstanding’, etc., which are found in the resolution.

At the Bhavnagar Session of the Conference³ the question of only Jamnagar and Gondal States was discussed. I had met the Jamsaheb and had discussions with him. I know what the issue was and it, but due to pressure of work, I could not derive full benefit from the discussions. I cannot say at the moment whether I won or lost. I have

¹ This was the fourth Conference.

² This resolution is reproduced from “Weekly Letter”, published in *Young India*, 26-1-1928. According to Mahadev Desai, Gandhiji was “the author of the resolution”.

³ Held on January 8, 1925; Gandhiji presided; *vide* “Presidential Address at Kathiawar Political Conference, Bhavnagar”.

suffered defeat at the hands of Thakore of Gondal; even then I did not allow any criticism of him individually.

At present the Conference is weak, lame and blind, and because I hold that we should not indulge in personal criticism I demanded here as well as in Bhavnagar that in the Conference no resolution or criticism on individual States should be allowed. The participants as well as the office-bearers of the Conference should be vigilant about such resolutions. They should do what is worthy of them. The ruler and the subjects should love each other and, in spite of their eagerness to point out to the ruler his shortcomings, they should put curbs on their speech and pen. Such restraint would help us a lot. Knowing our weakness, we should in future also adhere to the restraint which we have accepted in the two conferences. A person who is conscious of his inadequacy feels relieved when he confesses it before the world.

If someone asks me what the brave people would do after the imposition of the restriction, I should say that such brave people have no place in the Conference. Their place is outside the Conference. They may form another association but this Conference is not meant for satyagrahis. Even the congress is not for them. This Conference does not restrain them. They may criticize but should not malign others. If I am asked what should be done if there is maladministration in a particular State, my answer would be that we should acquire the courage to criticize the State. If the subjects being docile bear everything quietly, we should go to work amidst them in order to help them. Injustice is there, but we should find out some other platform for its redress. The princes are mutual friends and they won't allow any one of them to be criticized. Of course, the Conference as such cannot indulge in the criticism or censure of individual States.

Apart from such criticism, you have enough work to do for khadi and for redressing the injustice inflicted on *Antyajās* by the *sanatanis* which is more severe than the injustice prevailing in the princely States.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 29-1-1928

155. TELEGRAM TO MIRABEHN

VARTEJ,
January 23, 1928

MIRABAI

C/O JAMNADAS GANDHI

OPPOSITE MIDDLE SCHOOL

RAJKOT

RHONA'S¹ WIRE SAYS FATHER DIED PEACEFUL FRIDAY NIGHT.
PEACE LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5300; also G.N. 8190. Courtesy: Mirabehn

156. SPEECH AT VARTEJ²

January 24, 1928

If a Hindu does service to an untouchable he does not at all oblige the latter, he obliges only himself. The Hindus, who were responsible for the existence of their so-called untouchable brothers, have committed many sins. Whatever they may do by way of self-purification and expiation for these sins would be inadequate. Therefore, whenever I have a chance to serve the untouchables, I consider it a God-sent opportunity to do some slight atonement for past sins. No one should feel elated, thinking that since he does some service he has no need at all for expiation. I want to make it clear to you that we are all jointly responsible for the ill-treatment given by a single Hindu. It is a universal rule that the whole world is responsible for the sin committed by any one person. Both Hindus and Muslims should accept this rule. As long as there are barriers of caste and community in this world, the group as a whole is responsible for sin of every individual member.

A temple is not merely an edifice of brick or marble, nor does it become a temple by the installation of the image of a deity. It can be called a temple only when life has been breathed into the image. There may be hypocrisy in calling the priest and making sacrificial

¹ Sister of Mirabehn

² A village in the then princely State of Bhavnagar in Saurashtra. Gandhiji laid the foundation-stone of the temple of Rama for the untouchables.

offerings at the time of laying the foundation of the temple. The truth is that those who made a pious resolve to build a temple should, from that very moment, spend their life in deeds of penance and should surrender to the temple the fruits of all their good deeds. The managers and the priests of the temple should be leading a life of austerity so that one's heart is moved as soon as one enters the temple. If this is not going to be that type of a temple, if sufficient purity of heart and mind is not behind it, it is merely a building and, take it, it is a burden on the earth. Since it would be called a temple, the area occupied by it would go waste; it can be put to no use and it may turn out to be a pernicious institution and even a haunt of many sins. I have laid the foundation-stone of this temple in the belief that no such defects are here. To lay the foundation-stone as soon as the idea of constructing a temple occurs and then to live in the hope of erecting a temple some day is not good. Nothing is achieved in haste; the plants of religion do not grow fast. True faith, industry and patience are the prerequisites for this.

I should lie to say only this to the untouchable brethren: the Hindu precept which says that no one can go to heaven before death is perfectly true. You have to work yourselves for your own uplift. Do not believe that the caste Hindus are helping you; by serving you they are in fact helping themselves. If you wish to show your mettle, wake up. Give up those faults for which the Hindus blame you and shun you. Please make it a rule that those amongst you who are given to drinking, meat-eating and so on do not enter the temple. Do not point to the defects of the so-called high-caste Hindus. As the saying goes, "those in power can do no wring", the world will forgive them but not you. Whatever may be the defects of others, you must try to remove your own.

[From Guarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

157. SPEECH AT MORVI¹

[January 24, 1928]²

I sincerely thank the Maharaja Saheb, the people and members of the Modh³ community for having welcomed my companions and myself and for presenting me with an address. I should, at any rate, tell my brothers belonging to the Modh caste that I have no right whatsoever to accept an address of welcome from them. Not even in my dreams have I imagined that I have in any manner served this caste as such; there are some gentlemen who believe that I have not only not served this caste but rather have caused it some harm. If I accept this allegation for the moment, your address merely suggests your large-heartedness. However, I am not content with this large-heartedness because, although it may be a sign of generosity, there is always an implicit understanding between the giver and the receiver of an address of welcome that the giver blesses and approves of the work that is being done by the receiver. I hesitate to accept your address, as there is no such understanding between us.

There is a purpose behind what I am saying about your small caste; for I believe that these small barriers must be broken down. I am clear in my mind that there is no room for castes in the Hindu faith; I say this to those belonging to the Modh or any other caste who happen to be present here. In the true Shastras there is no reference to castes; there is a reference only to the four *varnas*, God has washed his hands off after creating these four *varnas*. There is not even a trace of castes in the *varnadharma*. I wish to tell all of you, and plead with all, through the Modhs, that you should forget the barriers created by caste. Make use of the castes that exist today in destroying the caste system, offer them to the sacrificial fire and, if there is anything in them that teaches you self-control, practise it. A foul smell is emitted by such puddles if we do not clear them. The doctors advise us to fill up puddles. In addition to giving off a foul smell, they breed mosquitoes and these in turn prove fatal. You must realize that these caste puddles are likewise fatal to man. You must realize that God would never create such a deadly organization. You will be happy if

¹ One of the princely States in Saurashtra

² From the reference to Ramdas Gandhi's marriage which took place on January 27

³ Gandhiji belonged to this sub-caste of Banias.

you act upon these words which I speak out of my own experience. Time goes on, doing its own work. You can go and raise your hand against it if you wish to, but you must realize that it is all futile. If we foolishly delay things, trying to defend these barriers against the march of time, it would be like the game of trying to throw dust on the sun and throwing it in our own eyes. I would not have spoken thus to you nor would I have had the occasion to do so if you had not presented me this address. Do not regard this as an insignificant matter. For many years now we have been steeped in superstition and ignorance; do not give these the name of knowledge. Comparative studies of different religions are being made in the world today, and if you examine these without any prejudice, you will find that these castes act as barriers to progress, to dharma, to swaraj and to the *Ramarajya* of which I speak so often. I would like to ask you: 'What are the achievements of the Modh caste that should prompt us to sing its praises exclusively?' We find that many cases there is a contradiction between our thoughts and actions. Our conduct is at variance with our proclaimed beliefs. This is like the track remaining even after the disappearance of the snake. Make a *Bhagiratha-prayatna*¹ to bring about conformity between your beliefs and your conduct. In return for the address of welcome that you have given me I would ask you to make this effort. If you also accept the implicit understanding of which I spoke, I shall feel that I did well to have accepted your address and to have been born in your caste.

I have been making the most sincere efforts to bring about conformity between my thought and action and hence it was that the Modh caste used to boycott me, although the Modhs realized later on that I did not deserve boycott as I never even thought of taking any advantage of the caste system. I wish to carry forward this attempt of mine to break down caste barriers. Perhaps you do not know that I got one of my sons married outside my caste and have lost nothing by doing so. My son got bride from a devout Vaishnava family, for which he is grateful to me. I could claim that by doing so I have stolen a gem belonging to another caste. I ask those belonging to the smaller castes to hand their daughters over to me, if the latter cannot be married off. I shall get them married to good upright boys belonging to other castes, the marriage expenditure being no more

¹ Mighty effort, like that made by Bhagiratha to bring the Ganga down to the earth

than a *tulsi* leaf or a hank of yarn. If other castes do not hesitate to hand over their girls to me who has adopted an untouchable girl as daughter, why should you have any fear? I am getting my son¹ married to a Modh girl after three days. I carry on my duties in this manner and find no difficulty in doing so.

In this way, through the Modh caste, I wish to ask all those who recognize such barriers, to break them. The eighteen *varnas* are mere myth; there are only four *varnas*, so divided on the basis of their occupational aptitudes. The customs in respect of eating and drinking with others are a part of untouchability, whereas the *varnas* are like a beautiful tree under the shade of which mankind can find shelter and nourishment for itself. The system of *varnas* is the dharma of self-control; there is no economic consideration involved in it but its object is to enable people to practise their dharma. Sages and ascetics have conceived and organized it as a thoroughfare on which one could tread the path of one's dharma, whereas it has now become the means of furthering our self-interest, our vices, and the gratification of our senses. Try to preserve the *varna* system in its pure form.

In my opinion *swaraj* and *Ramarajya* are one and the same thing; however, I do not often use the latter expression before audiences of men. This is so because, in this age of rationalism, if one who talks of the spinning-wheel to women talks also of *Ramarajya*, this would appear to our intelligent young men as idle sermonizing. They want *swaraj*, not *Ramarajya*, and of *swaraj* too they give strange definitions which, in my opinion, are absurd. But today, while I am standing before the Maharaja Saheb and his subjects, when the former has poured out his heart to me for an hour, I also feel like speaking out my mind before him. The concept of *swaraj* is no ordinary one; it means *Ramarajya*. How will that *Ram-arajya* come to be established? When will it come into being? We call a State *Ramarajya* when both the ruler and his subjects are straightforward, when both are pure in heart, when both are inclined towards self-sacrifice, when both exercise restraint and self-control while enjoying worldly pleasures, and, when the relationship between the two is as good as that between a father and a son. It is because we have forgotten this that we talk of democracy or the government of the people. Although this is the age of democracy, I do not know what the word connotes; however, I would say that democracy exists where the people's voice

¹ Ramdas Gandhi

is heard, where love of the people holds a place of prime importance. In my *Ramarajya*, however, public opinion cannot be measured by counting of heads or raising of hands. I would not regard this as a measure of public opinion; the verdict of the *panch* should be regarded as the voice of God. Those who raise hands are not the *panch*. The *rishis* and the *munis* after doing penance came to the conclusion that public opinion is the opinion of people who practise penance and who have the good of the people at heart. That is the true meaning of democracy. It is not democracy but something else that is reflected in the support secured by someone like me who makes a vote-catching speech. The democracy that I believe in is described in the *Ramayana*—in the essence that is derived from my simple and straightforward reading of it. What was the manner in which Ramachandra ruled? The rulers of today assume that it is their birthright to rule and they do not recognize the people's right to voice their opinion. However, you rulers who may be regarded as the descendants of Rama, do you know how he ruled? You may also be regarded as the descendants of Krishna. And what did Krishna do? He was the most perfect servant; at the time of the *rajasuya yajna*, he washed everyone's feet. That he actually washed his subjects' feet may be fact or legend, that custom may or may not have been prevalent at the time; its under-lying implication, however, is that, at the sight of his subjects, he bowed to them or rather bowed to their wishes. This very matter has been differently presented in the *Ramayana*. Through his secret agents Ramachandra elicits public opinion and finds that Sita is the object of censure in a particular washerman's home. He was well aware that this adverse criticism was groundless; Sita was dearer to him than his own life, nothing could lead to a difference between him and her; nevertheless, he renounced her, realizing that it was improper to let such criticism continue. As a matter of fact, Ramachandra and Sita had become one; they lived for and in each other; nevertheless, he thought it necessary to endure the physical absence of that very Sita for whom he led an army to battle, whose presence he desired day and night. Rama honoured public opinion in this manner; his rule is called *Ramarajya*. Even a dog could not be harmed in that State, as Ramachandra felt that all living beings were part of him-self. There would be no licentious conduct, no hypocrisy, no falsehood in such a State. A people's government would function in such a truthful age. The ruler forsakes his dharma when this age ends. Attacks will then be made from outside the State

Germes from outside attack the body when the blood becomes impure. Likewise when society as a body gets corrupted, people who are like its limbs are subjected to external attacks.

However, when there is a bond of affection between the ruler and the ruled, the people as a body can face attacks. The authority exercised by the State should be one of love; the sceptre does not signify the exercise of brute force but rather a bond of love. The word 'Raja' is derived from the root 'raj' which means 'that which is befitting'. Hence Raja implies one who does credit to the office. The people are not as wise as he is. He has bound the people to himself with the bonds of affection and he is a servant of his servants. Shri Krishna was such a servant and he was subjected to kicks like a servant. Hence I tell the rulers and the chiefs that if they wish to be known as the descendants of Rama and Krishna, they should be prepared to put up with their subjects' kicks. They should put up with the latter's abuses; although the people may act in an irresponsible manner, the ruler cannot do so. If the rulers did, the world come to an end.¹

Can not this country which is primarily agricultural with seven lakhs of village in it, save itself from this machine age? It consists of living machines and saving them is the only means of saving the country. They are the cow and her progeny, human beings and their descendants. If those who have living machines at their disposal and who can always add to this wealth, would become worshippers of the machine age, they will be cursed by humanity. If this country, which was once ruled by mighty emperors and which has thirty- three crores of living machines in it, starts worshipping this machine age, you must conclude that we are descendants of Ravana and not of Rama. These are harsh words but they are inspired by love and come from the heart. The maharaja Saheb sopke to me sincerely. Wherever I come across sincerity, I forget myself and reciprocate with all my heart. If not today, after my death, you will realize that what I said was right. You will be cutting your own throats the day you give too much importance to the machine age. If some Chengiz Khan invades us in future and through slaughter reduces the 33 crores to 3 lakhs, we may then need machines just as Britain and the United State need them. Moreover, these two countries have established the practice of

¹ What follows was addressed to the Jains who formed a large part of the population of Morvi.

robbery. Whom are you going to rob? There is no reason why our country should remain poor when it has so much natural beauty, good climate, a variety of plant life and an inexhaustible store of other resources. We have become our own enemies. It is for this very reason that I keep insisting upon khadi.

I request you to maintain an eternal bond of mutual affection. What the ruler is like will depend on his subjects and *vice versa*. What can the ruler do if the people, are dishonest, cowardly, deceitful and wicked? If the ruler is a good man, his soul may perhaps be spared; but he cannot save his subjects. If they cannot protect their women themselves, how can the ruler do so? In a town of the size of Morvi with a population of twelve to fifteen thousand—for whose good and to what end should there be so many factions and so many disputes? You should give up these things. There is no dharma other than truth and non-violence. Why should you, who are devotees of non-violence, indulge in intrigues? Passion and malice are nothing but violence. Non-violence does not merely consist in sparing the lives of bed-bugs or flies. That indeed is non-violence in its lowest form. The world is sanctified by one out of whose heart love flows constantly like a stream—these are not my words but the words uttered by Mahavira, the words uttered in the *Gita*. I have had just a slight experience of this. My mission is fulfilled by my endeavours to practise truth and non-violence. You will save yourselves if you practise these. However, your khadi or your cattle cannot be spared if you give in to hypocrisy or deceit. You will find it easy to practise what I have preached if you have a vision of the stream of truth, of the Ganga of non-violence.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

158. BOYCOTT OF BRITISH GOODS

It is not at all surprising that the nation should wish to show resentment of the studiously insulting and defiant acts of the British Government. Every new discovery in the direction adds fuel to the fire. The latest is the abhorrence the late King Edward VII and his son, the present King, are reported to have betrayed of 'natives' and that in connection with Lord Sinha. The representatives of the nation have for years past endeavoured to demonstrate their resentment by bringing about a partial or complete boycott of British goods. It is the nation's right to bring it about if it so wishes. There is no doubt that it will produce a great effect if it could succeed to the necessary extent.

But it has been my misfortune or good fortune consistently to oppose the cry for the boycott of British goods. Though I adhere to the fundamental ground that the proposed boycott is contrary to non-violence, I wish to confine myself at present to an examination of its possibility. The fact that we have hitherto made no headway whatsoever with it, in spite of the agitation for so long a time, is proof presumptive of its very great difficulty. If we were to take even such a simple instance as soap, we shall discover that we have made no progress even in the boycott of British made soap. The Committee appointed by the Congress recommended certain articles for boycott. So far as I am aware, no such effort has yet been made in the direction of excluding even one such article from the nation's use. The use of a punitive boycott lies in the effectiveness. Anyone studying the articles of import will soon discover the utter futility of spending labour on achieving the boycott of most of these articles from the standpoint of creating an impression on the British Government. It should not be forgotten that for all these long long years, we have not been able to have a body of specialists devoted to this single task. It is the fashion in some quarters nowadays to blame me for the failure of any and every resolution that the Congress passes. I am told that a particular resolution does not succeed because I oppose it or do not work at it. There can be nothing more humiliating for a nation than to be in such an impotent state. Surely boycott of British goods was conceived and vehemently advocated before I returned from South Africa. The real and the more natural reason for the failure of the British goods boycott resolution lies in the obvious fact that no committee of

experts has yet been able to arrive at a satisfactory plan of working it out. It has been suggested that we can succeed if China has succeeded. Yes, we can if we have the will, the courage and the opportunity to regulate the boycott by armed force, by creating an army of open revolutionaries, by forcing for that specific purpose a strike of dock labourers and others connected with the handling of British goods. It seems to me that even if we have the will, we have neither the means nor yet the capacity for managing such an open armed revolution. And neither those who have advocated boycott of British goods nor the special Committee appointed by the Civil Disobedience Inquiry Committee have ever contemplated armed force. I hold, therefore, that it will be more consistent with national dignity, prestige and welfare to give up the cry, proved to be useless, and almost impossible, of boycott of British goods. The permanent necessity of advocating true swadeshi in all things capable of being produced at home is untouched by the argument against the punitive boycott.

But there is no cause whatsoever for despair. We have a means ready made and most effective of signifying our resentment over the series of wrongs being continuously heaped upon our devoted heads. If we have the will, I claim that we have the present capacity of achieving a complete boycott not merely of British cloth but of all foreign cloth. And if we do this, we not only successfully demonstrate our resentment, but we serve the masses in a manner we have never done before and we secure their co-operation in a national effort. We have got an army of workers for doing this work. We have experts who have first-hand knowledge of the thing. There is no division of opinion on the propriety of the thing. The only thing that retards our progress towards the completion of boycott of foreign cloth is our own disbelief. It is strange but tragic that through our ignorance we believe more in the possibility of achieving a boycott of certain British goods than of foreign cloth.

But even this boycott of foreign cloth cannot be achieved without a well-thought-out and prepared plan. If it is the mere boycott we want rather than the higher and the more permanent result in the shape of the economic well-being of the masses, we can do so quickly enough if we receive the co-operation of mills on our terms. Without honest and hearty co-operation of our weaving and spinning mills, to attempt to achieve the boycott with mill-cloth would be to court suicide and to run into the arms of profiteering mill-owners. If indigenous mill-cloth is to play a part in this national effort, the mills

must come to terms with the Congress as to the kind of production and the prices to be charged. The mill agents should with the consent and co-operation of their shareholders cease to be merely trustees for themselves and shareholders, but both should become trustees for the whole nation. Then, with khadi, foreign cloth can be successfully and permanently banished from the land. But it is possible, even without the co-operation of mills, though less easy in point of time, to achieve the boycott of foreign cloth through khadi alone. Mills will still play a part, but that will be in spite of the owners. Khadi will put an effective check on their head, it will prevent a famine of cloth and it will give life and hope and work to starving millions, reinstate weavers of plain cloth in their ancient calling and will eventually, but within a short time, lead to a replacing of foreign cloth and regularizing of mill profits. Time limit can be determined by the strength of the nation's will and its capacity for sacrificing a little of its taste for fine cloth and a little money never beyond the capacity of individual users of cloth.

Young India, 26-1-1928

159. “KHADI GUIDE”

The *Khadi Guide* issued by the All-India Spinners' Association is a valuable publication containing useful introduction, the constitution of the A.I.S.A. and details of work done in the provinces where khadi is being produced. No lover of khadi and no honest sceptic should be without it. The volume is priced eight annas. It can be had of the All-India Spinners' Association, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad, and all the principal khadi depots for $9\frac{1}{2}$ --anna stamps.

Young India, 26-1-1928

160. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 26, 1928

JAWAHAR NEHRU
ANAND BHAWAN
ALLAHABAD

YOUR LETTER. MINE¹ WAS WRITTEN MERELY GIVE YOU RELIEF
FREEDOM. HAVE NO DESIRE PUBLISH ANYTHING FROM YOU. DO
BRING FATHER IF AT ALL POSSIBLE.
LOVE.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1928. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and

161. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD MISHRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 26, 1928

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASADJI MISHRA,

Your son has come to me and says that although he and his wife wish that she should give up *purdah*, you oppose this step. He asks me what his duty is. I have told him that, for the present, he should obey you, and engage a tutoress for his wife. One can be sent from here. I would advise you to allow the couple to act in accordance with their own wishes. In this age *purdah* is not practicable, nor is it necessary. In ancient times this evil custom did not exist.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8025

162. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 27, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I am watching the interest you are taking in these amnesties and

¹ Vide "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1928.

the deductions you are drawing. At the present these appear to me to be inevitable whilst we are dependent upon the Government for everything.

I have not yet got your article, but before this letter is posted, I hope to have secured it and read it. If there is anything to criticize, the criticism will go with this letter.

The cutting from *Forward* is very interesting and somewhat painful reading. I had read Lala Dunichand's original article. If Lala Dunichand reads the flaring headlines in *Forward*, he would either laugh or cry. I hope he will only laugh as I have done. This cutting is one more illustration of the irresponsibility of which I have written in the pages of *Young India*.¹

With love,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

[PS.]

Your article has not yet come to hand.² I have now your second letter. I am sending word to Capt. Petavel. I hope your visit to Mymensing was successful and that you felt nothing the worse for it.

From a photostat: G.N. 1583

¹ *Vide* "The National Congress", 5-1-1928.

² The letter bears the following remark from A. Subbiah: "The article, since the above note, was handed over to Bapuji."

163. LETTER TO DR. B. S. MOONJE¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 27, 1928

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

You have been quite discreet in writing to me. I would also agree with your general proposition. But can we enforce it only among Muss-almans, or can we begin the reform with them? Have we not got in the country innumerable purely Hindu institutions? Moreover, this Muslim University has no bar against the entry of Hindus. As a matter of fact, there are already discharged Hindu graduates of this University who are doing good national service. There are some Hindus in it even now studying. Thirdly, even a sectional institution may be called national if its outlook is national and is in reality utilized for national advancement. I would like you, therefore, if you can, to support this memorial to Hakimji.

Sharaddhanandji Memorial stands on a different footing and in one respect a higher footing, because of the circumstances in which Swamiji met his death. But the memorial as it has been conceived cannot be claimed to be national. It is a purely Hindu memorial. For, the *shuddhi* work as also untouchability are things for Hindus alone to look after. The two, therefore, have to be kept separate. Each has its own special object.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 12394

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's letter, dated January 18, in which, referring to the fund for Jamia Millia, he wrote: "I have long been of opinion that it is such sectarian institutions which, amongst other causes, have been mainly responsible for emphasizing and exaggerating sectarian separateness, culminating eventually in such deplorable Hindu-Muslim tension. . . . I shall be pleased to associate with any national scheme of a memorial to our revered and beloved late Hakimji as. . . with any similar memorial to our revered late Swami Shraddhanand. . . . But better still, let there be a common memorial to both Swamiji and Hakimji which shall proclaim to the world that both Hindus and Muslims have. . . resolved upon bringing about heart-to-heart unity conceived in nationalism pure and unalloyed, thus spurning the hated communalism ruthlessly and contemptuously aside" (S.N. 12394).

164. LETTER TO F. W. STEINTHAL

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹. I should be delighted to see you on Tuesday next between three and five in the afternoon. Monday you are welcome, but I shall be silent, as it is a day of silence for me. And rather than that I should miss you altogether, if you have to go away on Monday night, I would suggest your coming on Monday. Although I cannot speak to you, you will be able to say to me what you like.

Yours sincerely,

REV. F. W. STEINTHAL

C/O SALVATION ARMY SOLDIERS' HOME

DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13051

165. SPEECH AT WEDDING OF RAMDAS GANDHI²

SABARMATI,

January 27, 1928

Exactly at 9.30 a.m. all gathered on the prayer ground and Gandhiji blessed the couple in a brief speech which was as solemn as the occasion itself. It was a most moving scene in Gandhiji's life. Those present could see that Gandhiji on such occasions could be as human as any of them. He was nearly moved to tears as he referred to Ramdas and Devdas as two of his sons who had been brought up exclusively by him and under his care. The consciousness that the son had never deceived him, and had hidden none of his faults and failings from him nearly choked him with a feeling of grateful pride.

You have confessed your faults to me, but they have never alarmed me, for your frank confession has exonerated you in my eyes. I am glad that you would rather be deceived by the whole world

¹ Dated 23-1-1928; the addressee and his wife were missionaries having spent about 30 years among Bengali students and Santhal villagers and were leaving India for good. They had expressed a desire to see Gandhiji.

² From Mahadev Desai's "The Week", which reported this speech under the caption "A Solemn Ceremony"

that deceive anyone. May you live always in the same truthful way.

You will guard your wife's honour and be not her master, but her true friend. You will hold her body and her soul as sacred as I trust she will hold your body and your soul. To that end you will have to live a life of prayerful toil, and simplicity and selfrestraint. Let not either of you regard another as the object of his or her lust.

You have both had part of your training here. Let your lives be consecrated to the service of the Motherland, and toil away until you wear out your bodies. We are pledged to poverty. You will, therefore, both earn your bread in the sweat of your brow as poor people do. You will help each other in daily toil and rejoice in it.

I have given you no gifts. I can give none except a pair of *taklis* and copies of my dearly beloved *Bhagavad Gita* and *Bhajanavali*. Let the cotton garlands be a shield of protection for you. Could I have procured rich gifts for you from friends, the world would rightly have ridiculed my conceit, but today it will bear testimony that I have given you only such things as become one in my position.

Let the *Gita* be to you a mine of diamonds, as it has been to me, let it be your constant guide and friend on life's way. Let it light your path and dignify your labour. May God give you a long life of service !

Young India, 2-2-1928

166. SPEECH AT ASHRAM, SABARMATI'

January 27, 1928

In the evening he [Gandhiji] referred to the public aspect of the question. He dilated on the pernicious system which had divided the four original *varnas* into numerous castes and sub-castes and hoped that the wedding² just celebrated would perhaps be for the Ashram the last as between parties belonging to the same caste. It behoved people in the Ashram to take the lead in this respect, because people outside might find it difficult to initiate the reform. The rule should be on the part of the Ashram to discountenance marriages between parties of the same caste and to encourage those between parties belonging to different sub-castes. He wished girls could be kept unmarried up to 20 and even 25. Towards the end he again came back to the solemn significance of the ceremony.

Do not think that the Ashram has as its object the popularization

¹ From Mahadev Desai's "The Week"

² *Vide* the preceding item.

of marriage. It has and will have the promotion of lifelong *brahmacharya* as its object. It countenances marriage only to the extent that it serves as an instrument of restraint rather than of indulgence. And those who are for a life of restraint must order their lives differently from those who are for indulgence. Remember that there is always a limit to self-indulgence but none to self-restraint, and let us daily progress in that direction.

Young India, 2-2-1928

167. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

[After January 27, 1928]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Your letter. Babuji² must have recovered by now. What can I say to you? I am almost helpless.

I had been to Kathiawar for a few days. Mrityunjaya and Vidyavati both accompanied me then. Their health is quite good at present. The wedding of Ramdas and Nimubehn took place on Vasant Panchami³. It was all done in a very simple manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3340

¹ From the reference to Ramdas Gandhi's marriage which took place on this date.

² Brijkishore Prasad, addressee's father.

³ The spring festival which falls on the fifth day of the bright half of the lunar month *Magha*

168. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

[After January 27, 1928]¹

CHI. NIMU,

You have taken a vow not to write to me, haven't you? This is not correct. You have not kept your pledged word and now Ramdas writes and tells me that you would come only if I send for you. Is this not a very strange way of behaving? Do you wish to look upon me as a father-in-law? Why should you think it necessary to be sent for, in order that you may come to me? I will expect you to come over in reply to this letter.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

169. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 28, 1928

MY DEAR C.R.

I have your letter². I wish you will cease to worry about me. I can only give you my assurance that I shall do nothing wilfully to impair my health. But you know my nature. I cannot exist without dietetic experiment if I am fixed up at any place for any length of time. You know too that it has always been my intense longing to revert to fruit and nut diet or at least a milkless diet if I at all could. I find now that I can easily do so and so I have done it. Now that I can pull on with it, it would be difficult for me to go back to milk until I am satisfied that it is not possible to do without milk. I can only tell you that I shall not do anything obstinately. In accordance with Dr. Muthu's instructions I am not having the blood-pressure taken at all, but I am flourishing.

I discovered in Kathiawar that I could bring my voice to almost

¹ Ramdas and Nimu got married on January 27, 1928. This appears to have been written some time after their marriage as suggested by the words "Do you wish to look upon me as a father-in-law?"

² Dated 23-1-1928

the original pitch without fatigue and without any discomfort. It was a well-thought-out, very rapidly delivered speech¹ lasting for full one hour, and there was no trace of exhaustion after it. Surely, that was some test of my progress. And I was able to talk, not merely attend committee meetings for two nights, successively lasting up to 11 o'clock.

About work too, I cannot say that I am not doing very strenuous work, but it is not beyond my capacity.

What has given Lakshmi her fever? I hope that she is all right now.

I hope to send you Rs. 5,000/-for untouchability work soon.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 13050

170. LETTER TO R. B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 28, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I am glad you are now in Poona. I hope that your recovery will be rapid. I shall look forward to your coming here as soon as you can. I would like you to dismiss from your mind the idea that you owe anything either to the doctors or to me. After all, we are on this earth to serve one another without expectation of reward.

Please remember me to the Khambhattas, and when you write to me next tell me how Khambhatta is doing.

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

RICHARD B. GREGG, ESQ.

C/O F. P. POCHA, ESQ.

8, NAPIER ROAD

CAMP, POONA

From a photostat: S.N. 13056

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

171. LETTER TO HEMAPRABHA DEVI DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 28, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. There is no need to learn Urdu, but if you fail to understand any word used in *Navajivan* and no one in the Ashram can explain it, write to me. Prepare your own dictionary in this way.

Do not worry about Nikhil. Those who have faith in prayer should have no anxiety whatever. One implication of prayer is that every day we place our all, even our worries, at the feet of God. After that there is no place for worries.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1654

172 SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH¹

January 28, 1928

It is not my intention to disqualify the graduates or to say that the executive committee has not functioned well The reason for forming a non-elective trust is that it should, instead of being opportunistic, pursue its aims. And if it does not have the strength to do so, it should entrust the work to those who have it. If its members cause delay in handing over their functions, we can either resort to satyagraha or they can be punished for wasting the people's money. The middle path would be that of going to the courts. I am not on the committee, because I do not wish to remain on committees. I have resigned from the managing committees of the Ashram and the Charkha Sangh. Now I do not wish to take work by means of authority—with iron hands—but through love, by touching your heart. By not re-remaining on the committee, I want to show others who are not on it that their responsibility is not less.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 5-2-1928

¹ A meeting of the Senate of Gujarat Vidyapith was held to frame a new constitution and remodel the institution. Gandhiji who was Chancellor presided. *Vide* also "Gujarat Vidyapith", 2-2-1928.

173. A SISTER'S DIFFICULTY¹

[January 29, 1928]

A sister writes :

A year ago I heard you speaking on the supreme necessity of every one of us wearing khadi and thereupon decided to adopt it. But we are poor people. My husband says that khadi is costly. Belonging as I do to Maharashtra, I wear a sari nine yards long. Now if I reduced the length of my sari to six yards, there would be a great saving, but the elders will not hear of any such reduction. I reason with them that wearing khadi is the more important thing and that the style and length of the sari is absolutely immaterial, but in vain. They say that it is my youth that puts all these new-fangled notions into my head. But I expect that they will agree to the proposed reduction in length if you are good enough to write to me, saying that khadi ought to be used, even at the cost of style of clothing.

I have sent the desired reply² to the sister. But I take note of her difficulty here, as I know that the same difficulty is encountered by many other sisters as well.

The letter in question bears witness to the strong patriotic feeling of the writer, for there are not many sisters who, like her, are ready to give up old styles or old customs on their own initiative. The number of such sisters and brothers is legion as would gladly have swaraj if it could be attained without suffering any discomfort or incurring any expenditure and in spite of their sticking to old customs, regardless of their propriety or the reverse. But swaraj is not such a cheap commodity. To attain swaraj implies the cultivation of a spirit of self-sacrifice, including the sacrifice of provincialism.

Provincialism is a bar not only to the realization of national swaraj, but also the achievement of provincial autonomy. Women perhaps are more responsible than men for keeping up this narrow spirit. Variety is worth cherishing up to a certain limit, but if the limit is exceeded, amenities and customs masquerading under the name of variety are subversive of nationalism. The Deccani sari is a thing of beauty, but the beauty must be let go if it can be secured only by sacrificing the nation. We should consider the Kachchhi style of short sari or the Punjabi *odhani* to be really artistic if the wearing of khadi can be cheapened and facilitated by their means. The Deccani,

¹ Translated by V. G. Desai from the Gujarati original published in *Navajivan*, 29-1-1928

² This letter is not available.

Gujarati, Kachchhi and Bengali styles of wearing sari are all of them various national styles, and each of them is as national as the rest. Such being the case, preference should be accorded to that style which requires the smallest amount of cloth consistently with the demands of decency. Such is the Kachchhi style, which takes up only 3 yards of cloth, that is, about half the length of the Gujarati sari, not to mention the saving of trouble in having to carry a smaller weight. If the *pachhedo* and the petticoat are of the same colour one cannot at once make out whether it is only a *pachhedo* or full sari. The mutual exchange and imitation of such national styles is eminently desirable.

Well-to-do people might well keep in their wardrobes all possible provincial styles of clothing. It would be very courteous and patriotic on the part of a Gujarati host and hostess to put on the Bengali style of dress when they entertain Bengali guests, and *vice versa*. But such procedure is open only to the patriotic rich. Patriotic people of the middle and poorer classes should take pride in adopting that particular provincial style which cheapens as well as facilitates the wearing of khadi. And even there they should fix their eye upon the clothing style of the poorest of the poor.

Swadeshi does not mean drowning oneself in one's own little puddle but making it tributary to the ocean that is the nation. And it can claim to contribute to the ocean only if it is and keeps itself pure. It is therefore clear that only such local or provincial customs should have a nation-wide vogue as are not impure or immoral. And when once this truth is grasped, nationalism is transmuted into the enthusiasm of humanity.

What is true of clothing is equally true of language, food, etc. As we might imitate the dress of other provinces on a suitable occasion, so might we utilize the language and other things. But at present all our energy is wasted in the useless, impossible and fatal attempt to give English the pride of place to the neglect, conscious or unconscious, of our mother tongue and all the more so, of the languages of other provinces.

Young India, 2-2-1928

174. KATHIAWAR POLITICAL CONFERENCE

The Conference met and is now over. I have no comments to offer on Shri Thakkar Bapa's¹ speech, on the attendance of the public, on the welcome given by the reception committee, on the gentleness and courtesy of the honourable Rana Saheb², on his presence in the Conference or the hospitality that he extended to the guests. Sheth Devidas left nothing undone so far as the reception was concerned. He acted very well on behalf of Sheth Omar Haji Amod Zaveri who had been elected the chairman of the reception committee and did not hesitate to spend his own money in providing a welcome. The speech of the President was worthy of the priest of Bhils and the Dheds. The resolutions passed by the Conference were innocuous. These did not interest me as they did not reflect any firm determination or power to put them into actual practice. It seemed that many of those who put forward the resolutions thought that with the mere moving of them their duties were discharged. I realized that this was not a khadi conference and inwardly experienced a sense of defeat. I was alone concentrating on that subject. I realized that I had been unsuccessful; my faith in khadi, however, did not waver. I do not, therefore, wish to spell out my sorrow.

I wish to comment on one resolution alone. I am the author of that resolution and I feel that, by framing it and getting it passed, I have served the Conference and Kathiawar. That resolution runs as follows:³

The acceptance of this resolution became possible because of my devotion to truth. I found that this Conference could be held in Porbandar only because of some implicit understanding with the honourable Rana Saheb and that for some years to come it would be possible to hold such conferences only with such an understanding. This reflected the measure of the weakness of the Conference. No conference should be helpless to this extent. There is something wrong somewhere when such helplessness is found to exist. However, it is not got rid of by hiding it from view. Those who try to be

¹ Amritlal V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society, who presided over the Conference

² The ruler of Porbandar

³ For the text of the resolution, *vide* "Speech at Kathiawar Political Conference, Porbandar", 22-1-1928.

secretive about their sickness merely increase its intensity; they ignore remedial measures and become their own enemies.

There were two occasions in the Subjects Committee when the members introduced two resolutions criticizing individual States. I cannot claim that there was no reason for introducing these resolutions. However, I clearly saw that it was beyond the power of the Conference to admit such resolutions or act on them. The committee ruled out these resolutions. However, I felt that the Conference could not continue to function long if it brought forward such resolutions. Hence, I advised the Conference to declare to the world its own weakness, its own limitations. I suggested that, by proclaiming the truth, the Conference will soon overcome its weakness and save itself.

This was a very bitter pill for the Subjects Committee to swallow. I, too, did not like to give such advice; however, I could see clearly what my dharma was. One should act in accordance with the truth, whether it happens to be pleasurable or painful. Does not true happiness often appear to be like poison? Although some members did not approve of this resolution, they as well as others accepted my advice because of their generosity and far-sightedness.

Thereby, my responsibility has increased. I know that I will be blamed if this resolution leads to any undesirable consequences. Not only am I not afraid of these but I believe that, if the Conference implements that resolution in good spirit and does everything that is implied by it, the result must necessarily be rewarding. Restrictions which are voluntarily imposed, self-control which is voluntarily practised, are always beneficial to anyone who undertakes them. There is no other condition which need be applied to a restriction thus voluntarily undertaken.

If the Conference abides by this resolution in thought, word and deed, it will thereby increase its capacity to fulfil its obligations within its province. Before this restriction was imposed, rulers were hesitant to allow the Conference to be held, for fear of personal criticism and censure. As the members were not clearly aware of their limitations, they made attempts, apparently glamorous but in fact futile, to rid the States of their individual shortcomings and, by doing so, were inattentive towards those tasks which, though apparently without glamour, were capable of being carried out. Now, they will either perform these useful, though uninteresting, tasks or shut up shop. As no one likes to become bankrupt, let us hope that the office-bearers of

the Conference will accomplish, willingly or unwillingly, those tasks which are worth accomplishing.

No one will interpret the above resolution to mean that in passing it we admit before the world that the States do not deserve any criticism. We should not speak ill of anyone. Although these States deserve criticism, we do admit that as we live within the boundaries of Kathiawar we do not have the capacity to criticize at the moment any State in Kathiawar or even elsewhere. We have imposed the restriction for this very reason and in the hope that we shall be able to develop the strength to make such criticisms in the future. The Committee of the Conference has the right, or rather the duty, to utilize the means at its disposal for the redressing of any grievances that it may find in any State, without bringing in resolutions in the Conference to that effect and without making any criticism against any individual State either directly or in an indirect manner at the Conference. For instance, at the time when the Conference is in session, any member of the Subjects Committee can describe the drawbacks of any State in Kathiawar to his fellow-members and ask for the guidance of the Committee on the matter. The only restriction is that he cannot move a resolution on it in the session of the Conference. He could meet that rulers or their officers and request them for redress, or if the grievances prove to be untrue he should declare them as such. In other words, the Committee can approach each and every State through proper channels, in a friendly manner. There is a possibility that if the States in question, after having come to know the idea behind this restriction, have not suddenly started acting in an irresponsible manner and do not wholly disregard public opinion, they would welcome this step taken by the Committee and would even use it as a shield. Here we should bear in mind that the Committee should not take undue advantage of such an investigation and publicly discuss the facts which have come to light; it should suffer in silence even if it cannot gain access to the States in question or gets no satisfaction even after gaining access, and realize that the remedy for the disease lies beyond its powers.

The outcome of such limited interference, or investigation if you wish to call it by that name, depends on the tact, industry and courtesy of the Committee. It will be able to achieve nothing if it forms preconceived notions about those States and becomes prejudiced against them. It should have the self-confidence to melt the hearts of rulers. Such self-confidence can be acquired only through

supreme service to both the ruler and the ruled. Both should be served in a dispassionate manner for their ultimate good and not in order to placate them. The members of the Committee should not even dream of serving their own self-interest through such service. The belief that we do not wish to do away with the existence of Indian States but only ask for an improvement in these is at the very heart of this idea. The Conference does not deserve to be held in the States at all if the idea behind it is to put an end to the system of princely States.

It is change and not destruction that can be brought about through non-violence. Democracy can be realized through the rulers; neither the ruler nor the ruled should be destroyed and whatever is good in both these can be harmoniously harnessed. In short, the relationship between the two should be one of dharma and not of brute force. The modern trend is towards destruction, whereas ancient culture is in favour of growth and nurture. Non-violence achieves the good of all, whereas violence bases the prosperity of one upon the destruction of another. Democracy is not an advantage in all respects nor is monarchy altogether harmful. Each has its own uses and it is the duty of the Political Conference to find these out, for it wishes to reach its goal by following the path of truth and non-violence.

Let us examine what the Conference can do. Khadi, the service of the untouchables, social reforms, etc., are of course there. By taking up these activities the Conference should nurture democracy. Administrative problems are not few—prohibition, education, the railway department, storage of rain water for the whole of Kathiawar, preservation of trees and their multiplication, introducing uniformity in the excise levy throughout Kathiawar as well as uniformity in its administration. Other matters, too, which would be advantageous to both the ruler and the ruled can be enumerated. Such matters are of the utmost importance and Kathiawar can subsist on these alone. By disregarding them Kathiawar will bring about its own ruin.

In order to accomplish these tasks, the help of the officer class is required more than that of the rulers. If the former are selfish or narrow-minded, even the reforms decreed by the rulers cannot be brought about. The officers are the limbs of the rulers and the officer class means the people. The ruler would necessarily improve if the people improve; however, the larger section of the public which is vocal, happens to belong to the officer class. Hence, so long as that section does not give up its self-interest and adopt the path of

morality, so long as it does not cease to worry over earning its livelihood, so long as these fearless persons do not comprehend the nature of public activities and take interest in them, there is little hope of any true reforms being introduced in the Indian States. The greater part of the effort of the Political Conference should, therefore, be directed towards and concentrated on the people, as it is the people who are like roots whereas the rulers are like fruits. If roots become sweet, fruits are bound to be sweet too.

Moreover, if the Kathiawar Political Conference is destined to add prestige to itself, there should be separate Conferences of State people in each of the more important States; these conferences may certainly criticize their own States in all matters, within the bounds of decency. These conferences should develop their own strength; even in order to do so they should engage themselves in constructive activity. The development of its strength depends on this.

Selfless and fearless workers are required for these activities. Where to find them? If those that are there, whatever their number, would keep on doing their duties silently, their number would multiply. No one should entertain the cowardly thought: 'What could I achieve all by myself?'¹

So far I have addressed my words to the people. If the rulers could realize it, the above-mentioned resolution has greatly added to their responsibilities. To this day, they avoided and some even ignored the Conference for fear of its criticism and harsh words against them. However, in my humble opinion, they should respect the Conference by appreciating its civilized nature, satisfy its demands and use it as a bridge between the people and themselves. The evidence I have before me leads me to believe that it is not the case that all the States in Kathiawar are above criticism. I have been told that there are some very major shortcomings in these. They should come to recognize this age. The chaos that is there in the world and has affected India too, is an important symptom. It is certainly harmful in its chaotic form; however, the purpose underlying it is an honest one. People worship morality, although they follow consciously or unconsciously a path that deviates from it. They are tired of the blind forces of authority; they have become impatient. And, in their impatience, although they may forget that the remedy adopted by them is even more dangerous than the disease itself, they are eager for reforms and for moral power.

¹ The following paragraph was addressed to the rulers.

Though devotees of truth and non-violence like myself can see that morality will not be attained by their means, they are also aware that, if those in authority do not take this warning, destruction awaits them. It is necessary for rulers to take this warning. Let not perversity foreboding destruction prevail with them. I am kept alive by my unwavering faith that India will never take to the path leading to moral death. May the rulers prove my faith to be correct.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

175. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

A worker asked whether a school for untouchables should be started in State 'A'. Gandhiji replied:

I have heard at many places and from many persons that 'A' is an unholy State; if that is true, we should not go there for any sacred work. The only exception to this would be the work of removing the unholiness of that State. As we have been living under British rule, it has acquired a certain kind of prestige; however, as we wish to break up this unjust administration from within, no other alternative is open to us. Otherwise, for any good person to go or to live in an unholy State in order to carry out any other sacred work would amount to his going there to increase the prestige of that State.

Q. Is it necessary to have an all-India satyagraha organization for introducing reforms in Indian States?¹

A. No. There were 60,000 people associated with my work in South Africa; how many of them continue to be satyagrahis today? However, all the twenty-two of you have been selected for the purpose of giving a helping hand whenever it becomes necessary. Whenever you take up the work—and you will not do so without exercising discretion—you will find many other people who will join hands with you. If you are discreet satyagrahis the all-India satyagraha organization that you envisage is not necessary. The talent that lies hidden within you and in the country will manifest itself when occasion arises.

Q. How should the Satyagraha Dal grow in numbers and in quality?

¹ This and the following questions were asked by members of the Satyagraha Dal.

A. Every satyagrahi should remain alert. He should not be idle or lazy, he should not be lethargic or sick, so that he can be introspective. He should keep on evaluating his own contribution to the activity which he has chosen for himself. The commander-in-chief must maintain a record of the work done by each soldier.

Q. At present many persons are engaged in running schools for untouchables and in such other activities.

A. I would ask such satyagrahis how far they have been able to convert these children to satyagraha, to what extent they have been able to become one with the children. If I may ask the children who these persons are, they should reply that they look upon their teachers alone as their fathers.

There are satyagrahi doctors amongst you. Shall I tell you what a satyagrahi doctor should be like? He would treat the poor before all others and would disregard me and others like myself who can get the services of doctors whenever they wish to. He would ask a poor man whether he required a set of false teeth because he has lost his natural ones. Such a doctor should not worry how he could thrive in his profession if he did not find people with bad teeth. You should look up *Hind Swaraj* for a detailed description of a satyagrahi doctor¹. Such an individual should not even hope to make a living from his profession. Dr. Wanless has performed thousands of operations, people donate thousands of rupees to his institution, but he does not take a single pie out of it. Sam Higgin-bottom was the agricultural expert of the Scindia. He received a salary of Rs. 4,000 a month for his advise; did he, however, take a single pie of it for his personal expenditure? Yes, we do have our Dr. Chandulal²; he acts in a similar fashion, he knows his own job very well, he does not take a single pie for himself and the poor can readily approach him.

The satyagrahi should dedicate himself to his chosen field of activity in a spirit of purity, and adhere to it. His unflinching faith will be recognized by his truthful adherence to something which he has regarded as true although it may be untrue. Tulsidas has said: "The shell appears as a piece of silver and the sun's rays appear as a sheet of water—such is the character of illusion. Though it is ever non-existent, one cannot get rid of it."

¹ Vide "Hind Swaraj (Chapter XII: The Condition of India (Continued): Doctors)".

² Chandulal Desai, a dental surgeon and Congress leader of Gujarat

Since we act as if the world is ultimately true, we should remain absorbed in such actions as would bring about the good of the world. That alone is beneficial.

Q. Supposing State 'A' has so deteriorated that satyagraha needs to be practised there, should we set up our camp in it?

A. No, your duty is to muster strength, remaining outside it and to educate public opinion in State 'A' while doing so. When you find that you have grown in strength and that a part of the fortress of State 'A' has given way, if it appears that some Vibhishana can be found there, only then should the Satyagraha Dal invade it. Despite such an attack the Dal should bear goodwill towards the ruler while maladministration is the reason for this attack. The Satyagraha Dal can set up its camp there when all these factors are present. Meanwhile, you can educate the people of that State. You can create an awareness of their sorry plight amongst the large number of people who visit your place. You should train people of that State through boycott or by not going there even though you may have relations living there who may be celebrating a wedding or some such auspicious occasion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-1-1928

176. LETTER TO V. S. BHASKARAN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 29, 1928

MY DEAR BHASKARAN,

I have your telegram and your letter. I cannot help saying that you have been hasty in resigning. You joined the Khadi Service not to please anybody but to serve the country, and no man who joins an institution for a good cause may leave it because of an injustice felt by or done to him¹ personally. A conscientious man would regard as his own the institution to which he belongs, and, therefore, will carry out all the obligations without insisting on his rights.

If there is an injustice done, you should discuss it with Sjt. Rajagopalachariar. I, therefore, cannot approve of your running to the

¹ The source has "felt or done by or to him".

Ashram because you feel that you are not treated there properly. If there is any room left for reconsideration, I would like you to reconsider your position.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13057

*177. TELEGRAM TO PUNJAB CONGRESS COMMITTEE,
LAHORE¹*

January 30, 1928

GENERAL SECRETARY

PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONGRESS COMMITTEE

LAHORE

HOPE EFFORTS WILL BE COMPLETELY SUCCESSFUL.

GANDHI

The Tribune, 1-2-1928

178. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 30, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have now got and read your statement. It is fairly accurate. I have doubts as to one or two things. You have signed it. Is it the original? Or is it copy of a statement sent to some paper? I may not print it in *Young India*.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1585

¹ This was sent in connection with the boycott of the Simon Commission and the hartal in protest against the visit of the Commission.

179. LETTER TO ALICE VARLEY

January 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND¹,

I was pleased to receive your letter. It was a pleasure to see you all. Do please come when you wish.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

MISS VARLEY
BENTINCK HIGH SCHOOL
VEPERY
MADRAS

From the original: C.W. 10158. Courtesy: Marjorie Sykes

180. NOTE TO RAMANIKLAL MODI

[January 30, 1928]²

CHI. RAMANIKLAL,

It is true that Chhaganlal is sick, but I came to know about this only when I got your note just now. The meeting can be held tomorrow at 4 o'clock. I have given an appointment to Anasuyabehn from 3 to 4. Alternatively, it can also take place in the evening at 7-30. I do not think I shall be able to work on the draft rules³ today. But I shall prepare them before the meeting.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S. N. 14578

¹ The addressee had been a participant at the convention of the Council of Federation of International Fellowship.

² This was in reply to the addressee's letter, dated January 30, 1928, requesting Gandhiji to prepare a draft of the Ashram rules and suggesting that a meeting be held on January 31 to consider the draft.

³ *Vide* "Satyagraha Ashram", 14-6-1928.

181. LETTER TO D. N. BANERJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹. If you are absolutely clear in your mind about non-violence, it is your duty to make that statement before the judge decline to give evidence and cheerfully suffer the consequence. You should believe that it would be the duty of a judge administering a penal judgment to punish those who do not obey laws of the country in which they live. And, in this instance, there can be no question of civil disobedience either, because the law of punishing witnesses who do not answer questions will be enforced even after swaraj.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. D. N. BANERJI
94, BARADEO
BENARES CITY

From a photostat: S. N. 13058

182. LETTER TO ELISABETH KNUDSEN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 31, 1928

DEAR MISS KNUDSEN,

I have your letter. I am conducting no hydropathic establishment. I give Kuhne's baths to some people in the Ashram and that is all. If you can come at all, come to the Ashram. You will be welcome guest and you will teach massage to some of the sisters here as also men. You will of course have to pay nothing for your board-ing and lodging, and you will stay as long as you like. Life here is very simple, perhaps even harder, but I know that that matters little to you.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ELISABETH KNUDSEN
ADYAR
MADRAS

From a photostat: S. N. 13059

¹ Dated 23-1-1928; the addressee had asked Gandhiji's advice whether he should give evidence in a criminal case.

183. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

*Silence Day [January 1928]*¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

Regarding Khadi, I will not be able to do more from here. What you say in your letter you have done is sufficient. Since our idea in promoting its growth is a mixed one, it is but right to do nothing more for the present. Tell Jamnalalji this when he arrives there. Meanwhile you may do what you can.

Look into the error in the figures about milk² and set it right. I hope Purshottam has completely recovered by now³. How is Kanu?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 33215

184. SPEECH TO STUDENTS OF GUJARAT VIDYAPITH⁴

*[February 1, 1928]*⁵

I have not come to take you by storm, not in the Caesarean spirit of *veni, vidi, vici*. But I have simply thrown myself in your midst, so that you can make whatever use you like of me on the eve of the changes that are impending. It would perhaps be better if I said that I have come to clear a long-standing debt I have long owed to you as your Chancellor to come and stay in your midst and identify myself with you as much as I could. But I have never been able to do so. I am thankful to the Giver of all good for having given me this opportunity of spending some time with you.

I have not come to create any disturbance in the even tenor of your lives. I do not insist on your attending the four-o' clock morning prayers. If you are convinced that prayer is an essential thing in one's life and that it is best to begin one's day with prayer in

¹ As supplied in the source. Also *vide* the following footnotes.

² Also *vide* "Letter to Maganlal Gandhi", about October 10, 1927.

³ Also *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", December 19, 1927.

⁴ Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

⁵ According to a report in *Navajivan*, 5-2-1928, Gandhiji arrived at the Vidyapith in the evening of January 31 and spoke to the students at the prayer meeting next morning.

the early hours of the morning, you will attend it. If you do not, I shall certainly be sorry, but will not resent your absence. In the same way, I should like you to accompany me every evening to the Ashram to attend the evening prayer there. That also you will do if the spirit moves you, and if you feel that your work will permit you to do so. I want you to go there, not because I want you to join the Ashram, though I would be glad if you did so, but because I want you to understand and identify yourselves somewhat with the Ashram. For I make no secret of it that the Ashram is the best of my creations. I can myself point out numerous defects in it, and can add many more from your own experience. But I assure you that I am more conscious of them than anyone else and yet I hold that, with all its shortcomings, it is the best of my creations. I would have me and my work judged by the Ashram more than by anything else. Hence I would love you to attend the evening prayer daily. But this is a mere suggestion to be rejected or adopted out of your own free will.

Let me not live in your midst as a burden, but as a friend, and, if possible, a guide if you will.

I am willing to give you a quarter of an hour every day or two periods every week just as you might desire. I am not sure what I shall read with you, but that also I shall leave to you to decide.

Young India, 2-2-1928

185. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 1, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I wish you would lose your diffidence. Keep pressing Thakkar Bapa¹ on. His letter to Sir P.² should bear greater weight than mine, as his will be backed by experience. But you may keep me in touch. When there is anything I can do through *Young India*, you should tell me. But then you should send me a brief statement of work done and expectations.

You have to tell me whether you are ready, when you are free, to take up the all-India untouchability work. But you know the

¹ Amritlal V. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society

² Purushottamdas Thakkaradas

consequence. You may have to be continuously on the move. I want you to act with the greatest deliberation and decision.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 881

186. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

Wednesday [February 1, 1928]¹

CHI. RAMDAS,

Bravo! Now that you have become a family man, you must need stop writing to me! That will not do. Things are going on quite well here. The mail is going just now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Mrs. Sumitra Kulkarni Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

187. MISS MAYO AGAIN

Miss Mayo is clearly trading upon her knowledge that what we in India write can at best reach but a few hundred Americans, and that what she writes reaches thousands. She therefore feels perfectly free, just as it suits her, to misquote, half-quote or distort other people's writings or speeches intended to contradict her. She has done me the honour again of referring to me in her article in *Liberty* attempted to discredit my writing about her compilation, *Mother India* This she has felt called upon to do, I suppose, because I enjoy a certain amount of credit among cultured Americans, and lest therefore their judgment may be affected by my article. But in her article in *Liberty* she has outdone herself. Her reference to my secretaries is a clever attempt to hoodwink the unwary reader. All that could be inferred from my repudiation of the statement that I had two secretaries (whether always or not is not the point) is that Miss Mayo was at least a careless writer if not a wilful perverter of truth. But the manner in which she

¹ From the reference to Ramdas having "become a family man", the letter appears to have been written on the Wednesday following Ramdas's marriage on January 27, 1928 which was a Friday. The Wednesday following, fell on February 1.

² *Vide* "Drain Inspector's Report", September 15, 1927.

described the secretaries leaves the reader under the belief that I have always two secretaries. Her adherence to the statement that I did give her the message she ascribed to me proves her to be guilty of a gross suppression of truth. She seems to have thought that I would not have a copy of the corrected interview between her and me. Unfortunately for her I happen to possess a copy of her notes. Here is the full quotation referring to the hum of the wheel:

My message to America is simply the hum of this wheel. Letters and newspaper cuttings I get from America show that one set of people overrates the results of non-violent non-co-operation and the other not only underrates it, but imputes all kinds of motives to those who are concerned with the movement. Don't exaggerate one way or the other. If, therefore, some earnest Americans will study the movement impartially and patiently, then it is likely that the United States may know something of the movement which I do consider to be unique although I am the author of it. What I mean is that our movement is summed up in the spinning-wheel with all its implications. It is to me a substitute for gunpowder. For it brings the message of self-reliance and hope to the millions of India. And when they are really awakened, they would not need to lift their little finger in order to regain their freedom. The message of the spinning-wheel is, really, to replace the spirit of exploitation by the spirit of service. The dominant note in the West is the note of exploitation. I have no desire that my country should copy that spirit or that note.

The first sentence only of the foregoing extract, which Miss Mayo quotes without the most important commentary on it, is intended to ridicule me. But the whole paragraph, I hope, makes my meaning and message clear and intelligible. I wrote my article on her book whilst I was travelling. Had I had the notes before me, I should have quoted from them, and thus added force to my article. I claim, however, that the message as it appears in the full paragraph quoted is not different from what I have stated in the article Miss Mayo attempts to shake.

Whilst, therefore, even in "the trivial quibble" as she rightly calls the subject-matter of her contradiction, she is, I trust, proved wholly unsuccessful, I claim that even if my memory had betrayed me, my conclusive reply to her is left unanswered and untouched. Having no case, she has followed the method of the pettifogging lawyer who vainly tries to discredit a hostile but unshakable witness by making him state things from memory which might be found on

verification to be not quite accurate. It gives me pain to have to say that her article in *Liberty* proves her to be not only an unreliable writer, but an unscrupulous person devoid of sense of right and wrong.

Young India, 2-2-1928

188. GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

This National University, the first of its kind established when non-co-operation was at its height, has been struggling for existence for the past three or four years. The attendance of boys has gone down considerably. Several schools affiliated to it have closed or sought Government recognition. There would be nothing to worry over this decline, if there were no internal causes for it. But most of us including myself have felt that we have not done all we might have for this most useful national work of reconstruction. But whilst, if all had been vigilant, the defections might have been not so large as they have been, there are for the decline causes over which no one had any control. And though the quality of the work already done might have been easily better, what has been achieved is such as any institution would be proud of. I make bold to assert that but for the Vidyapith, Vallabhbhai Patel would not have been able to command the valuable assistance he did of so many workers during the late disastrous floods¹. Indeed, the Vidyapith volunteers went even to Sind in order to assist Professor Malkani who has been doing heroic work there in connection with the Sind floods. I hope some day to deal the Vidyapith graduates' work of which an accurate but brief analysis has been prepared by a graduate proud of being owned by it. Sufficient for the time being to make the confession of our neglect both avoidable and unavoidable and to state that we seem now to have been roused from our slumbers.

The preliminary cleansing step was taken on Sunday² last when the Senate handed over charge of the valuable property and the still more valuable responsibility connected with the Vidyapith to a Board of Trustees by means of a resolution of which I give the translation below:

¹ In Gujarat, in July 1927

² January 29, 1928

“This meeting of the Senate of the Gujarat Vidyapith is of opinion that

1. By having established the Gujarat Vidyapith in connection with the non-co-operation movement and by maintaining it in spite of a set-back in the movement, Gujarat has rendered essential service to the nation.

2. The Vidyapith has however continued year after year to suffer in point of numbers.

3. The Vidyapith could have achieved better results in point of quality, had the internal conditions been favourable; and,

4. The Vidyapith has now reached a stage in its evolution, when, in order to make it work more effectively and in order to ensure an unswerving observance of the principles hereinafter enunciated, the administration of the Vidyapith should be entrusted to a Board of Trustees.

5. Therefore, and in pursuance of the resolution for the reconstruction of the Vidyapith passed by this Senate on the 4th of December 1927, the Senate appoints a Board of Trustees called the Gujarat Vidyapith Mandal to be composed of those who, from the list herein below, pledge themselves to subscribe to and observe the principles hereinafter enunciated; hands over charge of all the institutions connected with the Vidyapith, along with their property, movable and immovable, as also all the rights and responsibilities pertaining thereto, to the said Vidyapith Mandal; and authorizes the Mandal to add to its membership subject to the same qualifications so as not to exceed 25; and authorizes it to exercise all other rights including that of filling vacancies caused by resignation, death, or dismissal of any member for breach of the pledge or similar other reason, the latter to take place by a vote of four-fifths of their number.

NAMES OF MEMBERS

1. Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel
2. „ Nrisimhaprasad Bhatt
3. „ Kaka Kalelkar
4. „ Shankerlal Banker
5. „ Mahadev Desai
6. „ Abdul Kadar Bavazir

7. „ Manilal Kothari
8. „ Kishorelal Mashruwala
9. „ Narahari Parikh
10. „ Valji Desai
11. „ Hariprasad Vrajrai Desai
12. „ Jugatram Dave
13. „ Gokulbhai Bhatt
14. „ Sukhlalji Pandit
15. „ Parikshitlal Mazmudar
16. „ Gopalrao Kulkarni
17. „ Mama Phadke
18. Shrimati Manibehn V. Patel

PRINCIPLE

1. The principal object of the Vidyapith shall be to prepare workers of character, ability, education and conscientiousness, necessary for the conduct of the movements connected with the attainment of swaraj.

2. All the institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith shall be fully non-co-operating and shall therefore have nothing to do with any help from Government.

3. Whereas the Vidyapith has come into being in connection with swaraj, and non-violent non-co-operation as a means thereof, its teachers and trustees shall restrict themselves to those means only which are not inconsistent with truth and non-violence and shall consciously strive to carry them out.

4. The teachers and the trustees of the Vidyapith, as also all the institutions affiliated to it, shall regard untouchability as a blot on Hinduism, shall strive to the best of their power for its removal, and shall not exclude a boy or girl for reason of his or her untouchability nor shall give him or her differential treatment having once accorded admission to him or her.

5. The teachers and the trustees of and all the institutions affiliated to the Vidyapith shall regard hand-spinning as an essential part of the swaraj movement and shall therefore spin regularly, except when disabled, and shall habitually wear khadi.

6. The language of the Province shall have the principal place in the Vidyapith and shall be the medium of instruction.

EXPLANATION. Languages other than Gujarati may be taught by direct method.

7. The teaching of Hindi-Hindustani shall be compulsory in the curricula of the Vidyapith.

8. Manual training shall receive the same importance as intellectual training and only such occupations as are useful for the life of the nation shall be taught.

9. Whereas the growth of the nation depends not on cities but its villages, the bulk of the funds of the Vidyapith and a majority of the teachers of the Vidyapith shall be employed in the propagation of education conducive to the welfare of the villagers.

10. In laying down the curricula, the needs of village-dwellers shall have principal consideration.

11. There shall be complete toleration of all established religions in all institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith, and for the spiritual development of the pupils, religious instruction shall be imparted in consonance with truth and non-violence.

12. For the physical development of the nation, physical exercise and physical training shall be compulsory in all the institutions conducted by and affiliated to the Vidyapith.

NOTE. Hindi-Hindustani means the language commonly spoken by the masses of the North, both Hindu and Mussalman, written in the Devanagari or the Persian script.

But drastic as this step is, it may mean nothing if it is not to be followed up by quick, persistent and vigilant effort. Such effort may for the time being even result in further defections. The Senate, now the Board of Trustees, have been quite aware of the possibility. They want quality and feel that if the quality is assured, quantity will come in its own time. They are prepared to sacrifice everything to quality. It would be wrong to use donations of those who have given and will give in the belief that the principles for which the institution has professed to stand will be worked out in practice in so far as it is humanly possible. As reformers the trustees would belie their trust if they sacrifice principles for holding the institution together anyhow. Personally I have no fear as to the result if the trustees remain staunch, as I have every reason to believe they will.

On the surface there would appear to be a descent from democracy to oligarchy. As a matter of fact it is not. The large elected body could not be sustained when the principles for which the elected

Senate for the time being stood were in the melting-pot. A democracy's ideals and principles vary with the times. A reformer's principles are rigid and fixed. When non-co-operation ceased to be national, those who believed in it as a creed, the only final solution for the removal of India's fetters, were bound to save the creed by working it to its logical conclusion in their own lives. Hence did the Congress bring into being an independent self-governing body styled the All-India Spinners' Association, composed of those who had a living faith in the message of the wheel. The unwritten understanding was that the Association would work out the programme of khadi so as to become in process of time a tower of strength to the parent body. The permanent trust has been created in the hope of evolving a truly democratic institution. And there is a democracy such as the world had never seen if khadi becomes a truly national institution. Even so has the Senate emerged as a Board of Trustees pledged to work out its present ideals so as to make national education a living force, so as, that is to say, to cover every village in Gujarat, to enable the students to realize the dignity of labour equally with the dignity of learning, to produce national servants who will serve the nation in her villages. The Senate, when after a full discussion it came to the resolution on Sunday, has no less, a hope, the Trustees shouldered no less a responsibility. No oligarchy can arise from a voluntary surrender such as the Senate's was. It gave up its powers to a permanent body when it was in possession of the fullest powers and in a position to exercise them to the fullest extent. It was an act of self-denial whose virtue has to be proved by the Trustees. Theirs is an awful responsibility. But, with proper consecration, it will sit lightly on their shoulders and Gujarat as well as India will be the gainer thereby. They will be judged not by the quantity of result turned out but by the quantity and the quality of self-service put in.

Young India, 2-2-1928

189. APPEAL TO PEOPLE OF BOMBAY

I hope that the boycott¹ will pass peacefully and show the nation's strength of purpose.

GANDHI

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-2-1928

¹ Of Simon Commission which was appointed "for the purpose of inquiring into the working of the system of Government"; *vide* also "After Hartal?", 9-2-1928.

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

Friday [February 3, 1928]¹

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter after many days. It is very good that you vacated Pattaniji's bungalow. Shankar writes that the new place is well provided with facilities. You have done well in not making a written or oral commitment.

Ramdas was married on the Basant Panchami day. The couple are still here. Devdas is also here.

I am keeping good health. For the present, I am experimenting with my original diet. It suits me. I take dried as well as fresh fruit. I have been taking this diet for nearly a month now. I shall be here only till the end of March.

Taramati has lapsed into silence after writing one letter.

What is the distance you are able to cover when you go for walks.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Pyarelal Papers. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Courtesy: Beladevi Nayyar and Dr. Sushila Nayyar

191. LETTER TO KUVALAYANAND

[February 3, 1928]²

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I have not abandoned the yogic exercises at all. *Shavasan* I take perhaps indifferently. The breathing I am taking as prescribed by you. But I have made a radical change in my diet. You know my dislike for milk for religious reasons. Having no travels on hand, I am trying the nut and fruit diet. It is now nearly a month. I am taking three times one *tola* of almonds pounded to a milky substance with stewed oranges or raisins each time. Twice I take half a coconut grated and squeezed so as to get the milk out of it with

¹ The addressee got the letter on February 5, 1928. The Friday preceding that date was February 3.

² The source has "3-1-1928" which appears to be a slip for "3-2-1928". Gandhiji would have started his dietetic experiment after returning to the Ashram on December 31, 1927. From the reference to his having carried on the experiment for "nearly a month" it appears this letter was written on February 3, 1928.

stewed unripe pawpaw or unripe banana. The unripe banana I started only today. Since this change, I have not had any opening medicine and the bowels have been much better than before. Probably you don't like this change. But if you can bear with me and can guide me, please do. If you have any more exercises to recommend, please tell me. On the strength of Dr. Muthu's advice, I have not had blood-pressure taken at all for a month.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5054

192. MESSAGE TO PUBLIC MEETING, AHMEDABAD¹

February 3, 1928

I hope this meeting will not disperse without deciding to do something concrete. The Congress Committee has entrusted us with such a task; if we fail to achieve this definite goal of boycott of foreign cloth, we would be ridiculed.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 5-2-1928

193. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

Magha Shukla 14 [February 4, 1928]²

BHAI RAMESHWARJI,

Your letters keep coming and every time I pray for your peace.

You did well in sending some money for the memorial to Hakimji.

By and by, if you make the effort, you will visualize truth and ahimsa. If your father-in-law is addicted to bhang, be kind to him, and if opportunity occurs, try to cure him of his depraved habits. In the present circumstances when the evil customs like child-marriage and

¹ Held to protest against the Simon Commission and to endorse the resolution passed by the All-Parties Conference at Banaras. The message was read out by Vallabhbhai Patel, who presided.

² From the reference to the memorial to Hakimji (Hakim Ajmal Khan) who died in December 1927

so on are rampant, such unequal alliances are inevitable.

Jamnālājī is absolutely right in advising you to go to Wardha and I also like the proposal to keep Babu at Wardha Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 193

194. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

AHMEDABAD,
*Monday [February 6, 1928]*¹

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

Chi. Chhagan² and others came here day before yesterday. They had a long talk with the Thakore Saheb of Morvi. He has promised to lift the excise duty from cotton used in making khadi. He has also asked me for a man who will work for cow-protection. They talked about you too. The Thakore Saheb said that you should stay in Morvi and do all this work with his help. I also think that you should spend a part of your time there, if not all. From what Mirabehn told me I see that now you are keeping well. What news of Dhiru³?

Regards from
MOHANDAS

REVASHANKER JAGJIVAN JHAVERI
MANIBHUVAN
LABURNUM ROAD
GAMDEVI, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1267

¹ From the postmark

² Chhaganlal Mehta, son of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

³ Son of Chhaganlal Mehta; he had been suffering from T. B.

195. LETTER TO KANTIPRASAD C. ANTANI

Maha Vad 2, February 7, 1928

BHAISHRI KANTIPRASAD,

All I can say about the problems of Cutch is that those problems can be solved only by the people of Cutch themselves.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Purushartha Kantiprasad Antani, p. 80

196. LETTER TO NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM,

Maha Krishna Paksha 2 [February 7, 1928]¹

BHAI NANABHAI,

I have your letter as also the letters of Sushila² and Amina. Sushila has spread a sweet atmosphere around her and is winning everyone's love. I hope you are keeping well.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6675

¹ The year has been supplied from the G.N. Register

² Addressee's daughter

197. LETTER TO RAMAKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM,
*Magh Krishna 2 [February 7, 1928]*¹

DEAR RAMAKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I could read it only today. Convey my blessing to the couple. May they live long and may both devote parts of their lives to some service or other.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

RAMAKRISHNAJI
KRISHNA NIVAS
KATRA KHUSHALRAI
DELHI

From the Hindi original: Brijkrishna Chandiwalla Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

198. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM,
February 7, 1928

MY DEAR GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter does make me anxious. Medicines would certainly cause tiredness. In my view total fasting is the first step. I have nothing to fear from it. Fasting can do no harm and should be undertaken not for a day or two, but for ten to fifteen days. If you decide to fast, you must stay here. I can send for one or two friends who are well versed in the technique of fasting. There is enough accommodation. The weather here is fine these days. If you wish to invite the specialist on fasting to Pilani, that too can be arranged.

It is my firm belief that on no account should you go to Delhi. I am writing today to *pujya* Malaviyaji and Lalaji to this effect. Regarding the memorial to Hakim Ajmal Khan, I have published an appeal in *Young India*² and *Navajivan*; I want donations from you and your friends. If you are not inclined to give a big sum and if you permit, I would take out a substantial portion from the Rs. 75,000

¹ From the postmark

² *Vide* "In Memoriam", January 5, 1928 and "Ajmal Jamia Fund", January 19, 1928.

already donated by you. I leave it to you to have your name published or not. Please write to me without hesitation if you do not wish to give anything out of that.

Do not be alarmed by the reports of my health in the newspapers. There is not much cause for anxiety. Doctors do try to frighten me, but I remain unaffected by it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6153. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

*199. MESSAGE TO MEETING AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH,
AHMEDABAD¹*

February 7, 1928

Having submitted to the doctors I may not attend the meeting. Acharya Kripalani is going away. I hold that he is not in reality leaving the Vidyapith, because his spirit will be here. He will come here occasionally to deliver lectures and he also promise to come as helmsman if the time comes. My connection with Acharya Kripalani dates back to the time of my arrival from South Africa. I wish all would follow him in his spirit of dedication, his simplicity and his devotion to duty.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 12-2-1993

200. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 8, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall see to your notes appearing in the next issue of *Young India*.² They were too late for the issue that is being printed today.

If you are ready for untouchability work, I am equally ready to

¹ The message was read out by Ambalal Sarabhai, who presided over the meeting in place of Gandhiji. The meeting was held to bid farewell to J. B. Kripalani who was leaving for Banaras to join and Gandhi Ashram there.

² *Vide* "Flood Relief Work in Sind", 16-2-1928.

take you up. We shall discuss plans and operations as soon as your work there is finished.

Don't be alarmed about the reports of my health. Doctors' instruments do give alarming readings, and therefore I have agreed to take full rest. Hence, such correspondence as I am permitted to undertake is dictated. But, personally, I feel that there is nothing vitally wrong. No doubt I am weak, but that is an old complaint.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 882

201. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 8, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I hope you have not become nervous over the news of my health. There was nothing in it, and there is nothing in it now so far as I can see. But as doctors themselves are frightened, I am taking all precautions and taking full rest. I am doing only a little bit of correspondence and that also by dictating.

Let me remind you that you have yet to finish the Shradhd-anand series¹.

Here is a copy of a letter from Kanikaraj. You will know its meaning fuller than I can.

I hope you will be going with Chhaganlal to Orissa so that he may know exactly what you would want him to do.

My love to everybody at the Ashram.

From a photostat: S.N. 13065

¹ Three instalments of this had already appeared in *Young India*, 22-9-1927, 29-12-1927 and 5-1-1928.

202. LETTER TO MRS. L. C. UNNI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters both of which I have kept by me for answer. It gave me great joy to see you in Calicut and it gave me much pleasure to receive your letters and to learn that my writings had given you some little help. I am delighted to find that you are regularly spinning. And seeing you are doing it in a religious spirit, I would like you to learn how to test the strength and the fineness of your yarn. If you are a reader of *Young India*, you will find the directions in the back numbers. I would ask you also to read the "Prize Essay on Hand-spinning"¹.

If you succeed in keeping early hours of the morning, I have no doubt that they will give you a peace and a joy which are not to be had in any other manner, provided, of course, that the very first thing done in the morning is to put oneself in tune with the Infinite. It is like putting oneself with perfect confidence in one's mother's lap.

I hope that your vegetarianism is agreeing with your health. If it does not, you must tell me what you are eating. I might be able to give you some guidance.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. L. C. UNNI
LAKSHMI VILAS
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 13066

203. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 8, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter. Some digestible preparations can be made with oil. But this experiment cannot be conducted from a distance. At present fasting is the most essential and the best remedy for you. I have no doubt about it.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6154. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

¹*Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving* by S. V. Puntambekar and N. S. Varadachari

204. AFTER HARTAL?

With great deliberation and not without the exercise of great self-restraint have I hitherto refrained practically from writing anything about the boycott of the Statutory Commission. I recognized the force of the appeal made to me by the *Leader* of Allahabad not to meddle with or influence the boycott movement, but to let the various parties manage it themselves. I recognized that my interference was bound to bring in the masses more prominently into the movement and might possibly embarrass the promoters. Now that the great demonstration is over, I feel free to say a word. I tender my congratulations to the organizers for the very great success they achieved on the hartal day¹. It did my soul good to see Liberals, Independents and Congressmen ranged together on the same platform. I could not but admire the courage of the students of Government colleges in absenting themselves from their colleges for the sake of the national cause. All the world over students are playing a most important and effective part in shaping and strengthening national movements. It would be monstrous if the students of India did less.

My object now is to draw attention to the fact that the very success of the hartal will be turned against us if it is not followed up by sufficient and persistent action. We must belie the prophecy of Lord Sinha that the hartal was but a passing cloud. Let us bear in mind that, notwithstanding our opposition, the Commission, backed as it is by British bayonets, will go its own way. Where it cannot get *bona-fide* recognition, it will be manufactured for it. Did not a so-called deputation on behalf of 'untouchables' welcome the Commission as its true deliverers? Claiming to know the untouchables more than the members of the deputation, I make bold to assert that they no more represented the untouchables than would a party of Japanese, for instance.

If then we are to ensure a complete boycott, not only will there have to be a joint organization by all the parties for carrying it out and possibly picketing, wherever the Commission goes, but there must be some further demonstration of the nation's strength. Even though mine may be a voice in the wilderness and even at the risk of repeating a thousandth time the same old story, I suggest that there is

¹ February 3, 1928

nothing before the nation other than boycott of foreign cloth which can be brought about effectively and quickly. But like all great undertakings, it requires planning and organizing. It requires sustained and vigilant effort by a party of earnest, able and honest men and women exclusively devoted to the task. It is not an easy task. If it was, it would not produce the great results that are promised for it. It must evoke the best in the nation, before it is accomplished. But let us also frankly recognize that if we cannot organize this one thing, we shall organize nothing else.

Let me make my own position clear. I have no desire even now to interfere with the present evolution of the national movement except through occasional writings. This is written, therefore, by way of a humble appeal to the different parties who are jointly acting in order to vindicate national honour.

Young India, 9-2-1928

205. NOTES

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Though through the heroic efforts of the Rt. Hon. Srinivasa Sastri the social status of our countrymen in South Africa has undoubtedly improved and life is becoming less unbearable for self-respecting Indians, reminders come now and then from that sub-continent that much yet remains to be done before the Indian settlers enjoy the ordinary civic rights and feel their position safe. The latest shock comes through a cable just received from Mr. Albert Christopher, the new Deputy President of the South African Indian Congress. Mr. Christopher was one of the volunteers who served as well during the Boer War as during the late War. He is South Africa born and has just returned after finishing his education in England. The cable runs as follows:

Second reading Liquor Bill now going through Parliament notwithstanding strong protest. Bill seeks deprive three thousand Indians their families and dependents of livelihood ultimately drive them out of country. Bill direct conflict letter spirit Cape Town Agreement. Clear racial legislation. Indians greatly alarmed Government's attitude. If Bill passes Cape Town Agreement smashed. Earnestly appeal your immediate intervention.

Even the respectable South African Press agrees with the opinion of the South African Congress that the Bill violates the

Agreement which resulted from the Round Table Conference. That it is aimed even at those who are already earning an honest livelihood in hotels and bars is unquestioned. If the Union Parliament persists in the Bill, it simply means that being the stronger party to the contract, it can safely commit breach of contract whenever it wills. Our hope lies in Sjt. Sastri's gentle diplomacy saving not only the situation, but the honour of the Union Government, the Union Parliament and the white people of South Africa in spite of themselves. He, however, needs energetic support from the Indian Press and the Indian public.

A PARALLEL FROM CHINA

A friend sends me a cutting from the *New York Times* containing the report of an interview with Mr. Ku Hung-Ming, one of the most prominent Chinese, referring to the cultural greatness of the Chinese people and its being belittled by foreigners. And referring to the inroads of foreign merchants upon China, Mr. Ku says:

"I was similarly blind when I first returned from my long years abroad," he admits with disarming frankness. "At first I was ashamed to admit I was Chinese; now I am so proud of my heritage that I am conceited enough to think the rest of you are all barbarians.

"You see, our main trouble is economic. You Americans, for instance, thought a great influx of Chinese labourers would upset your industry and lower your standard of living. You acted promptly and shut your door against Chinese.

"But we in China have suffered an invasion of your foreign machines and of cheap machine-made goods, and those things have ruined us, just [as] an influx of several million Chinese coolie labourers would have ruined your industrial scheme.

"When I was a young man, for instance, even the women in our own families spun and wove. At the time fully 100,000,000 Chinese women spun and wove. Then came cheap foreign cotton goods and these 100,000,000 women have no productive life, but must live on the labours of their menfolk. We are prevented from following your example of shutting the door by the fact that the treaties forbid our taking any action. We do not have even tariff autonomy.

"If I were an artist, I would draw you a cartoon which would show you what I think of the unequal treaties.

"Picture a Chinese prone upon the ground and a foreigner standing over him holding him down with his foot. 'Get up,' say the foreigner. 'Take your foot off first,' says the Chinese. 'No, you get up first,' says the foreigner,

putting more weight upon the foot.”

AJMAL JAMIA FUND

The following sums only have been hitherto received in answer to the appeal in these pages:

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj | Rs. 1,000-0-0 |
| Sjt. Rameshwardas, Dhulia | „ 51-0-0 |
| „ Pyare Ali, Bombay | „ 100-0-0 |
| <hr/> | |
| Total | Rs. 1,151-0-0 |

This is as yet a poor response. Ofter the response to appeals made in these pages is an indication of the manner in which the people receive certain movements. Evidently the strained relations between the two communities are keeping the general body of readers from responding. May I hope that wherever there are men and women who believe in Hindu-Muslim unity, believe in Hakimji as a great patriot, and in the necessity of supporting the Jamia, they will not only themselves soon send in the contributions, but will also canvass them among their friends and neighbours? Every subscription big or small will be acknowledged in these pages.

TO THE FRIENDS IN KARNATAK AND ANDHRA DESH

Inquiries are being made as to whether the proposed tours in these provinces have been altogether abandoned. I may state in answer that, though under pressure from Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande and Deshbhakta Konda Venkatappayya, I have postponed the tours, I have no idea whatsoever of abandoning them altogether. If health permits and God otherwise wills it, I propose to undertake them after the monsoons are over. But it is safe not to build hopes on any fixed season. Sufficent for me to give the assurance that I would like to tour in these and the remaining province at an early date, if it is at all possible. Meanwhile those who have already collected purses should send them either to me or to the organizers.

KHADI IN THE PUNJAB IN 1885

I extract the following valuable information that Sjt. Balaji Rao of Coimbatore collects for me from time to time from several books. The extract is taken from a Monograph on the Cotton Manufacture in 1885 by E. B. Francis:¹

¹ The extract is not reproduced here.

That the remuneration earned by the spinners was low did not baffle the good workers, for, as the author says, they worked during the leisure hours and whatever they earned was so much gained. If the things are different now, it is because the tastes have become vulgarized and foreign cloth, under an insidious system of indirect protection, has been dumped down on this unhappy land.

Young India, 9-2-1928

206. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 11, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Don't you worry about my health. Doctors will frighten one. This time the registered blood-pressure does not seem to produce any impression on me. I am keeping fairly [fit]. I have strength to walk, and I only lie on my back because doctors are impera-tive and tell me that some blood-pressure cases are most illusive and specially dangerous when the patient himself feels no visible effects.

This letter I am dictating in connection with Ajmal Jamia Fund. Whilst you are in the midst of all the big people, I want you to buttonhole them and get them to subscribe, no matter how much. I fear that there will be little spontaneous response or it will come when noted men and women have subscribed. If I had not become bedridden, I would have done lobbying this side of India. And I have not yet lost hope of being able to do it. I am not at all sure of your scheme of deputations going round succeeding. I know it is cruel to ask you to spare the time when it is occupied between your practice and direct Congress work. But you have got to find it for this work too.

If you have not seen my article "After Hartal?"¹, please look at it. Unless you take up this universal and possible thing, boycott of foreign cloth, the energy created by the boycott of the Statutory Commission will be all waste of effort. Every negative action without corresponding positive action becomes useless in the end.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13069

¹ Dated February 9, 1928

207. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I am again on my back, and I suppose these ups and downs will some day decide the final issue. The funny thing about the blood-pressure this time is that I notice nothing myself. But I am obeying the doctors as far as it is possible.

I had your telegram. I was sorry we could not meet before you put yourself in harness again. But I suppose it was inevitable.

Jawahar was telling me that you were keeping none too well. I hope however that you were thoroughly restored during the voyage.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13070

208. LETTER TO A. FENNER BROCKWAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with enclosures. I do continue to hear about the progress of your health through Paul and others. But I was more than pleased to have your own letter and to know that you were on the road to complete recovery and that you were able yourself to write long letters.

Yes, the violence during the Madras hartal was most unfortunate. The slightest relaxation of control precipitates violence.

I had a letter from Mr. Runham Brown. I sent a reply saying that I would not be able to go. I still feel that my work outside is also better done from the Indian platform. It can be said of it that it is still in too experimental a stage to make any confident claim about it, and if anything definite can be said about it with complete confidence, it would be itself a very striking object-lesson in no-war. But I am keeping both the letters for reconsideration. I shall watch also how the blood-pressure behaves, and if I find meanwhile any prompting from the inner voice in the direction of going, I shall not hesitate to say yes.

The youth movement is a decided attraction.

I was delighted to hear from Mrs. Brockway. I am writting to her directly.

Yours sincerely,

A. FENNER BROCKWAY, ESQ.
GENERAL HOSPITAL
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 14943

209. LETTER TO LILLA BROCKWAY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you to write to me. I should have cursed myself if I had not made time to go to your husband whilst I was in Madras. It was a severe disappointment to all of us here not to have him during the Congress session, but it was a great joy that he and his companions in the car had such a miraculous escape.

I was much touched to see Mr. Brockway's eyes moistening when his sister mentioned your cable. Such spontaneous demonstrations of human love bring us nearer to divine.

You must try to come to India one of these days. You will excuse this dictated letter, for doctors have advised me to lie on my back.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14237

210. LETTER TO HAROLD F. BING

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very kind and very warm invitation through Mr. Fenner Brockway. I wish it was possible for me to say straightway

‘yes’ to you, but there are fundamental difficulties which I have mentioned to Mr. Brockway. However, I am keeping your invitation by me and shall allow it to soak into me, and if I can see my way clear, to accept it. I shall write to you further in the matter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

HAROLD F. BING, ESQ.
THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF YOUTH
421 SENTINEL HOUSE, SOUTHAMPTON ROW
LONDON, W.C. 1

From a photostat: G.N. 1015 and 3770

211. TALK WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF BARDOLI TALUK¹

[Before *February 12, 1928*]

Kalyanji opened the talk, told him that they had practically covered the whole of the taluk, which was unanimous so far as the fight was concerned, but that they would prefer to refuse payment of the increment over the old assessment.

GANDHIJI. I don't quite understand that.

KALYANJI. 22 per cent enhancement has been imposed. The people say they would like to pay the old assessment and refuse the 22 per cent increment.

G. That is most dangerous. Government will fight you with the help of your own money and recover the increment in a moment. No assessment can be paid until the increment is cancelled, and you must plainly say to Government: 'Declare the enhancement cancelled and then take the old assessment which we are prepared to pay.' Are the people prepared to take up this attitude?

K. I am not quite sure about the bigger places like Bardoli or Valod, for the Vanias in these places are naturally afraid that Government might deprive them of their lands and transfer them to their original occupants, the Raniparaj people. But the other villages are quite solid.

G. That's all right. But is their cause just and their case unassailable?

KALYANJI. Certainly. Naraharibhai has demonstrated it in his articles.

G. I do not know. I have not read the articles with care. But remember that you will have to keep the whole country with you, and

¹ Representatives of Bardoli. Taluk sought Gandhiji's advice at the request of Vallabhbhai Patel, who was to lead the Bardoli Satyagraha.

the first condition is that your cause must be perfectly just. Then there is another point. The people may be ready to fight. But do they know the implications of satyagraha? Supposing Vallabhbhai is removed with the rest of you, will they stand together?

K. That is more than I can say.

G. Well, you will have to ascertain that. But what does Vallabhbhai say?

Sjt. Vallabhbhai had just arrived. He said he had studied the case and had no doubt that the cause was just. Gandhiji said :

Well, then, there is nothing more to be considered. Victory to Gujarat!

The Story of Bardoli, pp. 28-9

212. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 12, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your postcard. I am glad you won't have to be in Poona much longer now. I seem to be gaining ground—so the doctors think. Personally I feel I have not lost any. Of course I did lose weight, but then I did so with my eyes open. I could not conduct the difficult experiment of reverting to fruits and nuts without having to lose weight. But I am now conducting it under better auspices and with doctors watching. So this little collapse is perhaps an advantage and it has imposed upon me a rest which perhaps I needed.

I note the correction in the date about the spinning in Sind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13071

213. LETTER TO MRS. HARKER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The expenses at the Ashram need not be more than Rs. 20 to 30 per month. But what is more necessary to know is whether you can stand the life of the Ashram. It is so different

to all you have been hitherto used to that I should be nervous about your taking to the Ashram life. And now the cold weather on this side of India is practically over. We are having hot afternoons already and I wonder whether you can stand the summer of Sabarmati. Temperature goes up sometimes to 112, even 115. Sabarmati is not very far from Jacobabad, the hottest place in India. Why not reproduce wherever you are the ideals for which the Ashram stands? Then you have the Ashram without its obvious limitations, and you can add to or modify the ideals as much as you like.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. HARKER
3 SONEHRI BAGH
NEW DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13072

214. LETTER TO GIRDHARILAL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 12, 1928

DEAR LALA GIRDHARILAL,

Your letter has been read to me. There need be no anxiety about my health. So long as God wants some work through this body, it will stand all trials and tests. I am obeying doctors fully and taking complete rest, though personally I do not seem to feel the want of it. I know that you will come whenever I want you, however pressing your other engagements may be. The thought that there are friends ready to help me is itself a great consolation.

At the present moment there are enough nurse friends about me. I seem to, and doctors too, think that I am making steady progress.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13073

215. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,

February 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mira has translated your latest letter for me.

My whole soul goes out to you in your grief especially because it comes over a letter which makes you suspect me of hardness of heart. I appreciate your desire to find me correct in all I do and think. I do indeed want to stand well with you, but I must be true to myself if I am to continue to deserve your warm friendship.

Let me first tell you that Mira's letter reflected her own views though they were found to coincide with mine. Neither Mira, so far as I know her, nor I had the remotest idea of judging those two good peasants.¹ Their action was undoubtedly one of heroism. What we had in our minds was the heroism of a war-resister, and from the record sent by you and as it was interpreted to me by Mira, I missed that particular type of heroism which a war-resister demonstrates in his own life. Joan of Arc was a heroine. So were Leonidas and Horatius. But the heroism in each case was of a different type, each noble and admirable in its own sphere.

In the answers given by the peasants, I do not notice any definite repugnance to war as war and a determination to suffer to the uttermost in their resistance to war. These peasant friends, if my recollection serves me right, are heroes representing and defending the simple rustic life. These heroes are no less precious than those of a militant war-resister type. We want to treasure all this heroism, but what I feel is that we will serve the heroes and the cause of truth better if we treated each type separately.

You have curiously raised the question of my participation in the late War.² It is a legitimate question. I had answered it in the last autobiographical chapter as if in anticipation of your question. Please read it carefully and tell me at your leisure what you think of the

¹ Romain Rolland, in his reply dated March 7, wrote: "... I understand what you say regarding those two devout peasants of Savoi. I bow before your reasons, though at the same time I believe that there are very few men and women—at least in Europe—with whom 'war-resistance' is not always mixed with other elements of thought, because almost every thought, be it ever intense, is not in man completely pure. . ."

² *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. I.V, Ch. XXXVIII.

argument.¹ I shall treasure your opinion.

Lastly, I do want to reach perfection, but I recognize my limitations, and the recognition is becoming clearer day after day. Who knows in how many places I must be guilty of hardness of heart, and I should not be surprised if you have noticed want of charity in my writings in more places than one. I can only tell you that the lapses are there in spite of my prayerful effort to the contrary. I suppose it was not without reason that the early Christians considered Satan to be not merely an evil principle but evil incarnate. He seems to dominate us in every walk of life and man's mission is to overthrow him from power.

This letter of yours to Mira makes me more and more anxious to see you in the flesh, and there is just a distant hope of my being able to do so this year if I keep good health and if otherwise the inner voice guides me towards Europe. I am seriously considering two invitations, and the desire to meet you may precipitate my decision in favour of accepting those invitations.

Yours sincerely,

ROMAIN ROLLAND

From a photostate: S. N. 14942

216. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 14, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. But if you had come you would have caused me no worry and I would have enjoyed your companionship. I do not Press now because the finest part of the cold weather is gone. But if you can stand the dry heat of this place, you are welcome at any time.

¹ To this Romain Rolland replied: "Pardon me if I say to you that, in spite of all my desire to enter into your thoughts and to approve of them, I simply cannot do so. . . ."

My health is improving. You will see more about it in *Young India*.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. BABU MOTILAL ROY

CHANDERNAGORE

(BENGAL)

From a photostat: G.N. 11035

217. ON THEIR TRIAL

What happened to the students during the Rowlatt Act agitation is repeating itself now. During those precious days, one of them wrote to me that he felt like committing suicide because he was rusticated. A student now writes:

The students of. . . heard the mother's call and responded to it. We observed hartal on the 3rd. For this courageous deed of ours, we are being fined Rs. 2 per head. The poor students are losing their freeships, half-freeships and scholarships. Please write to Mr. . . . the Principal, or advise him through *Young India*. Tell him we are no criminals, we have committed no crime. Tell him we listened and responded to the mother's call, we saved her, to our utmost, from dishonour. Tell him we are no cowards. Please come forward to our aid.

I cannot follow the advice to write the Principal. If he is not to lose his 'job', I suppose he has to take some disciplinary measures. So long as educational institutions remain under the patronage of the Government, they will be, as they must be, used for the support of the Government, and the students or the teachers who support anti-Government popular measures must count the cost and take the risk of being dismissed. From the patriot's standpoint, the students did well and bravely in making common cause with the people. They would have laid themselves open to the charge of want of patriotism, if not wrose, if they had not responded to country's call. From the Government standpoint, they undoubtedly did wrong and incurred their severe displeasure. The students cannot blow hot and cold. If they will be with the people's cause, they must hold their scholastic

¹ Gandhiji had fainted while spinning on February 5, and had been advised complete rest

career sub-servient to the cause and sacrifice it when it comes in conflict with the interest of the country. I saw this quite clearly in 1920 and subsequent experience has confirmed the first impression. There is no doubt that the safest and the most honourable course for the student world is to leave Government schools and colleges at any cost. But the next best course for them is to hold themselves in readiness to be thrown out whenever a conflict occurs between the Government and the people. If they will not be, as they have been elsewhere, leaders themselves in the revolt against the Government, they must at least become staunch and true followers. Let their facing of the consequences be as was their response to the nation's call. Let them not humiliate themselves, let them not surrender their self-respect in trying to re-enter colleges and schools from which they may have been dismissed. The bravery of their response will be counted as bravado, if it succumbs on the very first trial.

I hear that, during the days preceding the hartal, the students discarded foreign cloth and very largely patronized khadi. Let it not be said of them that this was but a passing show and that they have, on pressure from without or temptation from within, discarded khadi as quickly as they discarded foreign cloth. To me foreign cloth for this country means foreign Government. I wish this was accepted as a self-evident proposition.

Young India, 16-2-1928

218. MY HEALTH

It is a matter of great sorrow to me that my health should cause anxiety to many friends. Hitherto I have allowed Mahadev Desai, subject to censorship, to write whatever he has wished about my health, seeing that the break-downs, important or unimportant, occurred whilst I was travelling, and were supposed to be due to fatigue, and because those who were in charge of me during the travels had a responsibility about my bodily condition. But circumstances have now altered. I am having a respite from travels and onerous public duties. I am taking part only to the extent that I wish in reorganizing some of the activities in Gujarat, specially educational, for which I am perhaps predominantly responsible. I have, therefore, felt called upon to take up what has been a hobby of a lifetime, namely, dietetic experiments. They are to me as important as many of the most important activities which have engrossed me from time to time, and it was in the course

of these experiments that the present so-called break-down has occurred. The alarming registrations of doctors' instruments have had no reponse in my own feeling. But I have accepted the statement of medical friends that very often blood-pressure patients feel no evil effects, although they may be stealthily present in the body and must, therefore, be guarded against. Happily, however, even these instruments registered last Sunday a very great improvement, a fall from 214mm. systolic to 178mm. and a rise from 120mm. [sic] diastolic to 118mm. I am also taking the rest prescribed by Dr. Haribhai Desai and his medical companions, and carrying on my dietetic experiments under their observations and guidance. Dr. Muthu who seems to have made special study of dietetics is also kindly guiding me by correspondence.

Having given all this information, I would implore newspaper correspondents to curb their pen and kindly to forget me and my health for the time being. And I would ask anxious friends not to worry about my health, accepting my assurance that I am in no hurry to die and that, therefore, I shall be taking all the care of my body that is humanly possible for me, and is consistent with the ideals to which the body is dedicated and which I hold to be more precious than the body. Let the friends rest assured that, if the nation has any use for this body of mine, it is because a serious attempt has been made for many a long year to hold it in trust for those ideals. I would ask them also to share my belief, which I hold even at the risk of being dubbed a fatalist, that not one hair of anyone's body can be touched without His will and that when He has no use for our bodies, He defies all the care, attention and skill that money, prestige, patriotism, friendship and what not can summon to one's assistance. This belief does not mean that I do not want to take advantage of the assistance that medical friends all over India ungrudgingly and most generously render to me. I take that assistance gladly and faithfully. For God has given me no inkling of His intentions, but He has imposed upon me the duty of taking care of the body consistently with other more imperative obligations which, in my opinion, He has imposed upon me in common with the rest of humanity.

Young India, 16-2-1928

219. FLOOD-RELIEF WORK IN SIND

I gladly publish the following first instalment¹ of notes by Prof. N. R. Malkani about the distress in Sind which was truly no less acute than in Gujarat. But as I have already remarked before, Gujarat attracted the widest attention not merely because of its being the store-house of India's donors, but also, and perhaps more, because it found an army of workers under Vallabhbhai Patel ready and determined to handle and organize the task of relieving distress. Sind no less than Orissa suffered because they could not produce such an organization. But no lack of organization can be allowed to excuse any avoidable misery. The public should know that Prof. Malkani is himself personally organizing the relief operations under the supervision of the Central Committee which, I hope, is giving him all the assistance he may need.

Young India, 16-2-1928

220. CORRESPONDENCE

If for nothing else, I cannot refrain from publishing the foregoing² for its subtle wit and sarcasm. Unfortunately for me, I am responsible for the phrase 'blot on Hinduism', notwithstanding my claim, often repudiated I know, to be a sanatani Hindu. If the institution of war, in spite of its being contrary to the spirit of the Christian teaching, may be said to be a blot upon Christianity because war is universal in Christendom, untouchability may safely be regarded as a blot Hinduism in spite of the contention of a growing number of Hindus that untouchability has no place in true Hinduism. If the expression pains some Hindus, it is a healthy sign. When it pains the majority of Hindus and they repudiate the charge, there will be no occasion to repeat it. And if it is a blot, why may not a Mussalman who believed in the truth and purity of Hinduism hold with his Hindu co-member that it is a blot ?

Young India, 16-2-1928

¹ This is not reproduced here.

² The letter, dated February 9, from S. D. Nadkarni is not reproduced here. The correspondent had taken exception to the expression "blot on Hinduism" with reference to untouchability in a resolution on reorganization of the Gujarat Vidyapith. He had suggested that it could be changed to "blot on humanity" or deleted altogether.

221. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

Herewith Kelappan's letter. I have asked him to discuss his scheme with you. Whatever you think is feasible should be done. You will not hesitate to sanction anything for fear of funds being exhausted. All I am anxious about is that whatever work is done is substantial and honest.

I hope you are now not worrying about my health. I have not yet taken any vow about the milk and I am not going to do anything unless I find the experiment to be absolutely successful. And not only I am carefully watching myself, but so also are the Ahmedabad doctors. It is open to them to veto the experiment at any time they like and I have promised to stop it. But I want you, instead of thinking of somehow dodging and making me to take milk, find out doctors or physicians who will help me to arrive at a proper, purely vegetarian diet which will be more than a substitute for milk. I am sure it is perfectly possible. Do please therefore think over my suggestion.

Have you heard from Singapore friends at all? If we are to go, I should like to start during the first week of April, because the hot weather commences in right earnest in April in Ahmedabad and it would be better to avoid it. And then there is the talk of a visit to Burma from Singapore. I should like to negotiate it and, if that also is to be done, there is very little time left. And then there are two invitations from Europe to go there during July and August.¹ I am inclined to accept them. The idea is cooking in my brain. One is from the World's Youth Peace Movement. It seems to be an important movement managed by a good organization. You may also consider the propriety or otherwise of accepting these invitations.

Lakshmi must not have a relapse.

From a photostat: S. N. 13063

¹ *Vide* "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 11-2-1928.

222. LETTER TO AYLMER MAUDE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I shall consider it a privilege to do whatever I can in connection with Tolstoy's works being popularized in India. I hope at an early date to notice your letter in the pages of *Young India*.¹

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

M. AYLMER MAUDE
HON. ORGANIZING SECRETARY
THE TOLSTOY SOCIETY
CHELMSFORD (ENGLAND)

From a photostat: C.W. 4514. Courtesy: Aylmer Maude

223. LETTER TO ESTHER MENON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

MY DEAR CHILD,

I had your two letters under one cover. It did appear to me that you had forgotten me entirely, and yet I knew that that wasn't possible. . . .² was looking a picture of health when I saw her at Madras, and she told me all about you.

You must have heard about the relapse in my health. I am now under strict orders not to do any serious work involving mental or physical strain. Except for spinning, therefore, I am on my back. I am dictating this whilst spinning. But there is no cause for anxiety. I am getting better and hope soon to be allowed to move about.

Yes. The Ashram remains what you have seen it to be. The population is daily increasing and we have too few houses to accom-

¹ *Vide* "Tolstoy Centenary", 1-3-1928.

² The original is damaged here.

moderate all the inmates.

I am asking for a complimentary copy of *Young India* to be sent to your address, and I shall see that as many back numbers as can be spared are also sent.

I am so glad that all of you are flourishing in health. What is Menon doing in England? Please send my love to him when . . .¹ whom you know is in the Ashram just now. She has come to pass a few days on her return from Delhi where she had gone to attend a women's conference. Mirabai is here and keeping very good health indeed.

With love.

BAPU

MRS. ESTHER MENON
14 ASYLVEY
TAAROAK, DENMARK

From a photostat: S.N. 14241

224. LETTER TO VIOLET

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 18, 1928

MY DEAR VIOLET,

I have your letter. I am very glad you have written to me so frankly and fully. Bad though this proposed wedding of the ex Maharajah of Indore is, I would like you to understand the distinction between that wedding and the Simon Commission. The Simon Commission is a public thing, whereas the wedding is a private affair. A wedding cannot affect the future of three hundred millions of India but the doings of the Simon Commission are calculated for better or for worse to affect the future of the whole of India. You can now understand the public resentment over the Simon Commission. Nobody thinks anything of the misdeeds of private Englishmen or other white men. But when an Englishman does anything wrong in his official capacity, it is immediately resented and quite properly too. If you have not yet understood or do not appreciate the distinction I have made, please write to me.

¹ The original is damaged here.

You ask me whether I would again come to Ceylon if one lakh rupees worth of khadi is taken up by the people there. I have no doubt that the generous people of Ceylon are quite capable of taking up more than a lakh rupees worth of khadi because there is nothing strange about [it], but what will induce me to come back to Ceylon is another donation to khadi. Buying of khadi is merely exchanging, valuable as that is, and donation to khadi enables me to widen the sphere of work among the poorest classes.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI VIOLET
C/O MRS. LILY MUTHUKRISHNA
CASA-DEL-MAR
ALEXANDRIA ROAD
WELLAWATTE

From a photostat: S.N. 13075

225. HAKIM AJMAL KHAN MEMORIAL

Readers know that this memorial is with regard to the Nationalist Muslim University in Delhi. This Vidyapith is not meant exclusively for Muslims. Hindus may also join it. The teachers too are not exclusively Muslim; Hindus and Christians also are there. However, as in the case of the Gujarat Vidyapith, where the students are mostly Hindus, since Muslim students rarely join it, so at the Jamia Millia too, few Hindus are enrolled. If the authorities of the Gujarat Vidyapith could be blamed for the reluctance of Muslim students the authorities of the Muslim university can also be blamed for the reluctance of Hindu students to join them. Considering the present vitiated atmosphere we should be content and grateful to God if the management and the staff of both the institutions are free from rancour and mutually accomodating. It is my belief that just as the Gujarat Vidyapith will contribute substantially towards the attainment of swaraj and will help to safeguard it, that is, in implementing such constructive programmes as Hindu-Muslim unity, etc., so too will this Vidyapith at Delhi. This prophecy of mine may or may not come true but if we owe anything to Hakim Saheb, and if it brings us credit to have a memorial to him for ever with us, we should all, to the best of our abilities, contribute to his Fund. The Fund is growing at less than a snail's pace, from which I gather that the Gujaratis do not respond to this cause as they do to other causes. I regard it my duty to say that

this is not the correct attitude. Those who wish to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity should help this cause. Everyone is inclined to contribute to a popular cause. People remain indifferent to a fund which is not popular, though it be beneficial in the long run, if there is no one to rouse them. This is my appeal to that indifferent class. It is not that the readers of *Navajivan* always encourage only what is popular. The readers of *Navajivan* have contributed in other ways, if not in the form of money, to funds that were not popular but would increase people's strength. They must now show that liberal spirit and power of discretion. Let not the Jamia Millia be crushed between the two opposing forces. Since the Jamia Millia does not nourish the present atmosphere of hatred, the general Muslim masses appear indifferent towards it, and if the Hindus too should be indifferent under the presumption that Muslims alone should support it, the Jamia Millia would be nowhere and Hakimji's memorial would meet with the same fate. It is the special duty of Swarajists, Hindus as well as Muslims, not to let this happen. I hope the readers of *Navajivan* will observe this dharma. I suggest donors should not rest content after giving in their personal contributions but should also try to collect as much as possible from their neighbours.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1928

226. TO THE PEASANTS OF BARDOLI

There is not a corner of India familiar with the word 'swaraj' which is not also familiar with Bardoli. The country has, therefore, a right to expect something distinctive and courageous in all the tasks that are undertaken by this taluk. You have taken the very grave step of offering satyagraha. You have now no alternative but to prove yourselves worthy of it. No one could have found fault with you if you had not taken that step. However, having once taken it, you will make yourselves an object of ridicule in the eyes of the whole of India if you beat a retreat now. No one can blame Bardoli for the postponement of the fight for swaraj that it had pioneered. People in a far-off province committed an act of indiscretion and the Bardoli movement had to be postponed. I have not the slightest doubt that it was all to the good. However, on this occasion, I think it is proper to remind you that thereafter you have not been keeping to the extent you should your vows about khadi, untouchability and so on. And,

because of this laxity on your part, I have my doubts about how far you will adhere to the pledge you have taken this time. I hope you will dispel this fear by your determined conduct.

Shri Vallabhbhai Patel had given you a clear warning. It is not in his hands to make a success of your struggle. The key to success is in your own hands. Even if he goes to the gallows, Vallabhbhai cannot fulfil your pledge. As the saying goes: “One cannot go to heaven unless one dies.” So also one has to fulfil one’s own pledges. I do not think there are two opinions about the justice of your cause. If, however, you do not have the strength to prove it you will not triumph despite its justice. If you understand it, rather than till the land only to pay the *vighoti*¹ it would be saving yourselves a great deal of trouble if those who collect this tax confiscated your land. If the Government will not listen to you and you do not bow down to them—and if the Government aims at ruining you, it will not send you to jails, but will rather seize your property. As in Kheda, here too they would confiscate your utensils and your land. Nevertheless, you have one invaluable thing which they cannot attach and that is your soul, your self-respect. If you put your person and all your property in one scale and your self-respect in the other, the latter will always be found heavier. Satyagraha is the *mantra* for safeguarding it. Victory is yours if you are prepared to withstand whatever loss you may incur while safeguarding it and you will prove worthy of having a leader like Vallabhbhai; moreover, you yourselves will be included in the category of the courageous. You must see to it that by fulfilling your pledge you enhance your own prestige as well as that of Vallabhbhai, Gujarat and the whole of India.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 19-2-1928

¹ Land revenue

227. *LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

A son of a valued jeweller friend has a tubercular bone. He has been treated in a sanatorium in Solon from where he is now being brought to Bombay. The father would now like to place his son under your treatment if you would handle the case. He can be sent anywhere you may advise. If you think that he should be examined by you in Bombay before you could finally decide, the father is well able to bear the expenses. I shall thank you if you can let me know by wire your advice in the matter, and in order to save time, repeat it to Sjt. Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri, 7 Laburnum Road, Gamdevi, Bombay, whose telegraphic address is "Morality".

I do want to write to you about my diet, but of this later. I seem to be doing well.

Yours sincerely,

DR. C. MUTHU
EGMORE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S. N. 13076; also G.N. 1271

228. *LETTER TO ALICE MCKAY KELLY*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

What you tell me and what I read about the poisonous influence of *Mother India* distresses me, but I take comfort in the thought that untruth is always overcome by truth and that book is full of untruth.

I know that Mr. Dhan Gopal Mukerjee is doing good work.

I have forwarded your cheque for five dollars to the Manager, *Young India*, and I hope you are now receiving your copy.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. ALICE MCKAY KELLY
130 EAST 40TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 14244

229. LETTER TO ROHINI POOVIAH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 21, 1928

MISS ROHINI POOVIAH,

Your letter was an unexpected pleasure. As I am under orders not to work and have still to lie on my back as much as possible, I must not dictate much beyond telling you that I have often thought of you and wanted to know what you were doing. I do hope that you will get something suitable in the near future. Do please keep me informed of your movements and I shall forgive all your past crimes. Sita has promised to look in now and then. Are you keeping good health?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13077

230. LETTER TO KUNVERJI K. PAREKH

*[February 21, 1928]*¹

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. I am better. Chi. Rami and others will leave along with Ramdas on Thursday morning. They will stop at Rajkot and be with you in two or three days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.N. 9706

¹ From the S.N. Register

231. *LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR*

Tuesday [February 21, 1928]¹

BHAI RAMESHWARDASJI,

Your letter. Certainly, do leave the boys at the Wardha school. They will be well looked after in the Ashram. Be at peace by imprinting Ramanama in your heart.

I am keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 194

232. *LETTER TO NORA S. BAILLIE²*

February 22 [1928]³

I have your letter for which I thank you. In reply I can only say we must each approach and worship God in accordance with the light He has vouchsafed to us.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 14222

233. *LETTER TO DEVI WEST*

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 22, 1928

The card you mention in your letter is now missing. You must please therefore send the one you have. I am glad you are now getting *Indian Opinion* regularly. Ramdas was married now nearly a month ago. He and his wife are leaving tomorrow for Rajkot where he expects to settle down. You must have read the account of the wedding in the pages of *Young India*.⁴ It was a magnificently simple affair. It could not have been made simpler.

I am personally feeling quite all right, but doctors being anxious have imposed complete rest on me. I must not, therefore,

¹ From the postmark

² Wife of the Rev. A. A. Baillie, Superintendent of the Indian Mission in Natal

³ This note was in reply to a letter of the addressee dated December 12, 1927.

⁴ *Vide* "Speech at Wedding of Ramdas Gandhi", January 27, 1928.

dictate a long letter. Devdas is here. He is going to Delhi shortly. Chhaganlal has gone to Orissa to serve the poor people there.

Yours sincerely,

MISS DEVI WEST
23 GEORGE STREET
LOUTH, LINC.
ENGLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14246

234. LETTER TO HENRY NEIL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter¹.

Under British rule, millions of children are starving for want of nourishing food and they are shivering in winter for want of sufficient clothing. And this I say not of the cities of India, which contain but a microscopic minority of the population of India, but I say this without fear of contradiction about the seven hundred thousand villages of the country scattered over a surface 1,900 miles long and 1,500 miles broad.

I suppose your first question ‘under non-Christian Religions’ is included in the second. But, if your first question relates to India before British rule, I can only give you my inference that the little ones were infinitely happier than they are now under British rule.

Your third question is difficult to answer. Which Jesus have you in mind? The Jesus of history? Not being a critical student of history, I do not know the Jesus of history. Do you mean the Jesus whom Christian England and Christian Europe represent? If so, your question is, it seems to me, already answered. If you mean the mystical Jesus of Sermon on the Mount who has still to be found, I suppose the

¹ Dated January 3, 1928; it read: “. . . Please tell me the condition of the poor children of India, under their non-Christian religions, and under British rule. Then in contrast please tell me what you think would be the condition of these children if Jesus was in full control of India and the people followed His teachings. . . .” (S.N. 14224).

condition of India's children will be a trifle better than it is now when men conform to the precept of Love.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

JUDGE HENRY NEIL, ESQ.
C/O AMERICAN EXPRESS CO.
RUE SCRIBE
PARIS-FRANCE

From a photostat: S.N. 14248

235. *LETTER TO L. LE MONS*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI
[February 22, 1928]¹

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter of 2nd December which was received some days ago with a postal order for Rs. 1,190. Please convey my thanks to the donors for their donation for khadi as also for their assurance that a similar donation will be renewed from year to year.

Yours sincerely,

MONS. L. LE MONS
BACLIEU
FRENCH COCHIN CHINA

From a photostat: S.N. 14249

236. *LETTER TO P. C. GHOSH*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 22, 1928

MY DEAR PROFULLA BABU,

I have been able to reach your letter only today lying on my bed, though, accurately speaking, I am just now not on my bed, but at the spinning-wheel for which and which alone and for prayer I am

¹ The letter was dictated by Gandhiji in English on February 22 and given to Mirabehn to translate into French. The French version was signed by Gandhiji on February 24.

allowed to leave it. And whilst I am spinning or whilst I am lying on my back, I dictate some little correspondence and in this condition I am trying to overtake arrears. In doing so, I came upon your letter.

I am glad about the compromise¹. I hope that now there will be no more violent scenes.

What you say about the Congress is largely true.² And those who believe in constructive work and non-violence have to counter-act the talkative activities and falsities by silent, dignified, unvengeful work and that alone. I do not make of the Congress a fetish, but the oldest political institution we have in the country has to be approached with becoming respect and tenderest feeling. All public institutions have their ups and downs. Has not the House of Commons got its hypocrisy and humbug? I know that it is no model for us, but for the British nation, modelled as it is, it would be wrong to decry the House of Commons. They can only mend it wherever it is possible, unless there are Englishmen who consider the civilization that the House of Commons represents is worthless. Personally, I still cling to the ideal that the Congress represents, and, therefore, generally observe silence where I cannot serve and I ask you and co-workers who are non-violent non-co-operators to do likewise. We have to be non-violent even towards erring co-workers, erring Congressmen.

Yours sincerely,

DR. PROFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH
ABHOY ASHRAM
COMILLA

From a photostat: S.N. 13046

¹ Arrived at between the Hindu and the Muslims at Comilla as a result of which all case pending in courts were withdrawn

² The addressee, in a letter dated January 19, had written: "Humbuggism is writ large on the Congress The Congress President and the working General Secretary are the two best illustrations of the doctrine that 'we are a nation of talkers' . . . Personally I have lost all faith in the Congress which I consider a place for bluffers" (S.N. 14046).

237. LETTER TO VALJI G. DESAI

Monday [Before February 23, 1928]¹

I had asked Mahadev to ask you to fix the last date for receiving the essay on cow-protection. If it has not been fixed, please fix it and announce it. Give again the same names of the examiners and the rules, etc., which were published earlier.² Settle both about the Gujarati and the English. Appoint a graduate of 15 years' experience and ask him to join for a fixed date. Please draw my attention to any factual errors in the narrative³ that you may notice. If it were in my hands to fix the happy day on which my death would be celebrated, I would announce it right now. I would feel no sinking of the heart in doing so, but, on the contrary, would say, 'Behold this *trikaldarshi*!' Who can have such good fortune, though? Yes, the mind certainly keeps on asking if I am eager to live on even after March 18, 1928. And the reply it gets is that even today I have no such eagerness. If living without attachment be considered weakness, let it be so considered. For my part, as long as I live I will at least go on spinning, if I cannot sew.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7400. Courtesy: Valji G. Desai

238. FIGHT SQUARE IF YOU MUST⁴

The foregoing is dealt with below. The headline 'Fight Square If You Must' is, in my opinion, a more correct rendering of निदान धर्मयुद्ध करो instead of 'At Least Wage a Religious War' in the authorized translation.

Young India, 23-2-1928

¹ From the reference to the apprehensions about Gandhiji's impending death on March 18, 1928, the letter appears to have been written before the publication of the article "The Origin of It", 23-2-1928

² Vide "Notes (About Cow-Protection Prize Essay)", October 13, 1927.

³ *Satyagraha in South Africa*, written in Gujarati by Gandhiji, the English translation of which by the addressee was published in 1928

⁴ One who can see the past, present and future

⁵ This was an article published in *Swarajya*, 15-9-1927, a translation of which was published in *Young India*. For Gandhiji's comments, vide the following item.

239. REMINDING OF OLD TIMES

Sjt. Shankarrao Dev and Sjt. V. B. Harolikar were convicted the other day at Poona under Section 124-A and sentenced to undergo imprisonment for two years with hard labour. There were two charges against them: waging war against the King (Section 121) and attempting to excite disaffection against the Government established by law in British India (Section 124-A). Sjt. Dev as editor of *Swarajya* wrote the article which was the subject-matter of the offence and Sjt. Harolikar was the publisher. I print elsewhere the authorized translation of the offending article as produced before the court by the prosecution. Though it admits of improvement, it cannot be called an unfair presentation of the original.

The accused will not be defended by counsel though free assistance was volunteered by Dadasaheb Karandikar and other lawyers of distinction. Friends advised them to be defended. They were told that everybody nowadays sought legal advice without any slur being cast on them. But these non-co-operators were adamant. They did not care what others did. They were non-co-operators on principle and therefore did not wish to listen to any advice based on prudential considerations. I knew Sjt. Dev in Yeravda. He with Sjt. Dastane had undertaken a severe fast from which it was difficult for me to wean them. I tender my congratulations to these friends on their firmness in abiding by their own convictions. For I am convinced that of such will the Kingdom of Swaraj be made. They have undoubtedly brought swaraj nearer by their crystal-like sacrifice. Let no one think that such solitary individual sacrifice has no place in national upbuilding, or that it does not produce great consequences. Indeed, it is the purest sacrifice alone that will count in the end. It lays the surest and the purest foundation of swaraj.

The article is undoubtedly written to promote disaffection against the existing Government. To promote such disaffection is the bounden duty of every nationalist. Every Congressman is, I hope, an avowed enemy of the existing Government. We have no quarrel with men, but if we are worthy of swaraj, we must destroy the existing system of Government by all legitimate and peaceful means. The recent debate in the Assembly on the Statutory Commission was an object-lesson in disaffection in which all parties, be it said to their eternal credit, whole-heartedly joined. The late Harchandrai Vishandas

risked his life in travelling to Delhi for the sake of registering his vote in favour of disaffection. One daily comes across stronger articles than Dev's in point of disaffection. His is a reasoned appeal to Hindus and Mussalmans to disown the protection of a Government that enslaves the country and if fight they must, fight fairly, squarely, honourably. I have read the article more than once and whilst I may not use the same language, there is nothing in the argument that I cannot adopt. A prejudiced critic may cavil at the verse quoted from the *Mahabharata*. But, read together with the context, its meaning is clear. We have no King. We have a rule masquerading under the sacred name of law. Rulers are many. They come and go. The rule abides. But it is a corrupt, mischievous, soul-destroying rule which has to be ended at any cost. The cost that Dev and people like him are prepared to pay has to be consistent with their creed of non-violence. They seek to establish the rule of real law not by killing other people, however misguided or cruel they may be, but by being themselves killed, if need be, in the attempt. This is the necessary limitation imposed upon them by their very conception of swaraj. It is, therefore, most difficult for me to understand why these two innocent workers were singled out for prosecution, or shall I call it, persecution. If they are fit for imprisonment, Lala Lajpat Rai and company are surely fit for transportation, if nothing worse. If it be said that the Assembly gives members privileges for statutory crimes which ordinary mortals outside do not enjoy, there is then, perhaps, no one who is guilty of such calculated and deliberate disaffection towards the 'Government established by law' as I am. The whole of my being is worked in order to achieve the destruction of this Government and to that end to spread disaffection as wide as possible, and I think I can lay a fair claim to having a somewhat larger audience than Dev and Harolikar. But real consistency, justice and courage are hardly to be expected of governments that are based upon exploitation sustained by violence.

Young India, 23-2-1928

240. HANDLOOM v. SPINNING-WHEEL

Apropos of the contention often thoughtlessly advanced that the handloom is the only thing worth preserving and that it can only be preserved through the use of mill-spun yarn, Sjt. C. Balaji Rao writes:

An effective answer to those who, in order to belittle the charkha, would exalt the handloom, is given here. Lord Curzon was voicing the opinions of his departmental scientific advisers when he declared at the Delhi Durbar that it was inevitable that the handloom should be superseded by the powerloom, just as the hand punkah was being superseded by the electric fan.

Of course, Lord Curzon's dictum need not be accepted as a conclusive answer if the longevity of the handloom can be sustained through mill yarn or any other means save the spinning-wheel. And these pages, I hope, are daily making it clear that hand-spinning can save the handloom in spite of the prediction of Lord Curzon. Indeed, if the wheel regains its ancient status in our national life, the handloom and many other domestic industries must revive automatically.

Young India, 23-2-1928

241. THE ORIGIN OF IT

I observe that newspaper paragraphs have been going round that I have predicted my own death by the 12th of March next and that, as a consequence, I am in a despondent mood. It is also stated that I am my own astrologer. I would have passed over this delicious morsel of news but for the fact that many anxious friends have taken it seriously and have, therefore, been upset. If the enquiring friends had only followed my advice never to depend upon newspaper paragraphs, but always to ascertain, at their source, the truth of statements seen in the Press, they would have been spared all that anxiety. The correspondent who set the news in motion could also have spared the enquirers considerable anxiety if he had been good enough to test the truth of statements made by him. But if the correspondents became more scrupulous about statements they may make, their occupation would be largely gone. I may then state for the information of friends that I am not an astrologer, I know nothing of the science of astrology and that I consider it to be a science, if it is a science, of doubtful value, to be severely left alone by those who have any faith in Providence. Nor

am I in a despondent mood, despondency being foreign to my nature. What precisely, however, did happen was this. When I was convicted six years ago and was asked what I thought about the prospects of swaraj, I said that it was highly likely that there was the hand of God in the limit of six years and that during that time either we should win swaraj or that I should die and that six years' time was long enough time for the country to win her freedom. This statement was based upon an observation of the state of things as then prevailed in India. I never attached any importance to it beyond this that I should myself leave no stone unturned to contribute so far as an individual could to the attainment of our freedom. The statement was on a par with the conditional statement made by me in 1920 about attainment of swaraj within one year.¹ That statement has served the purpose, if of nothing else, of giving satisfaction to my critics of laughing at my folly and to me that of seeing a tremendous effort being made by the country during that eventful year. I did not hesitate to say at the end of the year, when the Congress was held in Ahmedabad, that whilst we had not been able to achieve statutory swaraj, the freedom that politically-minded India gave itself and the unity that seemed to exist among the various communities amounted to substantial swaraj, and that if the people had carried out the conditions mentioned by me at Calcutta and Nagpur, they could have even attained statutory swaraj within the year. But even as I remained unaffected, in spite of the failure to attain statutory swaraj within the year specified, so do I remain unaffected in spite of the approaching termination of six years which, by the by, is not the 12th of March but the 17th of March next². Not only am I not preparing for the imminent approach of the dissolution of my body, but I am making every effort to put it in as good order and condition as is possible, and have already fixed some provisional appointments for the coming summer and the rainy season. After all the relevant portion of my talk six years ago, twice repeated to friends, was the attainment of India's freedom. Nothing depends upon the death of an individual, be he ever so great, but much depends upon the freedom of India. Let us, therefore, all forget individuals and concentrate upon attaining that precious freedom which will never be

¹ *Vide* "Swaraj in One Year", September 22, 1920 and also Appendix "Congress Resolution on Non-Cooperation", December 30, 1920.

² Gandhiji was sentenced to six years' imprisonment on March 18, 1922; *vide* "The Great Trial".

showered upon us from Downing Street or elsewhere, but which can be ours the for taking any day even inside of the 17th of March. No great preparation save a mental revolution is necessary for us—Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsis, Sikhs, Christians and Jews and others—to feel as one indivisible nation and as having a common stake in the country, nor is more than a mental revolution required for Hindus to forget that anyone is to be considered superior to any other and to regard the so-called ‘untouchables’ to be their own kith and kin, nor is much effort required if we but make the resolve to achieve complete boycott of foreign cloth. I repeat what I have said so often, at the risk of exciting laughter, that if we achieve this triple programme, no power on earth can prevent us from attaining our birthright. It is for us to work out our own salvation as it is in us to compass our own undoing.

Young India, 23-2-1928

242. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 23, 1928

MY DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. The newspapers wholly exaggerate the real thing. So far as I am aware, there is nothing wrong with me. Of course, I am weak because of my non-milk fruitarian experiment. But I am under strict medical observation and making the experiment under their watch and with their permission. There is therefore not the slightest cause for anxiety.

I am sorry about your eyes. You must not work them beyond their capacity. Mahadev just now lives between Bardoli and Sabarmati. He is helping Vallabhbai. He went to Bardoli last night and won't return before Monday morning.

You will see something from me in the current issue of *Young India* with reference to the 12th of March also.¹ Really newspaper reports do more harm than good. But I must not give you a long letter. Doctors want me to take complete rest and I am carrying out their instructions almost to the letter. I write or dictate just a little correspondence and confine myself to editing *Young India* and

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

Navajivan, and for the most part remain lying on bed except for spinning, attendance at the prayer meetings and a few minutes' walk early in the morning and in the evening.

Yours sincerely,

SHRIMATI URMILA DEVI

KALIGHAT

From a photostat: S.N. 13081

243. LETTER TO GAURISHANKER BHARGAVA

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*February 23 [1928]*¹

DEAR FRIEND,

It is really not possible for me to attend the wedding. Apart from every other thing, doctors' instructions are peremptory. But I am glad about the proposed wedding. I hope that the ceremony will pass off without a hitch and that the bride and bridegroom will have many happy years of useful service to the country.

Ramdas is not here, and it is not convenient for Devdas to leave Sabarmati just now.

Yours sincerely,

PANDIT GAURISHANKER BHARGAVA

'PHUL NIVAS'

CIVIL LINES

AJMER

From a microfilm: S.N. 13082

¹ This letter has been found placed among 1928 papers.

244. LETTER TO BOYD W. TUCKER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 24, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your very delightful letter which I deeply appreciate. I must not however accept your advice. 'Resist not evil' with me has never meant passive resistance. The word 'passive resistance' I have described as a misnomer for the resistance which I have known and offered. The paraphrase of 'resist not evil' means resist not evil with evil, and therefore necessarily means resist evil with good. And, if at the present moment, I do not seem to be actively resisting evil, it is a mere appearance. For, if you are a constant reader of *Bhagavad Gita*, you will recall the passage, "He who sees action in inaction and inaction in action sees truly."¹ Or is there not the corresponding English saying "He also serves who waits and prays" or something like that? Anyway such is absolutely my position today. If I could see my way clear leading to boycott movement, do not imagine for one moment that I would sit still for a single moment. But the way is not clear. It may clear any day. I want a living faith on the part of known workers in the boycott as I have prescribed from time to time in the pages of *Young India*. I am positive that no other boycott can possibly succeed, as I am equally positive that this boycott must succeed if there is enough work behind it. Huge demonstrations that have been taking place in Calcutta are good in their way, but not good enough for me. There is no reality behind them. They have their use too, but they cannot enthuse me as an active soldier.

I hope I am clear. If not, do please tackle me again. I am anxious for you to understand me and my movement through and through.

Yours sincerely,

REV. BOYD W. TUCKER
COLLINS HIGH SCHOOL
140 DHARAMTALA STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13084

¹ IV. 18

245. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

SABARMATI,

February 24, 1928

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I received your first letter today and the second letter three days earlier. I have given them to Mahadev for everyone to read. You have done a good job if you have seen in a short period all those institutions as closely as possible.

Look after your health and for doing so, you have to use a mosquito-net. Do not have the least hesitation in using it there. You might come across people who would criticise it the first day, the next day the same people would praise you for your well-maintained health, and on the third, they would follow your example. Mosquito-net is just an example.

Do not hesitate to write to me. I have always liked your letters. Reading your handwriting is never a problem.

I knew that you were hesitant to go to Orissa because of my health, but it is your dharma to overcome that hesitation and to help you in that is my dharma. I believe that my health is very good. The experiment with milkless diet seems to be successful so far. I take 8 *tolas* of wheat, $\frac{3}{4}$ *tola* olive oil, 4 *tolas* almonds, one *seer tandarjo*¹ and 6 to 9 oranges. I still need to increase my diet. If I can do that gradually, I hope to regain part or entire weight I have lost.

Chi. Ramdas and Nimu have gone to Rajkot. From there, they will go to Amreli and will be back here in 15 days.² Jamnadas is tempting Ramdas, so he may stay on there. He may even stay there if he has to live permanently in Amreli. He will make a final decision on coming here. These days he is cheerful and free from worries.

Brian Gabriel is here for the last two days. He will leave on Sunday. Govindji (Gregg) is coming for ten days. Others too, keep on coming and going. Do not worry at all about my health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: S.N. 32907

¹ Also *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", February 26, 1928.

² *ibid*

246. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I did indeed know that Congress Committees were practically sleeping. It would be a great thing if you can put life into them without giving rise to any suspicion about your notice.

What is this British goods boycott demonstration? And what are these ten thousand volunteers? I see Dr. Ray also has been in this thing. Please let me know the inwardness of this movement.

I do not at all mind your having gone third class if it agrees with you. I am glad you are giving Kuhne's baths to Nikhil. Why not consult Bose. He is a water-cure specialist. You know he had an institution in Bow Bazaar where I used to go for my treatment. At that time Bose was away, but Mazmudar used to give me massage and electric bath. Often the simple remedy succeeds where specialists fail.

The meaning you have given to the word '*sankara*' is original, but thoroughly in keeping with my definition of '*varna*', and, after all, my definition is the literal definition of the Veda. The third chapter is undoubtedly the key chapter of the *Gita*. The first two are introductory and the last fifteen a commentary. I think I told you that for some time now in the Ashram we have been reciting the *Gita* every day, the whole of it being finished every fortnight, Chapters VII and VIII, XII and XIII, XIV and XV, and XVI and XVII being recited each pair one day.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13085

247. *LETTER TO Y. BHASKARE*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am very sorry I am under strict medical orders not to take up any new burdens however slight they may be and even to reduce the existing responsibilities to the lowest possible minimum. I do not therefore in this circumstance comply with your request.

Yours sincerely,

MISS Y. BHASKARE
WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION
742 NEAR PETTIT HALL
POONA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13087

248. *LETTER TO RAMACHANDRAN*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

I have opened your telegram to Mahadev. As I know nothing about your correspondence with him, I am not taking any action upon it. Mahadev is at present in Bardoli. He returns on Monday at the latest when he will tell me all about your telegram and I shall do whatever is needful.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAMACHANDRAN
NARAYANATH THAIKAD
TRIVANDRUM

From a microfilm: S.N. 13589

249. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
*February 25 [1928]*¹

MY DEAR RAJAN,

Here is a letter from a lady. As I expect you to deal with it and acknowledge the letter, I am not writing to her.

Your sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a copy: S.N. 13086 M

250. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

SABARMATI,
February 25, 1928

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have Dr. Muthu's wire today; I sent you one² on receiving it, and you must have got it. If Dhiru has arrived by now, I think it advisable that you should wire to Dr. Muthu that he should come. He is right in saying that he cannot come to any conclusion without an examination. I do not know what his fee is, but whatever it is, it is necessary that you should cheerfully pay it.

My health is better. But the doctors still keep me in bed. I hope you are well.

On Thakore Saheb's request, Shri Parnerkar, who knows veterinary science, was sent from here to examine his cattle and explain the scientific method of feeding them.

Respectful greetings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1272

¹ The letter is among the S.N. paper for 1928.

² This telegram is not available.

251. WHO WILL RESCUE THIS HUMAN COW?

A gentleman, nearly 70 years old, belonging to the Brahmabhatt caste was married four times. All four wives are dead. He has no son, only a daughter who is fifteen. She has already been married. He now wishes to marry for the fifth time in order to have someone to run his household and fulfil his desire for a son. This gentleman has been abroad. He held a decent post in the Gaekwar's State. He has lost his eyesight owing to cataract. This, much-married old man is waiting for some cruel father who is prepared to sell his daughter. Some young men of the Brahmabhatt community are trying to save the meek cow from being sent in this way to the slaughter-house. One of them wrote a letter to the old man in order to persuade him not to commit such an act. The gentleman has replied to it at length. A copy of this has been sent to me. I give below extracts¹ from it :

I publish this letter at the risk of being considered foolish. If there is an absence of feeling for young girls in the Brahmabhatt community, if sensitive people in the community lack courage and if there is no such thing as public opinion in it, no one will be able to prevent this ill-matched union. However, the handful of kind-hearted young men or women belonging to that community must not neglect their duty. Reform, if it is to be carried out in a peaceful manner, can be carried out only through love and patience. We must put up with anger in any form if it is the result of self-interest. We should not be dazzled by anyone trying to impress by his knowledge. Within the last one year, two such marriages could be prevented through diligence and by arousing public opinion. An engagement that had already taken place was broken off whereas in this instance there has only been talk of an engagement. If public opinion can be created the meek cow is likely to be rescued from being slaughtered.

Let us now examine the letter from this gentleman, who had been to England. I am unable to understand what he intends to prove by giving instances of men becoming fathers at an advanced age. His arguments are the same old ones that have always been advanced by sinners. In novels, we have come across murderers describing the benefits of murder in beautiful language. And we have also come across robbers singing praises of their deeds. These acts may well have benefited those who committed them; but they have not benefited the world. Let us take the practice of ill-matched unions. In the instances

¹ Not translated here

which have been cited in the above extract, the men concerned may well have seen in it advantage to themselves. However, these old men of experience who are motivated by self-interest and a desire to gratify their lust are misinterpreting these instances in trying to get their own acts approved. This gentleman does not have the time and does not feel the need to think what these young girls must have thought when marrying these old men, how often they must have sighed. If one old man has the right to marry a girl of thirteen or fifteen, all old men should have this right and, if all of them were to follow this practice, we can easily imagine what consequences it would have on the people. Nowhere in the world have wise men been known to commend ill-matched unions. They have been condemned in all countries and in India we actually see the many evil consequences that follow from them. Hence, I hope this gentleman would review his own letter, written in an angry and impulsive mood, in a new light and gain control over his lust. And, if he cannot do it, he should look for a widow who is prepared to marry him of her own free will.

The craving for a male offspring needs to be given up. It cannot be said that this desire is always noble. Amongst a people where the birth and death ratio is regularly balanced it is noble to restrain rather than indulge the desire for a son. In India today because we are slaves, everyone is in a state of fear, and because we have lost the capacity to protect ourselves, our relatives as well as our property, I regard it as a sin to beget children.

Now about the desire to be nursed. What a misconceived idea that only one's own people can render this help. I regard it as the limit of audacity to grab an innocent girl by bribing or luring her father and then regarding her as one's own. Instead of calling that girl one's own, it would be nearer the truth to say that 'a slave girl has been bought'. As for service one can still get good loyal servants if one is prepared to pay well. I wish to leave aside now the other atrocious ideas in the letter. If he happens to read this article, I humbly request him to calmly reflect on it and save himself from the misadventure on which he is about to embark.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-2-1928

252. STUDENTS' NOBLE SATYAGRAHA¹

In referring to the universality of satyagraha I have time and again observed in these columns that it is capable of application in the social no less than in the political field. It may equally be employed against Government, society, or one's own family, father, mother, husband or wife, as the case may be. For it is the beauty of this spiritual weapon that, when it is completely free from the taint of *himsa* and its use is actuated purely and solely by love it may be used with absolute impunity in any connection and in any circumstances whatever. A concrete instance of its use against a social evil was furnished by the brave and spirited students of Dharmaj (in Kheda District) a few days back. The facts as gleaned from the various communications about the incident received by me were as follows :

A gentleman of Dharmaj, some days back, gave a caste dinner in connection with the twelfth-day ceremony of the death of his mother. It was preceded by a keen controversy about the subject among the young men of the place who shared with a number of other local inhabitants their strong dislike of this custom. They felt that, on this occasion, something must be done. Accordingly, most of them took all or some of the following three vows :

1. Not to join their elders at the dinner or otherwise partake of the food served on that occasion.
2. To observe fast on the day of the dinner as an emphatic protest against this practice.
3. To bear patiently and cheerfully any harsh treatment that might be accorded to them by their elders for taking this step.

In pursuance of this decision, quite a large number of students, including some children of tender age, fasted on the day on which the dinner was given and took upon themselves the wrath of their so-called elders. Nor was the step free from the dangers of serious pecuniary consequences to the students. The 'elders' threatened to stop the allowances of their boys and even to withdraw any financial aid that they were giving to local institutions, but the boys stood firm. As many as two hundred and eighty-five students thus refused to take part in the caste dinner and most of them fasted.

¹ The Gujarati original, of which this is a translation, was published in *Navajivan*. 26-2-1928.

I tender my congratulations to these boys and hope that everywhere students will take a prominent part in effecting social reform. They hold in their pocket, as it were, the key to social reform and the protection of their religion, just as they have in their possession the key to swaraj—though they may not be aware of it owing to their negligence or carelessness. But I hope that the example set by the students of Dharmaj will awaken them to a sense of their power. In my opinion, the true *shraddha* of the deceased lady was performed by these young men fasting on that day, while those who gave the dinner wasted good money and set a bad example to the poor. The rich, monied class ought to use their God-given wealth for philanthropic purposes. They should understand that the poor cannot afford to give caste dinners on wedding or on funeral ceremonies. These bad practices have proved to be the ruin of many a poor man. If the money that was spent in Dharmaj on the caste dinner had been used for helping poor students, or poor widows, or for khadi or cow-protection or the amelioration of the untouchables, it would have borne fruit and brought peace to the departed soul. But, as it is, the dinner has already been forgotten, it has profited nobody and it has caused pain to the students and the sensible section of the Dharmaj public.

Let no one imagine that the satyagraha has gone in vain because it did not succeed in preventing the dinner in question from taking place. The students themselves knew that there was little possibility of their satyagraha producing any immediate tangible result. But we may safely take it that, if they do not let their vigilance go to sleep, no *shethia*¹ will again dare to give a post-mortem dinner. A chronic and long-standing social evil cannot be swept away at a stroke; it always requires patience and perseverance.

When will the ‘elders’ of our society learn to recognize the signs of the times? How long will they be slaves to custom instead of using it as a means for the amelioration of society and the country? How long will they keep their children divorced from a practical application of the knowledge which they are helping them to acquire? When will they rescue their sense of right and wrong from its present state of trance and wake up and be *mahajans*² in the true sense of the word?

Young India, 1-3-1928

¹ Rich man

² Leaders

253. *LETTER TO WILFRED WELLOCK*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sending you an autographed volume of the so-called autobiography. You will be interested to know that all the bound volumes are bound in khaddar and every rupee invested in khaddar means at least twelve annas into the pockets directly of the poorest people.

Yours sincerely,

WILFRED WELLOCK, ESQ.
VICTORIA AVENUE, QUINTON
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: S.N. 14250

254. *LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 26, 1928

MY DEAR BROTHERS,

I have been duly receiving the duplicates of your semi-official notes for Sir Habibullah. Manilal and others too keep me informed of your movements. Already urgent letters are being received to implore you not to leave South Africa at the end of your year. They say you are already counting your months. And they are trembling in their shoes, and more than them am I trembling, and perhaps, my tremble is weightier because of the absence of shoes. For I really feel that except for grave reasons of health it would be a national tragedy for you to leave South Africa at the present moment. And I am sorry to have to say—but it is true—that no one else can successfully replace you at the present moment. The familiarity that your stay in South Africa might have produced has certainly not bred contempt; on the contrary, it has gained greater respect for you from those whose respect counts for the work. And just as you have gained influence amongst the Europeans, you have gained staunch adherents amongst

our own countrymen. You may not desert them. Do please therefore let me have a reassuring letter. Of course I don't know what the Government may want you to do. *Verb. sap.*

With love,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

If you were here, you would not appreciate our politics just now.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: G.N. 8814; also S.N. 11963

255. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 26, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letters. I am sensing all that is going on in Delhi and can understand every word of what you have said in your letter. I can't give you an adequate conception of my grief as I follow the Conference proceedings from day to day and read between the lines. Father's illuminating letter only confirmed my own reading from a distance. Then came Kripalani's letter yesterday to Krishnadas, and yours has come today to put the finishing touch.¹ What a miserable show we are putting up against the insolence of Lord Birkenhead and the crookedness of the Commissioners? I had not expected much from Sir John Simon, but I was not at all prepared for his resorting to all the known tricks of bureaucracy, and this the latest trade on untouchables adds to the ugliness of the whole picture. However, we have to be patient. You must therefore patiently go through the agony and mend where you can.

¹ In his letter, dated Allahabad, February 23, Jawaharlal Nehru had written: "I wrote to you a few hours ago and informed you that I hoped to be in Sabarmati on Monday or Tuesday night. Immediately after I received a summons from Delhi to go there and remain there for the next fortnight or more to assist in constitution drafting. . . . Personally I have had enough of this All-Parties Conference. After ten days of it, the strain was too great for me and I fled to avoid riot and insurrection! I feel better already after a three-day absence, but another dose of all the parties may go to my head. I am thus not at all desirous of attending the meetings in Delhi. But I do not know what might happen. I shall wire to you from Delhi" (S.N. 13079).

Do come as early as possible. I hope Kamala is keeping up her strength, if not actually adding to it. I wonder if Father has told you that, before you came, when Father was with me in Bangalore, he and I had contemplated your stay in Bangalore because of its magnificent climate during summer. There are just four weeks of somewhat trying weather, but you could always go to Nandi Hill only 35 miles from Bangalore where you have delightfully cool weather. In no case should Kamala be allowed to lose what she gained in Switzerland.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13079

256. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

February 26, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I also got the cable, to which I have already replied. If I were seriously ill, I would certainly have had a cable sent to you. Others, too, would have cabled, but do you think a man who was so seriously ill would wait till the steamer had arrived? Even in case of such illness, therefore, it would be best for you to suppress the desire to abandon your work and run back home.

Ramdas and Nirmala have gone to Rajkot, and from there they will go to Amreli. They have decided, both of them, to take up some work connected with my activities and devote themselves wholly to it. The place of work too will be decided before the 16th of March.

Devdas is still here. He is keeping well. Brian Gabriel left for Bombay today after staying here for three days. This letter will be carried by the same ship by which he sails.

I wish to see Sushila restored to perfect health. Which book in English is she studying? Send me a sample of her handwriting.

Tell Mr. Kallenbach that I am waiting for him to come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4734

257. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

Phalgun Shukla 6 [February 26, 1928]¹

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

Your letter. Illness is such a thing that most often one never knows whence and how it comes. Do not be sorry on this account, but make further introspection and be thankful to God even for the illness. Try to remove your own shortcomings if you notice any. Keep writing to me. If necessary, do take milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI TULSI MAHER
CHARKHA PRACHARAK
SHRI TULSI BHADURJI
Via VIRGUNJ
RAXAUL, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6533

258. LETTER TO L. W. RITCH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 27, 1928

MY DEAR RITCH,

I was glad to receive your long letter though a business letter. Unlike you, I am going to commence with domestic business. I was distressed to hear from Miss Knudsen, who by the way is staying with me at the present moment, that you had lost one of your legs. But she was unable to give me the reason for it. You shall give it. And how is Mrs. Ritch doing? And what about Erick and Harold? The daughters' names I forget. I hope they won't accuse me of want of chivalry. What are they all doing? For me, I am dictating from a sick-bed, not that I feel anything particular within me, but doctors have warned me against exerting myself either physically or mentally for some time yet. Mrs. Gandhi is keeping quite well. Harilal has practically forsaken me. He drinks, eats and makes himself merry. But he is a brave boy in

¹ From the postmark

one sense that he makes no secret of his vice and his rebellion is an open rebellion. If he had not done his creditors down, I would not have minded his other lapses as I mind this betrayal of his creditors. Manilal you know is in Phoenix and Ramdas and Devdas are assisting me in my work. Polak is in India just now, travelling about his business. I met him for a few minutes in Madras and he is likely to call at the Ashram before he re-em-barks for London. Andrews is a frequent visitor to the Ashram and he is due here about the third of March. This Ashram is a big, growing affair. We are at the present moment supporting a population of about two hundred, quite a little village by ourselves. And not only do we go through all the processes of cotton till it comes out as cloth, we are conducting a little dairy, a little tannery and we are having a little bit of farming. We have some fruit-trees and we grow our own vegetables. We grow some grains and enough fodder for cattle. We have as a rule one or two Europeans with us and there is a constant stream of such visitors. Life is very simple, and yet not simple enough for the Indian setting. You can't have any notion from that distance of the grinding poverty of the masses. And if we could only sustain ourselves well enough for our work in less, I would straightway reduce our expenses which amount to a pound per month on an average including clothing but excluding rental. Of course we are paying no rent. We have nearly 75 boys and girls for whom we are conducting what I may call a model school making tuitional experiments.

Now for business. My own opinion is that neither Andrews nor Sastri could have got more than they have. I quite agree with you that these Union Ministers will be driven to getting out of the bargain. But if Sastri is permitted to remain in South Africa for any length of time, I am inclined to think that his correct, that is, his righteous, diplomacy will triumph over the crooked diplomacy of South Africa. If we are to achieve the full result of the struggle of 1906 to 1914, we must act on the square and cleanse our stables, and I feel sure that if those who have entered surreptitiously will cease to be greedy, will make a clear confession and truthfully, not encourage any single fraudulent entrant in future, the position can be saved and the condition of the resident population steadily improved. If, however, the desire is not only to cover surreptitious entries already accomplished, but to leave the door open for more, I think that the community will be unable to remain in South Africa with any degree of self-respect. It will hold on somehow or other I have no doubt, it will be difficult to wipe out such a

large and resourceful community, but it would be a sordid existence; whereas I would like the Indians of South Africa to play an honourable part not merely for the upbuilding of South Africa but for the upbuilding of India itself. If we play the game in South Africa, it is possible in course of time to secure full rights of citizenship. You may share this letter with any friend you like.

With regards to you all,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11965

259. LETTER TO K. BALASUBRAMANIAM

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The more I think of it the more confirmed I become that boycott of British goods is a useless cry. I have not contemplated boycott of India's mills. All I have said about them is that they do not need any advertisement as khadi does, even as an old established trade needs no advertisement whereas a new one does.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. BALASUBRAMANIAM

6 LAKSHMI VILAS

MAMBALAM (NEAR MADRAS)

From a photostat: S.N. 13088

260. LETTER TO K. NARASIMHA IYENGAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
*February 27 [1928]*¹

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter of the 18th ultimo, I am asking the manager to exchange [with] you *Young India*. I have not seen the Supplement which you say you have sent.

My message to you is that an Indian journal outside India has a need for double caution. I hope that your journal instead of pandering to the evil tastes of the people wherever they exist will stand out boldly for social and moral reforms and show the emigrants that it is their duty to represent the best of Indian culture in the land to which they may migrate and to keep up the bond between themselves and the motherland by adopting khaddar at least.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. NARASIMHA IYENGAR
MANAGING EDITOR,
"THE TAMIL NESAN"
212 BATU ROAD, KUALA LUMPUR
(F. N. U.)

From a photostat: S.N. 14251

¹ The letter under reply was dated January 18, 1928.

261. LETTER TO PRAGJI K. DESAI

February 27, 1928

CHI. PRAGJI,

I have your letter. It is a pretty difficult problem in which you have been caught up. All the difficulties will be solved if you have patience and scrupulous regard for truth. Do not, for the sake of immediate gain, lend your name to falsehood. I have conveyed my views to Mr. Ritch.¹ I had a long letter from him, which I have read with care. I do believe that we can still save the situation, if only people will stop the practice of bringing in unauthorized persons. Try to keep Sastriji for another year. I will also try from this end. How is Medh faring? What do you think now will be the result of your case?

My health is good; there is no cause at all for worry. Try to suppress your desire to return to Bardoli.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5031

262. LETTER TO RATILAL

Monday [February 27, 1928]²

BHAISHRI RATILAL,

Narandas withheld your reply for some day in order not to trouble me.

It would be enough if you gave Chi. Surajbehn, in addition to Raichandbhai's articles, canto XI of the *Bhagavata*, the *Balkand* of Tulsidas's *Ramayana* and some of the books published by Navajivan Karyalaya. I think it essential that there should be less reading and more reflection and practice.

Chi. Chhagan and Lilavati promised on leaving that they would come again and stay longer. If they keep their promise and come, I certainly wish to discuss the matter with them. They have assured me that they will keep the promise.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7162

¹ Vide "Letter to L. W. Ritch", 27-2-1928.

² As in the G.N. Register

263. LETTER TO DHIRU JHAVERI

Monday [February 27, 1928]¹

CHI. DHIRU²,

It is good that you came. Be true to your name and have patience³. God will protect you. Dr. Muthu has a reputation for succeeding and if he comes he might be instrumental in your getting cured. But whether you are cured or not, learn to bear suffering in patience.

It is good that Mother has joined you there. Give my *pranams* to her. You need not reply. I get and will continue to get news about your health from your father or Manibhai.⁴

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1279

264. LETTER TO RAMNARAYAN CHOUDHRI

February 27, 1928

BHAI RAMNARAYAN,

Your letter to hand. I had no idea of what was being written about me in *Shraddhanand*. I glance at one or two newspapers for a few minutes only. I do not want that anyone should defend me. Moreover, it hurts me that someone should be attacked on my account. You can use this letter as you like. I am writing to *Pratap*.⁵

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha Kya Samajha?, p. 161

¹ From the contents. The addressee had been suffering from tuberculosis and had been brought to Bombay from Solan at this time for treatment under Dr. C. Muthu; *vide* also "Letter to Dr. C. Muthu", February 21, 1928, "Letter to Revashanker Jhaveri", before and on February, 1928.

² Son of Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri

³ 'Dhiru' is short for 'Dhiraj' which means patience.

⁴ Addressee's brother

⁵ *Pratap*, in an editorial, had "caustically criticized" an article by Vinayakrao Savarkar in *Shraddhanand*. Gandhiji's letter to *Pratap*, however, is not available.

265. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

[Before *February 29, 1928*]¹

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter.

You did well in sending a telegram to Dr. Muthu. I have had good experience of him. He has a great reputation. Send me a telegram when you hear that he is on his way, so that I may write to him again. I have in any case to reply to his wire.

If you find him a friendly person, consult him about your health too. Swelling indicate weakness of the heart. It is proper that you have stopped physical movements. But you need fresh air the most.

Manilal² wants Chi. Jeki³ to join him immediately. He seems to be doing well in Aden. He has also paid Jeki's fare to Thomas Cook. He is suffering from hydrocele and wishes to be operated upon in Aden, that is why he wants her there. I believe that he would have called her even if he had not been suffering from the disease. He wants the children too. Jeki is completely at home here. The kids are making great progress in their studies. All of them keep fit. But I feel that, since Manilal wants her, it is Jeki's clear duty to go to Aden. She, too, is ready to go. Let me know your opinion about this, so that I may act accordingly.

I am keeping well.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1273

¹ It is clear from the contents that this was written before February 29; *vide* "Letter to Revashanker Jhaveri", 29-2-1928.

² Manilal Doctor, husband of Jayakunwar

³ Jayakunwar, daughter of Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

266. *LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

MY DEAR BHRRR¹,

You are a good young man of twenty-five to brave the Government and the heat of Bardoli. No defeat if you please.

Yours,
BHRRR

From a photostat: S.N. 9562

267. *LETTER TO DUNICHAND*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter delivered through Lala Suraj Bhanu. I have put him on work which he had least expected and told him that he is not likely to take to the Ashram life unless he became a labourer pure and simple. But he seems to have taken to it very gracefully and pleasantly.

Now about your donation. I did not know that you were a pukka bania by choice. But you little knew that you were dealing with a still more pukka bania voluntarily acting as the agent of *Daridranarayana*. You say that you had announced a donation to the Ashram of Rs. 500 on the marriage of your son and you propose, to use the language of law, wrongfully to divert part of the funds to the payment of a debt voluntarily incurred by you with Sjt. Manilal Kothari. How can a donation be utilized for discharge of a debt whether moral or legal? And what connection can you promise to pay the All-India Spinners' Association have with the Ashram which represents multifarious activities—tanning, dairying, farming, experiments in hygiene, cotton-growing, ginning, carding, spinning, weaving, dyeing, printing, carpentry, smithy, conducting educational experiments, looking after widows, taking care of so-called untouchables, etc.? And why such a donation, not paid on the date on which it was announced,

¹ This was a manner of greeting between Gandhiji and the addressee.

should not carry double interest in the hands of the donor who from date of announcement becomes a trustee? You will please deal with these conundrums before I can deal with your cheque finally. And I would ask you in deciding this question to consult Mrs. Dunichand, who, when I had the pleasure of being under your roof, was found to be less bania-like than you have proved to be.

Yours sincerely,

LALA DUNICHAND
ADVOCATE
KRIPANIVAS
AMBALA CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 13080

268. LETTER TO B. RAJARAM PANDIAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If you have the courage of your convictions, then of course you will not send the two boys to the school and make either private arrangements for them or send them to a national school. I must at the same time say that I do not like the tone of the letter you adopted, and it would have been far more dignified if you had frankly told the head master that you did not send your boys because of the national declaration of boycott. The boys would have been sent out of the school, it is true; but it would have been a courted and, therefore, dignified dismissal.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. RAJARAM PANDIAN
BHASKARA VILAS PALACE
RAMNAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13090

269. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Jawahar had prepared me for your letter.¹ I am sorry that our meeting is delayed. But I am glad that you are staying there if perchance some tangible result may be achieved. What a sorry exhibition we are making of ourselves in the face of this organized insult to a whole people. But I suppose we have to make the best of a very bad job. I do hope that the Committee of twenty is being fully attended. We are engaged in an unequal duel; on the one hand are clever whole-timers acting with one mind and with the greatest deliberation; on the other we are part-timers having many irons in the fire and having almost as many minds as our numbers. My hope however is in the justness of our cause

I hope your eyes are not causing you much trouble.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13083

¹ In his letter of February 24, Motilal Nehru had written: “. . . I am sorry it will not be possible for me and Jawahar to leave for Sabarmati on the 26th. The very day that I wrote to you giving the points of agreement and disagreement between the various parties, Mr. Jinnah announced that it was wrong to say that anything had been agreed upon by the Muslim League which had not yet formally appointed its representatives to the Conference. He added that he was no doubt personally of the opinions he had expressed, but he felt that, in the absence of definite authority from his League, he was not competent even to bind himself with those opinions. Thus it was that the long sittings and elaborate discussions occupying ten days came practically to nothing. It was also found that the attendance at the Conference was thinning away from day to day until it came down to 14 on the 21st. The Executive of the Muslim League is meeting on the 26th and Mr. Jinnah has promised to do his best to bring them round to his point of view. In all these circumstances, I thought it was futile to go on with the Conference and suggested that a sub-committee be appointed to go into the whole question and make its report as soon as possible to an adjourned sitting of the Conference. This was agreed to and the Conference was adjourned to the 8th March, a committee of 20 being appointed to enter upon their work at once. We have a large field to cover, but will either be able to get on better after the 26th or give up the attempt. I feel that my presence here is necessary till either of the two contingencies I have mentioned happens. . . . I shall write or wire as soon as I am free.”

270. LETTER TO PADMARAJ JAIN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
February 29, 1928

DEAR PADMARAJ BABU,

I have your letter. My views have been frequently and unequivocally expressed in the pages of *Young India*. I have no notion of what is being done there at the present moment. But I suggest your seeking advice from Pandit Malaviyaji who knows more of the inwardness of the present movement than I do lying on a sick-bed. As you will notice, therefore, I am simply satisfying myself with an expression of my general views on swadesi, boycott, and the like.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. PADMARAJ JAIN
BENGAL PROVINCIAL HINDU SABHA
160 HARRISON ROAD
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13089

271. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
Wednesday [February 29, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. A chemist told me that if oil is frozen, the acid in it separates out and only the fat remains.

There was indeed good news concerning Morvi. If Revashankerbhai agrees, we can make him the president. If he falls ill, we can then elect someone else. I find this the best solution.

Since Fulchand and the others have gone to Bardoli, who is helping you now? What have you done about the Antyaja School at Morvi? I also want you to do something for implementing the resolutions of the Parishad². I do not know the English word for

¹ From the postmark

² Kathiawar Political Conference

*chilgoza*¹. If I get some, I will send you a little as sample. I'll also try to find out its English name.

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5695

272. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

Wednesday, February 29, 1928

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I got your letter, as also your wire. On getting the wire, I wrote a letter to Dr. Muthu only yesterday, addressed C/o you. You must have passed it on to him. If you have not sent a telegram or have not been able to write a letter even today, intimating the result of his examination, inform me by wire. I have also written to Dr. Muthu requesting him to write to me in detail.

Chi. Jeki is not at all keen on going to Aden. She is ready to do what we advise her to do. But we must consider what our duty is in regard to her. Is it right for us to keep Jeki with us against Manilal's wishes? What would the doctor² wish in these circumstances? If I were free to decide myself, I would certainly support Jeki in her desire not to go. But I feel that the doctor would not wish that, nor perhaps would you. I cannot bear to see the miserable condition of women. I would, if I could, save every woman from the burden which her husband in his sensuality puts upon her. However, if God let things happen according to our wishes, the world would certainly turn upside down; we should, therefore, do whatever we can while keeping ourselves detached.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1274

¹ Pine seed

² Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

273. *FOREIGN PROPAGANDA*¹

I have no desire to start any hot controversy over the question of foreign propaganda, but I publish the foregoing as it summarizes the views of many workers who hold them in no sense weakly because they do not express them in public. If the pure Non-co-operation of 1920 is not witnessed on an extensive scale at the present moment, it is most decidedly going deeper with some and everything that is happening today in the land goes to strengthen their belief. But they cannot make themselves felt by being vocal in season and out of season. On the contrary, they feel that they serve the cause of swaraj better by observing silence where they cannot serve by speech and helping humbly and actively wherever they can.

Young India, 1-3-1928

274. *CHAOS v. MISRULE*

An esteemed friend writes :²

It is not often that I intrude upon your expressions of political opinion. But a sentence of yours in a recent editorial, repeating a heresy uttered by you long ago, compels me to ask you whether you have measured your words with the care that one expects of an expounder of moral issues. You declare that you would accept chaos in exchange for freedom from the English yoke. That an Indian should desire and work for freedom from any foreign yoke is perfectly natural, normal and healthy. That anyone in his senses should exchange any kind of orderly government for chaos is simply incomprehensible, for the one implies some sort of discipline, whether imposed or stimulated, whereas the latter is the very negation of self-discipline. . . .

If non-violence be, as you claim it to be, creative, purposeful, and divine in its nature, then chaos cannot be its consequence or characteristic. If you have used the term with deliberation, then I should comment that you have rendered no service to mankind, who need rather a reminder that they should acquire the cosmic vision rather than the chaotic one to which they are already prone. . . .

There is no mistaking the earnestness running through the letter. And I have so much regard for the friend's views, that if I could have

¹ For C. Rajagopalachari's article bearing this title, *vide* Appendix "Foreign Propaganda", March 1, 1928.

² Only extracts are reproduced here.

suited mine to his, I would gladly have done so.

But I must say that my choice was deliberate. Chaos means no rule, no order. Rule or order can come, does come out of no rule or no order, but never directly out of misrule or disorder masquerading under the sacred name of rule or order. My friend's difficulty arises, I presume, out of his assumption that the present Government of India represents "some sort of discipline whether imposed or stimulated". It is likely that our estimates of the existing system differ. My own estimate of it is that it is an unmitigated evil. No good therefore can come out of this evil. I hold misrule to be worse than no rule.

Nor need my words cause any confusion in the minds of the ignorant or the violent. For I admit my correspondent's contention that chaos can be the result only of violence. Have I not often said in these pages that if I were compelled to choose between this rule and violence I would give my vote for the latter though I will not, I could not, assist a fight based on violence? It would be a matter for me of Hobson's choice. The seeming quiescence of today is a dangerous form of violence kept under suppression by greater violence or rather readiness for it. Is it not better that those who, out of a cowardly fear of death or dispossession, whilst harbouring violence refrain from it, should do it and win freedom from bondage or die gloriously in the attempt to vindicate their birthright?

My non-violence is not an academic principle to be enunciated on favourable occasions. It is a principle which I am seeking to enforce every moment of my life in every field of activity. In my attempt, often frustrated through my own weakness or ignorance, to enforce non-violence, I am driven for the sake of the creed itself to countenance violence by way of giving mental approval to it. In 1921 I told the villagers near Bettiah¹ that they had acted like cowards in that they had instead of resisting the evil-minded Amlas left their wives and homes on their approach. On another occasion I expressed myself ashamed of a priest who said he had quietly slipped away and saved himself when a ruffian band had entered his temple to loot it and break the idol. I told him that if he could not die at his post defending his charge non-violently, he should have defended it by offering violent resistance. Similarly do I hold that, if India has no faith in non-violence, nor patience for it to work its way, then it is better for her to attain her freedom from the present misrule even by

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Bettiah", December 8, 1920.

violence than that she should helplessly submit to a continuing rape of her belongings and her honour.

Look at the shameless manner in which, for sustaining the spoliation of India, British statesmen (?) are setting one party against another. They have suddenly discovered the untouchables, for they seem to fear that the Hindu-Muslim dissensions alone might not prove enough security for retaining possession of the 'most glorious diadem in the British Crown'. They are trying to set the helpless princes against the people. Sir John Simon finds it necessary to play the same game. The penetrating intellect he is said to possess does not penetrate the very thin veil that covers the frauds that are set up for his edification and he finds nothing seriously amiss in the Indian atmosphere. This sort of 'orderly discipline' has unmanned and unnerved the people as nothing in their previous history has ever done.

My own position and belief are clear and unequivocal. I neither want the existing rule nor chaos. I want true order established without having to go through the travail of chaos. I want this disorder to be destroyed by non-violence, i.e., I want to convert the evil-doers. My life is dedicated to that task. And what I have written in the previous paragraphs directly flows from my knowledge of the working of non-violence which is the greatest force known to mankind. My belief in its efficacy is unshakable, so is my belief unshakable in the power of India to gain her freedom through non-violent means and no other. But this power of hers cannot be evoked by suppressing truth or facts however ugly they may for the moment appear to be. God forbid that India should have to engage in a sanguinary duel before she learns the lesson of non-violence in its fullness. But if that intermediate stage, often found to be necessary, is to be her lot, it will have to be faced as a stage inevitable in her march towards freedom and certainly preferable to the existing order which is only so-called but which is like a whited sepulchre hiding undiluted violence underneath.

Young India, 1-3-1928

275. TOLSTOY CENTENARY

Mr. Aylmer Maude than whom there is no better English authority on Tolstoyan literature writes :

Knowing your interest in Tolstoy, I am sending you copy of a circular just issued to members of the Tolstoy Society, as well as copy of a letter by Bernard Shaw.

We are anxious that this Centenary Edition should find a place in public libraries and also that its publication should enable us to give assistance to members of Tolstoy's family, who are in distress since the Russian Revolution.

Should you have an opportunity of mentioning the Edition to librarians or members of the committee of any of your Indian libraries, the Committee of the Tolstoy Society would feel greatly indebted to you.

I take the following from the printed notice of the Tolstoy Society:¹

The Secretary is Miss L. E. Elliott, Ladywell House, Great Baddow, Chelmsford, England.

Anyone can become a member of the Tolstoy Society by paying at least £1-1-0 and an associate by paying a minimum subscription of 2s. 6d.

Young India, 1-3-1928

276. *THE COW-PROTECTION BIBLIOGRAPHY*

The foregoing list² has been prepared by Sjt. V. G. Desai out of his extensive study of the literature available on the question of cow-protection in terms of the objects of the All-India Cow-protection Association. It is not suggested that a study of all the foregoing literature is necessary for the lover of the cow or even that it is all valuable. The list is intended to help the careful student.

Young India, 1-3-1928

277. *KHADI NEAR MEERUT*

Dr. Ray gave me soon after his recent visit to Meerut an account of his impressions. I take the following from his letter :³

. . . I was taken to a village 20 miles north of the town where the peasants are comparatively prosperous. . . . In almost every house I visited the mother, the daughter and sometimes the daughter-in-law were found basking in the sun and spinning 10 to 12 count yarns. The coarse cloth woven in the village itself is used by the local people and ready-made sliver hawked about. In the field also side by side with the standing crops there are patches of cotton cultivation.

¹ The notice about the publication and price of Tolstoy Centenary Volumes is not reproduced here.

² This is not reproduced here.

³ Only extracts are reproduced here.

The march of 'civilization' has not yet fully overtaken the unfortunate villagers, but they have begun to taste of it. . . . The Banaras Gandhi Ashram with the help of a local band of devoted sacrificing workers is doing its level best but funds and proper organization are both badly needed.

The hum of the wheel need not die either in the Punjab or elsewhere in India, if we would be true to our trust. The band of workers from the Banaras Ashram who attracted Dr. Ray's attention are working in and near that district to put khadi on a stable footing. Now that the parent of the Ashram, Acharya Kripalani, is in the midst of his workers, there should be redoubled zeal on their part and greater support and appreciation from the public.

Young India, 1-3-1928

278. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

Friday [On or after March 2, 1928]¹

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am happy to learn that there has been some improvement in Nikhil's health. Rest and water-treatment may bring about a complete cure.

Study the *Ramayana* well. Recite the quatrains and couplets over and over again and meditate on them. Keep your mind absolutely calm and never give way to depression. This is the teaching of *Gita*. This is the purpose of Ramanama. Those blessed by God do not regard sorrow as sorrow. Daily we chant here the verse :

विपदो नैव विपदः संपदो नैव संपदः

विपद्विस्मरणं विष्णोः संपन्नारायणस्मृतिः

It means that sorrow is not sorrow, happiness is not happiness. Sorrow is forgetting Vishnu; happiness is remembering Narayana.

He who has Narayana in his heart, how can he know sorrow?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1651

¹ From the reference to water-treatment of Nikhil the letter appears to have been written after the one to Satis Chandra Das Gupta dated February 25, the Friday following which was March 2.

279. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 3, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I have discussed it with Jawaharlal, but he suggests, and I agree, that it will be better for me to reduce to writing the views I have expressed to him so that there may be no misunderstanding about the correct interpretation of my views, and so that he may also know whether he understood me correctly.

ELECTORATE: I am of the same opinion that I expressed years ago at Delhi that we should not be party to separate electorates or to reservation of seats, the latter should be by mutual voluntary arrangement if such is necessary. But unless the Mussalmans agree, there is no going back by us on reservation of seats. The Congress is committed to it. I think, therefore, that we must simply adhere to the Congress resolution and expect Hindus and Mussalmans to carry out that resolution. If the All-Parties Conference cannot discover another method acceptable to all, we must simply work out the Congress formula.

THE CONSTITUTION: Personally I am of opinion that we are not ready for drawing up a constitution till we have developed sanction for ourselves. Any constitution that we may arrive at must be a final thing in the sense that we may improve upon but we may not recede from it even by an inch. There seems to be no atmosphere for arriving at such a constitution. I would personally therefore prefer instead of a constitution, a working arrangement between all parties upon which all may be agreed. This would be not a constitution but chief heads of it, as for instance, the Hindu-Muslim arrangement, the franchise, the policy as to the Native States. If we are to make this thing popular, I should bring in total prohibition and exclusion of foreign cloth as an indispensable condition. Of course we should guarantee equality of treatment of all religions as also of the so-called untouchables. I am not exhaustive in the list of things on which there should be an agreement, but I have simply given a few things by way of illustration. I think that if we go beyond such a general agreement, we would be making mistake. In any case, I do hope that the Conference will not break up without doing anything, and even if it does, the Working

Committee should take the matter in its own hands and issue its own authoritative statement on behalf of the Congress on all the matters for which the Conference has been convened.

SANCTION: More important than the two foregoing things, in my opinion, is the sanction. Unless we have created some force ourselves, we shall not advance beyond the position of beggars, and I have given all my time to thinking over this one question, and I can think of nothing else but boycott of foreign cloth with the assistance of mills if possible, without if necessary. I hold it to be perfectly capable of attainment within a measurable distance of time if we can create sufficient public opinion in its favour. I would have exclusive concentration upon this thing if I had my way. Though I have said nothing in public, I do not at all like what is going on in Bengal. So far as I can see, it is doomed to failure and I can see much harm coming out of that failure; and unlike boycott of foreign cloth, it is valueless, unless it succeeds to the extent we want. Jawaharlal and I have given most of our time to a consideration of this question. And he will explain it all to you. As soon as he can be dispensed with, I would like you to send him back for further discussion of this problem if we do not finish before he leaves for Delhi.

I see that I am not to expect you here in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13095

280. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SABARMATI,
March 3, 1928

JAMNALAL BAJAJ

WARDHA

MAY GO DELHI IF NECESSARY. HEALTH EXCELLENT. BEGAN
TAKING MILK FROM YESTERDAY FOR MORAL REASONS.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 68

281. HAWKING KHADI IN GUJARATI

Shri Vithaldas Jerajani writes to say :¹

It was necessary to undertake such work in Gujarat. Now that it has begun, it will help in creating a khadi atmosphere if it gains a foothold. I take it for granted that help from local workers will be available everywhere in Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-3-1928

282. CATTLE IN KATHIAWAR

An expert in cattle breeding writes from Kathiawar to say :²

This letter deserves the attention of rulers (of Indian States) and their officers. The several methods of cattle-protection shown here have been discussed in various ways in the letter itself. However, I mention them here as they have been stated with reference to the local conditions by a person who has lived in Kathiawar. The cows and bullocks of Kathiawar were at one time famous. It is a matter of shame for every State in Kathiawar that today they are being sent to the slaughter-house and that economically they are regarded as a burden.

This reform requires neither a large sum of money nor any great courage. It is only a matter of giving up lethargy and sparing a little time from politics. It requires no great effort to get scrub bulls castrated or to regulate cattle fodder. The States should train some students by offering them scholarships. In the mean while, they should carry on the work with whatever help they can get.

The heads of pinjrapoles too should take note of the above suggestions. Infirm cattle ought to be looked after. However, it is a thousand times more important to prevent useful cattle from being sent to the slaughter-house.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-3-1928

¹ The letter, which dealt with the door-to-door sale of khadi in Gujarat, is not translated here.

² The letter is not translated here.

283. *SATYAGRAHA IN BARDOLI*

In this issue the reader will find the letters exchanged between the Government and Shri Vallabhbhai. In a way this correspondence is a sorry chapter. So far as I can see, the facts mentioned by Shri Vallabhbhai or the arguments that he has based on them lack nothing. The Government's reply is marked by cunning and equivocation and amounts to a snub. It makes one sad that power thus makes a person arrogant and that he in his arrogance loses his humanity and forgets himself. Although we may have known thousands of such instances of human weakness, each new one is bound to cause pain. This is because though man is not free from fault, at heart he wants to do good. Hence he is pained by insolence, discourtesy, etc., from others.

I shall not enter into the correctness or otherwise of the facts and the arguments. The reader may not have before him all the literature which would enable him to examine the pros and cons; if he has it, he may not have the patience to read and reflect upon it. However, Shri Vallabhbhai's demands will be found reasonable by the disinterested reader even on the basis of justice alone. Vallabhbhai does not insist that his arguments should be accepted by the Government. What he in fact says is that, while the Government is on one side, the people are on the other. There is a difference of opinion between the two regarding the facts themselves. There should be a third party to arbitrate in this dispute. Whatever award is given by this party will be accepted by Vallabhbhai on behalf of the people.

This is the crux, the essence, of Vallabhbhai's letter. The question that now arises is whether there could be such arbitration to settle disputes between the Government and the people. Is not the former the supreme authority? In matters relating to law, even this Government is theoretically prepared to stand in the dock in a court of law. The Government regards the question of land revenue as extra-judicial. The reason for this is beyond the common man's powers of comprehension. Let us not enter into the intricacies of this argument at this moment.

However, if the question of land revenue is outside the jurisdiction of courts, what could Vallabhbhai do but ask for arbitration? Should he advise the people to appeal to the Government and then sit quiet? Even if he wished to give such advice, the people had not left the door open to him; they had already appealed to the Government.

Vallabhbhai would not help them make such appeals, so they approached those who would. Having been unsuccessful there, they returned to Vallabhbhai to make him accept their leadership in offering satyagraha.

In accordance with the rules of satyagraha, Vallabhbhai approached the Government with a polite offer of peace. He said that the Government might not be wrong, it was possible that the people might have misled him. He asked the Government to appoint an arbitrator and ask him to dispense justice. He hoped the Government would not claim infallibility. The Government, by committing the grave mistake of rejecting this proposal, cleared the way for the people to offer satyagraha.

The Government, however, claims that Vallabhbhai is an outsider and does not belong there, that he is an alien and, if he and his alien friends had not entered Bardoli, people would have certainly paid up the revenue—that is the trend of the Government's letter.

This is like the thief trying to punish the policeman. As long as Bardoli is in India neither Vallabhbhai nor anyone else amongst us will understand how either he or any Indian living within the territory between Kashmir in the north and Kanyakumari in the south and between Karachi in the west and Dibrugarh in the east, can be called an outsider. It is the British officers of the Government who are foreigners, outsiders who do not belong here, and, to speak more plainly, all the officers—whether they are black or white—who serve this foreign, outside authority belong to this category. Those who owe their livelihood to the Government would of course be on its side. Even persons like Drona and Bhishma had to tell Yudhishtira that they were on the side of those who provided them their livelihood. How crooked of this foreign Government, to call a person like Vallabhbhai an outsider in Bardoli! This is like darkness at noon! It is because of such things that people like me regard it a sin to be loyal to such a Government, and practise non-co-operation. How can we hope for any justice where such gross impertinence prevails? Who can teach justice to this Government? Only a satyagrahi. The Government cannot be vanquished by intellectual arguments. For the mighty, reason lies in might. It weighs justice at the point of the sword.

This sword becomes blunt when it meets the sword of the satyagrahi. If the satyagrahis of Bardoli are capable of standing by

truth, either an arbitrator will be appointed, or Vallabhbhai's arguments will be accepted and he will cease to be considered an outsider and come to be accepted as a 'native'.

The other questions arising out of this correspondence will be dealt with later. It is enough for the people of Bardoli to remember that it is for them to win or lose the game.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 4-3-1928

284. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

Sunday [March 4, 1928]¹

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I have your letter. Please keep me informed about whatever you do for Dhiru. Will you yourself have to go with him or will someone else go? Do you need anyone from here? I understand about Jeki.

Respectful greetings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1276

285. LETTER TO PRESIDENT, PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA TRUSTEES

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 5 [1928]²

THE PRESIDENT

PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA TRUSTEES

BRINDABAN

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your wire that the Trustees of the Prem Mahavidyalaya had unanimously decided upon Adhyapak Jugal Kishore acting in Acharya Gidwani's place. You are welcome to Sjt. Jugal Kishore's services for twelve months.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13097

¹ From the postmark

² From the contents it is clear that the letter belongs to 1928; *vide* "Prem Mahavidyalaya", 8-3-1928.

286. *LETTER TO A. J. SAUNDERS*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter and money order for Rs. 50. Will you please convey my thanks to the students and tell them that I hope this is merely the first instalment of their gift on behalf of *Daridranarayana* and that they are wearing khaddar habitually?

Yours sincerely,

A. J. SAUNDERS, ESQ.

BURSAR

THE AMERICAN COLLEGE, MADURA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13096

287. *LETTER TO V. S. BHASKARAN*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

MY DEAR BHASKARAN,

I was glad to receive your letter. Of course I forgive you for all the mischief you have done. But your letter only confirms what I heard about you, and it was undoubtedly wrong.

You now ask me with my influence to restore the money that you withdrew and say that you will accept penance in the way of fasting and what not. That would not be correct penance. You must now submit to what Ramanathan or Rajaji may say without in any way being influenced by me. That is the correct position for you to take. And, if you can't have the money restored you should submit to their judgment cheerfully and expect to earn it by honest means in future.¹

Yours sincerely,

SJT. V. S. BHASKARAN

C/O POSTMASTER, RANIPET

From a photostat: S.N. 13098

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to V. S. Bhaskaran", January 29, 1928.

288. *LETTER TO R. NORA BROCKWAY*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your letter and to find that Mr. Brockway was doing so well. I hope the recovery has been progressively rapid.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is here at the present moment and I have shared your letter with him.

Yours sincerely,

MISS R. NORA BROCKWAY
ST. CHRISTOPHER'S TRAINING COLLEGE
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostate: S.N. 13099

289. *LETTER TO ROLAND HAYES¹*

March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. H. Chattopadhyaya writes to me saying that you are likely to visit India in the near future. If you do and if you visit Gujarat, please regard this little Ashram as your home.

Yours sincerely,

MR. ROLAND HAYES
C/O THE AMERICAN EXPRESS CO.
PARIS

From a photostat: S.N. 14253

¹ American Negro singer

290. LETTER TO W. B. STARR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 5, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter enclosing your donation, for both of which I thank you. There was no occasion for you to apologize for the smallness of the donation. The smallest donation in monetary value is a big thing when it comes from a big heart as I am sure yours has done.

The question of reform of the legal profession is a big one. It does not admit of tinkering. I am strongly of opinion that lawyers and doctors should not be able to charge any fees but that they should be paid a certain fixed sum by the State and the public should receive their services free. They will have paid for them through the taxation that they would have paid for such services rendered to citizens automatically. The poor will be untaxed but the rich and the poor will have then the same amount of attention and skill. Today the best legal talents and the best medical advice are unobtainable by the poor.

Yours sincerely,

W. B. STARR, ESQ.
MANAGER
HIGHLAND SPRINGS FARM
CISCO, TEXAS (U.S.A.)

From a photostat: S.N. 14254

291. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

March 6, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. The resolutions seem to be good. I hope they will be followed up by action. I do not like the idea of having the membership open to those who may love khadi or work for it for pay even though they may not wear it.

With love,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1586

292. WAR AGAINST WAR

A correspondent writes:

My excuse for writing this is that the autobiographical chapter about your attitude towards war as a follower of truth and ahimsa has apparently stirred the thoughts of many, and abler people would be writing to you about it. But I wish to present some aspects that have struck me. Is it not a fundamental doctrine that to the true disciple of truth and ahimsa, there can be no tampering with bad things even though one cannot resist them? War is a necessary evil as some say, but that is no excuse for supporting it in the hope that after it there will come to the world a realization of the wickedness of waging war. It cannot be. On the contrary, the callousness of man is increased further in intensity and the feeling about the sacredness of life is destroyed. The anarchist could argue just as you do and say: "We cannot stop European aggression and terrorism. We cannot resist terrorism by mass force. But if we can only demonstrate to them the wickedness of such methods by using them against them, they will see the folly of their attitude and we shall become free, and we shall also save the world from terrorism. So long as *himsa* is resorted to by our rulers and so long as we hate terrorism, what is the harm in using these weapons provided we do not allow them to obsess us?" Has the Great War actually done any good to the nations and particularly to the victors? Materially, morally, and socially they have lost heavily as a result of the victory. Their moral standards have all been upset and the strife after the life of the moment, and the disregard for truth and honesty in international dealings is becoming more and more apparent every day. Can any good come out of a war, however 'righteous' it may be? Are we not bound to oppose it and invite suffering for the cause rather than in any way acquiesce in it either passively or actively? Do you not believe that the pacifists served the cause better than those who actively engaged in the War? What you say might represent the state of your mind in 1914 when you thought there was a sense of justice in the British mentality. Do you now feel that it was right? If another war was declared tomorrow, would you volunteer your help to England in the hope that you would be making things better after the war? I know I have not presented the case in the best way but you can understand what it is that I am trying to tell you, and I shall be glad to have your reply.

I agree with the correspondent that he has not presented his case 'in the best way', but he does represent a type of readers who will not read carefully even writings that are meant to be serious simply because they happen to be found in a weekly journal. If readers like

the correspondent will re-read the chapter in question they will be able to deduce from it that:

1. I did not offer my services because I believed in war. I offered them because I could not avoid participation in it at least indirectly.

2. I had no status to resist participation.

3. I do not believe that war can be avoided by taking part in it even as I do not believe that evil can be avoided by participation in it. This however needs to be distinguished from sincerely helpless participation in many things we hold to be evil or undesirable.

4. The anarchist's argument is irrelevant as his participation in terrorism is deliberate, voluntary and preconceived.

5. The War certainly did no good to the so-called victors.

6. The pacifist resisters who suffered imprisonment certainly served the cause of peace.

7. If another war was declared tomorrow I could not with my present views about the existing Government assist it in any shape or form; on the contrary, I should exert myself to the utmost to induce others to withhold their assistance and to do everything possible and consistent with ahimsa to bring about its defeat.

Young India, 8-3-1928

293. *PREM MAHAVIDYALAYA*

This creation of Raja Mahendra Pratap has a proud record and is one of the very few pre-non-co-operation institutions that were created and have lived without Government aid, recognition or affiliation. Like all such undertakings it has had to pass through many vicissitudes but has come out scatheless through them all. Recently it celebrated its anniversary. Dr. Ansari presided on the occasion. The report before me states that "the proceedings began with a *takli* demonstration and hoisting of the national flag by Dr. Ansari and singing of the flag-song by the volunteers of the Hindustani Seva Dal followed by *Vande Mataram*". The report then proceeds :¹

Principal Gidwani had every reason to anticipate my support for an institution for which he was able to claim so much. The reader

¹ The excerpt is not reproduced here.

may not know that Principal Gidwani is going to Karachi to join his new post under its Municipality. Sjt. Jugal Kishore's services have been loaned to the trustees by Acharya Kripalani's Ashram at Banaras. But it is understood that though Sjt. Jugal Kishore will act on behalf of Acharya Gidwani, the latter will continue to be interested in the Mahavidyalaya and guide its destinies in so far as it is possible.

Young India, 8-3-1928

294. NOTES

THE SUPREME ARBITER

In answer to the blind adherence one often sees given to everything written in Sanskrit verse and going under the name of Shastra, Sjt. S. D. Nadkarni sends me the following verses taken from sources universally regarded as authoritative and supporting the final authority of reason :

अपि पौरुषमादेयं शास्त्रं चेद्युक्तिबोधकम् ।
अन्यत्त्वार्षमपि त्याज्यं भाव्यं न्यायैकसेविनाम् ॥
युक्तियुक्तमुपादेयं वचनं बालकादपि ।
अन्यत्तृणामिव त्याज्यमप्युक्तं पद्मजन्मना ॥

‘A Shastra, though man-made, should be accepted, if it appeals to reason; and the contrary one rejected, though claiming to be inspired. We should be guided by our sense of the just alone. A saying sound in reason should be accepted, though it proceed from a child; and the contrary one rejected as a straw, though it purport to proceed from the God Brahma.’

—From *Yogavasishttha* (*Nyaya-prakaranam*)

समयश्चापि साधूनां प्रमाणं वेदवद् भवेत् ।

‘A convention adopted by the good shall be as good an authority as the Veda.’

—From the *Madhava-Smriti* (otherwise called the *Madhaviya Vyakhya*)

The verses show that the Shastras were never intended to supplant reason but to supplement it and never could be pleaded in defence of injustice or untruth.

FOR THOSE WHO WOULD SUCCEED

There is so much despondency on the one hand and bluster retarding success on the other, that I gladly reproduce the following maxims handed by a friend and intended to cheer the despondent and warn the blusteres. There is practically nothing impossible for those

who would persevere in the face of the heaviest odds. Nothing is possible for those who would brag, bluster and merely make a brave show. Here are the maxims:

Every noble work is at first impossible. —CARLYLE

Success in most things depends on knowing how long it takes to succeed.

—MONTESQUIEU

Victory belongs to most persevering.

—NAPOLEON

Perpetual pushing and assurance put a difficulty out of countenance, and make a seeming impossibility give way.

—JEREMY COLLIER

Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel.

The nerve that never relaxes, the eye that never blanches, the thought that never wanders, these are the masters of victory.

—BURKE

However discordant or troubled you have been during the day, do not go to sleep until you have restored your mental balance, until your faculties are poised and your mind serene.

—CARTWRIGHT

Young India, 8-3-1928

295. OBITUARIES¹

THE LATE LORD SINHA

To the many tributes that have been paid to the memory of this distinguished servant of India I respectfully tender my quota. Lord Sinha's contribution to the making of modern India will always rank high whenever the estimate of such contributions comes to be made. His advice in all matters of State was always sought and esteemed. The country is the poorer for Lord Sinha's death.

A GREAT REFORMER

Death has removed from the public life of Gujarat in Sir Ramanbhai Nilkanth a man of great purity of character, a reformer of equally great zeal and intrepidity, a public worker of singular constancy and a scholar who has made a permanent contribution to Gujarati literature. In common with the numberless Gujaratis I tender my respectful condolences to the bereaved family.

Young India, 8-3-1928

¹ Vide also "My Notes", 11-3-1928.

296. *BARDOLI AND GOVERNMENT*

The illuminating correspondence that has passed between Sjt. Vallabhbhai Patel and the Government of Bombay regarding the assessment in the Bardoli Taluk affords food for reflection to the public worker and reveals in its true light the nature of the Government under which we are living. Vallabhbhai is not unknown to fame or to the Government. They have been obliged to acknowledge his worth as a public worker of great capacity, integrity and industry. They have acknowledged his great work in the Municipality of Ahmedabad. Only the other day he received unstinted praise for his philanthropic services in connection with the floods in Gujarat.

But his work seems to have counted for nothing when they found him engaged in an activity calculated to cause them embarrassment and possibly loss of prestige and what is the same thing to them loss of land revenue. Their prestige they need for the sake of their revenue. They are no believers in empty prestige.

And so in their very first letter in the matter, they thought it becoming to insult Sjt. Vallabhbhai by calling in question his professions of goodwill and describing him as an outsider in Bardoli. The last letter emphasizes the insult by leaving no doubt that His Excellency the Governor too was party to it. Sjt. Vallabhbhai had courteously assumed in his letter that whilst His Excellency might be identified with a policy enunciated in Government communications, he need not be identified with the manner of expression, more especially the insulting language often adopted by civilian secretaries incensed over any the least resistance or independence betrayed by the public in their correspondence with them. That the Governor has chosen to become a party to the unwarranted insult shows how difficult it is for Governors, however well-intentioned and impartial they may be reputed to be as the present Governor is, to escape the bureaucratic coil. 'Pride goeth before destruction and haughtiness before a fall.'

But Vallabhbhai has a back broad enough to bear the wordy insults that the bureaucracy may choose to heap upon him from its safe and entrenched heights. My reason for dwelling on the insult is to draw attention to the utterly irresponsible nature of the Government that dares to insult a public worker of the foremost rank.

But let us see for the moment what it is that has upset the Government. Land revenue is a close preserve beyond the pale of law such as it is. The regulation of assessment rests entirely with the executive authority. Every attempt hitherto made to bring it under

popular or judicial control has failed The Government must somehow or other meet the ever-growing expenditure, bulk of which is military. Land revenue lends itself to arbitrary increase as it affects the largest class and a class that has no voice, a class that can be squeezed without wincing. There would be an end to irresponsible government if the governed are either allowed to have a say in their taxation or to resist it successfully. Bardoli does not appreciate the increase made in its assessment. Its people approached the Government with petitions and exhausted all the means that are regarded as constitutional to secure redress. Having failed they invited Vallabhbhai to advise them and if necessary to lead them in resisting the Government through satyagraha.

Vallabhbhai investigated their case and though he found it to be just, sought to approach the Government with a view to save them embarrassment and spare the people prolonged suffering and suggested an honourable course, i.e., suggested that if the Government did not admit the justice of the people's case, they should appoint an *impartial* tribunal to investigate the case on either side and assured the Government that the people would abide by the decision of such a tribunal. This reasonable suggestion the Government has scornfully rejected.

The public, therefore, are not called upon to accept the popular version as against that of the Government. They are asked merely to support the demand for the appointment of an *impartial* tribunal and failing such appointment to support their heroic resolve peacefully to resist the assessment and suffer all the consequences of such resistance even including confiscation of their land.

Sjt. Vallabhbhai has rightly distinguished the proposed satyagraha from the swaraj satyagraha. This campaign cannot be properly deemed to be a no-tax campaign launched for the attainment of swaraj as Bardoli would have done in 1922. This satyagraha is limited in scope, has a specific local object. Every man has the right, nay, it is his duty to resist an arbitrary unjust levy as the Bardoli assessment is claimed to be by its ryots. But though the object of the proposed satyagraha is local and specific, it has an all-India application. what is true of Bardoli is true of many parts of India. The struggle has also an indirect bearing on swaraj Whatever awakens people to a sense of their wrongs and whatever gives them strength for disciplined and peaceful resistance and habituates them for corporate suffering brings us nearer swaraj.

Young India, 8-3-1928

297. *LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 8, 1928

MY DEAR MURIEL,

This will be presented to you by Mr. Rajendra Prasad, one of the best among my co-workers. You will show him all your activities and know all about me and the Ashram from him.

With love,

Yours,
BAPU

MISS MURIEL LESTER

From a photostat: G.N. 6566

298. *LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Mr. Rajendra Prasad is one of the best among my co-workers. He is going to London to fulfill an old engagement.¹ He cannot return to India without paying his respects to you.

Sincerely yours,
M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi : Correspondence, p. 102

¹ Rajendra Prasad was to go to London to assist in the appeal filed in the Privy Council by the Maharaja of Dumraon; *vide* "Europe-Goers Beware", August 30, 1928.

299. *LETTER TO SIR DANIEL M. HAMILTON*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 9, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Our common friend Rev. Mr. Hodge tells me that you were complaining of absence of acknowledgment from me of the handwoven scarf you have kindly sent me as also your two papers on the banking system. I have a vivid recollection that when I was convalescing in Bangalore last year I sent you a brief note of thanks. Evidently that letter has miscarried.¹ Please therefore regard this as a token of my thanks for your kind gift and for the very interesting papers which you sent me.

Your description of the Scotch banking system was very instructive for me. I have now received a copy of your evidence before the Statutory Commission. I know that I shall read that with interest.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DANIEL M. HAMILTON
THE WARREN HILL
LOUGHTON, ESSEX
ENGLAND

From a microfilm: S.N. 12907

¹ However, *vide* "Letter to J. Z. Hodge", July 13, 1927.

300. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 9, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I got your loving letter. Doctors will certainly advise me to go for a change of air, but I am sure I have told you what I am greedy about. As I have explained, I wish to take a change and also do my work at the same time, and I have been writing to friends with that end in view. Ordinarily, I would certainly love to be your guest. I shall keep your invitation in mind if I go to Sinhghadh for a change. I am keeping well.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4811. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

301. LETTER TO REVASHANKER JHAVERI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 9, 1928

RESPECTED REVASHANKERBHAI,

I had asked Mahadev to write to you but I am afraid that he forgot to mention one thing in the letter. Mahadev is not here so that I can ask him. I wanted him to write about Dr. Ansari. There is no doubt that Dr. Ansari is a very intelligent man, but he has no special knowledge of this subject. He has a high opinion of a Swiss doctor's remedy, which consists in serum drawn from many horses. That doctor charges £1,000 for one tube, but the serum does not necessarily benefit everyone. Nor do all doctors in Europe accept this man's treatment as scientific. I don't think we need go in for it. We should put Dhiru in the hands of a good doctor and then rest content.

I have now started taking milk. I keep good health.

Respectful greetings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1278

302. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. They only confirm the fears that were raised in me on reading the sensational reports about boycott and I feel sorry that Dr. Ray signed the manifesto which he knew was perfectly useless.

I do not like the proposal contained in your article. I think we must not be mixed up with the use of foreign yarn under any circumstances whatsoever. We must leave it to regulate itself or to those who have not a living faith in khadi. If we mix ourselves up with the use of foreign yarn, you will see that we shall have surrendered our position. I want you to consider this well and confine your assistance and activity to the supply of khadi if they want it. Our own mills may come in if they wish to and if they will develop the national spirit. But even there, our institution will have to be most cautious.

I am glad that Hemprabhadevi, Nikhil and Tarini have gone to Giridih. I received a very despondent letter from Hemprabhadevi. She was herself reported to be unwell. Please let me know all about her condition.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1587

303. *LETTER TO IDA S. SCUDDER*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am thankful to you for remembering Mrs. Gandhi and me in connection with the opening ceremony of your building. You will be interested to learn that there is no hospital and no institution where there is a ward endowed in my name. If there was, it would be a fraud. For, how can a ward be endowed in my name when I have not one

farthing to pay for it. If I can induce friends to endow wards of beds, the endowment should be in their names. But I can think of none of whom I can speak about endowing a hospital ward. All influence is exhausted in asking them to endow spinning-wheels and institutions for the so-called un-touchables or for a member of the dumb creation, the cow.

Yours sincerely,

MISS IDA S. SCUDDER

VELLORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13093

304. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 10, 1928

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND,

I have your letter. As a man may not look a gift horse in the mouth, I must accept your terms and waive the interest¹ to which the Ashram is legitimately entitled. Be sure that Sjt. Kothari is not as lenient as I am and, unless you pay your debt to him in time, he is likely to charge a proper bania interest and I shouldn't wonder if he insists upon compound interest.

About Lala Suraj Bhanu, I see that the Managing Board here are disinclined to let him come with his wife. A letter is being posted to him with reasons for their decision. And, if it is true that he desires to go on a cycling tour after a time, the Ashram is hardly the institution where he should recuperate for such a tour. It is designed for those who choose some humble occupation contributing to national uplift and go on with it with dogged pertinacity irrespective of results.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13094

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Dunichand", 29-2-1928.

305. *LETTER TO BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

MY DEAR BHUPEN,

I have your letter. I think the best course is for you to refund the loan and then put in an application for a grant and let the grant be considered on its merits. I would personally feel inclined to favour the grant, but I have undertaken not to influence the Council unless it refers matters to me.

I hope you are keeping good health

Yours sincerely,

SJT. BHUPENDRA NARAYAN SEN
E-76 COLLEGE STREET MARKET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13100

306. *LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR DR. ROY,

What is this bill¹ and where should I pay it from if I am expected to do so? For I am myself living on public charity. I may not use Ashram funds for a private purpose. It is no [small] indulgence that I give myself the benefit of expert assistance and advice which I cannot place equally easily at the disposal of every inmate of the Ashram. But for me to pay Rs. 46 or anything at all for analysis of my blood or any other constituents of the body would be the last straw. If, therefore, this bill has got to be paid, the payment has to come out of your generous pocket.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN ROY
36 WELLINGTON STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13102

¹ *Vide* the following item.

307. LETTER TO A. S. MANNADI NAYAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have forwarded it to Dr. Roy with a letter¹ copy of which I enclose herewith. You will appreciate the moral difficulty that faces me. Though I have claimed to be the richest person perhaps in the world, you will realize at the same time the depths of my poverty. I quite recognize that between Dr. Roy and myself you should not be made to suffer. But if you cannot get relief from him or from Captain Basu, you will treat this incident as a lesson never to have anything to do with Mahatmas or those who use their names. Mahatmas are the most slippery customers treading on this overburdened earth.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. S. MANNADI NAYAR
PROFESSOR OF BIOCHEMISTRY
MADRAS MEDICAL COLLEGE
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13101

308. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have again to acknowledge with thanks a further contribution of 10 dollars for the relief fund. All these amounts have been passed on to the Secretary of the Relief Fund Committee. But I hope that you have adopted some means of conveying to the donors my sincere thanks for their generosity.

About the general situation here, I would warn you against going by newspaper reports. Whilst there is the bitterest resentment

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

over the Commission camouflage, we are not yet organized enough to offer effective non-violent resistance though I have faith enough that that resistance is inevitable and is coming some day not very far [off].

Yours sincerely,

REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES
12 PARK AVENUE AND 34TH STREET
NEW YORK CITY

From a photostat: S.N. 15181

309. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 10, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

So this time I did get a letter from you. I hope all of you are keeping well. Chi. Kumi is arriving tomorrow. Tulsidas is going to Bombay. Chi. Devdas has gone to Delhi. I am keeping well. Give up the habit of beating children and getting angry with them. You can take a lot of work from them by amusing them. Food habits should be regular.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9708

310. MY NOTES

THE LATE SIR RAMANBHAI

Sir Ramanbhai has passed away leaving Gujarat in tears. Ramanbhai embodies the history of modernism in Gujarat. Ramanbhai stands for social reform. Ramanbhai was the friend of the poor. He was the warp and woof of the civic life of Ahmedabad. His service to the Gujarati language was of a very high standard. His high moral code never failed to leave an impression on whosoever came into contact with him. Ramanbhai's humour permeates his works. He did not however look upon life as something of a jest. He found the fulfilment of his life in devoting it to the performance of duty. Ramanbhai would indeed help any good cause. In matters of national welfare he always contributed his full share.

He never hesitated or spared himself in anything that he regarded as service. In spite of his serious illness and in spite of severe differences in political matters he recognized the value of Vallabhbbhai's service to the municipality and he unfailingly co-operated with him to the utmost whenever occasion arose. There could hardly be a public institution in Ahmedabad which did not wish to have Ramanbhai's name associated with it.

The loss of such a jewel of Gujarat will not be felt by his family members alone; the whole of Gujarat shares this grief of separation.

Nowadays, it has become customary to underestimate the quiet, unostentatious service of persons who do not take part in politics, especially in active politics. In my humble opinion this is a mistake though time will certainly rectify it. He who wipes the tears of even a single widow, who saves a single young girl from the immolation miscalled marriage, who renders selfless service to a single *Antyaja*, serves the country and society in a pure manner, and it is likely that, when the fight put up by a valiant political warrior is forgotten, this other service done in some obscure corner will still keep bearing fruit. That service which is accompanied not by ovations but by God's blessings is indeed true service. Such was the service rendered by Ramanbhai. He received his share of ovations too, but why describe what Ramanbhai never cared for! He was a brave warrior. Who has not seen him stick to his views as well as his own place amidst the whistling and shouting of young men? Let us pray that we inherit his virtues.

LORD SINHA

India has suffered a great loss in the death of Lord Sinha. He was a pillar of India. He had reached the highest office on the strength of his intellect. Although it is true that that office has little value in this age of non-co-operation, the abilities that were required in order to reach it have much value. Lord Sinha did not go out of his way to seek office. It could be said on the contrary that offices came seeking him. However, I do not wish to discuss here the various offices that he held at different times. The reader must have come to know of these from other newspapers. I wish to give a short account of my acquaintance with him.

I saw him for the first time at the Congress in 1915. This was my second experience of the Congress. At this session, I came to know only of his intellectual powers. Everyone appreciated his erudite

speech. His criticism of the Empire carried weight. Everyone on the Congress Working Committee admired the way in which he transacted business.

We cannot all emulate his intellectual powers. There was however one quality of his, of which I came to know at a reception in his honour, which we could all imitate, and that is his humility.

I came to know more of this quality at the time of Desh-bandhu Das Memorial Fund. All of us felt that the association of his name with the raising of this Fund would indeed be welcome. Persons belonging to all parties felt that, if his name was associated with it, it would facilitate the raising of the Fund and that this would make people from all parties readily associate themselves with it. I was among those who approached him. He was in indifferent health at that time; but he would meet people whenever necessary. He willingly agreed to the inclusion of his name and also agreed to give all possible help. On these occasions, I became well aware of his humility, his courtesy and his greatness and I felt that India would add to her prestige if all our elder statesmen possessed these qualities. I noticed that he did not crave for respect but was always eager to show respect to others. Those who do not crave for respect deserve it; privileges cling to those who try to shake them off. Lord Sinha happened to be in this happy situation. May all of us inherit that humility and that courtesy.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-3-1928

311. WHO WILL ACCEPT THE ANTIAJAS' HUNDI?

This *hundi*¹ should have been put out earlier. But as the saying goes the affairs of the sick are managed in a sickly manner and its publication was delayed. It is therefore expected that those who are prepared to accept it would send in their contributions, along with the interest, to Bhai Mulchand Parekh. Not all Hindus like to serve the *Antyajas*. Hence I hope that those who regard untouchability as a disease of the Hindu faith will remember that they have a twofold duty to help this cause.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 11-3-1928

¹ An informal bill of exchange or a cheque. Here Gandhiji uses the word to describe his appeal for funds.

312. LETTER TO JANE HOWARD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 12, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I was delighted to receive your long letter. I endorse every word of what you say about Mrs. Gandhi and the wretched incident I have related in the autobiographical chapters.¹ Of course you have not imagined that I am in any way proud of recalling the brutality or that I am today capable of any such brutality. But I thought that if people recognize me as a gentle peace-loving man, they should also know that at one time I could be a positive beast even though at the same time I claimed to be a loving husband. It was not without good cause that a friend once described me as a combination of sacred cow and ferocious tiger.

It would have been a pity if you had burnt your beautiful letter as at one time you thought you should. You have certainly not appeared to me to be rude or ill-mannered but most natural and on that account lovable. I do indeed wish that I had come in closer contact with your dear brother, but I knew him enough to love him and to appreciate his sterling worth.

Yours sincerely,

MISS JANE HOWARD

‘ROSEMARY’

50 PANDORA ROAD

MALVERN

JOHANNESBURG

(TRANSVAAL, S. AFRICA)

From a photostat: S.N. 11967

¹ *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. X.

313. LETTER TO B. W. TUCKER

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 12, 1928

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I like the manner in which you are combating my views. I discovered the difference between us even in Orissa. For me, there is no difference between the individual and the social position. At the same time there is ample room for the compromise of the nature suggested by you, for the simple reason that I ever compromise my own ideals even in individual conduct not because I wish to but because the compromise was inevitable. And so in social and political matters I have never exacted complete fulfilment of the ideal in which I have believed. But there are always times when one has to say thus far and no further, and, each time the dividing line has to be determined on merits. Generally speaking where the sum total of a movement has been evil, I have held non-co-operation to be the only remedy and where the sum total has been for the good of humanity, I have held co-operation on the basis of compromise to be the most desirable thing. If I seem to be holding myself aloof from some of the political movements just now, it is because I believe their tendency to be not for the promotion of swaraj but rather its retarding. It may be that I have erred in my judgment. If so, it is but human and I have never claimed to be infallible. You will see this point somewhat developed in a recent autobiographical chapter dealing with my participation in the late War.¹ Tell me now if I have answered your question, even if I have not solved the puzzle.

Andrews is here and will be for a few days longer. How nice it would be if you could come and pass a few days of quiet with me so that we could discuss the important problems you have been raising in your letters. This is however not to say that you may not discuss them through correspondence. Please do, so long as it is necessary.

Yours sincerely,

B. W. TUCKER
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13104

¹ *Vide An Autobiography*, Pt. IV, Ch. XXXVIII.

314. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 12, 1928

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

With reference to a letter by the Secretary to the Association dated 1st March, I want to say that in spite of all the difficulties in our way we must aim at getting a complete list of the spinners who bring their yarn to the common bazaar. I hold it to be absolutely necessary for the movement itself. If we are to really serve these spinners, we must establish direct contact with them. It may take a little time but our work is incomplete till we know our spinners and know them in their own homes and see how they work, where they get their cotton, how they pass their time otherwise and so on and so forth. If we would consider this to be a necessary part of our work there will be no question of sparing or not sparing workers, just as there will be no question as to the keeping of our accounts or knowing the quality and the quantity of yarn we receive. I have no time to say more to you. I speak to you on other matters through Krishnadas. I hope there is no trouble about the seat of operation now.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13105

315. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 12, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have received all your letters.

You must be well be now. Even if you are not I wish you to be healthy. God has ordained that our mind must be “un- troubled by sorrows and long not for joys”.¹ It is on such occasions that we have to use our learning; that is its true purpose. You should give up thinking constantly of Anil. His body was composed of the five elements, and in them it has merged. The soul is immortal. Then why

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 56

worry? Let us say with Mirabai: "Let what must happen happen." It is Rama's will that is done, in this belief we must rest content. Keep reading carefully in Tulsidas's work on the power and glory of Ramanama. May Ramanama sustain us in life and may we have it on our lips when we die. Let this be your constant prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: G.N. 1655

316. LETTER TO TREASURER, AJMAL JAMIA FUND

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 13, 1928

THE HON. TREASURER
AJMAL JAMIA FUND
395/97 KALBADEVI ROAD
BOMBAY
DEAR SIR,

RE: Ajmal Jamia Fund

Your letter dated 10th inst.

I am sorry to say that you have not replied to my letter of the 3rd instant. Mr. Zakir Husain, Jamia Millia, Delhi, has under instructions from Seth Jamnalalji been sending to us copies of lists sent to you of donations received by him for the above Fund and deposited by him in the Central Bank of India, Delhi. We have published his first list on 8th March in *Young India*. He has sent us another one for Rs. 1,492-13-0 which we are publishing in the forthcoming issue of *Young India*. We have added to the list the names you have sent to us on 3rd as also on 10th instant. We would request you to compare the lists up to now published in *Young India* with your account books and let us know if there are any discrepancies so that we may correct the same in the next issue. You will please advise us also as to whether we could publish the lists that are being sent by Mr. Zakir Husain from time to time. Or if not, would you kindly [send them so as to] reach us not later than Monday every week?

I wonder how you were able to get Rs. 1,559-0-0 as per the list

sent by you on 3rd March when you have taken Rs. 1,254-0-0, the amount previously acknowledged in *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 14911

317. WHAT CAN OUR MILLS DO?

Everybody is anxious that at this critical juncture in our history, we should be able to exhibit some real strength. It is being more and more realized that such strength can be developed and shown only through boycott of foreign cloth as distinguished from British cloth. In this boycott it is possible for our mills to play an important, indeed a decisive, part if they wish.

Some day or other they will have to choose between this alien Government and the people. There is no doubt that to a large extent they are dependent for their existence upon the toleration if not the goodwill of the Government. Thoreau told the truth when he said that possession of riches under an evil government was a sin and poverty was virtue. The riches of the rich are always at the disposal of the government of the day whether it is good or bad.

But if the mills are dependent for their existence on the toleration or goodwill of the Government, they are no less so on the toleration or goodwill of the people. They can afford to ignore the people only so long as the latter remain ignorant, supine or disunited. But the past seven years have not been lived in vain by the nation. The mass awakening that has taken place will never die. No one can tell when and how the people will show their strength.

But the mills occupy a privileged position. By showing a little courage, a little consideration for the true interests of the nation and by exercising a little self-sacrifice they can serve both the Government and the people. They can convert the government and advance the people's cause.

This is now in my humble opinion they can do it:

They can standardize their prices taking the lowest average of a number of top and lean years.

They can come to terms with the leaders organizing boycott as to the quantity and quality of cloth required for the nation.

They can refrain from manufacturing those varieties that can be easily and immediately produced by khadi organizations, thus freeing

their energy for manufacturing more of the varieties they can at the present moment more easily manufacture than the khadi organizations.

They can limit their profits to a minimum and let the surplus, if any, be devoted to the fulfilment of the boycott or, if that be unnecessary, to the improvement of the condition of the labourers.

This would mean all-round honesty, perseverance, mutual trust, a voluntary and honourable triple alliance between labour, capital and the consumer. It would mean capacity for organization on a vast scale. And if we are to attain boycott of foreign cloth through non-violence, we shall have some day or other to fulfil the tests just enumerated by me.

In my humble opinion we are eminently fitted for the task. The organization required for the purpose is not unfamiliar to us. The only question is, have we the will? Have the mill-owners enough vision, enough love of the country? If they have, they can take the lead.

Let me redeclare my own faith. For boycott to be swiftly brought about a combination between khadi and truly indigenous mills is desirable, but not absolutely necessary. I use the words truly indigenous, because we have bogus mills in India which are Indian only in the sense that they are located in the country but whose shareholders, whose management, whose spirit are mainly, when not wholly, foreign. But if the indigenous mills cannot or will not lead or join national movement, I am convinced that khadi alone can achieve the boycott if the politically-minded India has the will, the faith and the energy required for the purpose. We have not enough horsepower expressed through steam engines, oil engines or electricity, but we have an inexhaustible reservoir of manpower lying idle and pleading to be used, and essentially qualified for the purpose. Oh, for a faith that would see and use this supply of living power!

Young India, 15-3-28

318. HOW TO DO IT?

Notice has already been taken in these pages of the West Khandesh Zilla Mandal of which Sjt. Shankarrao Dev is the founder president and guardian angel. This Mandal has village reconstruction as its principal activity, and has become convinced that spinning must be the centre of every activity connected with reconstruction, if it is to prosper and respond to the deep poverty of the masses. All its work is

as thorough as it can be made. Sjt. S. V. Thakkar has been training himself for some time before settling down in a village for reconstruction service. He has been travelling together with Sjt. Balubhai Mehta in those centres where such activity is going on. The brief report he has presented to the president of his Mandal is worth reading. I therefore reproduce the main part of it for the guidance of those who do this work:¹

Young India, 15-3-1928

319. NOTES

A.I.S.A. MEMBERSHIP

The foregoing summaries² tell their own tale. There is a drop from the figures of 1927 in all the three classes. The reason is that there has been little or no canvassing for membership because the policy of the Association rightly has been not to incur any expenses over sacrificial spinning. It loses all merit when it requires to be canvassed and stimulated through paid agency. But the membership can be easily doubled if every member were to undertake to find one new member. It is worthy of note that whilst the membership has decreased, there has been a marked increase in the production and sale of khadi as well as in the number of spinners who spin for hire.

For the information of juveniles, I reproduce below the resolution of the Council of the Association. National schools can do a great deal for increasing the number of juvenile members:

Resolved that a B class of juvenile members of the Association be created, consisting of persons below 18 years of age who habitually wear khadi and contribute to the Association an annual subscription of 2,000 yards of self-spun yarn well-twisted and uniform.

INSTRUCTIVE FIGURES

I have been always repeating at public meetings that 50,000 spinners were being served by the All-India Spinners' Association in 1,500 villages. This statement was based on the figures compiled by the All-India Spinners' Association on the basis of yarn production and was made in 1927. Since then more than a year has passed. An attempt was made to arrive at the total number from direct evidence,

¹ The report is not reproduced here.

² Not reproduced here

i.e., by taking a census of spinners and incidentally of weavers and carders supported by the All-India Spinners' Association. The table¹ appended to this note gives those figures. It will be seen that all the provinces have not made their returns to have all the organizations in the provinces that have sent their figures been able to comply with the requirements of the All-India Spinners' Association. The figures given below are therefore in every way an underestimate and yet they are a decided advance upon 50,000 spinners and 1,500 villages. But this is merely a foretaste of the possibilities of a movement which awaits the tangible support of an enlightened public opinion. There is an illimitable scope for production of khadi if demand can only be guaranteed.

Young India, 15-3-1928

320. *STILL AT IT*

The autobiographical chapter dealing with my participation in the late War continues to puzzle friends and critics. Here is one more letter:²

No doubt it was a mixed motive that prompted me to participate in the War. Two things I can recall. Though as an individual I was opposed to war, I had no status for offering effective non-violent resistance. Non-violent resistance can only follow some real disinterested service, some heart-expression of love. For instance, I would have no status to resist a savage offering animal sacrifice until he could recognize in me his friend through some loving act of mine or other means. I do not sit in judgment upon the world for its many misdeeds. Being imperfect myself and needing toleration and charity, I tolerate the world's imperfections till I find or create an opportunity for fruitful expostulation. I felt that if by sufficient service I could attain the power and the confidence to resist the Empire's wars and its warlike preparations, it would be a good thing for me who was seeking to enforce non-violence in my own life to test the extent to which it was possible among the masses.

¹ Not reproduced here

² Not reproduced here. Referring to Chapters XXXVIII and XXXIX of Part IV of the Autobiography the correspondent had asked: "What impelled you to participate in the War? Was it right to join the War with the hope of gaining something? I do not know how to reconcile this with the teaching of the *Gita* which says that we should never act with a view to the fruits of action."

The other motive was to qualify for swaraj through the good offices of the statesmen of the Empire. I could not thus qualify myself except through serving the Empire in its life-and-death struggle. It must be understood that I am writing of my mentality in 1914 when I was a believer in the Empire and its willing ability to help India in her battle for freedom. Had I been the non-violent rebel that I am today, I should certainly not have helped but through every effort open to non-violence I should have attempted to defeat its purpose.

My opposition to and disbelief in war was as strong then as it is today. But we have to recognize that there are many things in the world which we do although we may be against doing them. I am as much opposed to taking the life of the lowest creature alive as I am to war. But I continually take such life hoping some day to attain the ability to do without this fratricide. To entitle me in spite of it to be called a votary of non-violence, my attempt must be honest, strenuous and unceasing. The conception of *moksha*, absolution from the need to have an embodied existence, is based upon the necessity of perfected men and women being completely non-violent. Possession of a body like every other possession necessitates some violence, be it ever so little. The fact is that the path of duty is not always easy to discern amidst claims seeming to conflict one with the other.

Lastly, the verse referred to from the *Gita* has a double meaning. One is that there should be no selfish purpose behind our actions. That of gaining swaraj is not a selfish purpose. Secondly, to be detached from fruits of actions is not to be ignorant of them, or to disregard or disown them. To be detached is never to abandon action because the contemplated result may not follow. On the contrary, it is proof of immovable faith in the certainty of the contemplated result following in due course.

Young India, 15-3-1928

321. LETTER TO NILRATAN SIRCAR

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

DEAR SRI NILRATAN SIRCAR,

I have established in connection with the Ashram a little tannery where I am not making use of power-driven machinery. The idea is to have a model tannery to serve the village population. Can you or anyone in your big undertaking help me with literature on tanning to be of use for the little enterprise commenced at the Ashram and give me any hints for my guidance?

May I ask you to share this letter with Mr. Das of the Research Tannery if you have not proposed it yourself and procure for me similar assistance from him?

We are all at the Ashram without any knowledge of conducting tanneries, and what I want to do is to learn from the beginning, i.e., how to skin dead cattle and treat hide from the very commencement as it comes out of the carcass.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 11394

322. LETTER TO MADHUSUDAN DAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

After a great deal of thought and bother I have established at the Ashram a little bit of a tannery without any power-driven machinery and without skilled assistance save that of a man who has received a rough-and-tumble experience of tanning in America and who is a crank like myself. Though I did not succeed in sharing your troubles and taking the load off your shoulders in connection with your own great national enterprise, your inspiration is partly responsible for the establishment of this little tannery at the Ashram. Can you please help me with a list of literature on the subject, a handbook on tanning and the like? If you think that there is nothing like it in English, will you

out of your own wide and varied experience write out something that may be of use for propaganda, just a few hints? What is happening at the Tannery? Who is in charge? I may add that my idea is to make the Ashram Tannery a model for villages so that the villagers may be able to treat their own dead cattle and make use of the hide themselves. I have asked many people without success as to how I can skin dead cattle. Everybody knowing anything of tanning has something to say about hides after they are received from the village tanner; but nobody has yet told me if I take charge of a dead animal I can skin the carcass economically and hygienically and make use of other contents such as bones, intestine, etc., for purposes of manure.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. MADHUSUDAN DAS
MISSION ROAD
CUTTACK

From a photostat: S.N. 11395

323. LETTER TO A. T. GIDWANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

MY DEAR GIDWANI,

I see you are already in harness. Brij Krishna, who was here when I received your letter, has promised to send you name and address of a good man after he reaches Delhi. He went today and expects to be in Delhi in two days' time.

You must get Gangabehn now to write to me. I hope you will all keep much better health than you did at Brindaban.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. T. GIDWANI
6 QUEENS ROAD
KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13107

324. *LETTER TO V. S. BHASKARAN*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

MY DEAR BHASKARAN,

I have your letter. I am glad the matter is now settled and that you are not to suffer any appreciable pecuniary loss.

I hope you will get a satisfactory letter from Rajaji.

What are you doing now?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13108

325. *LETTER TO SHANKER*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 16, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKER,

I have your letter. I have, so far as letters are concerned, neglected you entirely; but you have never been out of my mind especially because I am myself taking an active part in the conduct of the kitchen and I give early in the morning about an hour shredding vegetables which is my contribution to the joint work. Giriraj was feeling weak and overworked. He has therefore gone to the model village which is being constructed these days and Pyarelal has taken his charge for the time being.

I am keeping well. I am sorry to say that I was obliged to revert to the milk diet though there is hope of my being able to return to fruits and nuts.

The massage that you saw me take is still being taken. The Swedish lady's massage is in addition. It is a very simple thing.

Tell Mathuradas that I get no time to write.

From a photostat: S.N. 13109

326. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
March 17, 1928

PANDIT MOTILAL NEHRU
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
DELHI

THANKS WIRE. PLEASE MAKE CLEAR THAT IF I GO EUROPE
I GO NOT FOR HEALTH BUT RESPONSE INVITATIONS
AND PRINCIPALLY MEET ROLLAND. LIKELY RECEIVE
MORE INVITATIONS WHICH I MAY ACCEPT. THERE
SHOULD BE NO RESTRICTIONS AS TO PLACE OR
OTHERWISE. THERE ARE LIKELY TO BE THREE COM-
PANIONS .

GANDHI

From the origin al: Motila l Nehru Papers . Courte sy: Nehru Memori al
Museum and Librar y

327. LETTER TO VIOLET

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 17, 1928

MY DEAR VIOLET,

I have your long and interesting letter. I honour your opinion but I cannot agree with you. It surprises me however to find that you do not see any distinction between a private person committing a private wrong and a public person or a corporation committing a public wrong. How can people gag individual conduct in the manner you suggest? That is a matter of social reform and therefore of individuals living correct lives and [not] letting them, i.e., lives, afflict and inflict their surroundings.

Yours sincerely,

[SHRIMATI VIOLET
C/O] MRS. LILY MUTHUKRISHNA
445 HAMDEN LANE
WELLAWATTE
COLOMBO
CEYLON

From a photostat: S.N. 13110

328. *LETTER TO N. D. BHOSLE*¹

SABARMATI,
March 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have now heard from Mr. Jayakar and I see from it that Sir Purushottamdas is no longer the president. This, however, is the opinion he forwards to me :

He is however of opinion that the scheme is a useful one. He suggests one caution to you that any help that you may be inclined to give, if it is to take the form of a collection of funds, should be conditioned that its control in the way of investment or disbursement should be in the hands of a few men of your own choice whose veracity and judgment could be implicitly trusted. He assures that the scheme has a strong potentiality of being useful to the community, and deserves your support. The funds at present in the hands of the office-bearers are only a few hundred rupees, and unless they are supplemented it will be difficult for the institution to commence its work.

It therefore resolves itself into what I have suggested all along the line that there should be a proper trust-deed. I can now only suggest that you should see Seth Jamnalalji when he comes to Bombay which he will do in two or three days. I am giving him all the papers and if he is satisfied about the trust, I shall be in a position to do something.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 422. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ This was written in connection with the addressee's plan for a hostel for the depressed-class students at Bombay. Later a copy of this letter was sent as an enclosure to "Letter to Baban Gokhalay", 22-12-1928

329. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[March 17, 1928]¹

NEWSPAPER REPORTS ABSOLUTELY INCORRECT. I AM QUITE
WELL.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 91

330. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

[March 17, 1928]²

I got your wire just now. This time the newspaper reporters have perpetrated a crime. They should be prosecuted for that. But what can we do, since we are non-co-operators? I am quite all right.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 91

331. THE WEAPON OF BOYCOTT

It has been reported that the satyagrahis of Bardoli are getting ready to use the weapon of boycott against those who agree to pay the revenue to the Government. This weapon is a powerful one and the satyagrahi can use it only within limits. Boycott can be violent as well as non-violent. It is only the latter kind that a satyagrahi may use. At the moment I will only give examples of the two forms of boycott.

Non-violent boycott may mean not accepting any service. Refusal to serve may involve violence.

Non-violent boycott may include a refusal to dine at the house of the person boycotted, refusal to attend marriages and such other functions at his place, doing no business with him and, taking no help from him.

On the other hand, refusing to nurse the boycotted person if he is sick, Lot allowing doctors to visit him, refusing to help in performing the last rites if he happens to die, refusing to allow him to make use of wells, temples, etc., all this is violent boycott. Deeper

¹ From the source

² *ibid*

reflection will reveal that non-violent boycott can be continued for a long period and no external force can prove effectual in terminating it, whereas violent boycott cannot continue for long and external force can be used in a large measure to put an end to it. Ultimately violent boycott only does disservice to a movement. Many such instances can be quoted from the era of non-co-operation. However, on this occasion, the distinction that I have pointed out should be enough for the satyagrahis and the workers of Bardoli.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 18-3-1928

332. TELEGRAM TO N. R. MALKANI

SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

MALKANI FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE

HYDERABAD SIND

YOU SHOULD RESIGN.¹

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 883

333. LETTER TO JAL KHAMBHATTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

CHI. JAL,

I am sorry to hear that you are not well. Have faith that not a leaf falls without God's will, and so, trusting to Him, meditate on Him and have patience. If it is His will, you will be all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5013. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

¹ Vide "Letter to N. R. Malkani", 20-3-1928.

334. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I got your letter only today. You certainly have my blessings for your son. I see no reason why you should feel nervous and run to Europe. We must have trust in God. If some good doctor there is prepared to take the risk, I see no harm in getting the operation performed locally. Have you consulted junior Deshmukh? Tell Chi. Jal to be brave. Write to me again and let me know the developments. How is your health now?

If no doctor there is prepared to take the risk and if you do not feel at peace, certainly go to Europe. Do not treat my letter as a prohibitory order. I only wish to explain to you that we must do nothing in haste and, realizing that this body is perishable, should not be excessively attached to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 5012. Courtesy: Tehmina Khambhatta

335. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

March 19, 1928

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Of course you come whenever you can and stay as long as you will.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9607

336. *LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*

ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 19, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter. You are out of court about your dietetics for your hopeless protest, namely, your spinning yarns about almonds and poor groundnuts, the food of the Himalayan race. Take notice that the experiment is only suspended to enable me to return to it, unhampered by the weight of so-called medical opinion. I lived on raw groundnuts for at least 6 years without coming to grief of the sort referred to by you. But of this later.

What about Europe? My anxiety is to meet Rolland. He appears to be the wisest man of Europe. He takes an unusual interest in me and feels grieved if he thinks that in any single thing my opinion is wrong. It seems to me that it would be a tragedy if we do not meet. This is the cause that moves me above all else. The rest is thrown in.

I do not know what Andrews has written to you. But your opinion will have with me as much weight as Andrews's. Therefore say without fear what you will have me do.

Many are grieved that I did not die on the 17th. . . . Perhaps I am one among them. Perhaps I did die a kind of death. We shall see.

From a photostat: S.N. 13111

337. *LETTER TO M. R. MADHAVA WARRIER*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is difficult to guide you from this distance. But I suggest your going as slow as possible but steadily. If you will launch out on an ambitious scheme, you will find that it would prove to be embarrassing in the long run.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. R. MADHAVA WARRIER, B.A., LL.B.

PRESIDENT, MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

QUILON

TRAVANCORE

From a photostat: S.N. 13115

338. *LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 20, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. You must have had my telegram.¹ I couldn't possibly reconcile myself to the idea of your remaining in the College simply for the sake of being able to draw upon it for your maintenance. I see no harm in Flood Relief Fund supporting you. I am in correspondence with Thakkar Bapa about it and if it can be done without in any shape or form compromising your present position, it should be done. Whether you receive the money through me or the Flood Relief Committee, it would be from a public fund. We must get rid of there being shame in honorary services being paid in the sense in which we use the word 'honorary'. The labourer is worthy of his hire, and, all service is honorary when the servant takes no more than his hire. That your hire has to be above the normal in other parts of India is unfortunate but inevitable. If your honorarium can

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to N. R. Malkani", 19-3-1928.

not be decently drawn from the Flood Fund, I shall hold myself responsible for it. But I want you to tell me how much you will require.

Thakkar Bapa tells me that he is going to send you a good worker from the Bhil Ashram and that he had left one with you already. But if you have anybody particularly in mind, please do not hesitate to name him and I shall see whether he can be spared.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 884

339. LETTER TO SURESH CHANDRA BANERJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 20, 1928

MY DEAR SURESH BABU,

I have seen the letter from the Secretary regarding the number of spinners served by you. Do you not see that it is as essential for you to reach your spinners as it is for you to keep your books in a thoroughly good order? If you do not take this precaution, you will find that the organization will one day collapse like a house of cards. It does not matter whose yarn in the particular week day you have received but it does matter that you send some reliable person to the people who are actually spinning and find out their condition and talk to them. Surely, it is neither an impossible task nor a very elaborate one. When the spinners who come to the middle men to sell their yarn return home you have simply to follow them to their homes and, if they avoid you once, they won't avoid you always. They will give you their confidence immediately they cease to distrust you. You must have some middle men at least who are fairly honest and who will not mind taking your messenger to the very homes from which they receive their yarn. And if this very simple thing is beyond your capacity, you are manifestly at the mercy of the middle men to whom it is open any day to stop their custom or to impose conditions which will be either impossible of acceptance or hurtful to your self-respect. I wish therefore that you will realize the importance of the suggestion which Mr. Banker has been making from time to time at my instance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13113

340. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have received your two letters. I write just now only to fulfil the promise to send you a message for the friend you mentioned.¹ He has now written directly to me, but as I promised the message to you, here it is.

I hope you are following my articles on boycott and mills. I am having conferences with the mill-owners also. Whether they will come to anything I do not know. But if anything appears to you wrong or weak you will please let me know.

How is Kamala doing? Where are you going to keep her during the hot season?

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13116

341. *MESSAGE TO MARCELLE CAPY*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

There can be no living harmony between races and nations unless the main cause is removed, namely, exploitation of the weak by the strong. We must revise the interpretation of the so-called doctrine of “the survival of the fittest”.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13117

¹ *Vide* the following item.

342. *LETTER TO MARCELLE CAPY*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Before I got it, I had received your message through our common friend Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. As I was under promise to him before I received your letter, I have sent my message¹ through him.

Yours sincerely,

MARCELLE CAPY
78 RUE DE L'ASSOMPTION
PARIS (FRANCE)

From a photostat: S.N. 14264

343. *LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR DR. ROY,

I have your letter for which I thank you.

The news in the Press about Dr. Ansari's visit was wholly libellous. It upset so many friends and I had to answer cables even from Johannesburg and Siam. You have now I suppose seen the correction that Dr. Ansari's visit had nothing to do with my health. If it had, you as one of the keepers of my body would also have certainly known something about it directly from the Ashram. Dr. Ansari came with Jamnalalji and Dr. Zakir Husain purely in connection with the National Muslim University and as he came he brought the instrument of torture and was bound to examine me. Upon examination he found me in a satisfactory condition, systolic registering 149 and diastolic 92 in the morning and in the evening s. 152 and d. 98.

Yours sincerely,

DR. BIDHAN C. ROY
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13120

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

344. LETTER TO ZAKIR HUSAIN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

MY DEAR ZAKIR,

I have your letter and copy of Lord Irwin's letter.¹ Lord Irwin's letter makes it doubly useful to send the letter principally in accordance with the draft² made by me. Of course it will require necessary changes. I hope you will send me copy of the letter that Dr. Ansari may finally write.

I do not know whether Devdas has drawn your attention to the fact that the sanitary condition of the quarters requires careful attention. I would like you to ask Devdas to point out the defects he might have noticed.

I hope you will lose no time in issuing invitations³ and following up the programme we jointly discussed and settled when you were at the Ashram.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13119

¹ With his letter, dated March 17, 1928, Zakir Husain had sent to Gandhiji a copy of the then Viceroy Lord Irwin's letter, dated March 16, 1928, addressed to Dr. Ansari which *inter alia* read: "... I would willingly subscribe to it on the general grounds that the late Hakim Ajmal Khan had devoted his life to the relief of the sick and that a memorial of the kind proposed seemed to me well fitted to perpetuate his memory. I have now learnt from Hakim Ajmal Khan [s son] that an appeal is afoot and I am therefore associating myself with it. . . ."

² This is not available.

³ Zakir Husain had written in his letter: "I hope to issue the invitation to members of Jamia Foundation Committee as soon as Dr. Ansari is back" (S.N. 14913).

345. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 20, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

It is a sad thing this boycott movement. I want you to read carefully my article on mills and boycott¹. I am keeping myself in touch with mill-owners also. If you detect a flaw in my argument, you will not hesitate to draw my attention to it.

The telegram about my health was wholly libellous this time because it was absolutely without any foundation. So far as I know, I have never been in better health. Dr. Ansari and Jamnalalji came to discuss the Ajmal Khan Memorial in connection with the National Muslim University and nothing else.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13121

346. *LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI*

ASHRAM,
Tuesday [March 20, 1928]²

CHI. RADHIKA,

I got your beautiful postcards. Remember all that I have told you. Take great care of your health, and love everyone. Rukhi is improving, but there is bleeding whenever she tries to walk. The doctor has examined her. You need not worry about anything on the side. Tell Durga also to write, and see that she does.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8668. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhari

¹ *Vide* "What Can Our Mills Do?", 15-3-1928.

² From the postmark

347. INTERVIEW TO ALICE SCHALEK

March 20, 1928

Mahatma Gandhi received Miss Alice Schalek on the 20th of March in the Ashram at 4 o'clock. When she entered, he said :

Please excuse me for my remaining on my seat, I cannot stand up.

MISS S.: May I ask some questions?

GANDHIJI: Of course, please do.

Q. Does your influence grow or decline?

A. A question difficult to answer, but I fancy it is growing, so far as the masses are concerned.

Q. Is it true that in your meaning the British have done no good to India? And you even regard the railways harmful?

A. Partly true. The total effect of the British rule in India has been nothing but evil. The railways have done more harm than good.

Q. Have they not been useful in famines?

A. They may serve a temporary useful purpose. But they have generally served to carry away from the villager what he needs for himself.

Q. But he gets money for it?

A. But he cannot eat the money. If you were in the desert of Sahara and you had only as much water as you needed for keeping you alive, would you sell it for any amount of gold?

Q. But are not they selling only what is superfluous?

A. They sell their birthright when they sell their raw produce. They do so because they know no better. If you have my welfare at heart, would you advise me to sell raw hide and get from you manufactured shoes, or to sell my cotton and purchase manufactured cloth? I am asking my countrymen to store their cotton and spin it into yarn and make their own cloth.

Q. They say that where there are railways there is no starvation. In case of famine, they take food-quickly from a place where it is in abundance to a place where it is needed.

A. Those who laid out the railways did not think of the welfare

of the people. They thought of the interest of the distant shareholders or principals. The advantage, in case of a famine, is small when we think of the counterbalancing disadvantages. It is like a robber robbing me of my all and then offering me back a trifle.

Q. Would India have been better if railways had not been here?

A. I have no doubt, other conditions being satisfied.

Q. How can the railways be made useful?

A. The policy should be so conceived as to be consistent with the real interests of the people, that is to say, they should enable people to remain self-supporting as they were before the railways came. Today they are being pauperized both in mind and body. They knew how to make the best use of their raw material. They used to turn their cotton into cloth, their hide into shoes, their corn into bread. Today the process is being reversed. I cannot consider anything more [harmful] than that millions should have to export their raw material which they can manufacture at home, and import finished products. The railways can usefully serve to transmit the finished products manufactured by the villagers from one part of the country to another.

Q. There should be a large movement to teach the people to do all these things?

A. There was ample interprovincial trade before.

Q. Is not the foreign method cheaper?

A. No. Even if it was, our own product would be cheaper at a higher cost. For instance when we in the Ashram first began to grow our vegetables they cost us more than the market vegetables. But now we grow them better and cheaper than elsewhere and our own inmates get work also.

Q. May I speak frankly? I was told in Bengal that khaddar is more expensive and coarser than British cloth and that women who pledge themselves to wear khaddar have their underwear made of foreign cloth.

A. If khaddar is coarser, patriotism demands that measure of sacrifice. There is no doubt that we have made a considerable advance on what we used to produce some years ago and we have been able to effect considerable reduction in prices. As for the ladies you were told about, I can only say that it was not proper for them to use any foreign cloth if they were pledged to wear khadi.

Q. What are your aims and ideals?

A. I want perfect freedom for my country through non-violent and truthful means.

Q. Do you think you can reach so far through non-violence?

A. My own conviction is that we shall obtain it only through non-violence and not otherwise. I think it more possible of attainment through non-violent than through violent means.

Q. What do you mean by freedom?

A. I want the freedom to make mistakes, and freedom to unmake them, and freedom to grow to my full height and freedom to stumble also. I do not want crutches.

Q. Don't you think the British have been very helpful to India?

A. They have been most harmful in every essential particular. By "they" I mean the British Government.

Q. And why?

A. Because they have sapped the economic, mental and moral growth of the people.

Q. Don't you think they have helped in India's economic growth?

A. According to the reports of Government officials themselves, India is poorer today than it was fifty years ago. A few individuals may have become rich, but generally poverty is deepening. There has been a little transfer of wealth, but no general prosperity of the country.

Q. Government say there were never before so many purchasers.

A. It is wrong if they mean that people could not buy then and that they can buy now. It is true in the sense that whereas people did not buy many things in those days, they do so today, and there are more goods to buy.

Q. But what is the sense of boycotting British goods? England does not give preference to her own goods. There is free competition for all the nations of the world.

A. No. It is wrong. It only appears as though there was free competition. England does give preference to her goods in a variety of insidious ways. There is apparent freedom, but no true freedom. But even if the British were impartial in favouring foreigners, I would have my quarrel with them. I want preference for Indian interests.

Q. How?

A. By prohibiting import of all foreign cloth and by levying a heavy tax on all imports that can be manufactured in the country.

Q. Buy your cost of manufacture will be much higher.

A. High and low prices are no necessary indication of the prosperity or depression of a country. It is infinitely better that I grow my vegetable even if the cost is a trifle higher than that I should depend for them on someone else. Then I shall try to reduce the cost by judicious and skilful management. The gain in skill, comfort and the knowledge that we grow our vegetables is much greater than the little gain we might have in getting vegetables cheap in Ahmedabad. Even in the matter [of] producing cloth we could do it in no time and quite cheap if we were left to our own resources.

Q. There is no country in the world which is free from foreign competition.

A. Pardon me. Germany was one. Germany erected a prohibitive tariff wall on all foreign sugar and then successfully produced its best sugar. Every nation protects its infant industry by bounties and tariffs.

Q. Do you mean to say that all foreign imports must be stopped and that India must use only indigenous goods?

A. We may have from foreign countries all the things we cannot produce, e.g., we may have iodine from Britain or Germany, we may have pearls from Arabia, diamonds from Johannesburg, lever watches from England and good readable books from England, America and all countries in the world. Indeed I should have need[les] and pins—dangerous weapons both!—from foreign countries, and quite a number of other things I can mention. And we may profitably export to other countries whatever they need, but we should never impose anything on anybody. For instance I may grow opium, but would not think of imposing it on China or America.

Q. But if you make your own things, would you not have to face the labour question?

A. Why? If it arises, it will solve itself.

Q. Would you do it all on capitalistic basis or communistic basis?

A. On a nationalistic basis, in the interests of the people.

Q. But who will finance the industries?

A. We. Our finance consists in our own men and women, and

we have got them in their millions.

Q. Should your industry be run by the State or by the country?

A. It does not matter how it is run, provided it is run in the interests of the millions, not of a class. That principle assured, I should not mind who nominally runs it.

From a photostat: S.N. 14284

348. INTERVIEW TO ASSOCIATED PRESS OF INDIA

AHMEDABAD,

March 20, 1928

Interviewed regarding the report from Delhi stating that he had practically accepted the invitation to attend the Youth's Conference at Vienna and that he would shortly leave for Europe, Mahatma Gandhi said that the statement was altogether premature. He added that nothing had as yet been fixed and he was not clear in his own mind whether he should go.

The Bombay Chronicle, 22-3-1928

349. LETTER TO FRANZ RONO¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. I can only say to the youth that they should turn their tremendous energy of youth through spending it in sacred service but not dissipate it through speeches and writings and the like which are becoming so much the fashion nowadays.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 1426

¹ Secretary of Weltjugendliga, the Austrian division of the World Federation of Youth for Peace. In his letter, dated March 10, 1928, he had requested Gandhiji "to send a few lines of guidance" (S.N. 14225).

350. LETTER TO T. DE MANZIARLY

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was a pleasure to receive your letter after such a long time. I am sending you the two books you mention and I am adding a third—Hand-spinning Essay, the *Guide to Health* and *Takli Teacher*.

Now about the 2nd paragraph.¹ I would just like to say that whilst I am a passionate devotee of simplicity in life, I have also discovered that it is worthless unless the echo of simplicity comes from within. The modern organized artificiality of so-called civilized life cannot have any accord with true simplicity of heart. Where the two do not correspond, there is always either gross self-deception or hypocrisy.

Yours sincerely,

T. DE MANZIARLY

From a photostat: S.N. 14267

351. LETTER TO MRS. JOSEPH A. BRAUN

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was thoughtful of you and the members of your club to send me through Mrs. Sharman a cheque for Rs. 70. I value the gift for the heart that prompted it. I am utilizing the same for supplying the needs of one who had devoted himself to propagate the message of the spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. JOSEPH A. BRAUN
RFD 3
BIRMINGHAM
MICHIGAN, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14268

¹ The addressee in his letter dated December 27, 1927 had written: “. . . You know how I would like to see mankind realizing the necessity of becoming more simple, to have more time and more energy to be spent on truer things. . .”

352. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 21, 1928

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I have your postcard. Do come on Saturday evening. If I cannot spare time for you in the evening, I will do so on Sunday and will let you return at the time fixed by you. I hope you are now completely all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4009

353. NOTES

CHARKHA A PROVED WANT

Akbarpur in U.P. is a little place where Professor Kripalani's khadi band worked for seven years. For reason into which I need not go, this band had to withdraw from Akbarpur. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru describes the touching scenes that followed the withdrawal and how the centre had somehow to be kept up. The following from his letter to the All-India Spinners' Association will be read with interest:

I have told you already that the Gandhi Ashram has left Akbarpur. We have taken charge temporarily because we felt that pending your decision we ought to carry on. If we had not taken charge there would have been a break and it would have been more difficult to start afresh. Besides, on sentimental grounds also it was a little difficult to abandon the place. It has been a well-known centre for so many years and a large number of weavers and others are intimately connected with it. To leave it suddenly would have had a bad effect on the whole neighbourhood and upset the economy of a great number of poor households who were dependent on it. Indeed, we were told that some touching incidents were witnessed when the Gandhi Ashram announced that they were closing up. Many old women spinners who used to sell their yarn at a distant centre, finding this centre closed, trudged up many miles to headquarters and wept when they found that their yarn was not to be bought. Many weavers with their wives and families came up to the Akbarpur office and said they would perform satyagraha. For seven years they had been working for the Ashram and now they were being left in the lurch. You will realize how difficult it was

for us to refuse to take charge under these circumstances. But of course, sentimental considerations cannot decide the question. Akbarpur possesses some marked advantages and at the same time a very great disadvantage. As a weaving centre it is famous and even now some of the finest weaving in India is done at Tanda in the neighbourhood. Unhappily this fine weaving—called *jamdani* work—is done with foreign yarn. On the other hand, there is very little spinning done near Akbarpur if the centre is to be worked it will be necessary to bring yarn from elsewhere. The Gandhi Ashram, I believe, used to get their yarn chiefly from across the border in Bihar, also from Muzaffarnagar. For us it will be easier to get it from the Northern Districts of the U.P.—Moradabad, Bijnor, etc. The cost of sending the yarn is not great.

If khadi became as current as ghee or grain, there could never have been a thought of withdrawing from any centre. If we had funds and workers we would have representatives not only in 1,600 villages but in 7,00,000 villages. This is no impracticable ambition, when we remember the fact that there are at least two representatives of the alien Government in each of these villages. If anyone before the British advent had suggested any such thing, he would have been laughed out of court. But reflection should show that the restoration of the wheel in every one of the villages is not half as laughable as the hope of imperial Britain being represented in the republican villages of India would have been in the 17th century. What the women near Akbarpur are reported to have said demonstrates what a felt want the charkha fills or can fill in every village of this ancient land. It is no credit to our patriotism that the able weavers of Akbarpur have to fall back upon foreign yarn for their far-famed *jamdani* which it was their pride nearly half a century ago to weave out of yarn spun by the sacred hands of their own sisters living next door to them. It won't be long before the spinners in our villages are able to spin as fine and as strong yarn as any foreign yarn now infesting our market.

CAN IT BE TRUE?

The president, Arya Samaj, New Delhi, writes:¹

The Baghat State is situated in the Simla Hills and its ruler is an enlightened Hindu chief. . . . The population of the State is about ten thousand and mainly consists of Rajputs, Kanets and Brahmins. The other tribes are Kolis, Chamars, etc., who are regarded as menials. Although the Kolis chiefly

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

live on agriculture yet the social disabilities to which they are subject are numerous. . . . Moved by the inhuman treatment which these people suffer at the hands of their Hindu brethren, the Arya Samaj, Simla, brought them into their fold with a view to raise their status in life and invested them with the sacred thread, inasmuch as by occupation they are Vaisyas. . . . This seems to have given umbrage to the caste Hindus who challenged the right of their being invested with the sacred thread. A summary trial consequently held on the 6th January 1928 by the Chief of the State himself and on the subsequent day on the plea of antiquity and customs, the poor kolis who were ten in number were sentenced to undergo six months' imprisonment in addition to a fine of Rs. 200 each. No opportunity was given to these unfortunate persons to defend themselves, nor was permission given to the Pandit of the Arya Samaj who happened to be present on the occasion to explain the point of view of the Arya Samaj in this matter. It is now reported that they are being coerced in the jail to take off their sacred thread.

The information contained in the foregoing seems to me to be unbelievable. The Kolis can in no way be considered to be untouchables or to be of the suppressed or the depressed classes. If they are their own farmers, according to the definition of the different varnas, they are born Vaisyas and have every right to wear the sacred thread. But assuming that they have no right in religion, I was totally unprepared for the news that the wearing of the sacred thread would be considered a crime punishable in law in any State. Equally unthinkable it is that the unfortunate men who thought that they had passed through some desirable or meritorious religious ceremony were denied even the right of defending themselves and producing their witnesses. And, if the statements about the punishment and farcical trial are true, I should not at all wonder if the sacred thread had been forcibly taken off their persons. I would invite the president of the Arya Samaj to send further details, if any, in corroboration of the charges brought by him against the Baghat State and I would invite the State authorities if they wish to send me their version of the incident which I shall gladly publish.

Young India, 22-3-1928

354. FOREIGN CLOTH BOYCOTT—SOME QUESTIONS

A friend intimately connected with mills and desirous of having our mills contributing their full quota to the foreign cloth boycott movement asks :

1. On what basis do you want prices standardized? For remember all mills are not alike. Some are bad, some are good; some use more sizing than others, some have more reserve than others; Bombay mills make less profits than upcountry ones. These difference are illustrative of many others that might be stated.

The one general answer that may be given is “where there’s a will there’s a way”. The mills will contribute their quota only when they get rid of inertia, think “furiously”, and that too in terms of the nation, not merely the pockets of share-holders, directors or agents. But by way of making my position in this matter clearer I may say that all the mills who will join the boycott movement will have to pool all the differences and arrive at a standard price which would at least mean a large slice off from the present profits of at least some mills. If their patriotism is sound and progressive the flourishing ones will cover the losing ones, avoidable differences will be avoided. In the scheme I have in view the mills need never lose in the aggregate and they must not profit at the expense of the buyer.

2. Only some mills will undertake not to manufacture khadi. But what about those that only spin low counts? What is your test of khadi?

This is a matter of *common* honesty and arrangement between khadi organizations and mills. At present I am sorry to have to say that even some good mills are not ashamed to label their cloth ‘khadi’ simply in order to take an illegitimate advantage of the growing khadi atmosphere in the mofussil. If a workable arrangement is come to, I expect that there will be a line of demarcation for the time being between the cloth to be manufactured by khadi centres and mills. The manufacture of cloth will be controlled as it often is in times of war. What in a war based on violence we do by compulsion, in this war based on non-violence we shall do by choice. Our ability voluntarily, i.e., merely under pressure of public opinion, to arrange boycotts, etc., will be the outward but indispensable test of our non-violence if we have any in us.

3. How will profits be regulated? You know as well as I do that prices of cotton fluctuate with irritating irregularity.

This assumes our inability to control the cotton market. Surely if the largest manufacturers of the country combine in the patriotic effort, they will control the cotton market. America rules our cotton prices because we stupidly, thoughtlessly, and selfishly send out our cotton. But boycott means that we shall control the movement of cotton, as we shall control many other things, if we are to achieve complete boycott, as we must if we have developed the true national spirit and have confidence in ourselves and the nation.

4. If you lay much stress upon honesty, perseverance, mutual trust, etc., you are doomed.

As I have no bayonet at my command and would not have it even if I could command it, I must press for the qualities which the friend fears are at a discount. I do not share his fear—what is more I have patience enough to wait for the development of those qualities if they are not available in sufficient measure today. For this nation will never come to her own unless we exhibit them as a nation. I know too that we shall take much longer to discipline ourselves for violence, fraud and the like than we shall for truth and non-violence and all that they imply.

The friend then draws my attention to the following omissions in my previous article :¹

(a) The mills that join the scheme may not use foreign yarn or foreign artificial silk as many now do.

(b) They may not insure with foreign companies.

(c) They may not import foreign cloth and label it 'swadeshi'.

I had assumed that (a) and (c) were a foregone conclusion. I should not care to insist on (b) if the insistence would hamper the proposed joint venture. Much as I should like indigenous insurance enterprise, I am convinced that it is the foreign cloth that blocks the way as nothing else does. If we can put this Himalayan obstacle out of the way, we shall easily cope with hillocks.

Young India, 22-3-1928

¹ Vide "What Can Our Mills Do?", 15-3-1928.

355. DIFFERENCE STATED

I gladly publish the foregoing.¹ It was made clear at those meetings of International Fellowship² that I had meant the principal religions of the world and I had maintained that all were true more or less and that all were necessarily imperfect. Here therefore there is agreement. But Mr. Ireland's letter leaves on the mind the impression that there is a fundamental difference between him and me regarding conversion, no matter by what name it is called. Let me extend the analogy of fragrance, faulty as all analogies are in their very nature. The rose imparts its fragrance not in many ways but only one. Those who have not the sense of smell will miss it. You cannot feel the fragrance through the tongue or the ear or the skin. So may you not receive spirituality except through the spiritual sense. Hence have all religions recognized the necessity of that sense being awakened. It is a second birth. A man with intense spirituality may without speech or a gesture touch the hearts of millions who have never seen him and whom he has never seen. The most eloquent preacher if he has not spirituality in him will fail to touch the hearts of his audience. Therefore I venture to think that most of the effort of modern missions is not only useless but more often than not harmful. At the root of missionary effort is also the assumption that one's own belief is true not only for oneself but for all the world; whereas the truth is that God reaches us³ through millions of ways not understood by us. In missionary effort therefore there is lack of real humility that instinctively recognizes human limitations and the limitless power of God. I have no feeling that from a spiritual standpoint I am necessarily superior to the so-called savage. And spiritual superiority is a dangerous thing to feel. It is not⁴ like many other things which we can perceive, analyse and prove through our senses. If it is there, I cannot be deprived of it by any power on earth, and it will have its effect in its own due time. But if in matters of medicine and other natural sciences, I feel my superiority over others, a thing of which I may be legitimately conscious, and if I have love for my fellow beings, I would naturally share my knowledge with them. But things of the spirit I leave to God and thus keep the bond between fellow beings and myself pure, correct and within limits. But I must not carry this argument any further.

¹ The letter from W. F. Ireland of Cambridge Mission is not reproduced here.

² *Vide* "Discussion on Fellowship", Before 15-1-1928.

³ *Vide* "Two Corrections", 29-3-1928.

⁴ *ibid*

My first feeling was not to publish Mr. Ireland's letter but to send a brief reply to him privately. But my regard for him has prompted me to comply with his wish without any ado knowing full well that this is not a matter which admits of any conclusive argument especially from my side and in view of the position herein described by me.

Young India, 22-3-1928

356. FIJI FOR THE FIJIANS'

Though what Deenabandhu says is the truth and nothing but the truth, I fear that if the British Imperialist rulers offer the Indian emigrants in any part of the world sufficient inducement, they will succumb and imagine that they are "equal partners", not knowing that they are but "jackals". But the hope lies in Imperialists never offering enough inducement and the native wit of the Indian emigrants seeing through the thin veil of Imperial *maya*.

Young India, 22-3-1928

357. LETTER TO P. K. MATHEW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 22, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry that I was unable to reply to your letter till now. I would like you to read the back numbers of *Young India* to understand that spinning-wheels are not good for schools. *Taklis* should be introduced in schools. Experience has shown that they give much better results in every way than the spinning-wheel for the reasons stated in the pages of *Young India*² and you need no special buildings and no expenditure worth the name.

Yours sincerely,

P. K. MATHEW, ESQ., B.A., B.L.
CHRISTAVA MAHILALAYAM
ALWAYE
(TRAVANCORE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 13124

¹ C. F. Andrews's article bearing this title, is not reproduced here.

² *Vide* "Takli on Schools", 11-11-1926.

358. MARRIAGE OF THE OLD AND CHILD-MARRIAGE

A gentleman from Surat writes to say:¹

His criticism of child-marriages is largely correct. If the writer goes through the articles in the previous issues of *Navajivan*, he will see that they have often severely criticized child-marriages. And I also know that these articles have averted some child-marriages. However, there is still room for a great deal of reform. Society is not as much averse to child-marriage as it is to marriage with old men. In my opinion both these are equally objectionable. Hence, there is no difference of opinion between this correspondent and myself with regard to condemnation of child-marriage. If I had the authority or if my pen had enough power, I would use it to prevent every child-marriage. Parents who marry their children at a tender age become their enemies and are responsible for making them dependent and weak.

However, the correspondent's intention appears to be to uphold marriages of old men while discrediting child-marriages. The advantages of marrying an old man as stated by the correspondent seem to be ludicrous and also to ignore completely the poor girl or if there is any consideration for her it is only for her financial condition. The writer appears to forget that consent of the girls who are married off to old men is never secured; perhaps, in his opinion, it is needless to think of it. The correspondent seems to be wholly oblivious of the fact that marriage is a religious rite and, worse still, he fails to remember that marriage with an old man amounts to a doubly culpable child-marriage, as in all such cases not only is the bride a child but the old man who despite age contemplates marriage can only be deemed a child, or something worse. Although the husband may be living it is a kind of widowhood for the girl. Society is least likely to be harmed if old men who cannot control their passions or who for some other reason wish to marry, do so with old or mature women prepared to enter into such relationship with them.

CONGRATULATIONS

The result of the above-mentioned article has been that a poor girl has been spared as the elderly gentleman who was going to marry her realized his mistake on reading the article and gave up

¹ The letter is not translated here.

the idea of another marriage. I congratulate this gentleman on this welcome result. Let us hope that whenever in the future he is moved by passion he will restrain himself, thinking of the girl's good and of society, and even the country and also remembering God. This case should infuse greater enthusiasm in social workers. We find from this as well as other instance that have since occurred that social and other injustices can be prevented if timely steps—restrained yet firm—are taken against them.

WILL ANOTHER COW BE SAVED?

Some young girls have been rescued from being sold off to old men. Bearing this in mind a gentleman from Ranpur writes to say :¹

On the strength of this letter, I do request this Modh Vanik gentleman of Bhavnagar not to go through this marriage. At the age of 55, he should shrink from the thought of marrying a girl young enough to be his grand-daughter. I hope leaders of the Modh community of Bhavnagar will take all steps needed to prevent this marriage. In fact in such cases wherever people in general are alert, not only the leaders of small castes, but the entire public and even the State itself, should act as protectors of the young girls and it is their dharma to rescue girls who are being sold in this manner. Young men are their guardians and if they don the armour of virtue, humility and courage and do their duty they will be able to rescue all the poor young girls and there is no doubt they can.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 25-3-1928

359. LETTER TO RICHARD B. GREGG

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 26, 1928

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have your chatty letter. I am glad you were able to walk all that distance without any discomfort. I am getting well. I note what you say about the enema. The doctors who guided me in Bangalore insisted upon permanganate, but the solution is very weak. It is just rose colour that is required.

¹ The letter is not translated here.

How is Ganesan getting on with your book ? When is it likely to be ready?

With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13128

360. LETTER TO K. S. ACHARYA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. Simplicity is a matter of herat. But lest we deceive ourselves, the ideal is not to possess anything which the poorest on earth do not.

Yo cannot force you wife to abandon ornaments against her will, but you must seek to conquer her through selfless love devoid of animal passion and through your own daily-increasing self-denial.

Without denying your father and being always ready to serve him, you can live separately from him and bring up an untouchable boy in the manner you suggest.

I am afraid it will not be possible for me to take your sister because she would not know Hindustani. You should give her there all the training that she needs.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. S. ACHARYA

ASSTT. MASTER

GOVT. HIGH SCHOOL

DEVANGERE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13127

361. LETTER TO N. RAMA RAO

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

N. RAMA RAO, ESQ.
SECRETARY TO GOVERNMENT
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
SECRETARIAT, BANGALORE

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for your letter enclosing a copy of Sjt. Pujari's report on the Badnaval Spinning Centre. This work was noticed in the pages of *Young India*.¹

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13130

362. LETTER TO H. M. PEREIRA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

MY DEAR PEREIRA

The address is as printed above. There is no code address. Gandhi, Sabarmati, finds me.

Yours sincerely,

H. M. PEREIRA, ESQ.
225 OAK STREET
BELLORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 14271

¹ This was in C. Rajagopalachari's article "A State Khadi Centre", *Young India*, 8-3-1928.

363. LETTER TO DR. P. S. KITCHLEW

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your warm invitation. But if only for health reasons I must not attend the Conference. It would delight my heart if your prophecy comes true and there is a heart union established between Hindus and Mussalmans and Sikhs of the Punjab. I know that then Hindu-Muslim unity is assured and my faith in the power of that unity is such that I would say swaraj is assured.

Anyway I hope that the Conference will not forget or neglect khadi.

Yours sincerely,

DR. P. S. KITCHLEW
CHAIRMAN
RECEPTION COMMITTEE
THE 13TH PUNJAB PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
AMRITSAR

From a photostat: S.N. 13129

364. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 26, 1928

I have your letter. Before I decide anything I await Romain Rolland's letter. The argument given in your letter to Mahadev I had anticipated. But this is not a love letter. This is written to send you the enclosed letter from Dr. M. E. Naidoo. Please deal with it yourself and at once. I have told him that you would reply to it.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1
SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
GANDHI ASHRAM
TIRUCHENGODU

From a photostat: S.N. 13131

365. *LETTER TO PRATAP S. PUNDIT*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 26, 1928

MY DEAR PRATAP,

I haven't got you to build me a tannery, but all the same I have now got something which passes as a tannery because I have got a crank like myself who knows much about the business to do the work. I would like you when you come to Ahmedabad to look at it. But I would like you to send me some literature on tanning which a layman may understand and do something with, or tell me where I can get it.

Yours sincerely,

PRATAP S. PUNDIT

From a photostat: S.N. 15363

366. *LETTER TO M. PIGGOTT*

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 27, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You say Rs. 3,000 is so little to me, and they are much to the widow and her boy. You little know that I am poorer than the widow. For I do not possess any property over which I can go to any court of law much less to Privy Council. I have no money of my own. I am a humble trustee holding some funds for well-defined trusts. I may not deviate the funds without exposing myself to the charge of breach of trust. You should approach a monied man.

Yours sincerely,

M. PIGGOTT, ESQ.

HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: S.N. 13132

367. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 27, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

The expected letter being registered was received only today. It is a long letter. He¹ would like me to go to Europe, but he himself is not likely to be in his place before June. I expect a reply to another letter from him. I am in no hurry to go. I would therefore like to await further news from him. Somehow or other I can't put my heart into this proposed visit. My heart is in the boycott. If we cannot negotiate the boycott, I am supremely content to go on with the khadi programme. I would like you to visualize the marvellous effect that the khadi movement has produced. If the mill-owners had been honest, we should have made enormous strides.

I have now got the figures for khadi production by the mills. Here they are for three years.

The figures are for nine months ending December.²

| | 1925 | 1926 | 1927 |
|-------|------------|------------|------------|
| Lb. | 22,887,970 | 27,236,337 | 33,977,851 |
| Yards | 65,048,487 | 74,313,280 | 94,380,368 |

You will observe how rapidly the mills have been progressing towards khadi. 94.3 million yards in one year! It means all that money taken away from the mouths of the paupers. It shows also the potentiality of the khadi movement.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13133

¹ Romain Rolland

² *Vide* also "A Mill-owner on Boycott", 5-4-1928.

368. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

Tuesday [March 27, 1928]¹

BHAISHRI BHANSALI,

You know that I have discussed the matter with Lilabehn². She is of the same opinion as the others. Despite all the opposition, I find the general opinion is that if you wish to stay on you may do so. But that can only be if you believe that all these well-wishers are in the wrong. It is quite contrary to the rules of the Ashram if you think it wrong to work even as sacrifice. But I do not insist on your accepting my opinion and doing accordingly. Return this letter after reading it, as also the others. If you wish, I will give you a copy of each.

Ponder deeply over all these things, and then, if you wish, we will discuss the matter personally. I do not wish to put any kind of pressure on you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: S.N. 12966

369. SPEECH AT SWEEPERS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD ³

March 27, 1928

After having listened to these *bhajans* I feel that there is no difference between you and me. At present my health is such that I cannot attend any function and the doctors too have forbidden me to attend meetings. Because I am here today, do not think that I am fit. After a long interval and for the first time since I returned to Ahmedabad, I am attending a meeting and that too because Shri Banker and others insisted that I should give some advice to the Bhangis of the city.

Truly speaking, you are the high-caste Hindus. Your sacrifice is very great. The so-called caste Hindus are more responsible for your blemishes than you are. You come to have these because they fors-ook you. I wish you would get rid of these vices now. I can clean

¹ From S.N. Register

² Addressee's widowed sister-in-law

³ The meeting was held at 7.30 p.m. at Maganbhaini Vadi. Among those present were Kasturba Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel and Anasuyabehn Sarabhai. *Bhajans* were sung at the commencement of the proceedings.

latrines better than you do, but you prevent me from doing it; this is a grave mistake. Why should you prevent others from doing it?

The caste Hindus regard your work as low and of little value but my honest opinion is that it is the best. As long as one cannot do that work well, one cannot be said to have served well. What is the condition of the streets and lanes of Ahmedabad? I say this because I clean everything myself. You should feel that by doing this work, you render the greatest and the most important service to the city. Why do you object if others participate in such service?

If I had my say I would get the lanes and latrines of Ahmedabad cleaned by High School boys and make the city so beautiful that I could proudly invite everyone to visit it. The key to this lies in your hands. Regard this as an act of service and perform it with diligence because the city's health depends mainly on it. If you realize this you can remove many of the difficulties faced by Vallabhbhai¹, and you will receive applause from the citizens and at the same time you will put your betters to shame.

I have no faith in your claim that the evil of drinking has decreased. I think out of every sixteen persons two abstain from drinking and fourteen indulge in it. I do not believe that anyone runs into debt for food; they do so only for indulging in pleasures. You must get rid of all these addictions.

You should teach your children not to eat left-overs. You too should take a vow to the same effect. You should accept only that which can be accepted without humiliation. In this way you will be able to train your children well. It does not matter if you are not educated, but you must learn how to count so that no one can deceive you. You must also cultivate habits of personal cleanliness. From the leaders of society you have only to learn self-purification. For that you must give up all your addictions. If, in spite of the khadi cap that you wear, you have addictions, you will disgrace the cap. I will also get you good help from the Municipality and from the rich men of Ahmedabad when you do something on your own.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 1-4-1928

¹ Vallabhbhai Patel was at the time President of Ahmedabad Municipality.

370. LETTER TO T. K. MADHAVAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

MY DEAR MADHAVAN,

I have your letter. You have given me a doleful picture of the state of things there. My advice just now is for you quietly to cultivate public opinion there. From what you write it appears to me that the Government is not unsympathetic but it is timid and too sensitive to orthodox opinion. You should tell me also whether you are ready to offer satyagraha at Suchindram or Thiruvappu.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. T. K. MADHAVAN
S. N. D. P. YOGAM
VAIKOM
(TRAVANCORE STATE)

From a microfilm: S.N. 12893-a

371. LETTER TO M. DEWANDAS NARAINDAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. I shall need much more information than you have given in your letter before I can place you name before the Managing Board. You must state your age, whether your parents are alive, what is your future aim. In no case can you be admitted until you have tested yourself in Karachi for at least 6 months

- (a) By first spinning for at least one hour daily from slivers carded by yourself;
- (b) by learning, if you do not know it, Hindi so as to be able to speak and write correctly;
- (c) by wearing khaddar to the exclusion of all other cloth;
- (d) by securing the free permission of your parents.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. DEWANDAS NARAINDAS
STU. STD. VII
NEW HIGH SCHOOL
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13136

372. *LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

March 28, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

I have your postcard. You must always write in as beautiful a hand as you have written this time. Next time you write, let me know your daily time-table of work. Write to me how you find the climate there. There is a talk of my going to Europe, but nothing is fixed yet. Even if I go, it will take some time. Do you get any time there to read? Chi. Radha has gone to Bihar as a tutor to a Bihari girl, and Durga has gone with her in order help her.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9709

373. *LETTER TO H. N. VENN*

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your welcome letter. Mr. Andrews has forgotten to tell me about your intention to see me at the Ashram. I shall be delighted to see you on the 8th April. If it is the same thing to you please make it 4 p.m. instead of 5. But I shall be ready for you at 5 o'clock also.

Yours sincerely,

H. N. VENN, ESQ.

MAIDEN'S HOTEL

DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11970

374. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

MY DEAR C. R.,

I have your letter about the proposed European visit. I have myself no heart in it, nor have I any confidence in myself about making it successful; but an interview with Rolland still remains an attraction. All the reputation I enjoy in the West is borrowed from him and I feel that if I meet him face to face, there may be disillusionment on many points. It may be that we should come closer than we ever were. I do attach considerable importance to our knowing each other much better than we do.

I quite agree with you that there is nothing to gain from the health point of view. I might possibly suffer, and health is no consideration, whatsoever in the proposed trip. From that point of view any hill station in India would be infinitely superior for me.

I feel also with you that the withdrawal of my presence is likely to unsettle things a bit especially in Bardoli. Foreign cloth boycott can certainly make no headway during my absence. But now that you are all gathering together at Calcutta. I would like you to discuss the proposed visit at the Council meeting. I am most anxious that I should not become exclusive and should be humble enough to arrive at truth no matter from what source it comes.

I am sorry about the defalcations, but I shall accept your warning not to disturb myself or discuss them.

I understand what you say about Ramachandran. I want you to write him a warm letter and go out of your way to draw him towards you. He is kind of 'Chetty' also, for he did wonderfully well in the way of khadi at Jamia.

I must not forget one thing, though, about your reference to the defalcations. If the defaulter gives you Rs. 500 and tenders an apology for publication, you should be entirely satisfied. But this is an unconsidered opinion of a layman.

What do you say to my exploit in conducting an exclusively milk experiment? I do not want to be told you swooned at my saying it is a literally milk-and-water experiment.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13123

375. *LETTER TO DR. ARULMANI PICHAMUTHU*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Your insured little parcel preceded your letter and I was wondering from whom it was. Mahadev guessed it correctly. I congratulate you on the manner of your disposal of the precious jewels. I hope to take notice of the gift in some shape or form without disclosing name in *Young India*.¹

Yours sincerely,

DR. ARULMANI PICHAMUTHU
PANTHADI NO. 1
MADURA

From a photostat: S. N. 13134

376. *LETTER TO SAM HIGGINBOTTOM*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 28, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

When I had the pleasure of being shown over your farm on the banks of the Jumna, I remember having seen a contrivance whereby you heated your water by the sun heat. Will you please tell me whether it was merely the tank put on your building and exposed to the full sun or whether you concentrated by some mechanical contrivance the rays of the sun on to the tank?

Yours sincerely,

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM, ESQ.
AGRICULTURAL INSTITUTE
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: S.N. 13137

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 5-4-1928, sub-title, "Women and Jewels".

377. 'THE TRIUMPH OF RACE HATRED'¹

I am sure that the Amsterdam International, if it was placed in the same condition as the White Trades Union of Johannesburg, would not behave otherwise than the latter; nor would it have acted otherwise than Mr. Ramsay MacDonald or Mr. Lansbury if its members had found themselves in their position.

Young India, 29-3-1928

378. THE DOCTRINE OF FRIGHTFULNESS

In answer to a question put by a member of the late Hunter Committee, General Dyer admitted that Jallianwala was designed to create frightfulness. In making the admission the late General enunciated no new doctrine. Indeed "the ablest Civil Service in the world" has laid the foundation of its greatness on frightfulnesses.

In pursuance of this well-known policy, according to the information received at the time of going to press it appears that summary steps are now to be taken against the farmers of Bardoli in order to compel submission. For eight preliminary notices of forfeiture have been served upon certain satyagrahis of Bardoli. The names of these seem to have been carefully chosen, for all of them happen to be banias of note. The choice has been so made presumably because banias who have the reputation of being weak and timid are expected to yield under notices of forfeiture. What can be more natural, officialdom would argue, than that banias weakening, the others must follow suit. Satyagrahis need not be surprised at this first show of frightfulness. They have been repeatedly told to expect forfeitures and worse. Let them now show their strength if they have it in them.

Young India, 29-3-1928

¹ C. F. Andrews's article, on which Gandhiji comments, is not reproduced here. He had written that the International Labour Movement in Europe in its bulletin entitled "The Triumph of Race Hatred" had condemned the South African Trades Union Congress of white workers for its refusal to affiliate the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union (I.C.W.U.) of coloured workers which was already affiliated to the Amsterdam International, that is, International Federation of Trades Unions. Andrews had also regretted the action of Ramsay MacDonald and the Labour Parliamentary party in England in acquiescing in the appointment of the Simon Commission on a racial basis.

379. *THE NATIONAL WEEK*

The national week comes upon us with seasonlike regularity and has found us more or less wanting since after 1922. The 6th April to 13th April should be regarded as days of privilege, introspection, intense national activity and self-purification. These precious seven days should be days of stock-taking and heart-searching. The morning of 6th April 1919 found an India awakened to a sense of her dignity. Hindus, Mussalmans and others composing the nation felt themselves united like blood-brothers as they are in reality, if they would but recognize themselves as sons of the soil.

6th of April 1919 found an India endowed with a true spirit of swadeshi which culminated in khadi and which is now feeding according to the latest figures over 90,000 poor spinners.

The spirit thus awakened continued to advance during 1920 and 1921 and we seemed to be within an ace of statutory swaraj.

But that swaraj did not come and there was a set-back. Apparently since then there has been only an ebb. Hindus and Mussalmans are flying at each other's throats.

Instead of swadeshi we have the cry for boycott of British goods pending settlement as if support of Japanese goods including Japan's cheap calico can ever be a substitute for swadeshi, i.e., khadi, exclusive of all foreign cloth. After much research, reasoning and experience, we seemed in 1920-21 to have come to the conclusion that the only practical, effective and necessary swadeshi was khadi, not pending any settlement but for all time or such time as we could discover a better and more paying occupation for the starving millions. I have seen no new argument in support of boycott of British goods only as distinguished from foreign goods. No new situation has arisen to warrant the belief that boycott of British goods is a practical proposition and that the use of foreign cloth other than British is not almost equally detrimental to the best interest of India.

Would that those who are supporting the cry of boycott of British goods will seriously think over their programme, and, if necessary, revise their plan and join the khadi movement with the whole-hearted conviction that it and it alone can bring about complete boycott, not merely of British cloth but of all foreign cloth.

But whether they do so or not, I am sure they do not make of support to foreign cloth other than British cloth a matter of principle. And if I am right in my supposition, let them support the sales of

khadi during the National Week. If they will but study the progress of the khadi movement during the past seven years that it has been going on, they will discover that the charkha has more potency than they have ever dreamt of. It is potent enough, if it receives the whole-hearted and active support of politically-minded India, to bring about boycott of foreign cloth even without the assistance of our mills. With the active and organized support of the latter, boycott of foreign cloth becomes a much easier proposition. Indeed the mill-owners hold the trump card if only they would play it for the sake of the nation. They have at their disposal a ready-made extensive organization, which, if they devote it to the service of the nation, can simplify the campaign of boycott and arm the nation with the power it so much needs.

And why will not Hindus and Mussalmans recall those precious seven days and shed all fear, mutual distrust and weakness?

Let me not forget the so-called untouchables, the classes that we Hindus have been guilty of suppressing. Shall we not have the vision to see that in suppressing a sixth (or whatever the number) of ourselves, we have depressed ourselves? No man takes another down a pit without descending into it himself and sinning in the bargain. It is not the suppressed that sin. It is the suppressor who has to answer for his crime against those whom he suppresses.

Young India, 29-3-1928

380. NOTES

SPECIAL FOR NATIONAL WEEK

Sjt. Vithaldas. Jerajani (Khadi Bhandar, Princess Street, Bombay) writes :¹

I do hope that there will be an adequate response to Sjt. Jerajani's legitimate wish and hope. Bombay has always been sensitive to national moods. Bombay laid the foundation of the national khadi movement by opening the first khadi bhandar. The figures given in the letter are instructive. The great drop in 1925 is to be

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had given the figures of sale of khadi during the National Weeks from 1922 to 1927. He had hoped that in view of greater variety, improvement in the quality of khadi and a greater swadeshi spirit there would be greater response in the coming National Week. He had also announced a discount of one anna per rupee on khadi purchased from April 1 to 15. *Vide* also "The National Week", 1-4-1928.

accounted for by the fact there was another large khadi store opened in Kalbadevi Road. Nevertheless the figures for the other years are an eloquent proof of the statement that Bombay is the proper barometer for the politically-minded India. The figures for 1927 show a decided improvement upon 1926. Will Bombay rise to those of 1922? Not that even such a rise will be anything commensurate with what is required for the boycott we want and can have if we would but show the necessary measure of sacrifice and determination.

Another notice I have is from the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar, Richey Road, Ahmedabad. That Bhandar also proposes during the National Week to give discount from one anna to four annas in the rupee according to the variety required.

I hope that all khadi organizations whether owned by the Association or certified will put forth special efforts to bring khadi to the notice of the public and that the public will make a liberal response.

KHADI TOUR IN BENGAL

It is perhaps necessary to emphasize in Bengal that the khadi tour organized by Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta is also the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial tour. Sheth Jamnalaji, Sjt. Rajagopalachari, Sjt. Manilal Kothari and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker are about to tour in Bengal as from the 5th of next month in the interest of khadi, which an all-India committee decided on the death of Deshbandhu should be the centre and the circumference of an all-India memorial for the late Chittaranjan Das, the uncrowned king of Bengal. There is a wave of swadeshi passing over Bengal at present. But I suspect that the true meaning of swadeshi is missed in the forest of words that surround that simple but life-giving word. Let us adhere to its root-meaning and we shall discover nothing but khadi in it. Swadehsi is "of one's own country". Among things of the villagers' daily use, cloth is the only thing that is "not of one's own country". That which they can easily make themselves is also cloth. Hence the swadeshi that they can realize and without which they must starve is khadi and nothing else. Hence is khadi the only real swadeshi for every patriot. I hope therefore that Sheth Jamnalaji and his companions will be whole-heartedly assisted by Bengal wherever they go. Every yard of khadi bought and every donation given to the Memorial is so much help to the boycott movement and to the poorest in the land.

BOYCOTT AND STUDENTS

The Principal of a college writes :¹

The promoters of the boycott movement are dragging the students into their movement. . . . When the students leave their schools and colleges and join any demonstration, they mingle with the rowdies of the place and have to be responsible for all the outrages of the badmashes and often receive the first blows from the policeman's batons. They, besides, incur the displeasure of the school and college authorities whose punishment they have to submit to; they further disobey their guardians who might refuse to finance them further, which spells their ruin. I can understand youth movements which aim at doing such constructive work as teaching the ignorant peasants, spreading knowledge of sani-tation, etc., during holidays; but to see them turn against their own parents and teachers and walk along streets in questionable company and help the breaking of law and order is a sorry spectacle. May I request you to advise the politicians not to draw the students from their legitimate work to make their demonstration *more effective*? . . .

The correspondent has written in the hope of my condemning the participation by the student world in active political work. But I am sorry to have to disappoint him. He should have known that in 1920-21 I had not an inconsiderable share in drawing students out of their schools and colleges and inducing them to undertake political duty carrying with it the risk of imprisonment. I think it is their clear duty to take leading part in the political movement of their country. They are doing so all the world over. In India where political consciousness has till recently been unfortunately confined in a large measure to the English-educated class, their duty is, indeed, greater. In China and Egypt it was the students who have made the national movement possible. They cannot do less in India.

What the Principal might have urged was the necessity of students observing the rules of non-violence and acquiring control over the rowdies, instead of being controlled by them.

MACAULAY'S DREAMS

A friend sends me the following quotation from Macaulay's *Life and Letters* :²

On the 7th March 1835 Lord William Bentinck decided that "the great object of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

² *ibid*

literature and science among the natives of India;" two of the orientalisists retired from the Committee of Public Instruction; . . . and Macaulay entered upon the functions of President. . . .

"Our English schools, said Lord Macaulay, "are flourishing wonderfully. . . . The effect of this education on the Hindoos is prodigious. No Hindoo who has received an English education ever remains sincerely attached to his religion. . . . It is my firm belief that if our plans of education are followed up, there will not be a single idolator among the respectable classes of Bengal thirty years hence. . . ."

I do not know whether Macaulay's dream that English-educated India would abandon its religious beliefs has been realized. But we know too that he had another dream, namely, to supply through English-educated India clerks and the like for the English rulers. The dream has certainly been realized beyond all expectations.

PEACE AMIDST STRIFE

Before now I have shared with the reader some of the beautiful things that a friend sends me from time to time for my Monday silence. I am tempted to share with him the following further instalment which has been lying with me in my jacket for a long time. All but the last two are extracts from Buddhistic writings. The last but one is from Emerson and the last of all is a Hindu proverb.

Like a beautiful flower full of colour, without scent, the fine words of him who does not act accordingly are fruitless.

A mind unshaken by life's vicissitudes, unstirred by grief or passion, is the greatest of all blessings.

There never was, there never will be, a man who is always praised, or a man who is always blamed.

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, so wise men falter not amidst blame or praise.

Let us live happily, then, not hating those who hate us.

Let us live free from hatred among men who hate.

Let us live happily, then, free from ailments among the ailing.

Let us dwell free from afflictions among men who are sick at heart.

Let us live happily, then, free care among the busy.

Let us dwell free from yearning among men who are anxious.

Let us live happily, then, though we call nothing our own.

We shall become like the bright Gods, who feed on happiness.

The greatest prayer is patience.

Never in this world does hatred cease by hatred.

Hatred ceases by love: this is always its nature.
Reverence and lowliness,
Contentment and gratitude,
The hearing of the Lord at due season.
This is the greatest blessing.

As a mother, even at the risk of her own life, protects her son, her only son: so let a man cultivate goodwill without measure among all beings.

Let him cultivate goodwill without measure toward the whole world, above, below, unstinted, unmixed with any feeling of differing or opposing interests. Let a man remain steadfastly in that state of mind all the while he is awake, whether he be standing, walking, sitting or lying down. This state of heart is the best in the world.

By rousing himself, by earnestness, by restraint and control, the wise man may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

As the bee—injuring not
The flower, its colour, or scent—
Flies away, taking the nectar :
So let the wise man dwell
Upon the truth.
Ye taught my lips a single speech
And a thousand silences.

Even Buddha was once a cart-horse, and carried the loads of others.

Young India, 29-3-1928

381. ON FASTING

The reader is familiar with the letters of a Polish professor from which I have published extracts from time to time in these columns.¹ In one of his letters referring to my fasts he writes :²

I publish this as being of use to the reader who is interested in such researches. The physical and moral value of fasting is being more and more recognized day by day. A vast number of diseases can be more surely treated by judicious fasting than by all sorts of nostrums including the dreadful injections—dreadful not because for the pain they cause but because of the injurious by-products which

¹ *Vide* “Truth is One”, 21-4-1927 and “Unity in Variety”, 11-8-1927.

² Not reproduced here. The correspondent had narrated his experiments in fasting and said that it not only increased bodily activity but also spiritual enlightenment.

often result from their use. More mischief than we are aware of is done by the drug treatment. But not many cases of harm done by fasting can be cited. Increased vitality is almost the universal experience of those that have fasted. For real rest body and mind is possible only during fasting. Suspension of daily work is hardly rest without the rest that the over-taxed and overworked digestive apparatus needs in a multitude of cases. The moral effect of fasting, while it is considerable, is not so easily demonstrable.¹ For moral results there has to be perfect co-operation from the mind. And there is danger of self-deception. I know of many instances in which fasting undertaken for moral results has been overdone. To a limited extent it is a most valuable agent if the person fasting knows what he is doing. There was considerable force in the warning given by the Prophet against his disciples copying his fasting over and above the semi-fasts of Ramzan. "My Maker sends me food enough when I fast, not so to you," said the Prophet. Of what use is a spiritual fast when the spirit hankers more after food the longer the body is starved?

Young India, 29-3-1928

382. TWO CORRECTIONS

Two lamentable errors have crept into the footnote to Mr. Ireland's letter printed at page 93 in *Young India*² of the 22nd instant. About the middle of the column one reads: "God reaches earth through millions of ways not understood by us." The stenographer heard "earth" when "us" was spoken. The sixth line after this one reads: "It is like many other things which we can perceive", etc. The context would show that "not" is obviously omitted from the sentence. It should read: "It is not like many other things", etc.

Young India, 29-3-1928

¹ The correspondent had written: "Whenever I have a moral or intellectual difficulty, I fast. . . . Once I had a difficulty with a printer who delayed my work in order to print other more profitable things. By fasting I succeeded in changing his mind. . . ."

² Vide "Difference Stated", 22-3-1928.

383. LETTER TO ROMAIN ROLLAND

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 30, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

Though the translation of your very kind and energetic letter has been with me for three days, I am able to reach it only at the last moment. But I cannot let the post go without sending you a line if only to thank you for your friendly frankness.

The matter you have discussed is of tremendous importance. It is never out of my mind, if only because it is for the vindication of ahimsa that I love to live and should equally love to die. But I see that I have not been able clearly to explain my position. I must not however enter into any argument. If God enables me to meet you this year we shall prayerfully discuss the matter and possibly come to a joint conclusion. Before deciding finally I propose to await your cable or letter as the case may be.¹

Meanwhile please accept my best thanks for your cordiality and concern for me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Romain Rolland and Gandhi : Correspondence, pp. 105-6

¹ Gandhiji finally decided against the European tour when he had a letter from the addressee in April in which he wrote that he did not regard it as necessary that Gandhiji should drop all his important work and go to Europe to meet him

384. LETTER TO URMILA DEVI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You are never without troubles. But they should be treated as chasteners. Dhiren's case is difficult to advise upon.¹ Idealistically he should disobey every order of externment and internment and submit to any punishment that may be given to him. But that is a matter for himself to judge. Before he can disobey the orders I have in mind, he must have the inner conviction that disobeying is a duty and imprisonment for disobedience not a task but a matter of joy. And such joy is possible only when one considers such imprisonments as conducive to individual as well as national growth. But what actually should be done I cannot really confidently say. You know Dhiren better than I do and after all Dhiren will be largely guided by what you would have him to do. You must also consider to what extent you will be able to bear his imprisonment and sufferings, and then come to a conclusion. Of course Dhiren if he submits to the externment order is due to come to the Ashram and stay as long as he likes. There is always work for young men like him.

Nothing is yet fixed about the proposed visit.

Yours sincerely,

SRIMATI URMILA DEVI
4A NAFAR KUNDU ROAD
KHALIGHAT, CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13126

¹ The addressee had written: ". . . There is trouble about Dhiren also. The Government propose to extern him from Bengal. I do not think that catastrophe can be avoided. He can of course refuse to sign the order, but in that case he will be liable to prosecution which might result in 3 years rigorous imprisonment. . ." (S.N. 13126).

385. *LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS'
ASSOCIATION*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

TO
THE SECRETARY
A. I. S. A.
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

With reference to your letter No. 2169 dated 28th instant regarding private agencies, it is difficult to give an opinion straightway. I do consider it necessary to acquire greater control over private agencies. Before I can advise, it will be well to obtain concrete suggestions from the Tamilnad Agency.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13139

386. *LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 30, 1928

MY DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

You must continue to send me all new additional facts and figures. I enclose herewith the combined balance-sheet sent by you the other day.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13125; also C.W. 4786. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

387. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

March 30, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. You must not hesitate to write to me about your wants, and any other matter. I shall try to meet you as far as possible, but you might be called upon to face privations. Bickerings at home too may be a national servant's lot.

Thakkar Bapa saw Sir Purushottamdas about your salary and Sir Purushottamdas considers your receiving salary from the Central Committee as the most natural thing and Rs. 150 as quite reasonable. Now I shall have to ask for Rs. 200. I don't anticipate any difficulty.

I am trying to find out whether Jethalal or Parshatlal can be spared. Kalyanji and Naraharibhai it is impossible to spare. Narahari has his own work chalked out for him and Kalyanji must be buried in Bardoli. But I have an able businessman just now free for such work. He is Jaisukhlal Gandhi. He was in charge of Amreli Khadi Karyalaya. It is now being rearranged and Jaisukhlal is being made free. Your letter under reply comes just in time to keep him free. But it is necessary to send him to Amreli for winding up the head office and despatch all the stock here. This is likely to take a fortnight. I have just had a talk with him as to whether he is prepared to do the thing. He is agreeable provided I let him go to Amreli straightway and wind up the business there. I have sent a wire¹ to you today. If I do not receive your reply at once, you will have to give a fortnight to be counted after receiving your final reply.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI

PEOPLE'S FLOOD RELIEF COMMITTEE

HYDERABAD (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 951

¹ This is not available.

388. *LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER*

March 30, 1928

I have replied to your cablegram. Nothing is yet certain. I am not clear in my own mind as to what I should do. I am now in correspondence with M. Romain Rolland. His final reply will help me to come to some decision. If the visit to Europe is decided upon and if I reach in time I would gladly perform the opening ceremony¹. But so far as I can see I can't possibly reach in time. There seems to be no occasion to leave India before May if at all. I may therefore suggest your making other arrangements.

As for staying with you, of course, I would love to do so if you can harbour me and my companions, because if I do come I shan't be alone.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER
KINGSLEY HALL
POWIS ROAD
BOW
LONDON, E. 3

From a photostat: S.N. 14949

¹ Of the Handicraft Room on July 7

389. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

*Ramanavami [March 30, 1928]*¹

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have not been able to take a decision as yet about going to Europe. I am not keen on it. The desire to meet Romain Rolland is certainly there. But I am awaiting his letter in this connection. A letter has come, but it does not incline me to go. If at all I go, it will be in May and I shall be back in October. I shall try to stay with you in Mussoorie even if it is for only a few days. I want to remain here up to April 13².

Please let me have your opinion on what I wrote inviting the co-operation of mills in the boycott of foreign cloth.³

Write in detail about your health. Are you now able to eat anything?

Yours,

MOHANDS

From the Hindi original: C.W. 6155. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

390. SPEECH AT ASHRAM ON RAMANAVAMI DAY

March 30, 1928

The Rama of whom we sing is not the Rama of Valmiki, nor even the Rama of Tulsi—although his *Ramayana* is very dear to me and I consider it an incomparable work, I never seem to have enough of it once I start reading it. Today, however, we shall not think of Tulsidas's Rama or the Rama of Girdhar's *Ramayana*, much less Rama of Kalidasa or Bhavabhuti. There is great beauty in Bhavabhuti's *Uttararamacharita*. However, here is not the Rama whose name we may recite to cross to the other shore or whose name we may repeat in moments of despair. If someone is suffering unbearable pain I tell him to repeat Ramanama. If someone is unable to sleep I tell him too to repeat Ramanama. This Rama is not the son

¹ From the contents it is clear that the letter was written in 1928.

² Last day of the National Week

³ *Vide* "What Can Our Mills Do?", 15-3-1928.

of Dasharatha or the husband of Sita. In fact he is not the embodied Rama. The Rama that dwells in our hearts cannot possibly have a physical form; the heart is no larger than a thumb and the Rama who dwells in some niche there could not have a body, nor could he have been born on the ninth day of the month of *Chaitra* in a certain year. He is birthless. He is the Creator, the Lord of the universe. Hence the Rama whom one wishes to remember, and whom one should remember, is the Rama of one's own imagination, not the Rama of someone else's imagination.

If we keep this in mind, many doubts that trouble us would not arise at all. Many times we wonder how the Rama who slew Vali could be called the Perfect One. I too come across many such questions, and I am amused. What great achievement is there in having slain someone, by fair means or foul, or to have destroyed the ten-headed Ravana, if ever there was one such. In this modern age, even if a Ravana is born, not with twenty but countless hands, a child standing behind a cannon can, by firing a single ball, send all his arms and heads flying. We would not regard such a child superhuman; we would look upon him as a big monster. I believe that we do not wish to acquire the strength of a super-monster. We would not attain peace by worshipping him. We should worship Him, the Inner Ruler, who dwells in the hearts of all, yet transcends all and is the Lord of all. It is He of whom we sing: *Nirbalke bal Rama*¹. The song also mentions Draupadi's despair. Now, what had Draupadi to do with an embodied Rama? Yet, the poet has sung that Rama saved Draupadi's honour. The Rama mentioned here is the One who is common to all and yet comprehended by none. It is this Rama whom we remember. Between this Rama, the Inner Ruler, and Krishna there is no difference.

We celebrate the festival of Rama's birth so that we may practise some self-restraint, and the children may enjoy innocent pleasures and learn some lesson by reading the *Ramayana*. Man, who is himself embodied, cannot easily conceive God in any other form. His imagination cannot go farther. Therefore he conceives God as being incarnated in human form. Hinduism has boundless tolerance. Hence God has been described as descending in the forms of a fish, a boar and a man-lion. In this way having superimposed a form on God, men conceived Him as having a body and then imagined Him as taking birth. And when we speak of His

¹ Rama, strength of the weak', the opening words of a popular song

avatars to protect dharma whenever dharma declines and *adharma* flourishes, it is true only in the manner and to the extent which I have just described; how else could we say that the birthless One took birth? There is no reason to believe that any historical figure was the incarnation of God or God as a historical figure was born in human or any other form. If a person is endowed with all the qualities of God, he may be called an incarnation of God. It was because of their divine qualities that all those great men of the past were regarded by people as either plenary or partial incarnations. And yet, knowing this, different devotees have described the same God in the Rama of Valmiki or Tulsidas and there is no harm in singing those *bhajans*. If we bear in mind what I said earlier, we would not be deluded. If someone wishes to confuse us confronting us with conundrums, we should tell him that we do not worship embodied Rama as conceived by anyone; we worship our own Rama who is flawless and formless. As we cannot reach Him direct, we sing *bhajans* that describe Him as personified, and then try to apprehend Him in His purity.

So long as we are unable to see through the wall of the body, the qualities of truth and non-violence will not become fully manifest in us. When we think of pursuing truth, we must stop mistaking the body for ourselves, for we shall have to die in the pursuit of truth. The same is true of non-violence. The body is the root of ego. One who has attachment to the body cannot free himself of the ego. I cannot become wholly free of violence so long as I have the feeling that this body is mine. One who desires to have vision of God will have to transcend the body, to despise it, to court death.

It is only when we master these two qualities that we can be saved, that we can practise *brahmacharya* and so on. How can we do without truth if we wish to practise such vows? The face of truth is hidden by a golden lid.¹ Why should we fear to speak the truth or to act truthfully? How can we catch a glimpse of truth so long as we do not remove the glittering lid of untruth? If anyone commits an offence, are we willing to love him instead of getting angry with him? Although we sing that this world is insubstantial, do we know at all what the word implies?

“If you wish to know me,” says Rama, “you must flee the world.” But the body cannot be wished away. Having trained ourselves to look upon the world as unreal, we may go about our

¹ *Ishopanishad*, v. 15

business as a matter of duty all the time and still find Rama. That is the teaching of the *Gita*. This is why I regard the *Gita* as a spiritual dictionary. Tulsidas teaches us the same truth through beautiful poetry.

The key, however, is the one that I have given, namely, that the Rama in our hearts is the Ferryman who will take us across. We cannot all create poetry as Tulsidas did. But we can fill our life with poetry by bringing God into it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

391. SPEECH AT GATHERING OF STUDENTS AND TEACHERS, AHMEDABAD ¹

March 31, 1928

Mahatmaji, addressing the students, expressed satisfaction that his suggestions had been carried out. He however regretted that the boys were not as clean as they ought to be. Putting on khaddar, he said, indicated that they were clean both bodily and in their hearts.

The mill-owners, Gandhiji continued, were not extending their helping hand by becoming liberal in donating money. He was conferring with the mill-owners and requesting them to pay all the money subscribed by them to the Tilak Swaraj Fund for the benefit of the children unconditionally without interfering in any way in the administration of the schools, which must be solely left to the Labour Union. Even if they did not give any money these schools would go on.

God is great and if you have faith in Him you would get money from any source, provided you have true ideals.

To teachers, Gandhiji said that they must not make any use of books for imparting education, as books spoiled eyes and blunted the intellect. He himself had experienced that. He understood that in Russia they were conducting one thousand schools for peasants and that they were giving education without the aid of books by making all possible use of the senses. He asked them to clean their own houses and streets themselves and not to depend on others for doing the same.

Concluding, Mahatmaji asked them to make their schools ideal in every way, so that the boys and girls of the mill-owners might envy them and the mill-owners might be tempted to send their children to the labour schools. On truth depended the foundation of education, and they must always resort to truth.

The Hindu, 31-3-1928

¹ A spinning demonstration by the students of the schools run by the Ahmedabad Labour Union was held in the morning.

392. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 31, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have for a long time wished to write to you just a line. I was told that I could look forward to meeting you at Madras. But that was not to be.

Will you kindly tell me why you have preferred the cry of boycott of British goods, principally British cloth, to boycott of foreign cloth and why also boycott of British cloth only pending settlement?

I hope you have regained your original health.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13143

393. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 31, 1928

MY DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. The terms that I think the mill-owners should agree to are as follows :

(1) The prices should be regulated by a special committee representing all interests.

(2) The production both as to kind and quantity should also be regulated by the said committee.

(3) Mills should cease to sell any mill-cloth under the name of khadi and should cease within three months at the outside of the date of acceptance of terms to manufacture any cloth that is likely to compete with khadi and to this end the committee will specify from time to time what the mills may not manufacture.

(4) Mills will organize not only the sales of mill-cloth but they

will sell khadi also through the agencies thus organized.

(5) Mills should use no foreign yarn, no foreign silk, no foreign wool nor artificial silk.

(6) Mills should whole-heartedly identify themselves with the boycott of foreign cloth movement and to this end should put forth all their energy towards gaining control over piece-goods merchants, other middle men and cotton market in so far as it may be possible.

(7) If a clear understanding is arrived at with mills, khadi depots will naturally become agencies for the sale of mill-cloth under terms laid down by the said committee.

(8) Mills should hand to the said committee such funds as may be required from time to time for propaganda. This, in my opinion, may not exceed one lakh of rupees.

This letter is being hurriedly dictated. You will therefore please supplement these conditions with those stated in the two issues of *Young India*¹ if there is any omission. You will not publish this letter in any case, and, you will please remember that these are only my own personal views, and if anything substantial is to come out of these talks, [th]ere will have to be a formal meeti[ng of a]ll concerned.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. SHANTIKUMAR

BOMBAY

From a photostat: C.W. 4787. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

¹ *Vide* "What Can Our Mills De?", 15-3-1928, and "Foreign Cloth Boycott—Some Questions", 22-3-1928.

394. LETTER TO RAI HARENDRANATH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
March 31, 1928

DEAR SIR,

I have your kind telegram. I am extremely sorry that I shall be unable to attend the Conference. I however wish you all success and hope that the Conference will not forget khaddar which represents the dumb millions.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. RAI HARENDRANATH
CHAIRMAN, RECEPTION COMMITTEE
BENGAL PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE
CHANDRI, CALCUTTA

From a microfilm: S.N. 13142

395. SATYAGRAHIS, BEWARE!

When member of the Hunter Committee asked General Dyer the leading question with reference to the Jallianwala Bagh: "Was it your idea to instil fear of the Government in the minds of the people by acting ruthlessly?" the latter, enthusiastically accepted the suggestion and replied in the affirmative. However, the reign of terror had not begun with General Dyer. It is the legacy of tradition and the monopoly of Indian bureaucracy. It can, however, be said that General Dyer gained notoriety for this repression. Hence we know it also as Dyerism. As bureaucracy is dependent for its very existence on a policy of Dyerism, it does not hesitate to seek shelter under the latter when occasion arises. According to it such an occasion has arisen in Bardoli. Hence it may be said to have launched repression on the bania satyagrahis who are regarded as cowardly and submissive. Eight of these satyagrahis have been served with notices that if they do not pay up their land revenue stipulated therein before the 12th of April, their lands will be confiscated. The notice served on one bania gentleman shows the amount of revenue due as Rs. 160. Perhaps we could not have found fault with the Government if it had confiscated land worth Rs. 160, but to confiscate land worth thousands of rupees for the sake of Rs. 160 is nothing but repression. Under this policy,

on certain occasions, the punishment for a slap is not another slap but the gallows. We shall call anyone who extorts a thousand rupees for a debt of one rupee a tyrant, a ten-headed Ravana.

What reply will the banias, who are said to have forethought, give to this? Will they betray cowardice or prove themselves worthy of having joined the army of satyagrahis?

Vallabhbhai has warned not once but repeatedly that the Government has by legislation acquired the right to confiscate land, to imprison people, etc., and that it has time and again given proof of the fact that it will not hesitate in the least to exercise those rights. Hence neither they nor others should be flabbergasted by this notice of confiscation. They should have faith that the Government will not be able to derive any benefit from the land which would be confiscated in this manner and that it would not go to a traitor who would come forward to purchase it if it is auctioned. Land which has been filched in this manner is like unprocessed mercury which is bound to erupt as boils.

Land is not more precious than one's pledge or one's self-respect. There are myriads of landless people in this country. During the last floods, many people's lands were eroded and layers of sand have now been deposited over them. Just as Gujaratis withstood the wrath of the heavens with courage and fortitude, may the satyagrahis of Bardoli similarly put up with this wrath of the Government and may they stand by their pledge!

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

396. *THE NATIONAL WEEK*

The forthcoming National Week is the ninth of its kind. In this Week, we should take stock of the progress made by us. However, instead of that we find despondency in many places. For us this Week is the time for calculating the national sum total of achievement, for introspection and for self-purification, for uniting the hearts of Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and other, for Hindus to welcome in their midst those men and women who have been regarded as untouchables and to serve them, and for Hindus, Muslims and others to take exclusively to khadi and boycott foreign cloth.

However, today we seem to have forgotten these limbs which

sustain the nation. Those who have faith in any of these causes are making efforts to promote them. But now all this is not being done on an extensive scale. Today we do not hear people say, as they used to do in the past, that swaraj cannot be secured without these.

An attempt should be made during the National Week to bring about a change in this state of affairs. Those who have an unswerving faith in constructive activity should make great efforts in this direction, irrespective of whether some or all national institutions make such an effort; it is only from such efforts that an all-embracing activity will and must start again. None should entertain any doubts that khadi is the one visible activity that can be taken up by children, men, women, Hindus, Muslims and all others. The talk of boy-cott is everywhere in the air. However, there seems to be some confusion regarding boycott at the moment. Some persons advocate the boy-cott of British goods, others of British cloth alone and that too until such time as a peaceful solution is arrived at, while yet others advocate the permanent boycott of foreign cloth. All these things cannot go on at the same time. After the first two intentions had been proclaimed for twenty years, the people found on deeper reflection in 1920 that the only way of boycotting foreign cloth which was possible as well as obligatory was to replace it by khadi. Moreover, this idea of boycotting foreign cloth does not depend on any conditions but holds good for all time. And that which is everlasting is beneficial even in small measure whereas that which is dependent on conditions is beneficial only if it materializes in an appropriate measure. If the latter brings about only partial results, it may even prove harmful.

Hence we ought to free ourselves from this delusion and make constant efforts to carry on propaganda for khadi for the sake of boycotting foreign cloth or, in other words, for the sake of the poor of India. In order to do that :

1. those who do not already wear khadi should do so and advise others to do likewise;
2. all should spin as much as possible and inspire others to do likewise;
3. all should contribute as much as possible for this cause and collect funds from neighbours.

In this connection, what Shri Vithaldas Jerajani writes is worth

nothing :¹

The figures given here are worth pondering over. Bombay is the barometer for gauging the feelings of politically-conscious India. It is not too great a venture for Bombay to reach the figures of the first year. That is like a drop in the ocean in the matter of making the boycott a success.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

397. MY NOTES

ORISSA'S PLIGHT

I give below an extract² from Shri Chhaganlal Gandhi's letter:

The reader should remember that these starving children who wander about aimlessly, who pick up from the sand and eat banana skins which have been thrown away, are our own brothers and sisters. If we proudly call India our mother, we cannot but look upon these forlorn children as our brothers and sisters. What can swaraj mean to them? What will they say if we ask them to define swaraj? Shall we fill their stomachs by throwing uncooked rice at them by way of alms? Shall we let them pick up banana skins from the sand? Shall we let them eat rotten grain? Or shall we make human beings of them by making them industrious and providing them with some occupation? In my humble opinion, swaraj lies hidden in the search for a remedy for the starvation in Orissa.

CHEAP KHADI

The person in charge of the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar on Richey Road has sent the following note³:

If we wish to boycott foreign cloth, the stock of khadi lying in this small shop will be sold out on a single day of the week. One such shop should not have much difficulty in meeting its expenses.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-4-1928

¹ The letter is not translated here; *vide* "Notes", 29-3-1928, sub-title, "Special for National Week".

² Not translated here. It gave a harrowing picture of Orissa in the grip of famine.

³ Not translated here. It contained the rates of rebate offered on different varieties of khadi during the National Week from April 6 to April 13. *Vide* also "Notes", 29-3-1928, sub-title, "Special for National Week".

398. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. Of course the mill-owners would gladly give whatever may be wanted if only we would undertake to advertise their wares; but it is not possible for us to do so unless they accept our terms. Copy of the latest correspondence will interest you. You will please treat the whole thing as strictly confidential.

I wish Hemprabhadevi could be induced to give up her moroseness which creeps upon her so often even against her will.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 2

From a photostat: S.N. 13144

399. *LETTER TO OTTAMA BHIKKHU*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I am sorry indeed that anybody should have mentioned anything to you about my proposed visit to Burma. Even if I come to Burma I do not expect any contribution from Burmese. If I come I should certainly hesitate to express my views on the political situaion until I had studied it and could speak on it with confidence.

Yours sincerely,

REV. OTTAMA BHIKKHU
SHWEZADY KYAUNG
AKYAB

From a photostat: S.N. 13145

400. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 1, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter.

The enclosed copies will tell you what progress is being made in the negotiations with the mill-owners. I however agree with you that nothing will come out of them at the present moment. But the negotiations may fructify on due occasion. There was a time when the mill-owners were absolutely defiant about boycott propaganda. I shall write to you after these negotiations are finished.

Though Romain Rolland's first expected letter has arrived and [he] warmly looks [forward] to my proposed visit, it does not enable me to come to a decision. As the time for arriving at a fixed decision is drawing nearer, my diffidence is growing. There may be however a cable from Rolland next week and it may decide my fate.

Meanwhile there is no going to Singapur. I am fixed up here for the time being. If I do not go to Europe, I am due to go to Burma and pass there two months, going to a hill-side and making collections during my stay there.

I am quite of your opinion that some day we shall have to start an intensive movement without the rich people and without the vocal educated class. But that time is not yet.

You do not tell me where Kamala is to pass the summer months.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13147

401. LETTER TO H. M. AHMAD

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am passing it on to a friend¹ who is better able to reply to your questions than I am, and I have asked him to write to you directly.

Yours sincerely,

H. M. AHMAD, ESQ.
SCHUHUMANNSTR. 17
BERLIN N.W. 6

From a microfilm: S.N. 14276

402. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

You never write and I somehow copy your bad example. An opportunity has now offered itself to break through that undesirable practice.

I enclose herewith a letter. You are better able to answer the two questions than I am. I have told Ahmad that I have passed the letter on to you. Please therefore answer his two questions as briefly as you can.

What are you doing? How are you feeling? I do expect great things from you.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13148

¹ *Vide* the following item.

403. LETTER TO SADASHIVAM

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVAM,

Sjt. Jeevanlalji of Calcutta requires rest and change. He has been advised to go to Bangalore. Will you please secure a small bungalow or a flat on monthly terms? It should be well lighted, well ventilated and roomy. The more isolated it is the better, as it is required for recuperation. The sanitary surroundings should be perfectly good. If such a bungalow is available, before closing I want you to telegraph to me giving me the situation and terms. I would like you to give this matter early attention.

Sjt. Jeevanlalji's Madras agent—he has a branch of his business in Madras—will see you perhaps in this connection. You will then please help him.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13149

404. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have been regularly receiving your letters. But I never get the time to write to you. I had your telegram also. There is the expected letter from Rolland. He seems to like the idea of my going and has been already prompting associations to send me invitations. But as the time for deciding is nearing, I am growing more and more diffident. I am still waiting before coming to a final decision for his expected cable.

Mr. Mukul Dey is here and began operation immediately he came.

I have not been able yet to talk with Ambalal. I will not fail to do so. I hope it is not a case of phthisis with Rati's wife. Can't you persuade Gurudev to take a long rest in Europe? There is no reason for him to age so quickly.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13150

405. LETTER TO RAMJI DAS JAINI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I fear that it is distance that lends enchantment to the Ashram. I do not know that at your age and with your habits already formed you could exchange your comparatively soft life for the comparatively hard life of the Ashram. But if you are seriously desirous of being in the Ashram, you should first of all study its constitution and then come and live in it for a few days and see for yourself its life.

I am sorry I have no copy of the constitution at the present moment. But it is reproduced in Natesan's publications of my writings and speeches. The constitution has undergone alterations but nothing of a substantial nature. You will notice in it that it is necessary for the inmate of the Ashram to live the life of a celibate.

Yours sincerely,

RAI SAHEB RAMJI DAS JAINI
P.O. MAJITHA, DT. AMRITSAR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13138 a

406. LETTER TO REMINGTON TYPEWRITER CO.

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 1, 1928

MESSRS REMINGTON TYPEWRITER CO., LTD.
YUSUF BUILDING
CORNER OF CHURCHGATE STREET AND ESPLANADE
BOMBAY

DEAR SIR,

I am in receipt of Rem. Portable No. 61625 which I had sent you for slight repairs and adjustments.

I am exceedingly glad to say that the machine is working to my entire satisfaction.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13146

407. LETTER TO SATYANANDA

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 3, 1928

DEAR SATYANANDA BABU,

I have your letter. It give me joy to think that you do remember me occasionally. You will have seen from the pages of *Young India* that I am trying my best to induce mill-owners to shoulder the burden of bringing about a boycott of foreign cloth. We may not go beyond the negotiations at the present moment. But the ground will have been prepared for future action, if we can do nothing just now.

I am not at all sure in my mind as to the propriety of going to Europe. I am therefore still vegetating and still awaiting for the call from within. The next fortnight will perhaps decide the matter. If, however, the negotiations take a concrete shape, of course I do not go because I flatter myself with the belief that a successful prosecution of the boycott will demand my continuous presence in India.

Yours,

From a photostat: S.N. 13155

408. LETTER TO RAMI GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 3, 1928

CHI. RAMI,

I have your letter. The handwriting this time cannot be considered good. The lines are not straight. You should improve your health. Look forward to doing a good bit of khadi work during the National Week.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9707

409. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your telegram. I am sending not Jaisukhlal Gandhi but Mathuradas who is bringing this letter. He is perhaps better fitted for the work because his knowledge of English is better and being a Cutchi knows the language and habits of many people there. Of course he is a well-trying worker. He has been working in connection with khadi for many years now and has a wide knowledge of mercantile business. He was born and brought up in Malabar. He really came with Lakshmidas. He has been just now taken up by Kakasaheb for the Vidyapith in order to develop the charkha work. Therefore he is loaned to you from the Vidyapith and his honorarium will be paid by the Vidyapith. His travelling expenses are being paid just now on your account, that is, the Committee's account, but if there is any difficulty about paying his railway expenses, you will please tell me. I take it that you won't want to keep him beyond 15th of May. If you do want anybody beyond that time, I will have to send you someone else because he will be wanted by Kakasaheb on the first of June and before that he would want to go to Calicut to bring his family.

About your own honorarium, I have now a letter from Thakkar Bapu who says you told him also that you would want no more than Rs. 150. What is this? I do not mind the Rs. 200, but I want to know how you came upon Rs. 150 and why afterwards you had to increase your demand? I am anxious for all of us to be deliberate and firm in all we do. The only hope I see of our regeneration lies in some at least developing decision, forethought and the like. You are not to take this amiss, nor to revert to Rs. 150 unless you can clearly do so whilst you are doing relief work. But if you find that you made a miscalculation or if you fixed Rs. 150 without previous consultation with Mrs. Malkani and others concerned, you must humbly make the admission and ask for Rs. 200. You understand why I write all this, don't you? I want you to come up to my expectations.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. N. R. MALKANI

From a photostat: G.N. 927

410. LETTEER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

MY DEAR RAJAN,

You have put me a very difficult question. But after giving very careful consideration to the whole of your argument, I incline towards your accepting an honorarium for whole-time work in connection with the Fellowship. You will not be able to put your whole soul into it if your attention is divided between two trusts. One or the other or both must suffer, especially when there is likely often to be a conflict between the two. On the pinciple that the labourer is worthy of his hire, I see no ethical objection against your accepting an honorarium for your work for the Fellowship.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. A. A. PAUL
7 MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13160

411. LETTER TO B. SHIVA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 4, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The enclosed is the best I can do for you.¹ You want an article. You might as well get blood out of stone as get an article from me.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. B. SHIVA RAO
THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY
ADYAR
MADRAS 3

From a photostat: S.N. 13158

¹ *Vide* the following item.

412. MESSAGE TO “NEW INDIA”

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 4, 1928

I wish *New India* many years of useful service to the country. May its revival hasten the advent of swaraj.

413. PRAYER SPEECH AT ASHRAM

[April 4, 1928]¹

The first lesson in emulating Hanuman is to apply all one's senses to the task in hand. In order to do this, one's vision must remain unwavering and pure. The eyes are the lamp of the body and, one may add, of the soul also. For inasmuch as the soul dwells in the body, it can be looked at through the eyes. A man might through his speech present a false show and deceive others, but his eyes would reveal him. If he does not have a steady unwavering look in his eyes, his real nature will be betrayed. Just as physical ailments are diagnosed by examining the tongue, spiritual maladies may be detected by looking at the eyes. Hence children should be taught to look straight, right from their childhood.

Hanuman's eyes had a steadfast gaze and showed that, just as Rama's name was ever on his lips, it filled his heart and pervaded every fibre of his being.

I like the custom of installing Hanuman in our gymnasiums; this however does not mean that we wish to gain physical strength alone or that we worship merely Hanuman's physical strength. We should certainly become physically strong; but we should also know that Hanuman did not have the physique of a giant, he was the son of Vayu², hence his body was as light as a flower and yet wiry. However, Hanuman's distinctiveness lay not in his physical strength but in his devotion. He was an incomparable devotee and servant of Rama. He found fulfilment in serving Rama like a slave and he performed with the speed of wind whatever service was asked of him. We therefore worship Hanuman and instal him in gymnasiums because though we

¹ According to *Prajabandhu* the speech was made on April 4 in connection with Hanuman Jayanti.

² Wind-god

do physical exercise we are going to become servants—servants of India, servants of the world and, through these means, servants of God. It is through this humble service that we shall catch a glimpse of God.

Hence we should not even say that we worship Hanuman only for his *brahmacharya*. Every servant has to practise *brahmacharya*; how can anyone who has taken the vow of service enjoy the pleasures of sense? It is necessary for one to practise self-control even to render the limited service to one's parents; it cannot be rendered if anyone yields to his passions as I did. Similarly, how can anyone who would serve the Ashram, serve men and women, boys and girls, how can he afford to gratify his sensual desires? And serving the Ashram is such a small matter; it is like a drop in the ocean. Hence anyone who would serve the world should flee his desires.

However, mere fasting and penance are not sufficient to keep away from pleasures of sense; this can be achieved through a Hanuman-like devotion. Hence the key to *brahmacharya* and all other virtues is found in single-minded devotion. Every evening we recite :

विषया विनिवर्तन्ते निराहारस्य देहिनः ।
सर्वज्ञं रसोऽप्यस्य परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते ॥¹

The senses of him who fasts may well be quietened, but this does not help in controlling the desire for gratifying the passions; the mind very often becomes more restless when the senses become weak; then the mind runs more after the objects of pleasure; that too is calmed by the vision of Rama. This is the message of Hanuman, the lesson to be learnt from his life.

Yesterday I used an adjective which I had never used previously to qualify *brahmacharya*. I said that Hanuman's *brahmacharya* was *sattvik*, and, while praising *brahmacharya*, I mentioned three distinct types of it—*sattvik*, *rajasik* and *tamasik*. Whereas Hanuman's *brahmacharya* was of a *sattvik* nature, Meghnad's was *rajasik*. One who practises the latter type of *brahmacharya* has anger and pride. Total surrender is the mark of the *sattvik* type. It cannot be said that either of these two was inferior to the other in physical strength. Hanuman however could defeat Meghnad because the latter was full of pride, while Hanuman was full of devotion and so possessed additional

¹ When a man starves his senses, the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme. *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 59

strength.

We should, therefore, keep our vision pure, our hands and feet pure and our speech pure and, by doing so, develop the capacity to imitate Hanuman to some extent. We certainly wish to improve our physique by practising *brahmacharya*, but the under-lying motive is that we wish to become devotees of Rama even through the means of our body and thereby serve the world. It is not that if we took care of the outer the inner would automatically take care of itself. However, if we keep on taking care of the physical side and if this is not a mere veneer, the mind too will one day become steadfast and only then shall we be as good as Hanuman.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-4-1928

414. REMEMBER THE UNTOUCHABLES

Within two days of the publication of this issue, the National Week will be on us. We used at one time, in the process of self-purification, to picket liquor dens. I am reminded of those days as I go through the following paragraph from an address received from the members of the Coimbatore Adi-Dravida Association :¹

The old order has not changed even to a small extent, and even our souls are despised by the other Hindus so that we are not allowed to worship in temples the one God. . . . The churches and mosques have their doors wide open to receive us and the missionaries in charge of them extend us a hearty welcome. The Government tempts our young men by locating liquor shops in or near our *cheries*, the living quarters of our community. If industrial institutions took the place of such shops and if social workers befriended us instead of *abkari* contractors, we have no doubt that our progress would be assured in a very short time. We, therefore, earnestly appeal to you for help to organize industrial schools in or near our living quarters to save our community from ruin.

We need not consider during the National Week what the Government has done or not done, but we are bound to consider what we have done and what we can do. Whilst there is no doubt that public opinion against untouchability has been strengthening day by day, public action still remains weak. We have not even been able to induce the keepers of public temples to throw their doors open to the

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

suppressed classes nor have we been able to replace a single liquor den with an industrial school or a refreshment room where, instead of the fiery liquid, they can receive health-giving nutritious drinks and other refreshments in clean surroundings.

Young India, 5-4-1928

415. BAGHAT STATE AND SACRED THREAD

With reference to my note in *Young India*¹ of 22nd March last about the treatment of Kolis in Baghat State, president of the Arya Samaj, New Delhi, writes :²

The president is no other than Rai Saheb Lala Ganga Ram, the well-known philanthropist and public worker of Delhi. Lala Ganga Ram's letter seems to leave little doubt about the correctness of the allegations made in the previous letter published in these pages. I had hoped that his informants had exaggerated the happenings in Baghat State and that it had not treated as a crime the wearing of the sacred thread by the so-called untouchables. I have before me a copy of the letter written to Lala Ganga Ram by the Prime Minister of the State. It runs :

In reply to your letter dated the 10th January 1928, I regret that the State is unable to supply you the copy of the judgment, as Arya Samaj is not a party to this suit.

I cannot help remarking that the reply is in extremely bad taste. It is a bad copy of some English officials' laconic and stereotyped replies which they ordinarily send to correspondents who ask inconvenient questions. But these estimable gentlemen as a rule respect rank and status and do not crudely invent things to suit their replies. The Prime Minister of Baghat State has dared to ignore Lala Ganga Ram's status in society (I mean apart from his title) and for the sake of insulting him has imagined what Lala Ganga Ram has never said in his letter. For the never asked for a copy of the judgment in the case nor claimed to be party in the case against the unfortunate Kolis. This is essentially matter for the Hindu Mahasabha to take up. I do not know whether the Sabha countenances the wearing of the sacred thread by the so-called untouchables. Whether it does or not, it cannot possibly approve of coercion being used against those who choose to wear it. Immediately the thread becomes a monopoly

¹ *Vide* "Notes", 22-3-1928, sub-title, "Can It Be True?".

² The letter is not reproduced here.

carrying with it a punishment for its breach, it will cease to be sacred. It was sacred because and when the wearers were men of learning and piety. It will soon become a mark of degradation if the alleged example of Baghat State proves infectious.

Young India, 5-4-1928

416. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE A.I.S.A.

The All-India Spinners' Association has issued its second annual report. It is a thoroughly businesslike and instructive document. The letterpress occupies 31 octavo pages. The appendices occupy 24 pages. If I may advise the reader, I would suggest his reading the appendices first. They will give him a detailed analysis of the income and the expenditure of the Association duly audited and certified. He will discover at a glance how over 20 lakhs of rupees have been laid out for the promotion of the greatest, because the most extensive, national industry. If he will study the figures carefully, he will perceive the value of investing a portion of his income in this industry, and the return he would get for his investment would be the prosperity of the poor villagers on whose toil his own income depends. Among the appendices he will find also the resolutions of the All-India Spinners' Association defining its general policy, conditions on which loans are granted, conditions on which credit sales may be conducted by its depots and on which bounties are given to private khadi dealers and commissions to khadi hawkers. He will also find in them the constitution of the All-India Spinners' Association, the names and locations of different agencies and other information of value.

Having glanced through the appendices, let him go through the report if he has a half-hour or an hour to spare and he will know the way khadi has progressed. He will know the condition of the All-India Deshbandu Memorial Fund. Whereas the total production during 1925-26 was Rs. 23,76,670, in 1926-27 it was Rs. 24,06,370 and the sales during the same period were Rs. 28,99,143 and Rs. 33,48,794, respectively. Investors in khadi may therefore derive comfort that khadi is not a losing but a substantially progressive proposition. As against 50,000 spinners according to the previous report, there were 83,339 serving 5,193 weavers during the year under report. As against

1,500 villages, now there are 2,381 villages where hand-spinning is done through the agency of the Association. And just as the figures about spinners and villages were understated in the last report, so are they under-estimated in the report under notice. There are 177 khadi production centres of which 62 are departmental, 41 aided and 74 independent. There are 204 centres of which 115 are departmental, 44 aided and 45 independent, and the total number of workers under the direct control of the Central Office and in aided organizations is 748. This does not include those working in the independent organizations. Of improvement in the quality of yarn the report states :¹

It is satisfactory to note that whilst there is improvement in the quality, the prices have undergone steady reduction. The following information about the special khadi service furnished by the Technical Department will be read with interest :²

I must skip over the other instructive paragraphs of the report. I hope I have given sufficient information to what the appetite of the reader for possessing the report itself which can be had at the office of the All-India Spinners' Association, Mirzapur, Ahmedabad, for 4 annas worth of postage stamps.

Young India, 5-4-1928

¹ The extracts quoted are not reproduced here.

² *ibid.*

417. SASTRI'S SELF-DENIAL

The decision of the Right Honourable Srinivasa Sastri to remain in South Africa beyond his term will gladden the hearts of the Indian settlers as it has pleased and eased the minds of those here who are interested in the South African question and who have been anxiously following the course of events in that sub-continent. Familiarity in Sjt. Sastri's case instead of making the Europeans indifferent or lukewarm has made them look to the Agent General as their friend and peacemaker. By his punctilious impartiality combined with firmness wherever necessary Sjt. Sastri has inspired them with trust as well as respect. The grateful Indians have not been slow to discover and appreciate the worth of this distinguished countryman and they were urging him to prolong his stay, if it was at all possible. Let them now demonstrate their affection and appreciation by becoming united and by being correct in the observance of all their part of the agreement. I tender my congratulations to Sjt. Sastri on his self-denial. For I know how anxious he was to return home at the end of his term.

Young India, 5-4-1928

418. A MILL-OWNER ON BOYCOTT

An Ahmedabad mill-owner writes:¹

The letter is refreshingly candid. I wish that the other mill-owners would take the view that this correspondent takes of the possibility of standardization of prices and necessarily therefore of cloth. It is refreshing too to find that fluctuations of cotton prices do not much affect prices of cloth. And I would add in spite of the correspondent's view to the contrary that it is possible to control cotton prices if it is possible for us to boycott foreign cloth. For prices of our cotton are dominated by America only because we export large quantities of cotton and that too to the market for which America also caters. If we consider it to be possible, as it has proved to be possible, to appeal successfully to the patriotism of the buyer of cloth it is equally possible to make a successful appeal to that of the grower of cotton. Indeed the importance of foreign cloth boycott is derived from the knowledge that for it to succeed all the component parts of the nation have voluntarily to join the movement. It cannot succeed

¹ The letter is not reproduced here.

unless there is willing and hearty co-operation from the vast mass of the village population. My faith in the movement persists because I know the masses to be sound. Only the classes block the way because of their want of faith. If they will only shed their fear and their unbelief and lead the movement, the masses will follow. *And this boycott is the only thing in which it is possible for the masses actively to join without having to make much sacrifice.*

I do not share the view of the correspondent that artificail silk may be used with impunity in the manufacture of cloth in our mills. His com-parison of foreign dyes and foreign size with artificial silk is hastily made. Just now we contemplate boycott only of foreign cloth, not of dyes and size. All foreign yarns therefore, whether silk, wool or cotton, nautral or artificial, must be taboo; or if foreign artificial silk yarn may be used with impunity why not foreign cotton or wool or natural silk yarn?

But with foreign cotton it is a different thing. We need not exclude from use foreign cotton, for it is a raw product. What we *must* boycott for the sake of the starving masses living in enforced idleness for at least four months in the year is foreign yarn and cloth which the masses can spin and weave in their cottages.

The indigenous mill-cloth too would be intolerable if it displaced these mases without finding for them an equivalent industry. The mills have a place in the economy of national life only to the extent that they supplement the national industry of handspinning in millions of our cottages. They will be a hindrance if they compete with them and supplant them. Their natural tendency no doubt is to supplant both the village spinner and the village weaver. It is only when the mill-owners, mill-agents and their share-holders become truly national and conduct their affairs not to exploit the masses but for their benefit first and their own profits after, that they will be able to appreciate and not merely to join but of lead the boycott movement. That, if they take a long view of the matter, they have nothing to lose and much to gain has been made clear by the foregoing letter. Indeed it is a self-evident proposition. Boycott of foreign cloth, if it is the best assurance of steady work for the masses, is also an equal assurance to the mills of steady profits in the long run.

But the history of the mill industry at least during the past seven years of the mass movement does not fill one with much hope of the

mills rising to the occasion and realizing their duty to the nation. Instead of looking upon khadi with favour and fostering it, our mills have entered into an unfair, unpatriotic and illegitimate competition with khadi. The following are the figures of khadi manufactured by our mills during the respective years :

| | 1925 | 1926 | 1927 |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Lb. | 2,28,87,970 | 2,72,36,337 | 3,39,77,851 |
| Yards | 6,50,48,487 | 7,43,13,280 | 9,43,80,368 |

They have sold this enormous quantity of coarse cloth as khadi and have not hesitated in some cases shamelessly to use the charkha label, etc., with the deliberate purpose of exploiting the khadi atmosphere created by Congress organizations. It gives one pain to have to say that the mills that thus manufactured coarse cloth and palmed it off as khadi did a distinct disservice to the nation.

If their eyes are now opened and if only to do belated reparation for the grave wrong done by them to the nation, they will head or at least join the boycott movement on the terms suggested by me or others equally effective.

This painful discovery of the figures has however a bright side to it. It is a revelation even to an optimist and khadi expert like The Ashramme of the hold that khadi has acquired over the people. It shows that a much larger number that we are aware of has in obedience to the nation's call changed their taste and preferred to buy and use coarse cloth instead of the fine cloth they used to wear before. They have undoubtedly often paid higher prices than they used to. They have bought mill khadi largely under the mistaken belief that it was genuine and that it had the *imprimatur* of the Congress. An ardent lover of the mases has in these figures and my legitimate deductions therefrom much food for thought and equal cause for hope. As for my feared visit to Europe, I may assure the correspondent that I do not propose to visit Europe if an effective scheme of boycott materializes in the very near future.

Young India, 5-4-1928

419. NOTES

AFRICANS AND INDIANS

Deenabandhu Andrews, when he was here recently, drew my attention to what the Poet had written in the Press in connection with a movement in the Transvaal said to be going on on behalf of Indians to isolate themselves from the Africans and wanted me to give my opinion on it. I do not think that any importance need be attached to the alleged movement. For I feel that it has no bottom. Indians have too much in common with the Africans to think of isolating themselves from them. They cannot exist in South Africa for any length of time without the active sympathy and friendship of the Africans. I am not aware of the general body of the Indians having ever adopted an air of superiority towards their African brethren, and it would be a tragedy if any such movement were to gain ground among the Indian settlers of South Africa. Needless to say, I entirely associate myself with the opinion so forcibly expressed by the Poet condemning the movement. If, as has been stated on behalf of the leaders of the so-called movement, "It is humiliating to the Indian sentiment and to the Indian national honour and civilization to think that our Agent General is trying to bring us down to such a low level", it will ill befit us to repudiate such a sentiment when it is expressed by the South African whites in respect ourselves. And what is more, the South African whites are able to translate their contempt The Ashram and prejudice against us into action whereas ours towards the South Africans can only react against ourselves.

WOMEN AND JEWELS

A lady doctor in Tamil Nadu sends a letter accompanying her gift referred to in it. As the letter, in my opinion, enhances the value of the gift and is likely to serve as an example to others, I compress its contents as follows, omitting the names of the donor, the Raja and the place :

Just a few lines to tell you that I sent you yesterday a parcel of diamond ring and a pair of ear-rings which were given to me about 12 years ago in remembrance of service in the palace. . . when the heir was born to the Raja. It grieved me much when I came to know that the Raja did not have even the courage to invite you to his palace when you passed by and I was told that it was due to fear of the Government. You can imagine my feeling when after your visit I looked at these jewels which before used to travel with me. Now

when I looked at them, bitterness rose in my breast and then it turned into deep sympathy for the starving millions about whom you spoke when you were here. I said to myself, 'Are not these jewels made out of the people's money? And, what claim have I to keep them as my own?' I then made up my mind to send them on to you. You could use them for khadi service and so help some of the starving millions. I feel sure that it is a better use to make of them than that they should remain in a corner of my box. A friend has valued them at Rs. 500. They are therefore insured for that amount. I only hope that some generous person will give you more than the actual price, knowing the circumstances in which these things are being sent to you. You may make what use you like of this letter.

It is remarkable how we imagine fears even when there is no cause. There are many Rajas who have openly and willingly supported khadi and therethrough the cause of the poor from whom, after all, as my correspondent correctly puts it, they derive their riches. It is true that khadi has a political significance; but we have not yet come to the stage when support of khadi can be safely declared by the Government to be criminal. Every philanthropic movement can be truned to political use, but it would be a sad day when on that account it is boycotted even as to its philanthropic aspect. But it is only fair to state that the Raja to whom reference has been made by the lady doctor is not the only one who is afraid of supporting khadi or showing ordinary courtesy to a public servant like me. It is well The Ashram however that the Raja's boycott of me has stimulated the gift. But I would like all the sisters who may chance to see this note to realize that it is not necessary to be able to emulate the fair donor to have occasions like the one that set her athinking about her duty to the starving millions. Surely it is easy enough to realize that so long as there are millions of men and women in the country starving for want of food because of want of work, the sisters have no warrant for possessing costly jewels for adorning their bodies or often for the mere satisfaction of possessing them. As I have remarked before now in these pages, if only the rich ladies of India will discard their superfluities and be satisfied with such decoration as khadi can give them it is possible to finance the whole of the khadi movement, not to take into consideration the tremendous moral effect that such a step on the part of the rich daughters of India will produce upon the nation and particularly the starving masses.

KARVE JUBILEE

It give me joy to publish the following appeal by Sjt. V. M. Joshi, President of Karve Jubilee Committee :¹

Professor Karve is not an ordinary man who is satisfied if he satisfies an indulgent public which, if it proves itself exacting and imperious at times, issues a certificate of merit ninety-nine times out of hundred if some little service is rendered to it during recreation hours. Prof. Karve has obeyed a master that is never generous, never indulgent and ever exacting, though invariably just. This master is his own conscience. His self-effacement, his single-minded devotion to duty, his exhaustless energy, his honesty in all circumstances, his faith in the midst of opposition, his irrepressible optimism are a national asset of the first magnitude. There may be two opinion about the work to which he has devoted his great gifts but there can be only one opinion about the gifts themselves. And the latter are any day far more valuable and lasting than the work itself. The organizers of the Jubilee have set before themselves a very modest task to collect Rs. 25,000 to be presented to Prof. Karve for his work. It is a sum that should readily come forth from the numerous men and women who have come under the influence of this giant among silent and selfless workers or who have profited by his labours of a lifetime.

Young India, 5-4-1928

¹ The appeal is not reproduced here.

420. LETTER TO DR. C. MUTHU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 5, 1928

DEAR DR. MUTHU,

I have your kind note. I wish your enterprise every success. So far as I have understood your method, it is to treat phthisis patients [by] open air and dietetic treatment. As you know I have a horror of drugs and the like. I therefore welcome every honest effort to replace them with drugless and what might be termed natural methods of curing a disease which need never find an abode in this sunny soil of ours.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13161

421. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 5, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

You will see my article¹ on mills in the current issue of *Young India*. The latest move is on their own to start a Swadeshi League without reference to us. Do not think anything concrete is going to come out of my effort. By all means let them prosecute their own plans. So far as I can see, we must confine our attention to khadi hawking.

No final decision has yet been arrived at about the European visit. I am shirking it and making it depend upon some further indication from Rolland which I should have next week.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13162

¹ Vide "A Mill-owner on Boycott", 5-4-1928.

422. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 5, 1928

DEAR SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I shall wait further developments.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From the original: C.W. 4788. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

423. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

MY DEAR KHAMBHATTA,

I have your radio from Aden. I did not know when I replied that it was a radio message. I therefore sent a telegram¹ to your Bombay address. Mr. Kapadia received the telegram and acknowledged it. I hope that Jal took the voyage comfortably and that he and you all profited by it.

I am sending you herewith a letter² to Austrian friends who will guide you in the choice of a doctor should you decide to have the operation in Vienna.

May God bless Jal. With love to you all,

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13167

¹ This is not available.

² *Vide* the following item.

*424. LETTER TO FREDERIC AND FRANCISCA
STANDENATH*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

The bearer, Mr. Khambhatta, is a dear friend and co-worker. Under advise from his doctors he has gone to Europe in order to have his only son examined and, if necessary, operated upon. I know that you will give him all the help and guidance you can in the choice of a good surgeon, etc.

Yours sincerely,

DR. AND MRS. STANDENATH
GRAZ (IN STYRIA)
TRAUTMANSDORFGASSE I
(AUSTRIA)

From a photostat: S.N. 14281

425. LETTER TO M. M. SINGH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. It is not usual to receive in the Ashram people who are unknown to any of the members. I would therefore like you, if you seriously want to be in the Ashram, to write to the Secretary of the Managing Board giving all the particulars about yourself. I may also inform you that at the present moment the Ashram is overcrowded.

Yours sincerely,

SARDARINI M. M. SINGH
UPTON HOUSE
NEW CANTT. ROAD
DEHRA DUN

From a microfilm: S.N. 13163

426. LETTER TO M. DEWAN NARAINDAS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If human relations were regulated according to rules of arithmetic, what you propose would be suitable. But just as pressing 30 meals into 10 will not be the same as taking the 30 meals regularly from to day, similarly will 6 months' spinning compressed into 15 days not do. The idea is to test one's powers of sustenance and discipline.

Nor will it be enough for you to offer saytagraha against your parents and wrest an unwilling consent from them. You must get that consent by diligence and force of character.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. M. DEWAN NARAINDAS
C/O KRISHNA COTTAGE
NEW HIGH SCHOOL BUILDINGS
HASSAN ALI EFFINID ROAD
KARACHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 13164

427. LETTER TO Y. R. GAITONDE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

MY DEAR GAITONDE,

I thank you for your prompt opinion. I shall await the books you promise.

You say that if a drum is introduced an engine would be necessary. But I understood from the American friend of whom I spoke to you that the drum could be worked with man-power or even animal-power without difficulty and with little expense. And do you think that a drum is necessary for the development of the little tannery?

Yours sincerely,

Y. R. GAITONDE, ESQ.
C/O B. 12 AMBEWADI
GIRGAUM, BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 11397

428. LETTER TO GANGA RAM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

You will notice I have again returned to the subject of the Kolis in the Baghat State.¹ It is a shocking thing. When I received your first communication, I had no idea that my correspondent was my old friend the Rai Saheb. When, therefore, I made the discovery, it gave me pleasure.

Who is this Dewan and what is the position of the Baghat State? What is its population? Is there any public opinion? How is the State reached? Have the Kolis given up the thread out of fright?

Yours sincerely,

LALA GANGRAM
ARYA FARM
DELHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13165

429. LETTER TO S. RADHAKRISHNAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind letter. Nothing is yet certain aboutt he proposed European visit. It is difficult for me to make up my mind.

As to the article you want, I would ask you to take pity on me. I am so thoroughly washed out and have to give so much time to *Young India* and *Navajivan* that I have very little left for managing any more writing.

Your sincerely,

PROF. S. RADHAKRISHNAN
49/I.C. HARISH MUKERJI RD.
BHAWANIPUR
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13166

¹ *Vide* "Baghat State and Sacred Thread", 5-4-1928.

430. LETTER TO J. B. PENNINGTON

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters for which I thank you. I have been so busy that it has not been possible for me to overtake your book.

As to Miss Mayo's performance, there is no argument left for me to advance, if you think that there is no distinction between my writing in *Young India* and Miss Mayo's book. If your experience of India coincides with Miss Mayo's, no argument can possibly convince you to the contrary.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. PENNINGTON, ESQ.
5 EWELL PARK GARDENS
EWELL, SURREY

From a photostat: S.N. 14280

431. LETTER TO G. RAMACHANDRAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

MY DEAR RAMACHANDRAN,

In continuation of my letter I send you herewith the enclosed. I am anxious now that you should adopt the suggestion as early as possible.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13591

432. LETTER TO CHARLIE U. MORSELOW

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 6, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I do not perform any miracles nor do I believe in miracles. I would advise you to be content with what God gives you bearing in mind that there are many who are in a worse plight than you are. And, after all, physical blindness is not half as bad as moral blindness. And, whilst we have no positive control over physical infirmities, we have over the moral infirmities. If, therefore, there is any such thing as miracle, it should be attempted after one's moral welfare.

Yours sincerely,

CHARLIE U. MORSELOW, ESQ.
P.O. BOX 123, WATERLOO
NEW YORK, U.S.A.

From a photostat: S.N. 14282

433. *LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI*

April 7, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I did not need your budget. I must not ask you to cancel your policy. I simply passed on to you what was burdening my mind. My inquiries must not oppress you. We all must try to look as we are. And if we could do that we would not worry over any questions. The Rs. 200 I shall find and that without any loss of self-respect. But you must always let me have the privilege of expecting the highest from you. Why should you worry about dowries? You are going to pay not a farthing. Why should the daughters be married in an Amil family necessarily? You must train the girls from now to forget that they belong to a caste. They belong to India and if you believe in my view of varnashrama, the matter becomes simple.

Of course you do not need to pay him anything beyond his, say, fare and food there.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 885

434. *LETTER TO I. P. THURAIRATNAM*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I wish the Students' Congress all success. I hope that the students will not forget the starving millions of the parent country and the most effective manner in which they can help is to identify themselves with them by adopting khadi.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. I. P. THURAIRATNAM
SECY., STUDENTS' CONGRESS
CHAVAKACHCHERI, CEYLON

From a microfilm: S.N. 13172

435. *LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Better a dictated letter than none. My congratulations to Sohaila and many kisses on both the cheeks, on the lips, on the forehead and in the centre of the head of the baby.

I wish I had time to hear more of your songs.

Yours sincerely,

MISS RAIHANA TYABJI
CAMP BARODA

From a photostat: S.N. 13169

436. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your letter. I resign myself to your letter to the Viceroy. Of course I entirely agree with you that if the States will give us assistance we shall receive it gladly. But I know that they dare not give it to an institution that is frankly a creation of non-co-operation and nursed in its atmosphere. But if they do with the certain knowledge that it is a non-co-operating institution, we should gladly accept their assistance.

The proposed European visit is causing me much trouble just now. I can't make up my mind. I know that I should not be so undecided like this. But what is the use of my hiding my weakness? I can't account for it myself. However, I should come to a decision in the course of the next fortnight at the latest. Improvement in health has no attraction for me. The meeting with M. Romain Rolland and a quiet conference with the chief men of Europe is what would take me to Europe. Let us see how God leads me.

What is the use of Begum Ansari and Zohra wanting me to stay in their new abode? All the time I am there, they keep themselves at a safe distance hiding themselves behind the *purdah*. If they want me to be there, they will have to expose to view their superfluous bangles and other jewellery so that I can ease them of the superfluities and turn them to good account.

So far as the Jamia collections are concerned, I suspect that we shall do nothing beyond getting collections from personal friends, and, in order that this can be done it is necessary to have that constitution and trust-deed. Do please therefore expedite it as soon as you can.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 13170

437. LETTER TO MRS. SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

It was good of you so promptly to reply to the enquiry addressed to your husband.¹ Please send my regards when you write to him.

Nothing is yet certain about my proposed visit to Europe. But even if I go to Europe I hardly think I shall be able to combine both Europe and America during the few months alone which I can allow myself.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13171

438. LETTER TO A. A. PAUL

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR RAJAN,

Here is my message for the May issue of the *News Sheet*. If I agreed to give you a message for every issue, I could only have been in a drunken state and promises made in such a state are valueless.

I never knew that Joseph has lost a brother-in-law. It was good you gave me the information.

I hope you received in due course my reply² to your previous letter.

Yours sincerely,

A. A. PAUL, ESQ.
7 MILLER ROAD
KILPAUK
MADRAS

From a photostat: S.N. 13173

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Sam Higginbottom", 28-3-1928.

² *Vide* "Letter to A. A. Paul", 4-4-1928.

439. MESSAGE FOR "NEWS SHEET"¹

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

True promotion of Fellowship is to be found in silent acts of fellowship. One such little act, therefore, is more than tons of professions.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13172

440. LETTER TO JOSEPH

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR JOSEPH,

Rajan Paul tells me that you have lost a brother-in-law. My sympathies are with you and your widowed sister. Tell Mrs. Joseph that though I have not said one word since, I have never forgotten the last scene when I left your house. I shall ever treasure the affection of which that scene was a testimony.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13168

¹ Of the International Fellowship

441. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have your letter with Dr. Marie Stopes's review. I do not propose to publish it in *Young India* as it seems to me to be more an advertisement of her books and her methods than a serious review of the chapters seriously written.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 file

SJT. S. GANESAN

18 PYCROFTS ROAD

TRIPPLICANE, MADRAS

From a microfilm: S.N. 13174

442. LETTER TO ALICE SCHALEK

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 7, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter with your notes of the interview.¹ The notes required considerable revision. I therefore send you a clean copy.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ALICE SCHALEK

AUSTRIAN JOURNALIST

NERON'S HOTEL

LAHORE

From a photostat: S.N. 14284

¹ *Vide* "Interview to Alice Schalek", 20-3-1928.

443. LETTER TO S. A. WAIZE

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April, 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I would love to take up your sister. But I doubt whether she would be able to stand the rigorous life of the Ashram. We have very little room at present. If, therefore, she comes, she will have to share a room with some sister or sisters. Then she will have to take part in the Ashram labours. The weather in Ahmedabad is very hot during this time of the year. And if she does not know Hindustani quite well, she will be at sea. If in spite of these drawbacks—drawbacks as they may appear to her—she is desirous of coming, please let me know and I shall place your letter before the Managing Board. And you will also let me know for how long your sister desires to stay here.

Yours sincerely,

S. A. WAIZE, ESQ.

From a photostat: S.N. 13176

444. LETTER TO NARAYANA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 8, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I have no doubt that you should resist the idea of marriage until you yourself are quite ready.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. NARAYANA
27 THIRD CROSS ROAD
BASAVANGUDIP.O.
BANGALORE, S.I.

From a microfilm: S.N. 13178

445. LETTER TO J. B. KRIPALANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April, 8, 1928

MY DEAR PROFESSOR,

You know perhaps that Krishnadas is not here at present. He has however sent me your letter of the 25 March. Why do you say that the Spinners' Register will mean purchasing yarn from cottage to cottage? I have not suggested any such thing at all.¹ What I have suggested is that we should know the spinners with whom the middle men deal. We do not want to do away with the middle men altogether. We must not be at their mercy either, nor must we be in the dark as to what is actually paid to the spinners. The Register, therefore, has to be taken periodically. Once we know who the spinners are, where they are, what they get and what they do, you need not bother about them again, say for six months. As a matter of fact there should be no difficulty in your coming in touch with the middle men themselves. The Ashram and with the spinners through them. I don't know whether I am even now clear. Not knowing the practical working of these, there may be difficulties of which I have no knowledge. You will then write to me about those difficulties and I might be able to make concrete suggestions for overcoming them.

About the want of capital, I am going to confer with Jamnalalji and Shankerlal. You do not say definitely how much you require. Is Babu Shivaprasad Gupta ready to advance that sum without interest if repayment is guaranteed and if he is, what will be the period of such loan?

The last paragraph of your letter is bad. You can't afford to give way to despair under any circumstances. You have to hold on to the Ashram no matter what difficulties face you. You dare not take up any other work. Please write regularly.

Are you now thoroughly restored, or is there still some

¹ Gandhiji had called upon units of the All-India Spinners' Association to collect data regarding the spinners supplying yarn to the A.I.S.A. depots. *Vide* "Letter to J. B. Kripalani", 12-3-1928 and "Notes" 15-3-1928, sub-title, "Instructive Figures".

difficulty? If there is you should now find Dr. Ansari comparatively free.

Yours sincerely,

PROF. KRIPALANI
GANDHI ASHRAM
BENARES CANTT.

From a photostat: S.N. 13177

446. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 8, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. I do not remember Father having told me that he would be back in Bombay to confer with the mill owners during the last week of this month. But he and I discussed the question of foreign cloth boycott at length and he had a conference with Seth Lalji, Shantikumar, Seths Ambalal, Kasturbhai and Mangaldas. It was a good conference, but nothing definite was done. I have now heard that the mill-owners are going to start their own Swadesh League which means of course that we are not coming to any terms.

The Ashram I had a long discussion with Lalaji today, for he was here for two days. He is enthusiastic about boycott of foreign cloth. I have supplied him with literature. He even suggested that I should invite a few leaders and confer with [them] about boycott. I told him I had not the courage to do so. He is of opinion that if intense boycott propaganda is to be taken up, I must not go out of the country, wherein of course I agree; but I cannot take up intense propaganda unless politically-minded India is wholeheartedly with me and unless the agitation about temporary boycott of British cloth, principally British cloth, is given up. We have, therefore, come to this provisional arrangement that if anything concrete takes place by spontaneous action on the part of the known leaders, I should give up the idea of going to Europe. On the other hand [if] nothing of that kind happens and if otherwise I see my way clear, I should proceed and that Lalaji and others who are minded like him should cultivate an atmosphere for intense propaganda about foreign cloth boycott with or without the Assistance of mills. I therefore suggest that you should confer with

Dr. Ansari and others. I suppose they will all go to the Punjab and pass the resolution about foreign cloth boycott through khadi. I would warn you against any mention of indigenous mill-cloth. You can simply say: "Whereas the only effective means of immediately demonstrating the united strength of the nation lies through boycott of foreign cloth, this Conference urges all concerned completely to boycott foreign cloth and adopt hand-spun and handwoven khadi even though such adoption may necessitate revision of one's taste about dress and some pecuniary sacrifice.' You will also let me know the result of private discussions you may have with friends and advise me as to whether I should give up the idea of going to Europe. Dr. Ansari should really be able to decide.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13179

447. LETTER TO SHANKARAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April, 8, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I was thinking of you only early this morning, that is, just after prayer when talking to Pyarelal and here is your letter.

Suppose that there is a colony of orphans shipwrecked on an island, that they are all unmarried males, that they have never known that they ever had any parents, suppose further that they have a knowledge of letters and that from their reading they understood that they had all parents; suppose then that they in the course of their readings come upon a philosophical book called "Our Spontaneous Origin", should the orphans feel convinced philosophically that they were all spontaneous creation? Just as the supposed philosophical book would not unsettle the conviction of the majority of the unsophisticated orphans, so should the philosophical book that you have read about the non-existence of God not unsettle your belief in God. If you will admit the fact of your having parents, how can you escape the fundamental fact of the First Cause? Having made sure of that, I am indifferent whether you call that First Cause God or some other thing. And having been also convinced of that fact it is wholly

unnecessary to inquire how that First Cause disposes of justice or to inquire about the injustice that we seem to see around us. There are endless theories. I believe in that of cause and effect, that is, of the law of karma. It seems to answer all a man's doubts. But if they do not answer yours, you must wait, watch and pray and you will some day have the light. But if you do not believe in the First Cause, there is no hope. For to whom should you pray then? Therefore hold fast to your belief in God, never mind the reasoning. Can you reason out the existence of your parents? Will you not say, 'Whether I can reason or not the existence of my parents is an absolute fact with me'? If you cannot prove it to the satisfaction of your inquirers, you will say 'my reasoning is at fault but not the fact'. Even so must you say to yourself, 'Though I may not be able to reason out the existence of God, I must accept the experience of and the belief of mankind in the First Cause'.

If even now you are not satisfied, you must ask me again.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13175 and 13180

448. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 8, 1928

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

For the last so many days or even months, I have wanted to write to you but how was it possible for me to find time for it? This, too, I am dictating immediately after the morning prayers. I have got the shawl sent by you and when the time comes, I shall certainly use it. But in this season, the occasion will never come. I am getting fully acquainted with your activities and am pleased with them. I even rejoice in them. But do remember that you are not to pursue any activity at the cost of your health for, your first duty in going there lies in improving your health. However, if you can make use of your activities in improving it, I do not have to warn you. Do not have so much attachment for the activities that they ruin your health, and in order to regain it, you have to sacrifice your activities. It is like a saint losing both the worlds. Remember that the efforts to improve your health are also meant to excel in devotion to your duty.

Nothing has yet been decided about my going to Europe. It has been left to me to decide but I do not have the confidence to take a decision in this matter¹. I do not know what is good. I do not at all like going there, but in a week or two, I will decide this way or that. You are dreaming of paying a visit here. Forget about it. It is attachment. You are not fully aware of our wish to rub shoulders with the crores of suffering and half-starved people. Before spending each rupee, you must reckon that with that money, sixty-four persons can comfortably have their second meal. Moreover there is no need to risk your health by coming here in this weather. We meet through letters; that is no less grace of God.

You are inviting Kashi. The above argument applies in her case also. Only warm climate suits Kashi. The cold climate which you enjoy, which gives you strength, enfeebles Kashi. As far as service to her is concerned, there is hardly anything you could do. Besides, you The Ashram may not even be able to do that, and for one's own help, one cannot call one's parents. Moreover, you have made that relation virtuous. Treat any invalid woman you see there as your mother and help her. Consider such service as service rendered to Kashi. In the same way, treat every invalid man as your father. The spinning-wheel makes us do the same. It teaches us to render pure, selfless and dedicated service to numerous invalid and helpless parents, brothers, brothers-in-law and sons and daughters. Day by day, you are gaining proficiency in rendering such service. I am reminded of you by the figures you had given me about the growing business of lanterns, etc., here. I find from Devdas's letters that he is doing very good work in Jamia. Do not hesitate to write to me whenever you feel like doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32928

¹ After a lot of deliberation, Gandhiji ultimately dropped the idea of visiting Europe

449. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before April 10, 1928]¹

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letters. I do not think that I have missed any mail recently. It is good that Sushila is progressing in her studies, but I am worried about her health. I should like her to make every effort to acquire good health.

Nimu is here at present. Ramdas is on a tour hawking khadi. Afterwards he will go to Jamnadas's school. Both of them will work there. Devdas has gone to Delhi.

A proposal is being discussed about my going to Europe. I cannot make up my mind. The matter will be decided within a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Pragji that I got his letter. I have no time to write to him a separate letter. It appears that the cases of both have been decided now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4722

450. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 10, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have no time today to write myself. This is the National Week, and so I give as much time as I can spare and the body can endure, to spinning. Hence I am dictating this letter. You must have settled in phoenix by now. I like your staying there. It would be enough if Sushila went to the town twice or thrice to take her lessons. As a matter of fact, knowledge of a language as well as other knowledge can be acquired by one's own effort. I hope that Sushila is now completely all right. Yesterday Mr. Wayne met me. We talked The Ashram about his meeting Manilal. I did not engage him in any particular discussion, but I got the impression that he went away from here with

¹ *Vide* the following item.

some useful ideas.

Ramdas is hawking khadi in Kathiawar. Nimu is here. Devdas is teaching spinning, etc., at Jamia Millia in Delhi. These days the spinning-wheels are working non-stop in the Ashram. Kishorelal was ill, but is now reported to be recovering with common remedies. You must be getting letters from there, so I do not write about anything there.

Do you spend any time in studying the *Gita*?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4735

451. LETTER TO ALBERT GODAMUNNE

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter about your brother. I meet him every day because nowadays I sit with the diners in the common kitchen where he also takes his meals. I am glad you have written to me about him. I shall keep my eyes on him, but I must also tell you that I have not nowadays got the time to come in close contact with so many inmates in the Ashram. Therefore my observation of your brother will be limited.

The money order has not yet been received, but it will be in due course.

Yours sincerely,

ALBERT GODAMUNNE, ESQ.

PROCTOR AND NOTARY

10 PAVILION STREET, KANDY

From a microfilm: S.N. 13157a

452. *LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR C.R.,

I send you the enclosed with copy of my reply. You will do whatever may be necessary. Perhaps you know these parties.

SJT. C. RAJAGOPALACHARI
C/O KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

From a microfilm: S.N. 13183

453. *LETTER TO R. R. AITHEN*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I fear that I am unable to give you any useful guidance. I have not even been able to visualize your organization. But if you are desirous of coming to Ahmedabad, I shall be able to see you any day next week except Monday at 4 p.m.

Yours sincerely,

R. R. AITHEN, ESQ.
GENERAL SECRETARY,
INTERNATIONAL PEACE CAMPAIGN
150 WATSON HOTEL
BOMBAY

From a photostat: S.N. 13185

454. LETTER TO SADASHIVA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I have your three letters. My capacity for help in matters such as you relate is much less than my willingness. Though I know so many monied friend, I may not use my influence in the manner you suggest. You have therefore to paddle your own canoe and face the difficulties bravely. What does it matter if you are left without shelter? Do not millions live like that? And your daughters have received a training which should enable them to give a good account of themselves without your having made any provision for them. I want you therefore to discharge yourself like a man in the crisis that has overtaken you.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13184

455. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 11, 1928

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

I have your letter. What a pity Gurudev is so ill and has developed blood-pressure. This phthisis in India is a horrible business. If there is any truth in the theory of ultra-violet rays—so do I think there is—no one in India should suffer from that wretched disease.

You will remember that you have to finish the Shraddhanand series.

I have not yet met Ambalal, but I have not forgotten our conversation.

C. F. ANDREWS

SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: S.N. 13152

456. A SEASONABLE PRODUCTION

Readers of *Young India* are familiar with the name of Richard B. Gregg, an American lawyer who was attracted to India over two years ago by the message of khadi and who has been studying the movement in a most minute manner ever since his arrival in India. After a years's labour, he has written a book on the movement which treats khadi in an almost original manner. Every statement he has made is supported by facts and figures and footnotes give the authorities upon which Mr. Gregg has drawn. The book is published by S. Ganesan, 18 Pycrofts Road, Triplicane, Madras, and is priced at Rs. 1-8-0. From cover to cover it occupies 225 pages of which 165-225 contain seven appendices. The book contains 12 chapters. Let the reader also understand that Mr. Gregg, when he writes of villages, writes of things he has somewhat seen. The three opening paragraphs of his introduction show the reader the way in which Mr. Gregg has worked :¹

It was in order to remove this poverty that Mr. Gregg was driven to an examination of the various schemes proposed to that end and he was forced to the conclusion that the spinning-wheel was the only real solution. The author says:²

This little book is a statement of how the project looks to one who had seven years of practical work and study in industrial and labour problem in America (much of it in cotton mills), together with two and a half years' study in India of the khaddar movement. The latter period included observation both in the villages and at the headquarters of the movement. The investigation was undertaken primarily to clarify my own thinking. . . .

The originality of Mr. Gregg's examination of the problem consists in his approach to it from the engineering aspect which is the title of the first chapter, and he has no difficulty in showing that the The Ashrammaterial prosperity of a country is increased not merely by accumulation of power or machinery but by the right use of it.

¹ The paragraphs quoted are not reproduced here. Gregg had written: "In former days India was regarded as a very rich country, and prior to the Mohammedan conquest at least, the wealth was widely distributed among her people. . . . But now, although India is still considered a source of much wealth, the Indian people are ranked among the poverty-stricken of the world, . . . as Professor Gilbert Slater of Madras University says: 'The poverty of India is a grim fact.' "

² Only an extract is reproduced here.

This is how he opens his argument :

Following Mr. Ford's idea that the right use of power is more important than any particular kind of machinery, let us briefly examine the fundamentals of physical power and its utilization and then apply that as a test for the validity of the khaddar proposal. We will first state the whole engineering argument in brief, and then consider it in a more detailed fashion.

All physical power is derived ultimately from the sun. Coal and petroleum are, in effect, reservoirs from the stream of solar energy of past ages converted and stored up by vegetation. Water-power comes from the action of sunshine evaporating water from the oceans and transporting it to the land and rivers in the form of clouds and rain. Even the mechanical energy of horses and cattle and man himself comes from food obtained from plants activated by sunshine. All the power used in modern industry and in the economic activities of man in past ages came from his using some part of the never-ending stream of solar energy. The old *Rigvedic* hymns sang rightly of *Savitar* the Sun god: "*Savitar* . . . Lord of every blessing;" and "God *Savitar*, the good-eyed, hath come hither giving choice treasures unto him who worships" (*R.-V.*, x. 149; i. 35).

Any scheme which utilizes and efficiently transforms solar energy to a greater degree than was being done before is sound, from an engineering standpoint, and also from an economic point of view.

We do not usually think of the charkha as a machine, but it really is so. It uses the available mechanical energy of a man, woman or child for producing material goods. The handloom does likewise. The mechanical energy is derived from the food eaten by the person. Though in a different degree, manner and mode, the process is the same as that occurring in a steam engine or hydraulic power plant, namely, the transformation of solar energy into mechanical motion.

There are today great numbers of unemployed Indians. They are, in effect, engines kept running by fuel (food), but not attached to any machines or devices for producing goods. Mr. Gandhi proposes to hitch them to charkhas and thus save a vast existing waste of solar energy.

If we want to increase the use of mechanical power in India, this is the quickest and cheapest way. The 'engines' are all present; a man is as efficient a transformer of fuel energy into mechanical motion as a steam engine is; the spinning and weaving machinery to be used is nearly all ready at hand in the Ashrams sufficient quantity to supply all needs. Any additional needs can be quickly and cheaply produced in India by artisans who need no further training in technical skill for this purpose; the speed and quantity of output possible

with charkha and handloom are more closely adapted to the needs of the Indian market and Indian producers than any other type or machinery; no foreign capital is needed to purchase the machinery, and therefore there will be no expensive interest payments or difficulties arising from absentee control; the maintenance of such a factory is inexpensive and can be done entirely by available workers without further training; the amount of training needed for operatives is a minimum and of a sort more easily acquired than for any other type of machinery; the 'fuel' or power cost for the man-charkha system will be nothing above the present food bill of the nation; the material to be used is available in practically every Indian province at a minimum of transportation cost; and the market is everywhere.

I must resist the temptation to quote from the other chapters. But if the foregoing excerpts have at all proved tempting for the reader, let me assure him that he will find that the chapters that follows are fully interesting and deeply instructive. Let me close this hasty review with giving the names of the remaining 11 chapters. It will be admitted that they are suggestive enough.

Chapters

- II Engineering details
- III Competition between mill-cloth and khaddar
- IV Factors tending to decrease competition
- V Increased purchasing power
- VI Decentralized production and distribution
- VII Unemployment
- VIII Some cotton technology
- IX Does it work?
- X Various objections
- XI Comparison of khaddar programme with other reform schemes
- XII Money price criteria
- Conclusion

Young India, 12-4-1928

457. PLACE OF KHADI

Lovers of khadi have been writing to me energetically warning me against coquetting with mill-owners in the vain hope, as they call it, of securing their active co-operation on terms beneficial to the nation in the prosecution of the campaign of boycott of foreign cloth. I appreciate their warning. Some of them are tried and experienced workers in the khadi movement. But I do not give up hope of the mill-owners some day or other coming round to the national view. After all as an out-and-out believer in the method of non-violence, I may not let a single opportunity slip of converting the mill-owners to the nationalistic view, even as I may not pass by a single occasion of converting Englishmen to the Indian view of Indian's good. After all, if we are to win our freedom by non-violent means, we shall have to knock at the doors of those who put obstacles in its way and plead with them to remove them. And even as in a bloody revolution those who are supposed to stand in the way are made to pay the last penalty whether they are countrymen or otherwise, so in a non-violent revolution are they, whether countrymen or foreigners, required to face satyagraha, if they will not listen to reason and will obstinately stand in the way.

I therefore see no harm in having stated the conditions on which mill-owners can co-operate with the nation. It would have been wrong not to have done so. And if they accept the terms, I know that khadi, i. e., the masses have nothing to lose. For if the mills work not for exploiting the masses as they now do, but for serving them, they will supplement the products of the cottage spinning-wheel and the handloom and not supersede them as they now do. There is no doubt that if they hesitate to accept the terms stated by me, they will do so because the logical consequence repels them even as the logical consequence of Englishmen really becoming servants of the nation repels them. I would therefore ask khadi lovers not to be afraid of my so-called 'coquetting'. If we are strong in our faith, if khadi has the inherent vitality we claim for it, if it is the need of the masses, and if we persist in our effort with them, they will not fail to realize it. Khadi will fail only when khadi lovers falter in their faith or if their faith is based on a mere shadow, i. e., if there is no grinding poverty among the masses, if they have no leisure hours during the year, or if, though The Ashram they have spare hours, the spinning-wheel is not the most

suitable and practicable occupation conceivable for many millions.

It is because of the implicit faith I have in khadi in terms of the propositions just stated and of the strength born of that faith that I am 'coquetting' with the mill-owners. It is quite likely, it is perhaps now practically certain, that no immediate good will come out of these negotiations. But they will serve for further action or guidance if we have not meanwhile already achieved boycott of foreign cloth.

It is therefore profitable to inquire, even at the risk of repetition, what place khadi has in any scheme of boycott. In my opinion, boycott of foreign cloth is both necessary and feasible only because it affects and benefits the masses and can be achieved only if they co-operate. Boycott of foreign cloth would have but a temporary value if it could be obtained solely by the indigenous mills. And I hold it to be impossible in the near future to enforce the boycott through the single agency of mills. In my opinion, it is khadi alone that has made such boycott a practical proposition. Indeed it is so practical that if the politically minded India were to take up the sales of khadi, it is possible to manufacture in a year all the khadi that may be required by the nation even though there may be not a single yard of mill-calico—foreign or indigenous—available. I affirm this on the basis of the assumption that the villages will mostly manufacture their own khadi and the organized centres will manufacture for those who are not self-spinniers. Experience of past seven years shows that if there is a sudden famine of cloth in the country and if the masses are encouraged they have sufficient skill and the indigenous machinery for manufacturing their own khadi. No doubt a revolutionary change in the mental outlook and sartorial tastes of politically minded India is necessary. I have no doubt that if the bulk of them do not respond now, they will have to do so when they realize that khadi has become irresistible. And to make it irresistible khadi workers have to work away with steadfastness, honesty, scientific skill and precision. I have 'coquetted' with mill-owners and discussed the possibility of immediate boycott of foreign cloth in association with them, in order to show that if they mean it they can give themselves the privilege of serving the nation at the same time that they serve themselves. Meanwhile, let none doubt that khadi is silently and imperceptibly revolutionizing the national taste and will bring about the boycott in its own good time, if it not anticipated by some such combination as I have ventured to suggest.

Young India, 12-4-1928

458. NOTES

BREACH OF PROMISE?

When I was in Berhampur, Ganjam District, last year, I was taken to a temple which I was told was open to all including the so-called untouchables. I was accompanied by some untouchable friends. A few weeks after I received a letter that the trustees had declared prohibition against the entry of untouchables. I was loath to believe the statement. I, therefore, inquired and here is the reply to my inquiry :¹

If the information is correct, it is clear breach of promise by the trustees—a promise that was publicly made not merely to me but to the public of Berhampur through me. I wonder whether the trustees have any defence or explanation to offer. The untouchables have undoubtedly a clear case for offering satyagraha in this case. I do hope however that the public of Berhampur will redeem their self-respect by insisting on removal of the bar, if the bar does as a matter of fact exist.

“HUMAN SPIDER OF MAJORCA”

I am indebted to Sjt. C. Balajirao of Coimbatore for the following interesting press clipping²:

Young India, 12-4-1928

¹ Gandhiji's letter, dated March 22, 1928, is not available. The correspondent, whose letter is not reproduced here, had written that the trustees of the temple were putting even greater restrictions than before on untouchables and that the latter had started losing faith in the untouchability movement of the Congress.

² Not reproduced here. It was about a “human spider” spinning hundreds of yards of thread in a minute with an instinctive skill handed down through fifteen generations.

459. SOUTH AFRICA INDIANS

The following letter, dated 24th February, 1928, addressed on behalf of the Minister of the Interior to the Secretary, South African Indian Congress, records the concession granted by the Union Government regarding the alleged fraudulent entries:¹

If the condition regarding wives and children in clause (c) of the letter is not overstrictly enforced the concession should work well.²

Young India, 12-4-1928

460. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 12, 1928

MY DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I did not write without full knowledge of what was being done on behalf of mill-owners. They are starting a separate organization which will have nothing to do with us. However I am quite at one with you what we should leave no stone unturned to secure their full co-operation. I am doing all I can at this end and you will let me know what success you have with Sir Purushottamdas. But I would like you to study the possibilities of the charkha movement. It is not so hopeless as you seem to think. Let me put the position in a nutshell. Mills by themselves cannot achieve the boycott within the time that will satisfy the politician buy mills if they play the game together with charkha can do so within a time that will satisfy the most sanguine expectations of any patriot. The charkha by itself can achieve the boycott within a reasonable period, the pace being dependent upon intensity of the work put in by the politicians. And as a khadi manufacturer, I am open to negotiate with anyone for supplying almost an illimitable quantity provided he does not bind me to the quality beyond a certain limit and does not mind the cost.

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The concession was that subject to certain conditions the Union Government would "refrain from the full enforcement of section 10 of Act 22 of 1913 as amended by section 5 of Act 37 of 1927 in the case of an Indian who proves . . . that he entered a province of the Union, other than the Orange Free State, prior to the 5th July, 1924".

² The condition was that those wives and children, who were not already brought to the Union of South Africa before July 5, 1927, would not be admitted.

I send you a copy of the report of the Spinners' Association¹ and a little pamphlet which latter you can read in 5 minutes but which gives you some very telling figures. The only thing that hampers the progress of khadi is the want of demand and want of capital.

I am yet awaiting the expected reply from Romain Rolland. If he does not cable, I may get a letter from him next week.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 13182

461. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

Thursday [April 12, 1928]²

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have decided to hand over to the All-India Spinners' Association, the Kathiawar khadi work and all the equipment and debts relating to it. Taking responsibility for this work upon ourselves means my worrying about the money problems. I feel that there should be a regular resolution about this. You should therefore get such a resolution passed in the Committee or get the consent of members through a circular.

It seems that Revashanker Anupchand wishes to take possession of Manasukhlal's house in lieu of the debt which the latter owes him. If you know anything about this matter, please let me know. Valji says that you are of the opinion that Revashanker cannot take possession of the house.

What happened about the Morvi Antyaja School?

Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: G. N. 5729

¹ *Vide* "Annual Report of the A.I.S.A.", 5-4-1928.

² From the postmark

462. *SPEECH TO TRAINEES AT KHADI VIDYALAYA,
AHMEDABAD* ¹

[Before April 13, 1928]²

The idea of the Khadi Seva Sangh was mine. I felt that just as the Government has an organization, its *naukarshahi*,³ it would be good for us also to have an organization of workers. The Government's *naukarshahi* is called '*shahi*'⁴ because its members, although they are servants, function as rulers. But we are not '*shahi*' because we have to do real service. For admission to this organization a course The Ashram of fixed period was prescribed because in order to be a khadi worker training and proficiency are required. The science of khadi is a serious affair; its scope is extremely vast, because through this science we want to serve the 33 crore people of India and through them the whole world. It is an empirical science; astronomy, on the contrary, is not an empirical science. The science of khadi is empirical because its experiments and conclusions are accessible to experience. Thirty-three crores of people can have direct experience of it. Hence its scope extends to where name of God reaches.

The vastness of this science can be realized from the fact that all the things that are done in textile mills we have to do in our homes. Those who run these mills have had to read a number of technical books the study of which is essential for acquiring proficiency in the work. Take only one process. Just as in the mills they have to test cotton, we too have to do it. These knowledge which they require as to the strength of cotton, cotton-gathering, etc., is also required by us. Our very first lesson is about cotton and it is a very important one. There are indeed many things which we have to do but which the mills are not required to do. For example, the mills do not have to bother whether in ginning the cotton-seeds remain intact or are broken, but we cannot afford to be careless in the matter. We want that the seeds should retain their properties. We want to feed these to the cattle and extract oil from them. Mills have nothing at all to do with all these

¹ The Khadi Vidyalaya was run at the Ashram for candidates selected for admission to the Khadi Seva Sangh.

² According to the source the speech was delivered during the National Week, i.e., between April 6 and 13.

³ Bureaucracy

⁴ "Royal"

things.

However rich we may be in resources, and however persistent in our efforts, it is all useless without a purpose. That purpose is national service. And it is so vast that one can go as deep into it as one chooses. There is no end to the labours of the mills because they have a selfish motive, they have to earn money. In their set-up there is scope for punishment as well as for reward and, after all, what is the principle of reward if it is not one of punishment? In our case there is no selfishness and no punishment. But it is not proper that since there is no selfishness we should not work as much as they do in mills. Our work is as deserving of efforts as it is selfless. The more love and labour we pour into it, the quicker will be our victory. Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose takes a leaf from a plant and very carefully and minutely examines it to see how many sections it has, whether it has organs of sense and whether it can feel as human beings do. He then places the results of his experiments before the world. Does he do this for money? No. Then does he do so for fame? No. He does it without any selfish motive. But his objective is gaining knowledge, whereas our experiments are not purely for the sake of knowledge. Ours is an empirical science and we want to see its actual results. We have to observe carefully how much cotton is obtained from a given quantity of raw cotton, how much yarn is prepared out of that cotton and how much cloth is woven out of that yarn. And in this way we can calculate how many people have to put in how much labour in order to meet the cloth requirements of the whole country.

Acquire as much knowledge as you can in order to gain mastery of this science and carry out as many experiments as necessary. For this, you should have enthusiasm, interest and dedication. The person who cultivates this science with devotion will be granted the inner light by God.

But it is not enough for us merely acquire knowledge of this science. Mere knowledge would be useful in mills only. We need character in addition to this knowledge. You have come here not for earning your livelihood but with a desire to serve, to dedicate your life to the cause of khadi, and for this character will be very essential. How will you go among the people without character? Who will accept your service? Nobody bothers about the character of people working in mills but everybody will enquire about your character. You have to go to the people as servants, not as tyrants. If possible, you have to be

labourers living in their midst. For doing this a disciplined life is needed.

And cleanliness will be the first sign by which you can show your character. The impression which you will be able to create in the people by strict observance of the rules of cleanliness, you will not be able to do in any other way. And what is desirable is that you should not follow these rules for the sake of following them but it should become impossible for you not to follow them. You should so mould your nature that cleanliness become a part of it; if you find uncleanness anywhere you should be unable to bear it. Uncleanness anywhere, whoever may be responsible for it, should become an eyesore to us and unless it is removed we should find no joy in living.

We wish to offer ourselves as oblation in the national *yajna*. In order to do so we have to become pure and clean. Does it do any The Ashram good burning a dirty thing? But if you burn something fragrant, the atmosphere is purified and the perfume spreads. Therefore let us become pure like sandalwood and offer ourselves up in this sacrifice. This is the purpose for which this Ashram has been established. Let the Ashram become the incense in the national sacrifice and remove the foul smell wherever it may be found. This is our ideal. Indeed, this is not the Ashram's ideal only, but that of every khadi worker.

And are you aware what a high place your work occupies? If someone asked me what the place of khadi in relation to service of the cow or tanning was, I should surely say that it had the first place. According to the grand simile of Tulsidas, this is the most benevolent activity, even though it seems dull:

साधु चरित जिमि सरिस कपासू।
निरस बिसद गुनमय फल जासू॥

How monotonous spinning appears! The Punjabis tell me that it is a women's work and that they cannot do it. Then there is neither honour nor profit in khadi work. If one becomes expert in dairying or tanning, one can get big emoluments. But in khadi there is no such attraction because it is the work of millions of people. We require seven lakh workers in order to organize khadi work throughout the country. How can we afford to give them high salaries? Perhaps seven

lakh cow workers or tanning experts may not be required by the country, but it would not do to have less than this number for khadi work. 'This work is so important and it is required on such a big scale. Despite its seeming monotony, there is hardly any other work more interesting than this. If you start taking lots of interest in it, you would adorn yourself, the Ashram and the country as well.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-4-1928

463. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You will see how I have used your letter to sustain the case for khadi.¹ I am anxious to receive your account of the tour that is now going on and more so to hear from you how it is affecting your health.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 1588

¹ The reference presumably is to "Place of Khadi", 12-4-1928.

464. LETTER TO A. ELLINGS

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have cordial letter. I have not had the courage to decide whether I should respond to the Euroean invitations or not. I am therefore waiting for an expected letter from Europe before I make up my mind. And such being the case, I do not know whether you want any statement from me. But I may say that I will devote all the time I can spare to the development of the message of spinning-wheel.

Yours sincerely,

A. ELLINGS, ESQ.
NEWS EDITOR,
"THE ENGLISHMAN"
9 HARE STREET
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: S.N. 13187

465. LETTER TO MRS. BLAIR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR MRS. BLAIR,

I was delighted to hear from you after such a long time. It was good of you to think of the starving millions during the National Week. I can quite understand your inability at your time of life and in that uncongenial atmosphere around you to be able to spin steadily and well. But it does my heart good to find you ever thinking of the poor countrymen. Did you sell any khadi during the National Week?

Yours sincerely,

MRS. BLAIR
MALL VILLA 3
DARJEELING

From a microfilm: S.N. 13189

466. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

I have your second cable. I see that after all you belong to a rich country. I, belonging to a pauper country, think fifty times before sending cablegrams and each time say to myself one rupee means 64 hungry mouths fed per day after an hour's work each. For one-sixty fourth of a rupee buys sufficient flour to give one meal to one of the starving millions. When therefore we meet, if we do, I am going to ask you to account for all the cables that you have been spending money on although you represent the poor people of Poplar.

I can't summon up sufficient courage to make up my mind whether to go to Europe or not to go. I am therefore waiting. for an expected letter from Romain Rolland. The expected letter will compel me to make up my mind finally. I don't know why I have difficulty in making up my mind about the European visit in spite of your glowing letter.

Yours sincerely,

MISS MURIEL LESTER

From a photostat: S.N. 14955

467. LETTER TO T. NAGESHA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I am sorry I was unable to overtake it earlier. The only thing I can advise you to do is to live absolutely apart from your wife, take clean unstimulating diet, live in the fresh air the whole of the 24 hours, and fill up your waking hours with healthy activities and, when the body is tired, with healthy reading and thinking. You will produce little impression upon your pupils until you have gained mastery over yourself.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. T. NAGESHA RAO
TEACHER
BOARD HIGH SCHOOL
PUTTUR, S. CANARA

From the original: C. W. 9205. Courtesy: T. Nagesha Rao

468. A LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

Here is a long letter I am obliged to send you. From the correspondence copies enclosed by. . . ¹ with his letter, I presume that you have got conclusive proof of his dishonesty.² Before I can send him a final answer, I want to know whether there is any written or printed contract which. . . ³ signed and, if he did, whether it has any clause regarding automatic forfeiture of security. If there is no such written agreement about forfeiture, are you justified without the intervention of court in declaring forfeiture.

Yours sincerely,

Encl. 1 file

From a microfilm: S. N. 13593

469. A LETTER ⁴

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You should know that I am now no longer in charge of the administration of the Association⁵. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj is the administrative head, but I am interesting myself in your case and have written to Sjt. Ramanathan. As soon as I hear from him, I hope to write to you again. Meanwhile let me say that from the perusal of the papers sent by you, there seems to me to be a very strong case against you. If Sjt. Ramanathan has positive proof of bribery and corruption, I should wonder what defence you could have.

Yours sincersely,

From a microfilm: S. N. 13592

¹ Name omitted

² *Vide* the following item

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Addressee's name is omitted; *vide* the preceding item.

⁵ The All-India Spinners Association

470. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 14, 1928

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your letter. If the meeting of the representatives of mill-owners comes off and if you give me due notice, I shall be present. But up to now there is no intimation from Motilalji.

I am in constant touch with the representatives of millowners and so far as I am aware nothing is going to come out of these negotiations. The mill-owners have decided upon a separate organization of their own from which they wish to eschew politics altogether. Sir Purushottamdas has declined to be president even of this association. And I understand that he has come to the conclusion that the mill-owners will do nothing substantial at the present moment. Mr. Birla writes to me almost in the same strain, though he wants the boycott campaign without the mill owners. After having had so many The Ashramchats and so much correspondence with the latter, I incline to the same view. But that does not mean that we should not have the conference Motilalji has in view.

You will keep me informed of what is going on. I would like you to read all I have written about the mills in the pages of *Young India*. If you have not the articles I can send them to you.

I wish you will settle the Jamia constitution without delay.

Yours sincerely,

DR. M. A. ANSARI
AHMEDABAD PALACE
BHOPAL

From a photosat: S.N. 13191

471. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 14, 1928

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

This letter is in reply to yours. If the boycott becomes universal, we do not have enough *chhayal*¹ and dhotis. We can meet the demands of those who will go about, if need be, in a *langoti*², but wear nothing except khadi. To those, however, who are not ready to go to this extent but will take part in the boycott of foreign cloth if they can get some other cloth in its place, we may supply mill-made dhotis and saris. This means that the mills cannot manufacture any other cloth except what we decide and that, even in their shops, khadi will be sold as a substitute for the kinds of cloth which they do not manufacture. I can realize that the mills will not agree to this, but we cannot come to any understanding with them as long as they do not agree. My demand means that the mills should accept the permanent place of khadi. If you do not understand this point, please ask me. I do not want you to come here, leaving your work unattended there. You may discuss the matter when you have occasion to come here and get the necessary opportunity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9764

¹ Women's upper garment

² Codpiece

472. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 13, 1928

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I understand about Manasukhlal although I am very much confused. I am of the opinion that if a person has incurred debts he himself or his wife or children have to right to keep anything from the wealth amassed by him. But I do not know the facts of this case. And that reminds me: may I know if something has been done about the memorial to him? It is necessary to pass the following resolution about khadi :

“As the Kathiawar Political Conference has many occupations, it does not have enough men and money to bear the responsibility of the khadi activity. Gandhiji who hitherto used to shoulder the economic responsibility does not have the physical means to do so. The All-India Spinners’ Association is willing to shoulder the responsibility. Therefore the Committee of this Conference hands over the entire administration, all its money and the entire responsibility of the Kathiawar khadi activity to the All-India Spinners’ Association.”

Did Mulchandbhai get money for the *Antyaja* movement? Bhai Fulchand is not with you, so who helps you now? What other work of the Conference is going on at present?

Vandemataram from
BAPU

PS.

One can see that you sold quite a good amount of khadi.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5729

473. SERVICE OF THE SUPPRESSED ¹

The servant of the suppressed serves both himself and the society, as the oppressor ultimately oppresses himself, and the engineer is always hoist with his own petard.

We were on the point of being pariahs of the world, having treated the bulk of our brethren as untouchables. We are however likely to escape that catastrophe, as the Hindu society is trying to remove this blot in various ways and in many provinces. By far the biggest and most successful of these efforts is perhaps the one conducted by Anasuyabehn in Ahmedabad.

I addressed two meetings last month, one under the auspices of the Sweepers' Mahajan and the other a gathering of the children of the Labour Union schools.² Most of these children belonged to the suppressed classes. I take the following³ from the report that was read at the meeting :

I do not know of workmen's children elsewhere receiving education under such orderly and careful organization and in such numbers.

The mill-owners ought to welcome the enterprise. On the contrary they are reported to have threatened to stop the monetary help they are at present giving. I do hope not only that it is a false alarm, but that they will yearly add to their contributions. In doing so I should humbly think they will be doing nothing beyond what they owe to their workmen.

A noteworthy feature of the enterprise is the large contribution of the workmen themselves towards the expenses, the ultimate aim being to conduct these schools wholly at their own expense. This of course presupposes their economic betterment, a stimulation in them of the desire for sacrifice and for the education of their children. In the mean while, the mill-owners and other philanthropists should keep the enterprise going.

¹ The Gujarati original, of which this is a translation by Mahadev Desai, appeared in *Navajivan*, 15-4-1928.

² *Vide* "Speech at Gathering of Students and Teachers, Ahmedabad", 31-3-1928.

³ Not reproduced here

The sweepers' meeting¹ was remarkable for the things it brought to light. I heard them sing their songs with flawless pronunciation. They were comparatively unlettered, but no one who listened to their songs could say that they belonged to the suppressed classes. But they are indebted, underpaid, and addicted to drink. Most of them beg and live on leavings from plates given to them by Hindus of higher castes. Their condition makes the conclusion irresistible that we the so-called high caste Hindus are responsible for their failings, and only the inherent strength of Hinduism is responsible for their good points. Hinduism has helped them to retain some of their culture in spite of the oppression they have laboured under. They would never have been reduced to their present state if we had regarded them as our own kith and kin.

Anasuyabehn may carry on welfare work among them, but who will look to their housing? I have seen the hovels they live in. It is the duty of the mill-owners and the municipality to provide them with better houses, and even if the former fail in their duty the latter may not do so, for better housing is essential as much for the health of the city as for that of the workmen.

UNTOUCHABLES AMONG UNTOUCHABLES

I addressed a third meeting² which was full of painful experience. There is a suppressed class night-school under the Gujarat Vidyapith conducted by the students of the Vidyalaya. They take considerable pains over the school, which until a short time ago had a very large attendance of Dhed children. The teachers thought of the sweepers' children and induced the sweepers to send their children to the school but as soon as these came, most of the Dheds withdrew their children from the school! The teachers therefore turned to me to find a way out of the situation. So I went there. Very few Dhed parents attended the meeting. One of them whom I tried to tackle said frankly, taking his stand on the traditional religion: "How may a Dhed touch a sweeper?" "But if the touch of the sweeper pollutes the Dhed, why should the higher castes touch the Dheds?," I asked. "We never ask them to do so," he quickly rejoined, and floored me.

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Sweepers' Meeting, Ahmedabad", 27-3-1928.

² No report of this meeting is available.

This is how we are hoist with our own petard. If untouchability had been allowed go to on unchecked, each one of us should have considered the other untouchable and we should have been doomed. But thank God, in spite of the orthodox Dheds and Banias and Brahmins, the snake of untouchability is breathing its last.

The teachers of course ought to adhere to their resolve. They should not be angry with the Dheds, but neither should they let go a single sweeper boy for the sake of the Dhed boys. Let them shower all their love and attention on the sweeper boys, and there their duty ends. Their determination and faith will melt the hearts of the Dheds, who, as soon as they find the sweepers' children growing in cleanliness and character, will not help sending their own children too. The anti-untouchability worker has to begin at the lowermost rung of the ladder. There are, I know, some 'reformers' who are apt to think: 'Better reform and serve our own castes before we reform and serve the Dheds.' This way of thinking betrays impatience and ignorance, impatience because we fight shy of obstacles, and ignorance because we forget that all other reform of Hinduism is nothing worth until the main reform, viz., the removal of untouchability, is achieved. This blot poisons the whole system, even as a drop of arsenic would poison a tankful of milk. Remove this and you open the door for other reforms, retain this and you render other reforms nugatory. The disease of a consumptive unless the root cause is tackled remains just the same whether you remove or do not remove a few abscesses on his body.

Young India, 19-4-1928

474. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

SABARMATI,
Sunday [April 15, 1928]¹

CHI. MANI,

I haven't heard from you since you went there²; this is not good. Let me know your daily programme of work there. Write your experiences.

Read the enclosed letter and let me know if you wish to go to Ceylon³. How did you celebrate the [National] Week?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Manibehn Patelne, p. 65

475. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

April 16, 1928

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

I was thinking to hear from you about Padmaja. Tell her she has to be well quickly or she will cease to be regarded as a brave girl. How long does she expect to be there? What about your visit to America?

I have become a coward. I can't decide whether to go to Europe or not.

With love,

THE SPINNER

MRS. S. NAIDU

From a photostat: S.N. 13192

¹ From the source

² Bardoli

³ For khadi propaganda

476. *LETTER TO ANNIE BESANT*

SABARMATI,
April 16, 1928

DEAR DR. BESANT,

I thank you for your note. I may not join the movement of which you write. I feel we are having too many institutions and organizations without increasing men and women to work them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13193

477. *LETTER TO U. RAJAGOPALA KRISHNAYYA*

April 16, 1928

BHAI RAJAGOPALA,

God being Almighty can bring about anything.

Violence should not be answered with violence.

One cannot gain knowledge of dharma from a historical interpretation of the *Mahabharata*. And the *Mahabharata* is certainly not history.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original: C.W. 9238. Courtesy: U. Rajagopala Krishnayya

478. *CABLE TO RAJENDRA PRASAD*¹

[On or after *April 16, 1928*]

RAJENDRAPRASAD

JAYAWATI

LONDON

SUCCESS CONFERENCE.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 14381

479. *CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*²

AHMEDABAD,
April 17, 1928

RT. HON. SASTRI

PRETORIA

THINK CERTIFICATES AT SETTLEMENT 1914 SHOULD
REMAIN UNAFFECTED.³

GANDHI

From the photostat: S.N. 11974

¹ It was sent in reply to a cable, received on April 16, seeking a message for the Youth Conference.

² This was sent in response to the following cable dated April 13, 1928, from SAIC (South African Indian Congress), Johannesburg: "Developments regarding new immigration law very serious. Clause 5 if fully put into operation will undermine rights secured by struggle to even registration certificate holders whose claims go back to the beginning. If any flaw may be found suggestive of illicit entry condonation is offered conditional upon surrender certificates presently held in exchange for letters conferring rights of holder temporary permits and excluding rights wives and children must be applied for before first November. Thereafter inquisition deportations and demoralization of community inevitable. We have urged that line be drawn 1914 at least to narrow field and preserve something of spirit of Gandhi-Smuts Settlement. Implore you cable Sastri to press for at least this concession. Reply urgent" (S.N. 11974).

³ In reply Sastri sent a cable on April 18, 1928, reading: "Your cable. Last night Minister already announced condonation conditions without special treatment for certificated before 1914" (S.N. 11974).

480. LETTER TO K. MADHAVAN NAIR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. There is a confusion of thought about your action. If it was good for your friend to have the Law Membership, it was good both from a public point of view as well as a private point of view; and if it was legitimate for you to congratulate him in your private capacity, it was equally legitimate for you to congratulate him publicly and in your public capacity. You will not congratulate privately or publicly a friend upon being appointed a hangman, the post might carry a large salary and distinction on the part of those who might appoint him. Did we not think at one time that members of the present Government were very much like hangmen? It was really a matter for condonation¹ that a friend was offered and accepted Law Membership. But you may not share my view about the judgment of the present Government and those working it. If that is so, you may publicly defend your private conduct and take the risk of any odium that may be temporarily attached to it. After all, the approbation of your own conscience must be all-sufficing.

You are quite correct in saying that if our private judgment and feelings were to be suppressed, we should become hypocrites. It would be a bad day for us if servants of the public were to become hypocrites.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. K. MADHAVAN NAIR, M.L.C.
CALICUT

From a photostat: S.N. 13186

¹ Slip for 'condemnation'?

481. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. Do you know that even when you wrote to me that you were going to the Punjab, I did not know that you were going as the president of the Conference? When Dr. Kitchlew wrote to me, he said nothing about who the president was to be. However I was glad when I learnt that you presided.

Of course I notice everywhere what you noticed at the Conference. I wonder if you have noticed what I sense everywhere, utter absence of seriousness and disinclination to do any concrete work demanding sustained energy.

Do you find any hope in the Punjab for Hindu-Muslim unity?

About the European visit, I can give you no definite news yet.

The fiasco about mills you know everything [of] by this time from Father.

From a photostat: S.N. 13194

482. *LETTER TO SIR. DANIEL M. HAMILTON*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 17, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your cordial letter and invitation. If I go to Europe, I would certainly love to under your roof and discuss with you things of mutual interest.

I do indeed like your paper on modern finance. If there is any other literature bearing on it that you would like me to study, please guide me, and if you could find time to write for me a popular article or a series making banking easy for people to understand I would gladly publish the article or the series in the pages of *Young India*.

Yours sincerely,

SIR DANIEL HAMILTON
BALMACARA, KYLE
ROSS-SHIRE
SCOTLAND

From a photostat: S.N. 14293

483. *LETTER TO HANS KOHU*¹

April 17, 1928

I have your letter. This proposed European visit is a matter of great concern for me. I am awaiting M. Romain Rolland's letter before I can finally decide.

From a photostat: S.N. 14951

484. *MESSAGE TO STUDENTS' CONGRESS, CEYLON*

April 18, 1928

A message was received from Gandhiji wishing the Congress success and expressing the hope that the students would not forget the starving millions of the mother country, the most effective manner of helping whom was by wearing khadi.

The Hindu, 19-4-1928

¹ He was connected with the Peace Association, Jerusalem.

485. *OFF THE TRAIL*

Remarkable are the attempts made by and on behalf of the Government to befog people's minds and take them away from the main point by raising side issues and discovering or professing to discover flaws in evidence produced in support of the main point. It does not suit the Government to admit that its history is a history of the ruin of India's industries and India's manhood. One of such recent attempts is to discredit the oft-told story in the Press and on the platform about the cutting off by the weavers of their own thumbs in order to escape the East India Company's myrmidons who sought to compel them to wind silk. If the weaver has no thumb he cannot do the work expected of him. And the way the history has been discredited is by digging out the credentials of William Bolts on the strength of whose evidence the late Romesh Chandra Dutt first made the statement regarding the cutting off of thumbs. The writer of the refutation is not able to say that William Bolts gave false evidence, but he says that William Bolts had no character to keep and that therefore his evidence is not worthy of credence. And he further says that he was a dismissed servant of the Company under its resolution which described him as "a very unworthy and unprofitable servant of the Company, his conduct has been distinguished by a tenacious adherence to those pernicious principles relative to the rights of inland trade, in which he appears to have been so conspicuously oppressive". Who does not know the tricks of pettifogging lawyers to discredit witnesses by proving their bad character as if a man with a bad character was ever incapable of making a true statement? I make bold to say that whatever the character of William Bolts, his testimony about the cutting off of thumbs need not be discredited unless it can be otherwise disproved, and there has been nothing brought forward to show that that testimony is unworthy to be believed. On the contrary, what is more likely than that weavers in order to escape harrowing and continuous oppression would once for all render themselves physically unfit to do the work imposed upon them under unbearable punishment? After all, the evidence of William Bolts is only part of the story of the ruin of India's industries told by Romesh Chandra Dutt with such deadly effect and supported by the evidence of a variety of witnesses, the cumulative effect of whose evidence becomes irresistible. The main point is whether the industry was or was not

ruined with the greatest deliberation. If it was, it makes little difference if the evidence of one witness is rejected and it will lie ill in the mouth of the criminal to say that out of a hundred witnesses one has told an untruth. But as I have said in this instance, there is nothing relevant brought forward to show that William Bolts's testimony is not to be believed. Let me however put before the reader a few relevant extracts from Dutt's first volume of the *Economic History of India*. He says :

It will appear from the facts stated in the last two chapters that large portions of the Indian population were engaged in various industries down to the first decade of the nineteenth century. Weaving was still the national industry of the people; millions of women eked out the family income by their earnings from spinning; and dyeing, tanning and working in metals also gave employment to millions. It was not, however, the policy of the East India Company to foster Indian industries. It has been stated in a previous chapter that, as early as 1769, the Directors wished the manufacture of raw silk to be encouraged in Bengal, and that of silk fabrics discouraged. And they also directed that silkwinders should be made to work in the Company's factories, and prohibited from working outside "under severe penalties by the authority of the Government". This mandate had its desired effect. The manufacture of silk and cotton goods declined in India, and the people who had exported these goods to the markets of Europe and Asia in previous centuries began to import them in increasing quantities.

So much was the importation of silk and cotton goods from England stimulated by these methods that whereas in 1794 it was £156, in 1813 it rose to £108, 824. In 1813 the Company's charter was renewed and important evidence was taken at the enquiry prior to renewal. "In respect of Indian manufactures," says the author, "they—the Commons—sought to discover how they could be replaced by British manufactures, and how British industries could be promoted at the expense of Indian industries."

The commercial policy of England is thus described by Henry St. George Tucker :

What is the commercial policy which we have adopted in this country with relation to India? The silk manufactures and its piecegoods made of silk and cotton intermixed have long since been excluded altogether from our markets; and of late partly in consequence of the operation of a duty of 67 per cent, but chiefly from the effect of superior machinery, the cotton fabrics, which hiterto constituted the staple of India, have not only been displaced in

this country, but we actually export our cotton manufactures to supply a part of the consumption of our Asiatic possessions. India is thus reduced from the state of a manufacturing to that of an agricultural country.

Here is another testimony of the same character by H. H. Wilson :

It is also a melancholy instance of the wrong done to India by the country on which she has become dependent. It was stated in evidence (in 1813) that the cotton and silk goods of India up to the period could be sold for a profit in the British market at a price from 50 to 60 per cent lower than those fabricated in England. It consequently became necessary to protect the latter by duties of 70 and 80 per cent, on their value, or by positive prohibition. Had this not been the case, had not such prohibitive duties and decrees existed, the mills of Paisley and Manchester would have been stopped in their outset, and could scarcely have been again set in motion, even by the power of steam. They were created by the sacrifice of the Indian manufacture. Had India been independent, she would have retaliated, would have imposed prohibitive duties upon British goods, and would thus have preserved her own productive industry from annihilation. This act of self-defence was not permitted to her; she was at the mercy of the stranger. British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and the foreign manufacturer employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms.

According to Thomas Munro “the Company’s servants assembled the principal weavers and placed a guard over them until they entered into engagements to supply the Company only.”

The author then proceeds :

When once a weaver accepted an advance he seldom got out of his liability. A peon was placed over him to quicken his deliveries if he delayed, and he was liable to be prosecuted in the courts of justice. The sending of a peon meant a fine of one anna (about $1\frac{1}{2}$ d.) a day on the weaver, and the peon was armed with a rattan, which was not unoften used to good purpose. Fine was sometimes imposed on the weavers, and their brass utensils were seized for its recovery. The whole weaving population of villages were thus held in subjection to the Company’s factories. . . . The control under which the weaver population was held was not merely a matter of practice, but was legalized by Regulations. It was provided that a weaver who had received advances from the Company “shall on no account give to any other persons whatever, European or Native, either the labour or the produce engaged to the Company”; that on his failing to deliver the stipulate cloths, “the Commercial Resident shall be at liberty to place peons upon him in order to quicken his

deliveries'; that on his selling his cloths to others, the weaver "shall be liable to be prosecuted in the dewani Adalat"; that "weavers, possessed of more than one loom, and entertaining one or more workmen, shall be subject to a penalty of 35 per cent on the stipulated price of every piece of cloth that they may fail to deliver according to the written agreement"; that landlords and tenants "are enjoined not to hinder the Commercial Residents or their officers from access to weavers"; and that they "are strictly prohibited from behaving with disrespect to the Commercial Residents" of the Company.

Is it to be wondered at if weavers living under such intolerable restraint broke loose from it by cutting off their own thumbs? To revive an industry that was thus deliberately destroyed and which supplemented the resources of millions of people is the sacred duty of every Indian who loves his country and should be considered a privilege by every Englishman who would repent of the grave wrong done to a great country by his ancestors. But instead of repentance, we see a painful persistence in the policy initiated 150 years ago and an equally painful effort made by every means possible to bolster up the wrong.

Young India, 19-4-1928

486. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 19, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. You tell me nothing about your own health. I hope you are keeping well. Does this our mean more khadi sales? Is there a great response from the people addressed, or, are the collections from individuals?

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G. N. 1589

487. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1928

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I am daily making fresh discoveries which go to show that we may expect nothing from the mill-owners at the present stage. They will yeild only to pressure and the pressure of the Government is more felt than that of the Congress. But we may not be impatient. We need not put boycott of Indian mill-made cloth in the same category as that of foreign cloth. A negative attitude about mill-cloth will be quite enough to keep the mills under wholesome check. A positive boycott will only stir up bad blood without bringing us any nearer boycott of foreign cloth. We shall never, unless a sudden manifestation of mass energy comes into being, succeed in reaching the millions. In spite of all we may do, for the time being the latter will therefore be buying Indian mill-cloth and, further, there will be keen competition between Lancashire mills and Japanese on the one hand and Indian mills on the other. We have therefore to concentrate our effort on changing the mentality of the townspeople and those few villagers whom we are controlling and bringing them round to the adoption of khadi. If we set about doing this, the meassage of khadi will percolate the masses. Then both our and foreign mills will feel the brunt. That will be the time for our mills to come in line with us. The moment they do so we can complete boycott of foreign cloth inside of six months. The programme definitely therefore has to be this :

We leave Indian mills severely alone. We carry on a whirl- wind compaign for boycott of foreign cloth through khadi, asking people to count no sacrifice too great in adopting khadi. We must have faith in ourselves and in our people and believe that they can make this which appears to me to be small sacrifice. But I confess that at the present moment I do not visualize the organi- zation that is needed to carry on the boycott. The politicals who are in possession of the platform do not mean to do any serious business. They will not

concentrate on any constructive work. Jawahar in a letter truly describes the atmosphere when he says: "There is violence in the air." We read and hear so much about the boycott of British cloth in Bengal, but the letters I receive almost every week show that there is no real boycott. There is no organization behind it, there is no will working behind it. All things considered, what will you advise me to do?

The expected letter from Romain Rolland is due next Tuesday at the latest. I must after that come to a decision quickly. Supposing that Romain Rolland predisposes me in favour of the European visit, what would you have me to do in view of the talk of the boycott? Would you want me for the sake of the boycott not to go to Europe? I shall accept your decision whatever it may be. I am not personally keen on the European visit, but if all is plain sailing in India and if Romain Rolland wants me to visit Europe, I should feel bound to accept the European invitations. Will you please wire your decision? Jawahar will be with you and probably you will know Doctor Ansari's mind.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S. N. 13197

488. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1928

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. After having read Revashankerbhai's letter, how can I press him to accept the proposal? Or do you wish only to use his name and do not expect him to do any work? If that is what you wish, then we should find out a temporary vice-president who is a good worker. It is certainly desirable that you should go to Bombay for all this work. Maybe Revashankerbhai could suggest to you in the

course of discussion the name of such a vice-president or of somebody else as president. Tell me now what you want, so that I may act accordingly.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5691

489. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.¹ I cannot resist you, but I take you at your word. I send you a single sentence as follows :

Tolstoy's greatest contribution to life lies, in my opinion, in his ever attempting to reduce to practice his professions without counting the cost.

Thanks for your inquiry about my health. I appear to be keeping well at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14287

¹ The addressee had written: "The special issue of *Unity* in commemoration of Tolstoy Centenary would be incomplete if it did not contain a tribute from your pen."

490. LETTER TO PETE MATOFF

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 20, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter for which I thank you. I suppose I shall receive your book¹ in due course.

I shall feel deeply interested in whatever you may write to me about the condition of the Doukhobors in their new home.²

I am sorry I do not keep any photograph of myself. I am editing a weekly newspaper called *Young India* of which I send you the latest issue.

I shall be interested also to know more about the new leader³ who has just come to you from Russia.

Yours sincerely,

PETE MATOFF, ESQ.
THRUMS, B.C.
FREE CANADA

From a photostat: S.N. 14288

¹ *Message of the Doukhobors*

² The addressee had written that Doukhobors “were persecuted in Russia [in] 1895-96 for burning fire-arms and other destructive elements” and “in 1899 were permitted to migrate to Canada”

³ Peter P. Verigin

491. LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

April 20, 1928

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI¹,

I do feel a little hesitant in writing this letter to you but Bhai Ambalal is not here and you do know me a little. I therefore venture to write to you. Enclosed herewith is . . .² to Dinabandhu Andrews. Talking about that, I told him that all right, I would beg for money from somewhere. He had in fact asked for ten thousand rupees. Of this, five thousand he wanted for his expenses in Europe. I am not very clear about all this. Whatever it may be, Birla brothers have paid expenses to Kavivar. . .³ It seems that that amount will not be enough to accommodate Andrews. As far as possible, I do not want to go out of Gujarat to collect money for Andrews. Can I approach you with a begging bowl? If, for whatever reason, you do not want to give anything, please do not hesitate to say 'no'. I consider it my duty to go with a begging bowl wherever I can. But it is also my dharma not to feel bad if people refuse to give anything. If you feel like saying 'no', please do say so without any hesitation. Only then I. . .⁴

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33140

¹ Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Agent, Raipur Manufacturing Company

² The source is damaged here.

³ The source is damaged at these places.

⁴ *ibid.*

492. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 21, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

I have not understood the last paragraph of your letter which I take first, though I understand that you will be unable for some time to bring out Mr. Gregg's book. It will be terrible if that happens after the long notices that have been taken in *Young India* of that book. Please wire on receipt of this when if at all you are likely to bring the book out.

You need not apologize for having sent the book on *Self-Restraint* v. *Self-Indulgence* to Dr. Stopes. Indeed having reviewed her books and even advertised them, you were bound to send my book to her. There was nothing wrong in it, but you are certainly under no obligation to publish her review of my book, unless of course you independently think that it is a good and well-argued review. And if you do not publish her review, you will be rendering her a service by telling her straightway why you decline to publish it.

Now about yourself. The only thing I can suggest to you is to become absolutely firm about your resolution and you will find that all your difficulties will vanish. Our difficulties really arise when we are tossed to and fro by our weakness and indecisive action. A decisive, firm, clear action is like the glistening sun which not only dispels all darkness but destroys all disease germs. The vast majority of our ills and our difficulties arose from our doubting state.

I shall have decided about the European visit next week and if I decide to go, it will be somewhere in the middle of May or it may be the first week. Do come when you like. But before you come try to finish all your announced commitments.

I am glad you have ceased to advertise birth-control publications.

Yours,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13199

493. *LETTER TO SHANKARAN*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 21, 1928

MY DEAR SHANKARAN,

I have your letter. So you are now president of a Congress Committee. This is very good. And I am glad that Girdharilal is taking such keen interest in khadi.

I am forwarding your letter to Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani for attention.

I quite agree with you that in khadi organizations there should be no indifference, certainly never any cheating. I am asking Vithaldas what terms can be offered.

If you believe in the First Cause, you must regard the 'why' of the First Cause as a futile question. Whilst it is laudable and legitimate to bring everything under the dominion of reason we must be humble enough to recognize that there must be things beyond reason, seeing that man is an imperfect being.

I am glad you are making yourself serviceable all round. I entertain no fear about your being lax in the duty entrusted to you.

I have not been able to decide anything about the European visit.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13200

494. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

SATYAGRAHA, ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 21, 1928

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. You should start working gradually; there is no need to over-exert yourself. Do not be at all nervous if Nikhil's condition deteriorates. And whenever you do feel agitated, recall this verse that we always chant: "Whose mind is untroubled in sorrows and length not for joys, who is free from passion, fear and wrath—he is called the ascetic of secure under-standing."¹

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIMATI HEMPRABHADEVI
RUBY LODGE
P.O. BURGANDA
GIRIDIH
EAST INDIAN RAILWAY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1656

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 56

495. *CABLE TO DOUBLEDAY DORAN CO.*

[After April 21, 1928]¹

CONSULT REVEREND HOLMES "UNITY" AND MACMILLAN
PUBLISHER WHO HOLDS RIGHTS PUBLICATION ENTIRE BOOK.

From a microfilm: S.N. 14745

496. *LETTER TO JULIA ISBRUCKER* ²

[Before April 22, 1928]³

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of the 7th ultimo. If I go to Europe at all and if I find the time and have the health for it, I shall gladly attend the Conference.

From a photostat: S.N. 14944

497. *CLERKS v. WORKING MEN* ⁴

Sheth Ranchhodlal Amritlal has sent me the following scheme⁵ of Industrial Insurance for clerks :

I understand little of insurance, but I take it that in this age of insurance any scheme of industrial insurance devised for the benefit of the clerical workers would be to their good. Only an insurance expert can offer helpful criticism of the scheme, and I take it that Sjt. Ranchhodlal has framed the scheme in consultation with some large-hearted expert.

There cannot be two opinions as to the fact that mill-owners, no less than other business and commercial firms, ought to take a paternal interest in the welfare of their employees. The relations between the employer and the employee have been up to now merely those of the master and servant, they should be of father and children. I therefore welcome the scheme.

¹ The addressees, in a cable, dated April 21, 1928, had sought permission to publish an American edition of *An Autobiography*.

² Secretary, Inter-religions Conference for Peace, The Hague

³ This letter was evidently written before April 22, on which date Gandhiji decided not to go to Europe. *Vide* "Letter to C.F. Andrews", 22-4-1928.

⁴ The Gujarati original, of which this is a translation by Mahadev Desai, appeared in *Navajivan*, 22-4-1928.

⁵ Not reproduced here

Medical relief should not, in my opinion, be free. It should be genuine, prompt and cheap. Free aid is likely to undermine their independent spirit. Sometimes free aid is rendered perfunctorily and sometimes it is abused, from both of which evils the clerks should be saved.

The main grievance of the clerk and the working man is low pay and indifference to his welfare. The measures suggested in the scheme will be a direct and simple redress of the grievance, and I welcome them.

The condition of clerks is, in certain respects, undoubtedly much more pitiable. I have a vivid picture of their condition before my mind. It was given to me in 1915 in Calcutta by the Marwari Clerks' Association. It was a tragic tale of their helplessness. The number of clerks is small, their power of endurance and their capacity for union is feeble. Whereas the clerk is the only earning member of his family, practically all the members of the workingman's family are wage-earners. The clerks must bestir themselves to improve their own condition. They must unite, and must educate their dependants, especially their wives, to engage in some gainful occupation. They have lost all self-confidence and are helpless. Those who are honest, competent in their work, conscientious and hard working need not despair of finding a suitable situation.

True social economics will teach us that the workingman, the clerk and the employer are parts of the same indivisible organism. None is smaller or greater than the other. Their interests should be not conflicting but identical and interdependent.

Young India, 3-5-1928

498. *LETTER TO ELISABETH KNUDSEN*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 22, 1928

DEAR MISS KNUDSEN,

I was wondering why I have not heard from you for such a long time. I am glad you have been having such success in Karachi. Owing to the National Week I suspended both the oil massage and your massage, and owing to pressure of work since, I have not been able to resume them. But in spite of the suspension I increased nearly two lb. in weight. As soon as the pressure decreases I hope to recommence massage.

Gangabehn is neither better nor worse. For the last two days she has been having some fever. The Calcutta patient left about ten days ago. Mr. Kothari is in Darjeeling at the present moment.

Yours sincerely,

MISS ELISABETH KNUDSEN
C/O DR. THIRANANDANI
"NEW TIMES" BLDGS.
KARACHI

From a photostat: S.N. 13201

499. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 22, 1928

You will be perhaps sorry to hear that I have decided not to go to Europe this year. There was not call for me to go in answer to the various invitations, but I felt that, if Rolland considered it worth while my going to meet him in furtherance of the common cause, I would go and incidentally respond to invitations from Europe. Now there is the expected letter from him. I send you a copy so that you can better understand my decision. Rolland's hesitation to let me go to Europe principally for the sake of meeting him shows that as an artist and as the interpreter of my message he does not regard it as necessary that I should leave all my important work here and go to Europe to meet him. And as there is no call in him to ask me to go or to accept my

offer to go, I feel that if my letter to him was truthful, that is to say, if the deciding motive was to see him, I should consider his letter to be God's guidance in answer to my prayer. As days went by I was hardening my heart feeling more reluctant to go to Europe at the present moment and was feeling also that I had nothing to give to Europe, whereas my hands were absolutely full here. The call of the Ashram is incessant. It is becoming clearer day by day that if I am to do justice to the Ashram, which I claim to be my best creation, and if I cannot give it the whole of my time, I must at least give to it the major part of my time.

I had Burma in my mind if I did not go to Europe. But now I feel that I don't want to go to Burma either and I shall pass the summer in the Ashram, if Burma does not want me.

The heat does not trouble me. I am getting on quite well. And, of course, there are many other things which I can attend to if I am here. On the whole, therefore, I think that I must not go. But I can make this provisional decision that if everything goes well, I would go next year giving myself ample time from now to make all my preparations and dispositions so that I can go without difficulty, and then, perhaps, if I could do so and if the way is clear, taking America also to save time.

I had a long chat with Ambalal. He said that he had sent his own subscription but that he could not move further unless there was a proper balance-sheet published. He was dissatisfied with the account-keeping and he seemed to be keen on a Gujarati committee because he said that the bulk of the money was found by the Gujaratis. So far as I could see I could not move him in his decision. But he said that in giving his opinion he was more guided by other donors than by his own instinct.

Marichi described to me the condition of your teeth or rather your toothlessness. To be toothless is by no means a great deprivation and it is decidedly a gain when one's teeth are a source of disease rather than of health.

Remember that you have to finish the Shraddhanand series. You should write something on Gregg's book.

I hope Gurudev is much better now.

From a photostat: S.N. 14958

*500. LETTER TO SECRETARY, ALL-INDIA SPINNERS'
ASSOCIATION*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 22, 1928

THE SECRETARY
A.I.S.A.
AHMEDABAD

DEAR SIR,

I have your letter about the loan guaranteed by Mr. Prakasam. I have written to him.¹

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13594

501. TELEGRAM TO MATHURA PRASAD

[Before *April 23, 1928*]²

YOUR LETTER. RAJKISHORI RAMNANDAN MAY ACCOMPANY
RADHA WHEN SHE IS READY RETURN. PLEASE CONTINUE WIRE
MAGANLAL'S CONDITION DAILY. WHAT IS CAUSE DELIRIUM?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

¹ This letter is not available.

² Maganlal Gandhi passed away on April 23.

502. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Sunday [Before April 23, 1928]

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Bhai Ramlal is a very good worker. He is honest too, but is very short tempered. As an atonement for this, I am sending him to you. He has to serve you and do all the work you entrust to him. He has liked the work. If you do not like the arrangement or instead of finding his presence helpful, you find it burdensome, write to me. I will call him back.

As you have difficulty in getting milk and milk products, I am sending *pedas*⁴ from here. Do not eat them as *pedas* but make powder of one or two, add warm water to it and mix it. That will become milk and serve its purpose. Similarly, soak *gol papadi*⁵ in water, make gruel of the liquid and take it . If you like the preparations, ask for the amount you would like to have. Do not neglect your health. Do not hesitate to write to me about your health and other difficulties.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32861

503. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

Tuesday [Before April 23, 1929]¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have received your telegrams. Knowing you well, I was not at all upset by your telegram. The other telegrams proved your faith right. As long as I am destined to take work from you, no harm will come to you. I personally feel that you should not leave Utkal. I would not like you to leave the place after falling ill. Many old priests live there. Where could they go? We belong to the place as much as we belong to the Ashram or Rajkot. After improving your health in Calcutta, if you feel strong enough to go back, do so. I have sent Ramlalji with that hope. Do not feel self-conscious unnecessarily, ask for the facilities you need, look after your health and render service. However, these are my views. Do what you want and what is within your power. My duty is to encourage you and your duty is to imbibe from it what you can. There is so much to write but where is the time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32859

¹ From the reference to Gandhiji's advice to the addressee not to leave Utkal (Orissa), the letter appears to have been written *before* the letter to Maganlal Gandhi dated April 23, 1928, wherein Gandhiji wrote that the addressee "had left Orissa" as he fell ill and had gone to Almora

504. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

[Before April 23, 1928]¹

CHI. RADHIKA,

I understand your condition from your letters to me and to others which they give me to read. Everybody will feel reassured if you keep on writing like this. I have received letters from Bhai Ramnandan also in which he says he will take proper care of you. There is a letter from Brij Kishore Babu from Patna, in which also he says that he will go to your village² and arrange everything. You have to show courage. You should not, therefore, be disheartened by difficulties but should overcome them with patience and bear those that cannot be overcome. Do let me know of even the smallest difficulty. You must not lose heart. One of the purposes in sending you out is that you should have some experience of the world and be tested by it. We may also in this way have a measure of our strength and weakness. In this vast land of ours there are countless ways of living and all kinds of hardships. We have to live in the midst of all this and reform things wherever there is scope for reform; look at the thing in this light.

Nothing is decided as yet about my going to England.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11617

¹ The letter has "April, 1928" noted on it. It must have been written before the addressee's return to the Ashram following the death of her father Maganlal Gandhi at Patna on April 23, 1928

² The addressee had gone to Bihar to teach a Bihari girl.

505. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

April 23, 1928

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

As I write this letter, I have before me a telegram from Patna informing me that Maganlal is on his death-bed. Radha is there by chance. The friends at Patna are doing their best for him. Any moment there may be a telegram about his passing away. What mystery of God's will is this, that he whom I regard as my heir is preparing to go away, leaving his inheritance? If only all of you who remain behind could follow in Maganlal's footsteps!

I get the letters of both of you. Wayne must have given you my message. I think I have already informed you that he met me.

Ramdas is still in Kathiawar hawking khadi. He should return in four or five days. Chhaganlal fell ill and has, therefore, left Orissa and gone to Almora. Prabhudas is already there on grounds of health. But now he is doing khadi work all the time.

I want a sample of Sushila's English handwriting and language. What is her weight now? What painting is she engaged on at present?

If Sorabji spends beyond his means, do not forget your duty, as a friend, of restraining him. Never take advantage of his spend-thrift nature. Always remain within the bounds of propriety. I have dropped for the present the idea of going to Europe.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just received a telegram saying that God has taken away Maganlal.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4736

506. TELEGRAM TO BRIJKISHORE PRASAD

[April 23, 1928]¹

RECEIVED FINAL WILL OF GOD. SEND RADHABEHN WITH
ESCORT. RAJKISHORI MAY ACCOMPANY. FUNERAL SHOULD
BE SIMPLEST TYPE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

507. TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI

[April 23, 1928]

MAGANLAL PASSED EARLY MORNING. DO NOT GO. WIRED
FOR RADHA BEING SENT UNDER ESCORT.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

508. TELEGRAM TO RADHA GANDHI

[April 23, 1928]

RADHA

CARE SHAMBHUSHARAN

EXPECT YOU TO BE BRAVE. SUBMIT GOD'S WILL AND SING
RAMANAMA. YOU ARE COMING WITH SUTIALE
COMPANION. LOVE.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

¹ This and the telegrams which follow were evidently sent on receipt of the news of Maganlal Gandhi's death on April 23.

509. TELEGRAM TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

[April 23, 1928]

KHUSHALBHAI GANDHI

RAJKOT

MAGANLAL DIED MORNING AT PATNA. YOU KNOW HE WAS MORE
TO ME THAN TO YOU. YOU MUST NOT GIVE WAY TO GRIEF.
HIS IS A NOBLE DEATH. NARANDAS LEAVING TONIGHT. INFORM
SHIVLALBHAI'S PEOPLE.

MOHANDAS

From a photostat: S.N. 14651

510. TELEGRAM TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

[April 23, 1928]

MAGANLAL DIED MORNING PATNA. RADHA WILL RETURN
IMMEDIATELY. NO GRIEF PERMISSIBLE. MUST KNOW HOW
TO ENFORCE OUR OWN TEACHING. YOU SHOULD CONTINUE
REST.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 14661

511. TELEGRAM TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

April 23, 1928

JAMNADAS GANDHI
CARE JIVANLAL CO.
KANSARA CHAWL
KALBADEVI
BOMBAY

MAGANLAL DIED MORNING. NO GRIEF ALLOWED. NO INTERRUPTION
ALLOTTED PROGRAMME.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 8697. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

512. LETTER TO SHRINATH SINGH

Vaisakha Shukla 4 [April 23, 1928]¹

SHRINATH SINGHJI,

I have your letter. I am acquainted with the Birla boys; hence I sent a message to them. It would take up all my time if I started sending messages to every newspaper and every editor that asked for them even though they may not be known to me.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

SHRINATH SINGHJI
EDITOR, "BAL SAKHA"
INDIAN PRESS LTD.
ALLAHABAD,

From Hindi: C.W. 2973. Courtesy: Shrinath Singh

¹ The letter bears the postmark 24-4-1928.

513. LETTER TO KUNVERJI KHETSHI PAREKH

*Silence Day [April 23, 1928]*¹

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. Consider with Jaisukhlal what should be done if the work at Balara stops. I did not understand your intention in the last paragraph. If however you have an offer of a better-paid job and you feel inclined to accept it, I will not force you to remain in the khadi work. If you remain in khadi work, you should do so merely in a spirit of service and without any thought of money, as Ramdas does. No one should feel that he is acting under coercion from anyone. I certainly like your work. Personally, I should like to keep you in the Ashram. But a proposal is under discussion just now that only those who observe *brahmacharya* should be allowed to live in the Ashram. Nothing has been decided finally. But I believe that there would be no difficulty in fixing you up at some other place if not in the Ashram.

Maganlal expired in Patna.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9710

¹ From the postmark

514. LETTER TO SANTOK GANDHI

[After April 23, 1928]¹

CHI. SANTOK,

Seth Ghanshyamdas Birla is willing to employ Keshu, so you need not worry now about him. God will certainly ensure that he prospers. All of you should get absorbed in work. Take care of your health.

Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8672. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

515. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Sunday [After April 23, 1928]²

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have received all your three letters. I am unhappy that you are so very unhappy. Till today, I never worried on your account. I had assumed that you would neither feel hurt nor would misunderstand me. Now you have felt a little hurt. I assume that it will only be momentary. About Radha and Santok, do as you think best. I withdraw my opposition. I have sent two letters to that effect to Chhaganlal regarding Santok and Radha. I have written to him about Sanabhai also. I have also asked him why, after deciding to keep him, he changed his mind. You may pour out all your sufferings to me but never lose your self-possession. I do not have more time today.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 33325

¹ Radhabehn Chaudhri states that this letter was written shortly after Maganlal Gandhi's death on April 23, 1928.

² From the nature of reference to Santok and Radha, wife and daughter respectively of Maganlal Gandhi, addressee's elder brother, the letter appears to have been written after the death of Maganlal in Patna on April 23, 1928. *vide* also the following item.

516. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

*Tuesday [After April 23, 1928]*¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

What shall I write to you? Improve your health. There is no urgency for going to Utkal. Whenever you decide to go, do see me before going. Kashi herself, at the moment, does not feel strong enough to go there. Both of us believe that she will not be able to bear the cold there.

I am touched by your beautiful letter to Joshi.

The very next day of [Maganlal's] death, I started a movement that Santok should give away whatever property she has. I had talked about it to Maganlal many a time. I have started the move with the help of Keshu. While talking to Khushalbhai about the *shradha*², I asked him to do the same. I could not talk to him at length as there was some distraction. However, on this matter, I solicit the help of all you brothers. The property is meant for all of you but none of you need it. Then why should you keep it? I will no doubt talk to Narandas too. I remember that you too have something with you. I wish that you would dispose it off. For whom do you need it? Both your sons are able and of self-sacrificing temperament. Kashi and you will never be in trouble. The thought as to what will happen to the Ashram when I am no more, is a mean one and should never be entertained.

I have written all this in a great hurry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32857

¹ From the reference to Santok, and to the death, presumably of Maganlal Gandhi; Maganlal had died at Patna on April 23, 1928.

² Performance of the last rites for the dead

517. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
[After April 23, 1928]¹

BHAI TULSI MAHER,

What you write about Maganlal is true. Let us be more vigilant than ever. Do not be elated or depressed by the ebb and flow in your work but do as much as you can without attachment.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6534

518. CABLE TO SOUTH AFRICAN INDIAN
COMMUNITY²

April 24, 1928

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------|------------|----------|--------------|---------------------|
| HEALTH | GOOD. | RECEIVED | SASTRI'S | SATISFACTORY | REPLY. ³ |
| MAGANLAL | DIED | YESTERDAY. | | | |

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 11977

¹ It is likely that this letter was written after the death of Maganlal Gandhi.

² This cable was sent in reply to the South African Indian Community's cable which read: "Inform health."

³ In his long cable, Sastri had stated that the understanding arrived at the Settlement of 1914 would not be challenged and that the South African Ministers would not knowingly go back on previous promises. For the text of Sastri's cable *vide* Appendix "Cable from V. S. Srinivasa Sastri", April 24, 1923.

519. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 24, 1928

MY DEAR JAWAHAR,

I have your letter. Of course you know already the calamity that has befallen me on the death of Maganlal. It is well-nigh unbearable. However I am putting on a brave front.

I had not read the resolution asking the Congress to drop “peaceful and legitimate means” and change the expression into “by all possible means”. Independence I can swallow, “by all means” is unswallowable. But I suppose we shall have to develop stomach strong enough to swallow any poison. I hope however that you will not allow yourself to be exploited beyond your wish and capacity.

The mill-owners, it has now become obviously clear, wanted to do a deal with the Congress. But I am not sorry for these abortive negotiations. They have cleared the atmosphere.

The expected letter from Romain Rolland was received on Sunday. He will not bear the burden I wanted him to do. So I am not going this year. But you will read about this in the pages of *Young India*.¹

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13203

¹ *Vide* “To European Friends”, 26-4-1928.

520. LETTER TO KARNAD SADASHIVA RAO

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 24, 1928

MY DEAR SADASHIVA RAO,

I have your letter which I like very much. Let your daughters put themselves in touch with me. They have got to be brave, if they will not become worse than *purdanusheens*¹. For those who will have the butterfly existence are, in my opinion, worse than *purdanusheens*. And those who will become real servants of the nation have to accept voluntarily poverty as a blessing and not a mere tolerable position.

Yours sincerely,

SJT. SADASHIVA RAO KARNAD
KODAIKAL
MANGALORE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13202

¹ Those who observe *pardah*

521. *TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*¹

SABARMATI,
April 25, 1928

SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA
KHADI PRATISHTHAN
SODEPUR

YOUR TELEGRAM² WORTHY OF YOU. BEST SERVICE
YOU CAN RENDER TODAY IS BUILD UP YOUR BODY SO AS TO
SPARE ME ANOTHER SHOCK.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1590

522. *TELEGRAM TO DEVDAS GANDHI*

*[April 25, 1928]*³

RETURN HERE WITH RADHA.

From a photostat: S.N. 14649

¹ This was written on the back of the addressee's telegram dated April 24, 1928, to which it was sent in reply.

² It read: "Maganbhai's place cannot be filled but if wanted my ready serve you there."

³ This was written below the telegram to Satis Chandra Das Gupta; *vide* the preceding item. It appears both the telegrams were sent on the same day.

523. TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI¹

April 25, 1928

ABANDONED EUROPEAN VISIT BEFORE MAGANLAL'S
DEPARTURE. JAMNALALJI MUST GO PILGRIMAGE. LET ME
DESERVE INHERITANCE LEFT BY MAGANLAL.

BAPU

From a microfilm: S.N. 14683

524. MY BEST COMRADE GONE

He whom I had singled out as heir to my all is no more. Maganlal K. Gandhi, a grandson of an uncle of mine had been with me in my work since 1904. Maganlal's father has given all his boys to the cause. The deceased went early this month to Bengal with Seth Jamnalalji and others, contracted a high fever whilst he was on duty in Bihar and died under the protecting care of Brijkishore Prasad in Patna after an illness of nine days and after receiving all the devoted nursing that love and skill could give.

Maganlal Gandhi went with me to South Africa in 1903 in the hope of making a bit of fortune. But hardly had he been store-keeping for one year, when he responded to my sudden call to self-imposed poverty, joined the Phoenix settlement and never once faltered or failed after so joining me. If he had not dedicated himself to the country's service, his undoubted abilities and indefatigable industry would have made him a merchant prince. Put in a printing press he easily and quickly mastered the secrets of the art of printing. Though he had never before handled a tool or a machine, he found himself at home in the engine room, the machine room and at the compositor's desk. He was equally at ease with the Gujarati editing of the *Indian Opinion*. Since the Phoenix scheme included domestic farming, he became a good farmer. His was I think the best garden at the settlement. It may be of interest to note that the very first issue of *Young India* published in Ahmedabad bears the marks of his labours when they were much needed.

¹ This was sent in reply to the following telegram from C. Rajagopalachari: "Jamnalalji gone Patna. Returning tomorrow. You may resent suggestion but prayerfully press your going Europe now leaving scene of desolation in Jamnalalji's hands who must postpone pilgrimage remain Ashram. Wire reply Martaluminium."

He had a sturdy constitution which he wore away in advancing the cause to which he had dedicated himself. He closely studied and followed my spiritual career and when I presented to my co-workers *brahmacharya* as a rule of life even for married men in search of Truth, he was the first to perceive the beauty and the necessity of the practice and, though it cost him to my knowledge a terrific struggle, he carried it through to success, taking his wife along with him by patient argument instead of imposing his views on her.

When satyagraha was born, he was in the forefront. He gave me the expression which I was striving to find to give its full meaning to what the South African struggle stood for, and which for want of a better term I allowed to be recognized by the very insufficient and even misleading term “passive resistance”. I wish I had the very beautiful letter he then wrote to me giving his reasons for suggesting the name ‘Satyagraha’ which I changed to ‘Satyagrah’.¹ He argued out the whole philosophy of the struggle step by step and brought the reader irresistibly to his chosen name. The letter I remember was incredibly short and to the point as all his communications always were.

During the struggle he was never weary of work, shirked no task and by his intrepidity he infected everyone around him with courage and hope. When everyone went to jail, when at Phoenix courting imprisonment was like a prize to be won at my instance, he stayed back in order to shoulder a much heavier task. He sent his wife to join the women’s party.

On our return to India, it was he again who made it possible to found the Ashram in the austere manner in which it was founded. Here he was called to a newer and more difficult task. He proved equal to it. Untouchability was a very severe trial for him. Just for one brief moment his heart seemed to give way. But it was only for a second. He saw that love had no bounds and that it was necessary to live down the ways of ‘untouchables’, if only because the so-called higher castes were responsible for them.

The mechanical department of the Ashram was not a continuation of the Phoenix activity. Here we had to learn weaving, spinning, carding, and ginning. Again I turned to Maganlal. Though the conception was mine, his were the hands to reduce it to execution. He learnt weaving and all the other processes that cotton had to go through before it became khadi. He was a born mechanic.

¹ Vide “Satyagraha in South Africa (Chapter XII: The Advent of Satyagraha)”.

When dairying was introduced in the Ashram he threw himself with zeal in the work, studied dairy literature, named every cow and became friends with every animal¹ on the settlement.

And when tannery was added, he was undaunted and had proposed to learn the principles of tanning as soon as he got a little breathing time. Apart from his scholastic training in the High School at Rajkot, he learnt the many things he knew so well in the school of hard experience. He gathered knowledge from village carpenters, village weavers, farmers, shepherds and such ordinary folk.

He was the Director of the Technical Department of the Spinners' Association, and during the recent floods in Gujarat, Vallabhbhai put him in charge of building the new township Vithalpur.

He was an exemplary father. He trained his children—one boy and two girls, all unmarried still—so as to make them fit for dedication to the country. His son Keshu is showing very great ability in mechanical engineering, all of which he has picked up like his father from seeing ordinary carpenters and smiths at work. His eldest daughter Radha, eighteen years old, recently shouldered a difficult and delicate mission to Bihar in the interest of women's freedom. Indeed he had a good grasp of what national education should be and often engaged the teachers in earnest and critical discussion over it.

Let not the reader imagine that he knew nothing of politics. He did, but he chose the path of silent, selfless constructive service.

He was my hands, my feet and my eyes. The world knows so little of how much my so-called greatness depends upon the incessant toil and drudgery of silent, devoted, able and pure workers, men as well as women. And among them all Maganlal was to me the greatest, the best and the purest.

As I am penning these lines, I hear the sobs of the widow bewailing the death of her dear husband. Little does she realize that I am more widowed than she. And but for a living faith in God, I should become a raving maniac for the loss of one who was dearer to me than my own sons, who never once deceived me or failed me, who was a personification of industry, who was the watchdog of the Ashram in all its aspects—material, moral and spiritual. His life is an inspiration for me, a standing demonstration of the efficacy and the supremacy of the moral law. In his own life he proved visibly for me

¹ The source has "cattle".

not for a few days, not for a few months, but for twenty-four long years—now alas all too short—that service of the country, service of humanity and self-realization or knowledge of God are synonymous terms.

Maganlal is dead, but he lives in his work whose imprints he who runs may read on every particle of dust in the Ashram.

Young India, 26-4-1928

525. A MORAL STRUGGLE

I am a husband aged 30. My wife is about the same age. We have five children, of which two are fortunately dead. I know the responsibility for the rest of our children. But I find it difficult, if not impossible, to discharge that responsibility. You have advised self-restraint. Well, I have practised it for the last three years, but that is very much against my partner's wish. She insists on what poor mortals call the joys of life. You from your superior height may call it a sin. But my partner does not see it in that light. Nor is she afraid of bearing more children to me. She has not the sense of responsibility that I flatter myself with the belief I have. My parents side more with my wife than with me and there are daily quarrels. The denial of satisfaction to my wife has made her so peevish and so irritable that she flares up on the slightest pretext. My problem now is how to solve the difficulty. The children I have are too many for me. I am too poor to support them. The wife seems utterly irreconcilable. If she does not have the satisfaction she demands, she may even go astray or go mad or commit suicide. I tell you, sometimes I feel that if the law of the land permitted it, I would shoot down all unwanted children as you would stray dogs. For the last three months I have gone without the second meal, without tiffin. I have business obligation which prevent me from fasting for days. I get no compassion from the wife because she considers I am a humbug. I know the literature on birth-control. It is temptingly written. And I have read your book on self-restraint. I find myself between the devil and the deep blue sea.

The foregoing is a faithful paraphrase of a heart-rending letter from a young man who has given me his full name and address and whom I have known for some years. Being afraid to give his name, he

tells me he wrote twice before anonymously hoping that I would deal with his communications in the pages of *Young India*. I receive so many anonymous letters of this type that I hesitate to deal with them, even as I have considerable hesitation in dealing with this letter, although I know it to be perfectly genuine and know it to be a letter from a striving soul. The subject-matter is so delicate. But I see that I may not shirk an obvious duty claiming as I do claim a fair amount of experience of such cases and more especially because my method has given relief in several similar cases.

The condition in India, so far as English-educated Indians are concerned, is doubly difficult. The gulf between husband and wife from the point of view of social attainments is almost too wide to be bridgeable. Some young men seem to think that they have solved it satisfactorily by simply throwing their wives overboard, although they know that in their caste there is no divorce possible and therefore no remarriage on the part of their wives possible. Yet others—and this is the far more numerous class—use their wives merely as vehicles of enjoyment without sharing their intellectual life with them. A very small number—but daily growing—has a quickened conscience and are faced with the moral difficulty such as my correspondent is faced with.

In my opinion, sexual union to be legitimate is permissible only when both the parties desire it. I do not recognize the right of either partner to compel satisfaction. And if my position is correct in the case in point, there is no more obligation on the part of the husband to yield to the wife's importunities. But this refusal at once throws a much greater and more exalted responsibility on the husband's shoulders. He will not look down upon his wife from his isolent height but will humbly recognize that what to him is not a necessity is to her a fundamental necessity. He will therefore treat her with the utmost gentleness and love and will have confidence in his own purity to transmute his partner's passion into energy of the highest type. He will therefore have to become her real friend, guide and physician. He will have to give her his fullest confidence and with inexhaustible patience explain to her the moral basis of his action, the true nature of the relationship that should subsist between husband and wife and the true meaning of marriage. He will find in the process that many things that were not clear to him before will be clear and he will draw his partner closer to him if his own restraint is truthful.

In the case in point I cannot help saying that the desire not to

have more children is not enough reason for refusing satisfaction. It appears almost cowardly to reject one's wife's advances merely for fear of having to support children. A check upon an unlimited increase in the family is a good ground for both the parties jointly and individually putting a restraint upon sexual desires, but it is not sufficient warrant for one to refuse the privileges of a common bed to the other.

And why this impatience of children? Surely there is enough scope for honest, hard-working and intelligent men to earn enough for a reasonable number of children. I admit that for one like my correspondent who is honestly trying to devote his whole time to the service of the country it is difficult to support a large and growing family and at the same time to serve a country, millions of whose children are semi-starved. I have often expressed the opinion in these pages that it is wrong to bring forth progeny in India so long as she is in bondage. But that is a very good reason for young men and young women to abstain from marriage, not a conclusive reason for one partner refusing sexual co-operation to the other. That co-operation can be lawfully refused, it is a duty to refuse, when the call for *brahmacharya* on the highest ground of pure religion is imperative. And when such a call has clearly come, it will have its healthy reaction upon the partner. Assuming, however, that it does not produce such reaction in time, it will still be a duty to adhere to restraint even at the risk of losing the life or the sanity of one's partner. The cause of *brahmacharya* demands sacrifices no less heroic than, say, the cause of Truth or of one's country. In view of what I have said above, it is hardly necessary to state that artificial control of births is an immoral practice having no place in the conception of life that underlies my argument.

Young India, 26-4-1928

526. TO EUROPEAN FRIENDS

It is not without deep sorrow that I am now able to announce that the much-talked-of visit of mine to Europe is not to come off this year at any rate. To those in Austria, Holland, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Russia who had sent me kind invitations I can only say that their disappointment will be no greater than mine.

Somehow or other I dread a visit to Europe and America. Not that I distrust the peoples of these great Continents any more than I distrust my own, but I distrust myself. I have no desire to go to the West in search of health or for sightseeing. I have no desire to deliver public speeches. I detest being lionized. I wonder if I shall ever again have the health to stand the awful strain of public speaking and public demonstrations. If God ever sent me to the West, I should go there to penetrate the hearts of the masses, to have quiet talks with the youth of the West and have the privilege of meeting kindred spirits—lovers of peace at any price save that of Truth.

But I feel that I have as yet no message to deliver personally to the West. I believe my message to be universal but as yet I feel that I can best deliver it through my work in my own country. If I can show visible success in India, the delivery of the message becomes complete. If I came to the conclusion that India had no use for my message, I should not care to go elsewhere in search of listeners even though I still retained faith in it. If, therefore, I ventured out of India, I should do so because I have faith, though I cannot demonstrate it to the satisfaction of all, that the message is being surely received by India be it ever so slowly.

Thus whilst I was hesitatingly carrying on the correspondence with friends who had invited me, I saw that there was need for me to go to Europe, if only to see M. Romain Rolland. Owing to my distrust of myself over a general visit, I wanted to make my visit to that wise man of the West the primary cause of my journey to Europe. I therefore referred my difficulty to him and asked him in the frankest manner possible whether he would let me make my desire to meet him the primary cause of my visit to Europe. In reply I have a noble letter from him through Mirabai (Miss Slade) wherein he says that in the

name of truth itself, he will not think of letting me go to Europe if a visit to him is to be the primary cause. He will not let me interrupt my labours here for the sake of our meeting. I read in his letter no false humility. I read in it a most genuine expression of truth. He knew when he wrote his reply that my desire to go to Europe to meet him was not for a mere courteous discussion but in the interest of the cause as dear to him as to me. But evidently he was too humble to bear the burden of calling me merely so that in furtherance of the common interest we might by mutual talks understand each other better. And I wanted him to shoulder that very burden, if he felt that truth required us to meet each other face to face. His reply therefore I have taken as a clear answer to my prayer. Apart from this visit, I felt within me no imperative call.

I have taken the public into my confidence as, against my wish, the fact that a visit to Europe during this season was under serious contemplation was published in the papers. I regret my decision but it seems to be the correct one. For whilst there is no urge within to go to Europe, there is an incessant call within for so much to do here. And now the death of my best comrade seems to keep me rooted to the Ashram.

But I may say to the many friends in Europe, that next year, if all is well and if they still will have me I shall try to undertake the postponed tour, under the strict limitations mentioned by me and this I shall do whether I am ready to deliver my message or not. To see my numerous friends face to face will be no small privilege. But let me conclude this personal explanation by saying that if ever I am privileged to visit the West, I shall go there without changing my dress or habits, save in so far as the climate may require a change and self-imposed restrictions may permit. My outward form is I hope an expression of the inward.

Young India, 26-4-1928

527. *FOUR MONTHS' WORK*

The Vaishya Vidyashram, Sasavane, which started the constructive programme in right earnest last year has sent the following report¹ of work during four months ending *Chaitra* :

The foregoing resume of four months' increasing work is proof, if proof be still necessary, of what earnest effort can do. Where the wheel is reported to have failed, it was not the wheel that failed, but the wheel mesters that failed because they had no faith. Schoolboy all the world over will respond to honest endeavour as the boys of the Sasavane Ashram have done. And from the figures that are published from time to time in these columns, anyone who cares can work out an arithmetical calculation showing how many children working, say, at least one hour per day at the weel or the *takli* can spin enough yarn to clothe the whole nation. Oh for an imagination that will visualize the simple beauty of the wheel as a sure solvent of the economic distress or the country!

Young India, 26-4-1928

¹ Not reproduced here

528. CABLE TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI¹

SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

RT. HON. SASTRI
MARITZBURG

I LEFT SOUTH AFRICA JULY 1914. ALL UNDER-STANDING BETWEEN UNION GOVERNMENT AND ME COULD ONLY BE PRIOR MY DEPARTURE. PERSONALLY I COULD ASK FOR NO PROTECTION FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS BUT I SOUGHT AND RECEIVED PROTECTION FOR THOSE WHO HAD RECEIVED FRAUDULENT PAPERS BECAUSE AS I PROVED CONCLUSIVELY TO GOVERNMENT THAT THEIR OFFICERS WERE PARTY TO FRAUD AND THAT IT HAD BECOME DIFFICULT FOR EVEN HONEST MEN TO ENTER EXCEPT THROUGH BACKDOOR. YOU WILL SEE THEREFORE THERE IS DISTINCTION BETWEEN NATAL AND TRANSVAAL. FRAUD WAS NO DOUBT EVERYWHERE BUT NEVER IN SUCH WHOLESALE ALMOST OPEN MANNER AS IN TRANSVAAL AND INITIATED BY CORRUPT AND CORRUPTIBLE OFFICIALS. CLAIM NO FIRST-HAND KNOWLEDGE OF EVENTS AFTER MY DEPARTURE BUT ON GENERAL GROUNDS SINCE HABIBULLAH DEPUTATION OPENED NEW CHAPTER AND NEW VISION AND YOUR INSTALLATION EMPHASIZED AND SECURED STABILITY FOR NEW VISION THINGS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED ON MERITS APART FROM PREVIOUS ASSURANCE DIRECT OR IMPLIED AND I FEEL ALL THOSE WHO ENTERED BEFORE SMUTS-GANDHI SETTLEMENT SHOULD HAVE FULL UN-CONDITIONAL PROTECTION. AFTER ALL NUMBER CAN ONLY BE SMALL. HAVING GIVEN MY OPINION, I KNOW WHATEVER YOU DO WILL BE BEST AND HONOURABLE UNDER CIRCUMSTANCES. I SHALL THEREFORE CONTINUE TENDER YOU ALL SUPPORT IN MY POWER ESPECIALLY IN YOUR DEALING WITH TRANSVAAL INDIANS. POSTING COPIES SIR MAHOMED TREATING CONFIDENTIALLY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 11974

¹ This was sent in reply to Sastri's cable dated April 24, 1928, for the text of which *vide* Appendix "Cable from V. S. Srinivas Sastri", April 24, 1928.

529. *LETTER TO MAHOMED HABIBULLAH*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

At the instance of our common friend Mr. Sastri, I send you herewith copy of cables that have passed between us. If there be¹ anything that is obscure in the position that I have taken up in my cable², please do not hesitate to ask for my explanation.

Though I am treating the whole of this telegraphic correspondence as strictly confidential, I am taking the liberty of sending copies to Mr. Andrews who knows everything about the matters concerning the position of our countrymen in South Africa.

Yours sincerely,

Encl.

HON. SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH
MEMBER, VICEROY'S COUNCIL
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 11977

¹ The source has "are".

² *Vide* the preceding item.

530. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 26, 1928

I have your wire as also Gurudev's regarding Maganlal. It is perhaps the greatest trial of my life. But so far it appears that He who has subjected me to the ordeal is giving me the strength to go through it.

Now therefore to the business. Here are copies of cables exchanged between Sastri and myself. Please tell me if I have erred anywhere in my reply. And if you have got the papers referred to by Sastri in his cable of date after my departure from South Africa after July 1914, please send them to me by registered post, especially the arrangements of 1915 and the recent bill.

C. F. ANDREWS

SANTINIKETAN

From a photostat: S.N. 11978

531. LETTER TO S. GANESAN

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 26, 1928

MY DEAR GANESAN,

Here is the preface¹ to the *History of Satyagraha in South Africa*.

Sjt. Desai is anxious that you should send a proof copy of the whole book, cover and all, as it is to be issued, and that this you should do before finishing the binding of all copies. He tells me that whoever looks after the printing in your office, is extremely careless and tells me sometimes important corrections made by him have not been carried out. He is anxious that such mistakes should be avoided for this book.

I have already telegraphed² to you that you may dedicate it to Maganlal Gandhi.

¹ This appears to be a slip for "foreword"

² The telegram is not available.

I have your letter about the advertisement. Much as I would like to advertise the publications, I am afraid I must not do so. But if I can do it in some other way, I would gladly adopt it. There is a way, perhaps, of taking Mr. Gregg's book off your hands. What is its cost price? Have you to pay anything to him?

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 13205

532. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

At the interview in Delhi,¹ I promised to send you literature on khadi. I delayed sending the other pamphlets pending the publication of Mr. Gregg's volume. The other pamphlets represent the conclusions of two very well-known lawyers of Madras and Bihar.

You were good enough to say that when you had more leisure you would like to discuss the potency of khadi with me. If you have the leisure and still the inclination I am at your service.

I am,
Your Excellency's Friend,
M. K. GANGHI

H. E. THE VICEROY
SIMLA

From a photostat: S.N. 13596

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to C. F. Andrews" & "Letter to C. F. Andrews", October 1, 1927 and Appendix "Gandhi-Irwin Interview", November 2, 1927.

533. *LETTER TO J. B. PETIT*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

DEAR MR. PETIT,

Whilst I was thinking of applying to you for a contribution for the expenses I am incurring in connection with the position of emigrants abroad, I received a long confidential cablegram from the Rt. Hon. Sastri to which I have been obliged to send a reply which has cost me Rs.92-4-0. I do not know how prolonged this cable correspondence will be.

Whilst I have not Mr. Banarsidas with me, I have Pandit Totaram Sanadhya of Fiji, whom I dare say you know at least by repute. He is staying at the Ashram with his wife. He is drawing regularly Rs. 50, and he is allowed to incur extra expenses in connection with Fiji. All the expenses are kept and even accounts are published. I send you a copy herewith. Totaramji gives his spare time to teaching Hindi to the children in the Ashram. I would like the Association¹ to take this burden off my shoulders. If the Association would not care to bear the whole of the honorarium paid to Totaramji, it may halve with me. I send you also the account published by Totaramji of his work and issued for private circulation.

I am managing all the expenses connected with Ashram activities through the generosity of private friends, but I think that the expenses on account of activity in connection with the emigrants should be borne by the Association. I would therefore like you to consider this letter as if it was divided into two parts, the first with reference to the general expenses which in my books amount to roughly Rs. 5,000 to date. I could send you an extract from the Ashram ledger to show how the account is made up,—secondly, the expenses that I am now incurring regarding cables.

I shall be thankful for whatever the Committee of the Association considers a legitimate charge upon its funds.

Yours sincerely,

From a microfilm: S.N. 12859

¹ Imperial Citizenship Association

534. *LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 26, 1928

BHAISHRI KASTURBHAI,

I have your letter. I will be ready on Tuesday at 6.15 and wait for your friends in order that I may reach there and present myself.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33138

535. *LETTER TO JUGALKISHORE*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 27, 1928

MY DEAR JUGALKISHORE,

I was glad to receive your letter after such a long absence. I was wondering how you were faring at the P. M. V.¹

My plan about the spinners' register is not half as ambitious as you think, though we cannot be too accurate nor too insistent on every worker coming in the closest touch with the spinners and yet, strange as it may appear though we represent spinners above everybody else, our workers are least in touch with them! But even if we do not come in such close contact with them and understand their lives as we understand our blood-sisters, we should at least know who and where they are, who are supplying us with their yarn. I have therefore said that we should trace the residence and names of every spinner whose yarn is received in the bazaar. Let us at least have that very rudimentary contact with them. This does not require the elaborate register mentioned by Satis Babu in his Manual. Even he is not able to enforce that register when he buys yarn at the Feni Bazaar. His register was and is in complete operation at his Atrai Dept. where he brought into being the spinners for the first time and kept touch with them. The largest quantity of yarn however received by him is at

¹ Prem Mahavidyalaya

the Feni Bazaar. My register therefore is really a census register to be taken once for all or periodically. You see therefore you do not require the staff suggested by you for my simple measure.

Nobody has complained that the Gandhi Ashram will not give this list. I think I saw the argument advanced by Dhiren about the difficulty of tracing every spinner and I wrote combating that argument and showing a way out of the difficulty. The difficulty raised by Dhiren was not raised by him alone. It is a difficulty common to almost all and all are gradually getting over the difficulty.

I quite agree with you that in order to establish a living contact with the spinners, we must have women workers. Tell Shanti Devi I would like her to make a start.

Now about your scheme. I like the general idea. How far you can give effect to it there, I do not know. Because after all you want honest and able teachers who know their work. We have not too many as yet. But make out your scheme and send it to Jamnalalji unofficially in the first instance and see how it appeals to him.

Tell me how Bharat is doing there and how spinning is going on among the students.

By this time you know about Maganlal's death.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13204

536. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

April 27, 1928

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I got both your letters. But even today there is not time enough for a full reply.

About Maganlal, what shall I write? I find it harder to bear this loss than to drink the cup of poison, but God has been most compassionate to me for I am calm.

What can we do about the boycott until the educated class is ready for it? One sees clearly enough now that it is useless to expect anything from the mills.

I am happy to hear that your health is improving; the happiness is of course tinged with self-interest. How could I help it?

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6156. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

537. *LETTER TO FREDERIC AND FRANCISCA
STANDENATH*

THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

April 27, 1928

DEAR FRIENDS,

I have received all your letters including the last dated March 28th. I do not think I replied to the previous letter because in it you led me to expect another to tell me definitely what the passage would be and whether there would be any difficulty about your passports. In your recent letter whilst I understand all about the passports, there is no reference to the fare required. If you give me a definite idea, I would be able to approach friends and ask them to give me the amount.

So far as the assurance¹ from me is required, please produce

¹ The British Passport Control Office for Austria had written to the addressees: "If, however, you are travelling to India at the express invitation of Mahatma Gandhi, it will only be necessary for you to submit his letters of invitation containing the statement that he is prepared to guarantee your expenses" (S.N. 14301).

this letter which gives you the assurance that throughout your stay with me, there will be no difficulty about your support, and that you would be coming to India at my invitation.

Now of course I do not want you to come before November or December, for the simple reason that this is the hot season and the heat continues more or less to the end of October.

You will see that I have abandoned the contemplated European visit for reasons fully given in *Young India*.¹ If I keep good health next year my coming to Europe ought to be a certainty. This may mean some change in your programme. But I do not want you to cancel your visit to India; for my desire is that you should see India with your own eyes and compare it with the India of your imagination. So, if you can at all come, I would like you to come irrespective of my proposed visit to Europe.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 14302

*538. MESSAGE WITH AN AUTOGRAPH*²

SABARMATI,
April 27, 1928

God is Truth. The way to reach Truth is through the loving service of all that lives.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 14263

¹ *Vide* "To European Friends", 26-4-1928.

² This was sent to Byron N. Clark of the University of Vermont, Burlington, who was also the Secretary of the State Committee of the Y.M.C.A.

539. LETTER TO KALYANJI MEHTA

April 28, 1928

BHAISHRI KALYANJI,

You know I cannot attend the Conference. I am sorry I cannot, but just now I am helpless. The contribution of the Raniparaj men and women to the present movement is as much a matter of satisfaction to us as it is worthy of them. I regard this movement as one for developing fearlessness and for self-purification. How can they who call themselves Raniparaj live in fear? In the sacrificial effort of self-purification, how could they afford to have vices like drinking, gambling and wearing foreign cloth? I trust, therefore, that the Raniparaj men and women will give increasing importance to the spinning-wheel, use more and more khadi and abstain from drinking and give up other vices.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2683

540. THE MEANING OF VOLUNTARY POVERTY ¹

Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi is the Secretary to the Managing Committee of the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati. He had a university scholarship for post-graduate study in economics and ever since he gave up that scholarship to take part in the non-co-operation movement he has been in the Ashram. About a fortnight ago he had a summons from a first class magistrate to appear as witness in a criminal case. The policeman who came to serve the summons behaved most carelessly. He came shouting for Chhaganlal Joshi. This I heard and directed him to Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi. He gave him the summons. Sjt. Chhaganlal asked him to wait until he had read it, but "take it if you care" he said and went away.

Sjt. Chhaganlal read out the summons to me. He seemed to be knowing nothing about the case, and he did not know what to do. He had no time of his own, nor had he any money for railway fare. For all his time and money belonged to the Ashram, as every member is

¹ The Gujarati original of which this is a translation by Mahadev Desai appeared in *Navajivan*, 29-4-1928.

supposed to have given his all to the Ashram. The money in possession of the Ashram is all public money ear-marked by the donors for the purpose for which it exists, and could certainly not be utilized for railway fare to respond to a summons. And so Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi was in the predicament of the pauper of Orissa, the only difference being that whilst the latter could receive and use for himself whatever others gave him the former could not use a donation except for the purpose of the Ashram. Herein lies the beauty as well as the restraint of voluntary poverty.

What then would an Orissa pauper do if he was served with a sum-mons as in this case? The policeman had not cared to explain to him the meaning of the summons, nor to pay him the railway fare to enable him to go to the court. In the present case the magistrate's court was some miles away from Ahmedabad near a station on the Prantij line. The Oris-sa pauper would be absolutely helpless and would not know what to do.

So Sjt. Chhaganlal decided to sit still and suffer the consequences. Otherwise his voluntary poverty would have no meaning, nor could he serve the poor if he did not behave like them.

This inevitable inability to respond to the summons was interpreted by the magistrate as contempt of court and he issued a warrant of arrest against Sjt. Joshi. The man serving the warrant said: "We will not arrest you, if you promise to attend on the due date."

"I would willingly promise," said Sjt. Joshi, "provided I got the railway fare and allowance."

The man had no authority to make the payment and so he produced Sjt. Joshi before a first class magistrate in Ahmedabad. The latter had no time to go into the case. Sjt. Joshi explained how he failed to obey the summons, but the magistrate trained in the traditions of the bureaucracy said :

"I am afraid I can do nothing. I am prepared to release you on bail, and you may if you like agitate later on."

If he was prepared to give bail, without getting the fare and the allowance, why should he not have obeyed the original summons?

The sun was blazing overhead when Sjt. Joshi was ordered to proceed to the police station. He refused any longer to walk and the policemen in charge were compelled to hire a carriage. Ultimately Sjt. Joshi was taken to Talod under a full police escort and produced before the magistrate. The moment the magistrate saw Sjt. Joshi he

realized his mistake, paid him the fare and allowance and released him on parole.

It is reported that this simple act of courage had a very good effect on the people of Talod who were greatly delighted.

Those who have accepted voluntary poverty can by acting in the manner of Chhaganlal Joshi easily hasten the end of the injustice and tyranny that seems today to be the lot of the poor.

The thoughtless discourtesy of the magistrate in the case was remarkable. He issued summons without the least inquiry and having done so did nothing to provide the man summoned with the wherewithal to obey the summons. I am told that it is not the practice to pay the witnesses railway fare and allowance in advance. If that is the case, it means terrible hardship for the poor. The issue of warrant in the case betrayed the magistrate's criminal negligence. He had no evidence of the proper service of the summons.

He did not care to inquire whether Sjt. Joshi had at all received the summons. One can only imagine what terrible injustice lies hidden in this Government's department of "justice".

It is difficult to say what would have happened in Talod had Sjt. Chhaganlal been the dumb pauper of Orissa. What a shower of abuse he might have received and how fiercely the magistrate might have bullied him! The man who had been so much sinned against might have been branded as a sinner.

Though the Government is responsible for this reckless and insolent behaviour towards the poor, one cannot help observing that the Indian officials who behave in this fashion have absolutely no excuse to do so. It is possible that this high-handedness was there even in pre-British days. But a wrong does not become right if it can be proved to be pre-British. And if even Indian officials do not mend their ways, those who have accepted voluntary poverty ought to correct them through satyagraha.

Young India, 3-5-1928

541. SOUL OF THE ASHRAM

When Shri Vallabhbhai received the news of Maganlal Gandhi's death, he wired: "The soul of the Ashram has departed." There was no exaggeration in this. I cannot imagine the existence of Satyagraha Ashram without Maganlal. Many of my activities were started because I knew that he was there. If ever there was a person with whom I identified myself, it was Maganlal. We often have to consider whether certain matters will hurt another person, even if that person be one's own son or wife. I never had to entertain such fear with regard to Maganlal. I never hesitated to set him the most difficult tasks. I very often put him in embarrassing situations and he silently bore with them. He regarded no work as too mean.

If I were fit to be anyone's guru, I would have proclaimed him my first disciple.

In all my life I gave only one person the freedom to regard me as his guru and I had my fill of it. The fault was not his, as I could see; only I had imperfections. Anyone who becomes a guru should possess the power of conferring on the pupil the capacity to carry out whatever task is assigned to him. I had not that power and still do not have it.

But if Maganlal was not a disciple, he was certainly a servant. I am convinced that no master could possibly find a servant better or more loyal than Maganlal. This may be a conjecture, but I can assert from my experience that I have not found another servant like him. It has been my good fortune always to have found co-workers, or servants if you like, who were faithful, virtuous, intelligent and industrious. Still, Maganlal was the best of all these co-workers and servants.

The three streams of knowledge, devotion and action continuously flowed within Maganlal and, by offering his knowledge and his devotion in the *yajna* of action, he demonstrated before everyone their true form. And because in this way each action of his was full of awareness, knowledge and faith, his life attained the very summit of sannyasa. Maganlal had renounced his all. I never saw an iota of self-interest in any of his actions. He showed—not once, not for a short time but time after time for twenty-four years incessantly—that true sannyasa lay in selfless action or action without desire for reward.

Maganlal's father entrusted all his four sons to me one after

another for serving the country. Maganlal was entrusted to me in 1903. He accompanied me to South Africa to earn a living. In 1904, I invited him along with other friends to embrace poverty in order to serve the country. He heard me calmly and embraced poverty. From that time on until his death, his life was an un-interrupted flow. With each day I realize more and more that my mahatmaship, which is a mere adornment, depends on others. I have shone with the glory borrowed from my innumerable co-workers. However, no one has done more to add to this glory than Maganlal. He co-operated with me fully and with intelligence in all my activities—physical or spiritual. I see no better instance than Maganlal of one who made a tremendous effort to act as he believed. Maganlal was awake all the twenty-four hours establishing unity of thought and action. He used up all his energy in this.

If I have not exaggerated, consciously or unconsciously, in this sketch, one can say that a country in which dharma can be so embodied must triumph and so must its dharma. Hence I wish that every servant of the country should study Maganlal's life and if it commends itself to him imitate it with determination. What was possible for Maganlal is possible for every man who makes the effort. Maganlal could become a true leader because he was a true soldier and I find those who could put up with his fire weeping around me now.

This country, as also the world, is in need of true soldiers. Service of the country, service of the world, self-realization, vision of God—these are not separate things but different aspects of the same thing. Maganlal realized the truth of this in his own life and made others do so. Those who are curious can study his life and find this out.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-4-1928

542. *LETTER TO KUNVERJI KHETSHI PAREKH*

Sunday [April 29, 1928]¹

CHI. KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. I have never felt that you have taken up khadi work for the sake of money, and my question arose only from yours. Will you always be able to live contented doing khadi work? You certainly know there is no financial gain in this. It provides plain bread. I assume from your letter that you will not be able to live in the Ashram if a rule is adopted that only *brahmacharis* can do so. Even in that case I believe there will be no problem in employing you in khadi work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9711

543. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 29, 1928

DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your letter. I have told you the way I want you to assist me. You offer to come to the Ashram, and yet, at the end of your letter, you are obliged to say, "I am afraid for a long time, I won't be physically fit." No, your *sadhana* is to make yourself physically fit and, therefore, it is better for you to be where you are, and convalesce. I would even suggest your going to Giridih and be at the side of Nikhil.

¹ From the postmark

The idea of burying yourself in a village in order to develop it makes a forcible appeal to me. There, perhaps, you can rest your limbs better than anywhere else, if you have a clean water supply and if you will use a mosquito-net.

I have heard that you do not use milk. If this is true, it is bad. You won't serve the cause by wearing away the body without cause.

Love.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1591

544. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 29, 1928

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter of condolence. God's will be done.

As to the other part of your letter, what can I do in Bombay? I have no confidence in my ability to assist. My solution of the problem is so different from what is generally expected. I am more than ever convinced that the communal problem should be solved outside of legislation and if, in order to reach that state, there has to be civil war, so be it. Who will listen to a proposal so mad as this?

Yours sincerely,

SJT. C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR
KODAIKANAL

From a photostat: S.N. 13207

545. LETTER TO LAJPAT RAI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
April 29, 1928

DEAR LALAJI,

I have your characteristic letter. I am glad you had an ocular demonstration of what form untouchability takes in the south. I wish you could have been there longer to see the unapproachables and the

invisibles face to face, and to talk to them.

And in this connection let me tell you what an important part khadi is playing in reaching even the unapproachables and invisibles, because it is khadi that makes it possible to establish contacts which before were impossible or unthinkable. However this is by the way and written not to influence you in favour of khadi through a side issue.

I am therefore glad that you are making a serious study of the subject. And I am glad, too, that you are determined not to come to any hasty decision. Whatever conclusions you may ultimately form, I would like you to feel about them as you feel about untouchability. No argument against untouchability from the so-called *sanatana* quarters or any quarter could possibly dislodge you from the position you hold. I would like you therefore to make a thorough study of the problem before coming to any conclusion whatsoever.

I want you for khadi. I know what a gain it would be. But I do not want you as a patron on whose certificate I may trade. I want you as a fellow-worker who will not be dislodged from his position and who would be working for the cause of khadi to the best of his ability. For the present, therefore, I would like you, after you study, to discuss the subject with me if you have any doubts before you commit yourself. By all means carry on correspondence with me or those who may be hostile to khadi, but I would like you to promise that you will not commit yourself before discussing with me the criticism that may appear to you to be convincing and unanswerable. Let me assure you that there are in the khadi movement people who have made a thorough study of the subject and who will leave khadi without a moment's hesitation if they found that the premises on which they proceeded were insupportable.

Yes, indeed, Maganlal's death is the heaviest blow I could have received. But in the battle for freedom, we have little time to shed tears over the departure of the dearest.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13597

546. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO GANGADEVI

2.5 a.m. Monday, April 30, 1928

There is no need to take a purgative. I do not wish to give milk today either. Continue to take juice of orange and grapes. Take as much water as possible. Take hip-bath and massage with ice. Take through the nose water with salt and soda mixed, and apply mud-pack to the stomach today also.

From copy of the Hindi: Benars idas Chatur vedi Papers . Nation al Archiv es of India

547. LETTER TO RAVISHANKER MAHARAJ

Silence Day, April 30, 1928

BHAISHRI RAVISHANKER,

You are fortunate. You are satisfied with whatever food you get, cold and heat make no difference to you, you cover yourself if you get some rags and now you are the first lucky one to go to jail. If God would permit an interchange and if you are generous I would surely change places with you. Victory to you and the country!

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2935. Courtesy: Ravishanker Maharaj

548. LETTER TO TARABEHN JASWANI

SABARMATI,
*Mondy [April 30, 1928]*¹

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter. When I go for my daily walk, I think of you. Take great care of your health. Remain firm in all your vows. Write to me from time to time.

You must have heard about Maganlal. I hope you get *Navajivan* regularly.

Blessings to Chi. Divali.

I shall read your questions now and write to you about them in my next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. TARABEHN DHIRAJLAL JASWANI
C/O BHAI MOHANLAL KHANDERIA
WANKANER

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8780

¹ From the postmark

549. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 1, 1928

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I hope to write about mill-cloth in the next issue of *Young India*.¹ I am writing to Jairamdas now.²

I have now to try to deserve the legacy left by Maganlal.

You will please tell me in good time whether you would want me to send Jaisukhlal after Mathuradas leaves. Having taken up flood relief work, I take it you will not in any way put it in jeopardy by taking an active part in any other thing however attractive it may be. Remember the *Bhagavad Gita* verse :

श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः ॥³

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 886; also S.N. 13212

¹ Vide "Mill-cloth v. Khadi", 10-5-1928.

² This letter is not available.

³ III. 35. Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.

550. LETTER TO S. RAMANATHAN

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 1, 1928

MY DEAR RAMANATHAN,

I have your letter about¹ I see your law is at fault. If you have no writing from . . . , I am sure that we cannot pay ourselves for any loss incurred owing to the negligence or fraud of workers, even though the latter may have furnished cash security. Do you not see that it is a dangerous doctrine? If such were the law, employees would be at the mercy of employers who would be judges and executioners combined. What may appear to an employer to be negligence or fraud, may not honestly appear to be that to an employee and may not be such even in law. A well-ordered society, therefore, requires unequivocal written documents, if securities furnished by employees are to be appropriated for patent negligence or fraud. Whatever, therefore, you do about . . . I suggest that you should take a written document from all the employees from whom you have taken securities.

About . . . , I suggest that you state the facts that you may have in your possession in proof of his dishonesty, tell him that you hold the security as guarantee for the damage sustained in accordance with the custom of the association and in accordance with the verbal agreement between him and yourself and offer to take him to a court of law if he wishes or to submit it to arbitrators, one to be appointed by him and one by us.

I promised to write to . . . after I had heard from you. I will await your answer before writing to him.²

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

SJT. S. RAMANATHAN
SECRETARY,
A. I. S. A., TAMILNAD
ERODE

From a microfilm: S.N. 13593

¹ Name omitted

² A copy of this letter was sent to Secretary, A.I.S.A., Ahmedabad, along with Ramanathan's letter.

551. *LETTER TO DR. B. C. ROY*

THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
May 1, 1928

DEAR DR. BIDHAN,

Your letter flatters me,¹ but I must not succumb to my pride. Apart from the fact that as a non-co-operator I may have nothing to do with the University that is in any way connected with Government, I do not consider myself to be a fit and proper person to deliver Kamala lectures². I do not possess the literary attainment which Sir Ashutosh undoubtedly contemplated for the lecturers.

You are asking me to shoulder a responsibility which my shoulders cannot bear. I am keeping fairly fit. I am biding my time and you will find me leading the country in the field of politics when the country is ready. I have no false modesty about me. I am undoubtedly a politician in my own way, and I have a scheme for the country's freedom. But my time is not yet and may never come to me in this life. If it does not, I shall not shed a single tear. We are all in the hands of God. I therefore await His guidance.

Yours sincerely,

From a photostat: S.N. 13210 a

¹ Dr. Roy had requested Gandhiji to deliver lectures at the Calcutta University. The earlier lecturers were Annie Besant, Srinivasa Sastri and Sarojini Naidu.

² Instituted by Ashutosh Mukherjee

552. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

*Tuesday [May 1, 1928]*¹

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. I do not have the courage to let you come here. Nor is it necessary for you to come. I have suggested to Devdas that he should go and be with you. If you send me a specimen of your model of the spinning-wheel, I will ask someone here to work it. I will obtain Keshu's report. Lakshmidas, who also is here now, may also see it. I may suffer your coming here when the weather is colder. Do come in the winter. Besides, Chhaganlal is there, and even for his sake, it is essential that you remain there. I certainly cannot let Chhaganlal come here. When his health is completely restored, he will of course come. My proposed visit to Europe has been cancelled, and so that reason also for your coming here does not exist. Moreover, as it is, you have been doing some work there and so, you need have no scruples in staying on there.

What can I write about Maganlal? Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi have arrived. They are bearing the loss with great fortitude. Some changes have been taking place in the Ashram these days. You must be getting an account of them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The figures of the account marked by me in the accompanying pamphlet do not seem to be correct. Go through them and then let me know. Return the pamphlet to me. I wish to write something about it.

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32994

¹ From the reference in the letter to the cancellation of visit to Europe which Gandhiji announced in *Young India* of April 26, 1928, vide "To European Friends". The Tuesday following this announcement fell on 1st May. The reference to Khushalbhai and Devbhabhi's arrival and their "bearing the loss" of Maganlal's death "with fortitude" also indicates that the letter may have been written on 1st May, 1928. Maganlal had died in Patna on April 23, 1928.

553. *SPEECH AT OPENING OF CRECHE, AHMEDABAD*¹

May 1, 1928

Perhaps it is quite appropriate that this creche is being opened by one who calls himself a labourer, though let me confess to you that it was not without some hesitation that I accepted the invitation when it was brought to me by Sheth Kasturbhai, not because I did not like the object, but because I was so preoccupied, and nothing would have pleased me better than that you should have got this function performed by someone more deserving than myself preferably a mill-owner. But my regard for Sheth Kasturbhai prevailed and I had to yield.

When I established my Ashram in Ahmedabad the consideration which weighed with me was not merely that it was the capital of Gujarat, nor that it was a busy commercial centre but that it was a great centre of textile industry and I felt that I could reasonably count on the help of the mill-agents and be able to render some service to the city. Today I am glad to be able to say that these expectations of mine have not been altogether unfulfilled. Though I have a recollection of some bitter experiences I have also a number of sweet recollections of my relations with the mill-owners. I have not yet given up hope of Ahmedabad. I still expect great things of it. It has much to accomplish yet, and among other things, speaking as a labourer myself, and as one who has tried to enter into the innermost feelings of the working class I say that Ahmedabad has much to do yet towards the amelioration of the condition of the labouring class.

My connection with the labour of this place is not of yesterday. It is as old as my first coming to this city, and so I make bold to tell you that you have not yet done your part towards your labouring population. In some cases the labourers have not been provided with even the primary amenities of life. There are exceptions, however. Some mill-owners have made some effort in the direction, and the present one is an instance in point.

The sentiments about the welfare of the mill-hands that Sheth Kas-turbhai has just now uttered before you reflect credit on him and the city of Ahmedabad. Sheth Kasturbhai was delighted with Port Sunlight, and rightly. But Port Sunlight cannot be our ideal. Messrs Lever Bros. represent to my mind the minimum standard that an

¹ Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Agent, Raipur Manufacturing Company, had requested Gandhiji to perform the opening ceremony.

employer must do for his employees. To do less would be a discredit. But we cannot afford to rest content with that. We must think in terms of our own civilization, and if the picture presented to us in the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* of the social conditions prevailing in the ancient times be correct, our ideal would seem to go much farther than Port Sunlight. I have read a lot of literature about Port Sunlight, and I am an ardent admirer of their welfare work, but I maintain that ours is a higher ideal. In the West there is still a watertight division between the employer and the employees. I know it is impertinent to talk of our ideal, while the curse of untouchability still stalks through the land. But I should be untrue to myself and be failing in my duty to you if I did not place before you what I regard as the highest ideal. The relation between mill-agents and mill-hands ought to be one of father and children or as between blood-brothers. I have often heard the mill-owners of Ahmedabad refer to themselves as 'masters' and their employees as their servants. Such loose talk should be out of fashion in a place like Ahmedabad which prides itself on its love of religion and love of ahimsa. For that attitude is a negation of ahimsa, inasmuch as our ideal demands that all our power, all our wealth and all our brains should be devoted solely to the welfare of those who through their own ignorance and our false notions of things are styled labourers or 'servants'. What I expect of you therefore is that you should hold all your riches as a trust to be used solely in the interests of those who sweat for you, and to whose industry and labour you owe all your position and prosperity. I want you to make your labourers co-partners of your wealth. I do not mean to suggest that unless you legally bind yourselves to do all that, there should be a labour insurrection. The only sanction that I can think of in this connection is of mutual love and regard as between father and son, not of law. If only you make it a rule to respect these mutual obligations of love, there would be an end to all labour disputes, the workers would no longer feel the need for organizing themselves into unions. Under the ideal contemplated by me, there would be nothing left for our Anasuyabehn's and Shankerlal's to do; their occupation would be gone. But that cannot happen until there is a single mill-hand who does not regard the mill in which he works as his own, who complains of sweating and overwork, and who therefore nurses in his breast nothing but ill will towards his employers. And where is the difficulty?

You have told us and it is recognized everywhere that the mill-

owners stand only to gain by doing all this. Messrs Lever Bros. lost nothing by doing all that they did. They felt so encouraged that they even tried to create another Port Sunlight in Natal. As our experience gradually broadens we are beginning to see more and more clearly that the more we give to our workers the more we stand to gain. From the moment your men come to realize that the mills are theirs, no less than yours, they will begin to feel towards you as blood-brothers, there would be no question of their acting against the common interest and the need for having a heavy supervisory establishment over them.

You have given me credit for keeping the city of Ahmedabad free from a labour upheaval such as Bombay is at present passing through. Well, I cannot quite disclaim that credit, for does anyone among you for a moment doubt that things would have been otherwise here, but for the work that Shrimati Anasuyabehn and Sjt. Shankerlal have been doing? It is true perhaps that you the mill-owners of Ahmedabad are more tactful than the Bombay mill-owners. In case of an upheaval you do not employ hooligans to crush your men as some employers in the West do, and I fancy that you have deliberately abjured that weapon of suppressing the aspirations of labour. My critics tell me that this is all moonshine, and that you would not hesitate to resort to such means, if you could. But I believe that they are mistaken and I want you to prove by your conduct that they are mistaken. I hope you will help to bring near the time when the sort of work that Sjt. Banker Shrimati Anasuyabehn are doing would be rendered needless, and pending that consummation give them all the help, all the encouragement that they need in their work.

Now perhaps you understand why I have dared to appropriate a little credit for the peace that prevails here today. It belongs not to me but to Shrimati Anasuyabehn and Sjt. Shankerlal Banker. They live, move and have their being among the labourers, which I am unable to do. If you aid the efforts of these friends you will find there will not be much need left for erecting creches like this one or for providing medical relief. I do not wish to detract from the merit of these efforts of yours, but I ask you whether any well-to-do man would care to send his children to a creche like this. Our endeavour should be to bring about a state of things under which there would be no occasion for a mill-hand's baby to be torn from its mother, and when a factory hand's child would receive the same opportunities for education that our own children have.

Young India, 10-5-1928

APPENDICES
APPENDIX I
*RESOLUTION ON HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY*¹

PART A—POLITICAL RIGHTS

This Congress resolves : (1) That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation in various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted; (2) That, with a view to giving full assurances to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures such representation of the communities should be secured for the present, and if desired, by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature :

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

In the decision of the reservation of seats for the Punjab, the question of the representation of Sikhs as an important minority will be given full consideration;

3(a) That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that the reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of the Congress, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces;

(b)(i) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Congress is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on a linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted in the constitution of the Congress;

(ii) This Congress is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and that any province which demands such reconstitution on linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly;

(iii) This Congress is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by reconstituting Andhra, Utakl, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces;

4. That, in the future constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed

¹ Passed at the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Madras on December 26, 1927; *vide* letters to Ansari, 25-12-1927 and 28-12-1927.

and no legislature, Central or Provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience;

‘Liberty of conscience’ means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others;

5. That no bill, resolution, motion or amendment regarding intercommunal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourths majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of such bill, resolution, motion or amendment.

“Intercommunal matters” means matters agreed upon by such a joint Standing Committee of both communities—of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislature concerned appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

PART B—RELIGIOUS AND OTHER RIGHTS

This Congress resolves that :

1. Without prejudice to the rights Hindus and Mussalmans claim, the one to play music and conduct processions wherever they please and the other to slaughter cows for sacrifice or food wherever they please, the Mussalmans appeal to the Mussalmans to spare Hindu feelings as much as possible in the matter of the cow and the Hindus appeal to the Hindus to spare Mussalman feelings, as much as possible in the matter of music before mosques.

And therefore, this Congress calls upon both the Hindus and Mussal-mans not to have recourse to violence or to law to prevent the slaughter of a cow or the playing of music before a mosque.¹

2. This Congress further resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the person, place, time and manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration of jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means,

¹ This section, according to *The Hindu*, 27-12-1927, was originally drafted by Gandhiji and adopted with a few verbal changes by the Congress.

or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations.

The resolution was moved by Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and was seconded by Mr. Abul Kalam Azad.

The resolution was put and carried unanimously.

Report of the Forty-second Indian National Congress at Madras, pp. 61-2

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU¹

ALLAHABAD,

January 11, 1928

MY DEAR BAPUJI,

The Working Committee is now meeting in Banaras and so I cannot go to Bombay or Sabarmati for some time.

I am loath to inflict another letter on you so soon after my last but I am very much troubled by your criticisms of the Congress resolutions and I feel I must write to you again. You are always very careful with your words and your language is studiously restrained. It amazes me all the more to find you using language which appears to me wholly unjustified. You have condemned in general language the proceedings of the Subjects Committee and specially selected some resolutions for greater criticism and condemnation. May I point out that it is always unsafe to judge on hearsay evidence? You were not present yourself and it is quite conceivable that the opinions you may have formed after a personal visit to the Subjects Committee may have been different. Yet you have chosen to condemn and judge unfavourably the whole Committee, or at any rate a great majority of it, simply basing your judgment on the impressions of a few persons. Do you think this is quite fair to the Committee or the Congress? You have referred to discipline and to the Working Committee as the National Cabinet. May I remind you that you are a member of the Working Committee and it is an extraordinary thing for a member on the morrow of the Congress to criticize, and run down the Congress and its principal resolutions. There has been a general chorus of congratulation on the success of the Madras Congress. This may be wrong or without sufficient basis but undoubtedly there was this general impression in the country and atmosphere counts for a great deal in all public work. And now most people who thought so feel a bit dazed at your criticisms and wonder if their previous enthusiasm was not overdone or mistaken.

¹ *Vide* Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru, 17-1-1928.

You have described the Independence Resolution as “hastily conceived and thoughtlessly passed”. I have already pointed out to you how the country has discussed and considered this question for years past, and how I have personally thought over it, discussed it, spoken about it in meetings, written about it and generally been full of it for the last five years or more. It seems to me that under the circumstances no stretch of language can justify the use of the words “hastily conceived”. As for “thoughtlessly passed” I wonder if you know that the resolution was discussed in the Subjects Committee for about three hours and more than a dozen speeches for and against were made. Ultimately as you know it was passed almost unanimously both in the Committee and the open Congress. Were all the people in the Committee and the Congress who voted for it “thoughtless”? Is this not rather a large assumption? And why should it not be said with greater truth that the small minority opposed to the resolution were mistaken? You mention that last year the resolution was rejected by the Committee. I do not know what inference you draw from this but to me it seems obvious that this can only mean that the Committee and the Congress have been eager to pass it in the past as in the present but refrained from doing so out of regard for you. I hope will agree with me that it is not healthy politics for any organization to subordinate its own definite opinion on a public issue out of personal regard only.

I am not referring here to the merits of the resolution. But I shall only say this that after prolonged and careful thought a demand for independence and all that this implies has come to mean a very great deal for me and I attach more importance to it than to almost anything else. I have thought over every word you said the other day in Madras on this question and it has merely confirmed me in my opinion. But I doubt if anyone outside a small circle understands your position in regard to this. I am sure that none of the others—liberals, etc.,—who want dominion status think in the same way with you. Yesterday Sir Ali Imam addressed a meeting here on the Simon boycott. I also spoke for a few minutes and like King Charles’ head independence cropped up and I laid stress on it. After the meeting Ali Imam told me that I did well in laying stress on this; he and his friends would probably come round to this position sooner or later but for the time being they had to be a little restrained as they wanted to carry many people with them. I am sure most liberals welcome the Independence Resolution, whatever they may say about it, as they feel that it strengthens their position. But whether they like it or not, it passes my comprehension how a national organization can have as its ideal and goal dominion status. The very idea suffocates and strangles me.

I took no special interest in the resolution on the boycott of British goods chiefly because I felt that it would meet with your strong disapproval and the boycott could not succeed unless a more or less unanimous effort was made. But I have no doubt that it can be made into a partial success if there was some unanimity in our own ranks. You must have read about the wonderful effectiveness of the boycott in China.

There was nothing special in China which we have not got and there is no fundamental reason why we cannot succeed where they succeeded. But granting that it is not likely to succeed is it such a laughing matter after all? Has our boycott of foreign cloth by khaddar succeeded so remarkably? Has our spinning franchise succeeded? They have not but you do not hesitate to them on the country and the Congress because you felt, and rightly, that they would be good for the nation even if they did not wholly succeed.

I remember how Kelkar, Aney and Co., even as members of the Working Committee, used to make fun of the Congress resolutions on khadi, and it is very painful for me to think that you are also ridiculing important Congress resolutions. The Kelkars and Aneys do not count and I do not care what they say or do. But I do care very much for what you say and do.

Having singled out two resolutions for your special condemnation you casually refer to the others as "several irresponsible resolutions". Excepting the Unity Resolution every other resolution of the Congress may come under this heading. And so the labours of the 200 and odd persons in the Subjects Committee and the larger number in the Congress are summarily and rather contemptuously disposed of. It is very hard luck on the unhappy persons who, though wanting perhaps in foresight and intelligence, did not spare themselves and tried to do their best. We have all sunk to the level of the schoolboys' 'debating society' and you chastize us like an angry school-master, but a school-master who will not guide us or give us lessons but will only point out from time to time the error of our ways. Personally I very much wish that we were more like real schoolboys, with the life and energy and daring of schoolboys, and a little less like the right honourable and honourable gentlemen who are for ever weighing the pros and cons and counting the cost.

You know how intensely I have admired you and believed in you as a leader who can lead this country to victory and freedom. I have done so in spite of the fact that I hardly agreed with anything that some of your previous publications—*Indian Home Rule*, etc.,—contained. I felt and feel that you were and are infinitely greater than your little books. Above everything I admire action and daring and courage and I found them all in you in a superlative degree. And I felt instinctively that, however much I may disagree with you, your great personality and your possession of these qualities would carry us to our goal. During the N. C. O. period you were supreme; you were in your element and automatically you took the right step. But since you came out of prison something seems to have gone wrong and you have been very obviously ill at ease. You will remember how within a few months or even weeks you repeatedly changed your attitude—the Juhu statements, the A.I.C.C. meeting at Ahmedabad and after, etc.,—and most of us were left in utter bewilderment. That bewilderment has continued since then. I have asked you many times what you expected to do in the future and your answers have been far from satisfying. All you

have said has been that within a year or eighteen months you expected the khadi movement to spread rapidly and in a geometric ratio and then some direct action in the political field might be indulged in. Several years and eighteen months have passed since then and the miracle has not happened. It was difficult to believe that it would happen but faith in your amazing capacity to bring off the improbable kept us in an expectant mood. But such faith for an irreligious person like me is a poor reed to rely on and I am beginning to think if we are to wait for freedom till khadi becomes universal in India we shall have to wait till the Greek Kalends. Khadi will grow slowly, and if war comes it will grow very fast, but I do not see how freedom is coming in its train. As I mentioned before you our khadi work is almost wholly divorced from politics and our khadi workers are developing a mentality which does not concern itself with anything outside their limited sphere of work. This may be good for the work they do, but little can be expected from them in the political field.

What then can be done? You say nothing,—you only criticize and no helpful lead comes from you. You tell us that if the country will not even take to khadi how can we expect it to do anything more difficult or daring. I do not think the reasoning is correct. If the country does not go ahead politically by one method, surely it is up to our leaders to think of other or additional methods.

Reading many of your articles in *Young India*—your autobiography, etc.,—I have often felt how very different my ideals were from yours. And I have felt that you were very hasty in your judgments, or rather having arrived at certain conclusions you were over-eager to justify them by any scrap of evidence you might get. I remember how in an article on the “Two Ways” or some such title—you gave some newspaper cuttings from America about crimes and immorality and contrasted American civilization with Indian. I felt it was something like Katharine Mayo drawing conclusions from some unsavoury hospital statistics. Your long series of articles based on the French book—“Towards Moral Bankruptcy”—also made me feel the same way. You misjudge greatly, I think, the civilization of the West and attach too great an importance to its many failings. You have stated somewhere that India has nothing to learn from the West and that she had reached a pinnacle of wisdom in the past. I certainly disagree with this viewpoint and I neither think that the so-called *Ramraj* was very good in the past, nor do I want it back. I think that western or rather industrial civilization is bound to conquer India maybe with many changes and adaptations, but none the less, in the main, based on industrialism. You have criticized strongly the many obvious defects of industrialism and hardly paid any attention to its merits. Everybody knows these defects and the utopias and social theories are meant to remove them. It is the opinion of most thinkers in the West that these defects are not due to industrialism as such but to the capitalist system which is based on exploitation of others. I believe you have stated that in your

opinion there is no necessary conflict between capital and labour. I think that under the capitalist system this conflict is unavoidable.

You have advocated very eloquently and forcefully the claims of the *Daridranarayana*—the poor in India. I do believe that the remedy you have suggested is very helpful to them and if adopted by them in large number will relieve to some extent their misery. But I doubt very much if the fundamental cause of poverty are touched by it. You do not say a word against the semi-feudal zamindari system which prevails in a great part of India or against the capitalist exploitation of both the workers and the consumers.

But I must stop. I have already exceeded all reasonable limits and I hope you will forgive me. My only excuse is my mental agitation. I did not want to become the secretary of the A.I.C.C. as I wanted perfect freedom to say and do what I considered necessary. But Ansari pressed me on the ground that many of my resolutions and specially the Independence Resolution, had been passed by the Congress and I thus had full freedom to work on my own lines. I could not answer this argument and had to accept. Now I find that every effort is being made to belittle and ridicule these very Congress resolutions and it is a painful experience.

Yours affectionately,

JAWAHARLAL

From a photostat : S.N. 13039

APPENDIX III
FOREIGN PROPAGANDA
BY C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

Before the Non-co-operation movement, Indian political activity largely consisted of propaganda in Great Britain. A great deal of money, comparatively, was spent on it and was considered well spent. When Gandhiji took up the guidance of our national affairs there was a change of outlook. A grasp of the essentials of national strength was the first result of his programme and it marked all our political thought at the time. We understood the natural laws that governed the sanctions needed for the non-violent enforcement of national demands. An almost exclusive spirit of self-reliance was the natural consequence. The cultivation of favourable opinion in foreign parts including Great Britain was valued at its correct worth and distinct efforts to that end were practically given up, and opposed vigorously whenever the question was raised. So intense was the work in India and so marked were the results that the tables were soon turned, and instead of Indians going to do propaganda in Great Britain and foreign parts, India attracted numerous foreign visitors; and the British Government was forced to undertake counterpropaganda in foreign parts. In India itself the Government had to give up its self-confidence and organize its own propaganda among the people in order to resist or at least postpone the effects of the

national upheaval.

With the stoppage of aggressive non-co-operation, however, there has been a reversion in Indian thought. Slowly but steadily the cry for foreign propaganda is gaining in volume again. The internal situation also, namely, the difficulties in the way of united national action, has naturally led people to turn to easier outlets of activities abroad. To those who still hold to the creed of non-co-operation and who look to emancipation only from within, this turn of the national gaze and energy to East and West is a symptom of growing weakness and a cause for anxiety. The vision is bound to be clouded and constructive efforts are bound to be prejudicially affected by the growing tendency to this diversion. Not only does it divert attention but some of the best workers will be drawn bodily into this channel of pleasanter though futile work.

Pre-non-co-operation foreign propaganda was mostly propaganda in Britain. But one of the permanent results of the efforts of these eight years is loss of faith in Britain. The last vestiges of faith that stuck to the British Labour Party have been also destroyed. The present harking back to foreign propaganda is therefore not for propaganda in England, but for the cultivation of contacts and friendship with other foreign nations. We are told that it is very desirable to develop intimate association with the German and Russian people. We are told that the Latin races of Europe present a favourable field for propaganda. France, Italy, Spain and Portugal are mentioned. Even Scandinavia is not forgotten, being important neutral soil. We are told, again, that the need of the hour is to link India up with other countries suffering under like imperialistic exploitation. We are assured that the hope of India is a federated Asia rising against Western domination. This change of attitude in regard to foreign propaganda had naturally its echo in the proceedings of the All-India Congress Committee where foreign affairs dominated the atmosphere, and many resolutions were adopted calculated to form a basis for international friendships.

It would be narrow-mindedness, indeed, and show us to be lacking the spirit of culture and humanity to refuse to have dealings with other nations if we were better circumstanced. But what would be civilization and culture and broad-mindedness under favourable circumstances would be mere helplessness under existing conditions and would lead to nothing beneficial. Friendship with other nations can grow and be beneficial only if as in personal friendships it is not cultivated on the mere expectation of advantages, all on one side. If we seek honourable friendship with others there must be something for us to give them while we seek something from them. If we are in effect truly unable to help others and only ask for something at their hands it would not conduce mutual esteem; nor can a healthy alliance grow. If we are able really to help others, it must be by a supreme effort of national assertion which can and must, if well directed, produce far more marked results at home. The

nations, whose friendship we go to woo, must find something to learn or something to gain from close association with us. If we have going on amidst us some movement of dynamic value, some revolutionary effort or some great constructive activity worthy of copy or study on others' part, we would be seeking friendship on honourable, if not equal, terms. But we cannot be ever living either on the capital of our ancient culture or on the history of the Gandhian movement.

The link of mere friendship of slavery is not likely to be a real or useful bond. Why do we turn to Russia, China or Turkey? It is to simply the greatness of the past history of these nations that attracts us. If that alone were offered we would hardly be interested. But it is because we believe that there are great movements now going on in those countries which furnish matter for useful study or admiring observation, that some of our people go to those countries. Similarly if we seek international friendship with such nations, we should have something to offer to them of value. Otherwise we would only be beggars and should expect to be treated no better.

But then, it may be said, this is to ignore world politics. There are wars coming on. The nations of the world are ever seeking to subvert one another's plans, and India is an important piece on the board. We are not so helpless internationally as we may be internally in our own affairs. This needs clearing up and plain talking. Are we in for a war and the formation of alliances with those likely to fight England, or do we expect other countries to go to war over us? If the powers abroad go to war, they do it with gunpowder and ships. Are we ever likely usefull to participate as a nation in such war? Is it contemplated that India and other slave nations in the East may enter into a treaty, some time in the future, to rise in revolt helping each other against the common foe? Is India to expect, under any contingency arising in a world war, to render active assistance to a belligerent power against England? What, to put only one argument, is the chance of our ever achieving anything in this way? Is it practical politics of the remotest kind, disarmed as we are?

We do not want arms, it may said: we can do a great deal by passive resistance. The only weapon in our hand is non-co-operation with the British Government during a war or peace. Here we come back to the old position. The Indian fight against England if it is to be by non-violent means depends entirely on its own strength and can never be converted into an international affair. In a non-violent struggle it is not easy, if at all possible, to obtain any material help from abroad. It must be conceived and organized and fought only on a basis of complete self-reliance.

Non-material moral help we can get from foreign countries. This we shall do not by any propaganda, foreign or domestic, but exactly in the measure that we do solid constructive work and develop internal strength.

Young India, 1-3-1928

APPENDIX IV

CABLE FROM V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

MARITZBURG

April 24, 1928

GANDHI

SABARMATI

CONFIDENTIAL. SAIC'S CABLE TO YOU FROM JOHANNESBURG ALARMED YOU UNNECESSARILY. NATAL CONGRESS LEADERS DISAPPROVE. THEIR DESIRE WAS TO ASK DEFINITE QUESTION, WAS IT PART OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING WITH SMUTS THAT HOLDERS OF CERTIFICATES AT THE TIME THOUGH OBTAINED FRAUDULENTLY, SHOULD BE UNCHALLENGED? IF THIS BE SO, I CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY GOVERNMENT PUBLISHED CONDONATION SCHEME IN 1915 AND KEPT IT OPEN TILL 1916 OFFERING PROTECTION PAPERS TO FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS BEFORE 1ST AUGUST 1910. IT SEEMS POLAK EARNESTLY ADVISED FULL ADVANTAGE BE TAKEN OF THIS OFFER TO CLEAN UP BUT ONLY A FEW DID SO. DEPARTMENT WILLING THAT PEOPLE ONCE CONDONED NEED NOT APPLY NOW FOR CONDONATION. BUT THE TRANSVAAL CONGRESS LEADERS DEMAND FRAUDULENT CERTIFICATES AT 1914 SETTLEMENT SHOULD BE IMMUNE WHETHER OR NOT HOLDERS THEREOF OBTAINED CONDONATION UNDER 1915 NOTIFICATION. IF THIS PART OF YOUR UNDERSTANDING PLEASE IMMEDIATELY CABLE SO. FROM MY PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE OF MALAN, SCHMIDT, VENN, AND PRING, I AM THOROUGHLY CONVINCED THEIR GOOD INTENTIONS AT PRESENT. THEY WILL NOT KNOWINGLY GO BACK ON PREVIOUS PROMISE. REGARDING INTRODUCTION OF FAMILIES, THE NUMBER OF ENTRANTS BEFORE 1914 STILL WITHOUT FAMILIES MUST BE SMALL. NOR IS THERE GOOD REASON WHY IF FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS AFTER 1914 REMAIN WITHOUT FAMILIES, THOSE BEFORE 1914 SHOULD BE EXEMPTED FROM THAT DESIRABILITY. DEPARTMENT ASK WHY FRAUDULENT ENTRANTS IN NATAL AND CAPE BEFORE 1914 SHOULD BE TREATED WORSE THAN SIMILAR PEOPLE IN TRANSVAAL. THEY ALSO FEAR THAT THERE BEING NO REGISTRATION CERTIFICATES IN THESE PROVINCES IT IS EASY FOR ANYONE TO CONTEND HE CAME BEFORE 1914. REMEMBER BEFORE SECTION 5 CAN BE EMPLOYED AGAINST ANYONE, BURDEN OF PROOF OF FRAUD RESTS ON GOVERNMENT. IT IS NOT TRUE THAT REGISTRATION AND OTHER CERTIFICATES MUST BE SURRENDERED IN EXCHANGE FOR PROTECTION CERTIFICATES. BY EXPRESS PROVISION PARTIES ARE ALLOWED TO RETAIN THESE DOCUMENTS. TRUE THAT PROTECTION

CERTIFICATES WILL COME UNDER REGULATION UNDER SECTION 25 IMMIGRATION ACT 1913 WHICH SANCTIONS TEMPORARY PERMITS. DEPARTMENT ARE ADVISED BY LAW OFFICERS THAT MINISTER CANNOT IMPOSE CONDITIONS OF RESTRICTIONS IN THE CASE OF PERMANENT PERMITS UNDER SECTION 25, BUT CAN DO SO ONLY IF PERMITS ARE TEMPORARY, THE PROPOSED PROTECTION OF CERTIFICATES CONTAIN A PROMISE THAT THE MINISTER WILL NOT CANCEL THEM EXCEPT WHEN HOLDERS ARE CONVICTED OF DEPORTABLE CRIMES. DEPARTMENT CONTEND THAT THIS PROVISION MAKES THE CERTIFICATES PERMANENT IN REALITY. QUESTION OF FORM OF CERTIFICATE IS STILL UNDER DISCUSSION AND I HOPE TO GET SATISFACTION FROM DEPARTMENT IN CASE LEGAL OPINION IS ADVERSE TO PRESENT FORM. I HAVE POSTED LONG MEMORANDUM. PLEASE SUSPEND JUDGMENT UNTIL YOU READ IT. I AM UNABLE TO SEE HOW RESULTS OF PASSIVE RESISTANCE STRUGGLE ARE NULLIFIED BY PRESENT CONDONATION SCHEME. PLEASE POST COPY OF THIS CABLE TO SIR MAHOMED HABIBULLAH. ALSO OF SAIC'S CABLE TO YOU AND THE CABLES BETWEEN YOU AND ME.

SASTRI

From a photostat: S.N. 11974