

1. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
August 23, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your delightful letter. You do not tell me how you fared physically. I have already written to you. I am glad Vidya is with you and has seen a little of the Ashram life. Tell me how you are in mind and body.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

2. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 23, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. After Shanta and Kalavati have tried the medicine given by the doctor, write to me and tell me what effect it has. If the latter has taken a pledge to join the struggle, I think she cannot leave. But you have already written to Father. You should both do as your hearts bid you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5249

3. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
August 23, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. If any questions arise with regard to the vow of not indulging the palate, ask me.¹ You have not mentioned anything about your health in your letter this time. I therefore assume

¹ For Gandhiji's observations on the control of the palate, *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 12-8-1930.

that you are well. Do you go for a walk every day? Physical exercise is necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Blessings to Brother. When you write to Mother and Father, say that I often think of them.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

4. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 23, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. Look upon the Ashram as your home. Try to improve your Hindi handwriting still further.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

5. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your love letter written during your journey to Madras. I am hoping that this strain will not prove too much for you. Your descriptions are all valuable. Yes, I had a strenuous time during the Nehrus' visit. It was with difficulty that I was able to spin 375 rounds without doing which I should feel most unhappy. The box wheel is working very well and undoubtedly causes less strain. It gives more satisfactory work now that I have put on it the thin *mal* you sent me. The thick *mal* was causing trouble. The carding-bow is working to perfection. It imposes no strain on me. Kakasaheb rolls the slivers. He has yet to learn carding which he proposes to begin shortly. The translation of the *bhajans* continues as before regularly but slowly

and I see no immediate chance of greater output. I am keeping well. The weight fluctuates. Last week I regained one pound out of two or three I seemed to have lost. There has been no loss of energy. The water here is hard and therefore constipation requires a little handling. Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will be glad to know that the *tant* has not once broken.

From the original: C.W. 5409. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9643

6. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I didn't see any letter from you in the mail this week. You must have received my letters to Jayaprakash and to you. My weight, which was going down, has again increased by one pound. What is your daily programme of work these days? Vallabhbhai told me that Jayaprakash was not in good health. How is that?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3367

7. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA (MANILAL),

You seem to have dried up? Is it out of compassion for me or through laziness? If you had compassion for me, you would write to me. How is Sita? Why does she fall ill so often? I hope you are not being miserly about fruit. What is the condition of your ears? How do you keep generally? How is Tara? How is Nanabhai's health? Think about other similar questions yourself. I hope you, always find Manilal with a smile on his face and joking. Does he read anything in jail?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4770

8. LETTER TO RASIK DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. RASIK (DESAI),

Did you uphold my honour? Did you keep the vows which you had taken? Give me all the details. How did you spend the time? Were you lazy? Were you talkative? Did you keep good health? Reply to these and many other similar questions. What friends did you make?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6617

9. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I have preserved your last letter. I did not reply to it. But after reading about your heroism I cannot help writing. Deal patiently with the situation. I would advise you not to do anything on an impulse. Does it need mentioning that pure sacrifice calls for careful thought, a sense of discrimination, restraint and patience? Since Khurshedbehn was with you, I felt reassured and satisfied.

Blessings from both of us.

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11109. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

10. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 24/26, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got the letters earlier than usual, that is, on Wednesday instead of on Thursday. Among the letters is one for Satis Babu. He is Krishnadas's guru, Satis Mukherjee. His address is Harra Road, Calcutta. I have forgotten the number of the flat. You will find it somewhere in my papers. Surendra is likely to know it. Or you will get it in the Ashram office itself. How is Devdas's health? Tell him that I often think of him. Has Ramdas's health recovered? I have before now asked for the names of those who have been released. It would be better if against each name the quantity of carding and spinning done by the person is also mentioned. If, when you do not get a cloth-lined envelope, the ordinary envelope is tightly secured by a string, like a packet sent as book post, there will be no risk afterwards. Keshu seems to have lost health again. Take immediate and effective measures to help him to recover. Giriraj's illness has lasted quite long. His blood must be impure. I have not received the guide to Singer's. If you find it difficult to secure a copy, give up the attempt. I understand what you write about Hasmukhrail. Give him the letters if and when you think you may. Read the letter to Zaulinger before giving it to her. Hence I don't write about her in this letter. You must have sent an acknowledgment to Dhangopal. How is Jamnadas? Do the authorities let you visit him occasionally?

Tuesday morning, August 26, 1930

Non-possession is allied to non-stealing. A thing not originally stolen must nevertheless be classified as stolen property if we possess it without needing it. Possession implies provision for the future. A seeker after truth, a follower of the law of love, cannot hold anything against tomorrow. God never stores for the morrow; He never creates more than what is strictly needed for the moment. If, therefore, we repose faith in His providence, we should be assured that He will give us every day our daily bread, meaning everything we require. Saints and men of faith have always found justification for it from their experience. Our ignorance or negligence of the Divine Law, which gives to man from day to day his daily bread and no more, has given

rise to inequalities with all the miseries attendant upon them. The rich have a superfluous store of things which they do not need, and which are therefore neglected and wasted; while millions starve to death for want of sustenance. If each retained possession only of what he needed, no one would be in want and all would live in contentment. As it is, the rich are discontented no less than the poor. The poor man would fain become a millionaire, and the millionaire a multi-millionaire. The poor are not content if they get their daily needs. They have a right, however, to get enough for their daily needs and it is the duty of society to help them to satisfy them. The rich should take the initiative in dispossession with a view to universal diffusion of the spirit of contentment. If only they keep their own property within moderate limits, the starving will be easily fed and will learn the lesson of contentment along with the rich. Perfect fulfilment of the ideal of non-possession requires that man should, like the birds, have no roof over his head, no clothing and no stock of food for the morrow. He will indeed need his daily bread, but it will be God's business, and not his, to provide it. Only very very few, if any at all, can reach this ideal. We ordinary seekers may not be repelled by the seeming impossibility. But we must keep the ideal constantly before us, and in the light thereof critically examine our possessions and try to reduce them. Civilization, in the real sense of the term, consists not in the multiplication, but in the deliberate and voluntary reduction of wants. This alone promotes real happiness and contentment and increases the capacity for service. Judging by this criterion, we find that in the Ashram we possess many things the necessity for which cannot be proved, and we thus tempt our neighbours to steal. If people try, they can reduce their wants and, as the latter diminish, they become happier, more peaceful and healthier. From the standpoint of pure truth, the body, too, is a possession. It has been truly said that desire for enjoyment creates bodies for the soul and sustains them. When this desire vanishes, there remains no further need for the body and man is free from the vicious cycle of births and deaths. The soul is omnipresent; why should she care to be confined within the cage-like body, or do evil and even kill for the sake of that cage? We thus arrive at the ideal of total renunciation and learn the use of the body for the purposes of service so long as it exists, so much so that service, and not bread, becomes for us the staff of life. We eat and drink, sleep and wake, for service

alone. Such an attitude of mind brings us real happiness and the beatific vision in the fulness of time. Let us all examine ourselves from this standpoint.

We should remember that non-possession is a principle applicable to thoughts as well as to things. A man who fills his brain with useless knowledge violates that inestimable principle. Thoughts which turn us away from God or do not turn us towards Him are unnecessary possessions and constitute impediments in our way. In this connection we may consider the definition of knowledge contained in Chapter XIII of the *Gita*. We are there told that humility, *amanitvam*, etc., constitute knowledge and that all the rest is ignorance. If this is true—and there is no doubt that it is true—much that we hug today as knowledge is ignorance pure and simple, and therefore only does us harm instead of conferring any benefit. It makes the mind wander and even reduces it to a vacuity, and discontent flourishes in endless ramifications of evil. Needless to say, this is not a plea for inertia. Every moment of our life should be filled with mental or physical activity, but that activity should be *sattvik*, tending towards truth. One who has consecrated his-life to service cannot be idle for a single moment. But we have to learn to distinguish between good activity and evil activity. This discernment goes naturally with a single-minded devotion to service.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb's weight has again increased by one pound, and his cheerfulness has also increased. I have regained one pound from what I had lost. For the past three days, I have been taking boiled vegetables in addition to curds. You will see that today's letters are put into one of the envelopes received from you, fresh slips of paper being pasted on it. You can use the envelope again.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 53 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

11. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

August 29, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. No one should be amused at my writing on slips of paper or be angry with me for that reason. That is the proper thing for me to do. Though I write on such slips, I try to make each letter as interesting as I can in the time I get.

Why are you alarmed by the suspicion that you have got some disease in your body? What would it matter even if you had a disease and that too a grave one? "The body may live or perish, what should endure is one's devotion to God."¹ We have learnt at least this in the Ashram, if nothing more. If you fast for a few days, the body will be cleansed. You require Kuhne baths, hip-baths and particularly friction sitz-baths. If you do not know about them, ask Kanta or Radha. I think they know. You may also read about them in Kuhne's book. Whenever women suffer from any disease, it becomes necessary to know the facts about their monthly periods. Are they normal with you? Are they regular in appearance and duration? Are they painful? If necessary, consult a doctor.

I have not read Arvind Babu's book. I alone know how limited is my reading. My main interest is in reading the book of nature. I shall never finish reading it.

You should have enough sleep. You should observe the rule of sleeping from 9 to 4.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10232; also C.W. 6680. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

¹ From the Marathi saint Namdev

12. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Was there any letter to which I did not reply? I do think every day about you and all other sisters. I would have been happy, too, if you had spent a few months with me. However, both of you have so trained yourselves, though you lived away from me, that I don't know what more you would have gained if you had stayed with me. It is good that the children still live on fruit, etc., and that you have started on it again. Why has not Dahibehn written to me? My blessings to all sisters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6797

13. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

Gangabehn writes and tells me that you have become impatient to go out [for work]. This was before you got my letter. I hope that my letter has overcome your restlessness. Can a soldier ever ask why? He goes on doing, silently and cheerfully, the work assigned to him. Let Kakasaheb's condition be fulfilled. It is not long now before he will be released. If you are still not satisfied let me know.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7761

14. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. If Kamalabehn willingly lets you go and there is an opportunity for work in Bihar, it is your first duty to take it up. I hope Jayaprakash is keeping good health. Take care of your health. I got Mrityunjay's letter.

I am more or less all right. I have at present substituted fresh vegetables for raisins and dates in my diet. I shall watch the effect of the change. Don't worry about me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3368

15. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MAITRI,

You should write regularly to me. I feel happy to hear from Gangabehn that she is satisfied with you. I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6218

16. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 29, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. Your handwriting is tolerable but there is much scope for improvement. You should see Radhabehn's¹ handwriting. In seeking to tie up Narandasbhai, you girls are yourselves properly tied up. While I bathe I shall have to test you in Ch. XVIII². Is your pronunciation correct? You must write out that chapter from memory a couple of times in neat handwriting.

Why did you fall ill?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11088. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

17. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

Y. M.,
August 29, 1930

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

Narandas has given me news of you. I hope you are well in body and mind. What is Laxmi Devi doing? Both of you should write to me. It is good that Jang Bahadurji has gone to jail. My blessings to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

¹ Radhabehn Gandhi

² Of the *Bhagavad Gita*

18. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

August 29, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Both of us feel that you should take with you both Dhiru and Rambhau¹ if they are willing to go. In each other's company, they will stay there longer and you will have less to worry about. With either Dhiru or Rambhau alone, you will have to go out of way to give him company. At present, I would not like you to be in that predicament.

I had forgotten about Damodardas and therefore wrote nothing about him. I would not have seen any harm if he had come, and you had accompanied him. But I like the present arrangement more.

I understand what you say about the spinning-wheel. My argument was altogether different. I appreciate that it does not bother you. May your faith be rewarded. You have mentioned the right *shlokas*. If you have the self-confidence demanded by the *shloka*, if you are hard-working and if your idealism is based on reality, you will certainly find the rest of the means and will also acquire the required knowledge. So, I have no objection at all if you intend to persist in your efforts. The only condition is that you are not to do it at the cost of your health. If your health had reached beyond recovery stage, I would not have allowed you to go to the hills. This time you are going with the blessings of Kashi and Chhaganlal. No doubt blessings from both of us are always with you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32962

¹ Rambhau Khare, son of Narayan Moreshwar Khare

19. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 30, 1930

CHI. QURESHI,

I was happy to read your letter. You did a good thing in studying the Koran. Get hold of *The Mystics of Islam* and read it. You may write to me anything you wish to. Regular inclusion of curds in your diet will probably benefit you. Take moderate and regular exercise. When you visit Imam Saheb next time, tell him that both of us think of him with great love, and his name frequently comes up in our conversation. Ask Amina to write to me. Blessings from us both to both of you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6651

20. LETTER TO SHARDA C . SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 31, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letters come quite regularly. If one's mind indulges in thoughts of pleasure, one might as well get it done with the body. But when the mind itself does not want it, it would indeed be better if one works away at something with concentration. In matters like these, children cannot be forced to do anything. If you are feeling too lazy for *udyoga*¹ the feeling can by persistent effort be got out of the system. You must realize the necessity of work.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9888. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala.

¹ Industry; here the Ashram activities like spinning, etc.

21. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
August 31, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got your letter. It would be well to try out Premabehn's diet. I think it is necessary to resume regular sitz-baths. It can easily be done in my bathroom. It also has sunlight filtering through the thatched roof. You should have your periods regularly. If you do not you must immediately take remedial measures. When the date is due it would help if you took a steam-bath once or twice. I think Radhabehn knows how it is done. They follow your suggestions in making the bread here. They say there is still some defect. I have conveyed to them the improvement suggested by Gangabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Are there any letters from Krishna?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

22. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
August 31, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. Do go to Almora if there is an opportunity. How is your mental state? Convey my blessings to Krishnan Nair.

Continue writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2384

23. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[About August 31, 1930]¹

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter though written in a shaky train was wonderfully legible. If you had not drawn my attention, I should not have noticed any difference at all.

I think I have got my control over the travelling wheel and I hope to gain greater speed than now. As it is I am saving about an hour and there is much less fatigue. But your labour has not gone in vain. Kakasaheb was using the Gandiv. But it did not give him satisfaction. And he was not able always even to do one unit, i.e., 160 rounds. On your wheel he has no difficulty in making one unit in two hours which is the least he has vowed to give to the charkha.

You did the right thing in transferring to the 2nd class. There can be no harm and certainly no shame in going 2nd class, when the 3rd is clearly impossible or next to it.

I am glad you had a quiet hours with Miss Petersen. Is not your sister somewhere in Madras?

Send my love to Andrews, Reginald and those others who may be thinking of me.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5407. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9641

24. LETTER TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1930

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

Why should you think that because you have done no work for me you cannot write to me? Really speaking, is there any work which is mine? All of us should do God's work to the best of our ability and

¹ From the reference to the travelling wheel it appears this was written some time after August 18; *vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 18-8-1930. In another letter to her of October 5, Gandhiji says he did not miss a week in writing to her. Since no letter dated between August 24 and September 7 is available, it is likely this was written on or about August 31, 1930.

according to our lights. And you are doing that every moment of your life. Kaka and I often talk about you. If there is anything about which you think you should write to me, please do so. I don't ask you, and I do not wish, that you should write to me merely for the sake of writing. I know that you keep, and would be ready to give, an account of every minute of your time.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Kanya Ashram Rajat Jayanti Smritigranth, p. 16

25. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

*Silence Day [September 1, 1930]*¹

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

Ba told me that you feel depressed. Why should you? One who reads the *Gita* and reflects over its teaching should never feel depressed. How can that man or woman who daily meditates on God and believes that He always dwells in our hearts ever feel depressed? Try and get rid of your depression.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3736

26. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

I have an impression that Nanibehn and you owe me a reply to one letter of mine. There is nothing particular to write about this time, and I write this letter only to tell you that I think about all of you every day. I know that you devote all your time to work. That is the right thing to do and is sure to give proper results in course of time. Devotion to duty is the fabled wish-fulfilling tree.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3101

¹ The original letter has a remark, in a different hand, "about 1-9-30". Monday fell on September 1.

27. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September [1, 1930]¹

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You are too greedy. However long my letter, you will think it too short. I send between 50 and 60 letters to the Ashram every week, and I must write them during whatever time I can spare from spinning. Hence, and also because I don't have much to write about from here every time, I write short letters in which, however, I say all that I wish to say. If I had to write only one or two letters, I could fill them with long description of conditions here. The letter meant for the whole Ashram is always long. Since Mirabehn cannot read Gujarati, I write a long letter to her. All other letters are short and to the point. Look; I have filled half this letter explaining why I write short letters. Kakasaheb and I were weighed on Friday; my weight came to 104 and Kakasaheb's to 114. This is a fairly good increase. We pray regularly every day. The *Gita* is also read daily. Recently I have given up raisins and dates and, instead, eat boiled vegetables. Generally I eat sweet potatoes and uncooked tomatoes every day or some other vegetable like cabbage. This diet has done me no harm. The weight has increased and constipation has been relieved. You must have read the reports about the negotiations with the Government. There was no truth in them at all. Let me know your future programme, and also Jayaprakash's. Has your mother-in-law recovered now? I am sure you will nurse her with the utmost love.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3370

¹ The source has only September, as the original seems to have been damaged here. However *Bapuna Patro-10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne*, pp. 33-4, gives this date.

28. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 1, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Are you cross with me? You don't even write to me and yet will be cross. What sort of justice is this? Is this the way of the Ashram or that of the hills? Or are you simply shirking letter-writing by pretending to be cross? How much do you spin daily? What other work do you have? Do you regularly get up in the morning? How many chapters have you memorized?¹

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 31

29. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 2, 1930

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I got your letter. If it is only your gums which bleed, you should gargle with salt water three or four times a day and in the morning massage them with a finger using pure, finely-powdered salt, taking care not to spit out the saliva meanwhile. You may use coconut oil instead of salt. You should also gargle with some potassium permanganate solution. If the bleeding does not stop with this, you should consult a dentist. Sometimes such bleeding is brought about even by indigestion. You should eat daily a little quantity of uncooked green vegetables.

Were you forced to eat *rotlas* of *bajra* and *jowar* or did you eat them to keep company with the other prisoners? I have seen you refusing to take advantage of the shade even when sitting under a green tree. I should like to get, if available, an account of the carding and spinning done by everyone.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7406. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

¹ The original was written in Gujarati.

30. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[September 2, 1930]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the Ashram packet on Thursday. If you get the discourses printed, send one or two copies here. It would help if I had with me a copy of the previous discourse. Send me also the set of Ashram rules. If Surendra, Madhavji and Madhavlal have still not written to me, ask them to write. Others, too, should write. Kusum's hand must be all right. Has Mrs. Zaulinger calmed down a little? Try to win her over.

I remember to have written to someone and given permission for a translation of the *Autobiography* in Swedish. Accept the sum of £11 and credit it in whichever account you think proper.

You utilized the occasion of *Rakshabandhan* very well. Take care of Lilavati. If she gets fainting fits, she should come over to the Ashram and rest. If you come to know Devdas's weight, mention it in your letter. In that place he should improve. You can get a garland made from yarn spun by Jamnalalji. The spinning-wheel gives me no difficulty now. The speed has not increased much, but it is good enough. This is a portable spinning-wheel and it required a thin *mal*. If anyone knows a simple method of making a *mal*, he should write to me. Abbas had explained it to me, but I have forgotten it. One packet of cotton has been exhausted. Together with what I can make from the second one, I shall have enough slivers to last a month. But someone is bound to visit Kakasaheb. Send one packet with him. Vallabhbai, too, has a visitor once a week or fortnight. You may send the packet with one of the persons. If neither course is possible, send some cotton by post as you did previously. There is no hurry at all. Along with it, send some pieces of leather for repairing the heels of my sandals. If no such pieces are available and if you can find my pair of sandals, send that. There was an extra pair during the march. Kanti will probably know about it. There was one in the Ashram too. Kusum may know about it, or the person to whom she has handed over charge of these things.

¹ As in the printed source.

FEARLESSNESS. As every reader of the *Gita* knows fearlessness heads the list of the divine attributes enumerated in Chapter XVI. Whether this is merely due to the exigencies of metre or whether the pride of place has been deliberately yielded to fearlessness, is more than I can say. In my opinion, however, fearlessness richly deserves the first rank assigned to it. For it is indispensable for the growth of the other noble qualities. How can one seek Truth or cherish love without fearlessness? As Pritam says: "The path of Hari is the path of the brave, not of cowards." Hari here means Truth. And the brave are those armed with fearlessness, not with the sword, the rifle and the like. These are taken up only by those who are possessed by fear.

Fearlessness connotes freedom from all external fear, fear of disease, bodily injury and death, of dispossession, of losing one's nearest and dearest, of losing reputation or giving offence, and so on. One who overcomes the fear of death does not surmount all other fears, as is commonly but erroneously supposed. Some of us do not fear death, but flee from the minor ills of life. Some are ready to die themselves, but cannot bear their loved ones being taken away from them. Some misers will put up with all this, will part even with their lives, but not their property; others will do any number of black deeds in order to uphold their supposed prestige. Some will swerve from the straight and narrow path which lies clear before them, simply because they are afraid of incurring the world's odium. The seeker after Truth must conquer all these fears. He should be ready to sacrifice his all in the quest of Truth, even as Harishchandra did. The story of Harishchandra may be only a parable; but every seeker will bear witness to its truth from his personal experience and, therefore, that story is as precious as any historical fact.

Perfect fearlessness is almost impossible to cultivate. It can be attained only by him who has realized the Supreme, as it implies freedom from delusion. One can always progress towards this goal by determined and constant endeavour and by cultivating self-confidence.

As I have stated at the very outset, we must give up all external fears. But the internal foes we must always fear. We are rightly afraid of animal passion, anger and the like. External fears cease of their own accord when once we have conquered these traitors within the camp. All such fears revolve round the body as the centre, and will therefore disappear as soon as we get rid of attachment for the body. We thus find that all external fear is the baseless fabric of our own

vision. Fear has no place in our hearts when we have shaken off attachment for wealth, for family and for the body. “Enjoy the things of the earth by renouncing them”¹ is the sovereign precept. Wealth, family and the body will be there just the same; we have only to change our attitude towards them. All these are not ours, but God’s. Nothing whatever in this world is ours. Even we ourselves are His. Why then should we entertain any fear? The Upanishad, therefore, directs us to give up attachment for things while we enjoy them. That is to say, we must be interested in them not as proprietors but only as trustees. He on whose behalf we hold them will give us the strength and the weapons requisite for defending them against all usurpers. When we thus cease to be masters and reduce ourselves to the rank of servants, humbler than the very dust under our feet, all fears will roll away like mists; we shall attain ineffable peace and see Satyanarayana, the God of Truth, face to face.

Kakasaheb had not so far taken a categorical vow of spinning; he has done so now. The vow is that he will spin for not less than two hours and not less than 160 yards daily. He has also started carding. He spends most of his time in physical activities. He maintains good strength. For the last four days or so I have given up raisins and dates and eat instead boiled vegetables, raw tomatoes, etc. If this¹²² diet does not meet my needs, I shall add fruit. I have made the change in order to overcome constipation. If the change proves economical, so much the better. I will not be obstinate about any item.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 58 letters.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8123. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi; also *Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, pp. 112-5

¹ *Ishopanishad*, v. 1

31. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 3, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters together. Which other women are with you at Sarbhon? Only God is completely free from the pride of the ego. Everyone among us, however, should strive daily to get rid of such pride.

“The brave never run away from a battle; fight against lust and anger, pride and greed.” Only yesterday I was trying to translate this *bhajan*.¹ I then felt its beauty more powerfully than I had done before. For us that is the only real battle. If we fight on, we are bound to win in the end.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 531. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit; also S.N. 9286

32. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

September 3, 1930

We may claim our experiment to have succeeded only if the Ashram women can swim across even in a storm. We need not worry if we stumble. Whenever we try to climb, there is always a risk of falling. We must take that risk. We may not knowingly take such a risk, but we should not turn back if circumstances force us to take it. We should learn to adopt towards women the same liberal attitude that we do towards men. Will not Lord Krishna protect our honour? We sing a *bhajan* which says that He will. Let us show that faith in our actions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6798

¹ For Gandhiji's translation of this *bhajan* by Kabir, vide “*Ashram Bhajanavali*”, 15-12-1930 under the date 5-9-1930.

33. STATEMENT TO T. B. SAPRU AND

M. R. JAYAKAR¹

September 5, 1930

DEAR FRIENDS,

We have very carefully gone through the letter, written to you by H. E. the Viceroy, dated 28-8-1930. You have kindly supplemented it with a record of your conversations with the Viceroy on points not covered by the letter. We have equally carefully gone through the Note signed by Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and sent by them through you. This note embodies their considered opinion on the said letter and the conversation.

We gave two anxious nights to these papers and we had the benefit of a full and free discussion with you on all the points arising out of these papers. And as we have told you, we have all arrived at the definite conclusion that we see no meeting ground between the Government and the Indian National Congress so far as we can speak for the latter, being out of touch with the outside world. We unreservedly associate ourselves with the opinion contained in the Note sent by the distinguished prisoners in the Naini Central Prison, but these friends expect us to give in our own words our view of the position finally reached in the negotiations for peace, which you, with patriotic motives, have carried on during the past two months at considerable sacrifice of your own time and no less inconvenience to yourselves. We shall therefore allude as briefly as possible to the fundamental difficulties that have stood in the way of peace being achieved.

¹ After meeting Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar the Viceroy addressed a letter to Sapru on August 28, *vide* Appendix Viceroy's letter to Sir T.B. Sapru", 28-8-1930. Sapru and Jayakar then met Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Syed Mahmud at Naini Jail on August 30 and 31 and showed them the Viceroy's letter as also notes of conversation with him, *vide* Appendix "Notes of Conversations with Viceroy's", 5-9-1930. The Nehrus then gave them their final note addressed to Gandhiji, *vide* Appendix "Note From Nehrus", 31-8-1930.. With these documents Sapru and Jayakar saw Gandhiji and other leaders at Yeravda Jail on September 3, 4 and 5. A draft of this Statement available in Gandhiji's hand in S.N. 1927 bears some changes and additions in a handwriting other than Gandhiji's.

The Viceroy's letter, dated July 16, 1930, is, we have taken, intended to satisfy, so far as may be, the terms of the interview Pandit Motilal Nehru gave to Mr. George Slocombe on June 20th, and the statement submitted by Mr. Slocombe to him on June 25, and approved by him. We are unable to read in the Viceroy's language in his letter of July 16 anything like satisfaction of the terms of the interview or the said statement. Here are the relevant parts of the interview and the statement.

In the interview it was stated: "If the terms of the Round Table Conference are to be left open and we are expected to go to London to argue the case for Dominion Status, I should decline. If it was made clear, however, that the Conference would meet to frame a constitution for a Free India subject to such adjustments of our mutual relations as are required by the special needs and conditions of India and our past association, I for one would be disposed to recommend to the Congress to accept the invitation to participate in the Conference. We must be masters in our household, but we are ready to agree to reasonable terms for the period of transfer of power from a British administration in India to a responsible Indian Government. The Conference must be to meet British people to discuss these terms as nation to nation and on an equal footing."¹

The statement contained the following:

"The Government would give private assurance that they would support the demand for full responsible Government for India subject to such mutual adjustments and terms of transfer as are required by the special needs and conditions of India and by her long association with Great Britain and as may be decided by the Round Table Conference."²

Here is the relevant part of the Viceroy's letter:

It remains my earnest desire, as it is that of my Government—and I have no doubt also that of His Majesty's Government—to do everything we can in our respective spheres to assist the people of India to obtain as large a degree of management of their own affairs as can be shown to be consistent with making provision for those matters in regard to which they are not at present in a position to assume responsibility. What those matters may be, and what provisions may best be made for them, will engage the attention of the Conference, but I have never believed that, with

¹ The draft did not have this paragraph.

² The draft did not have these paragraphs.

mutual confidence, on both sides, it should be impossible to reach an agreement.¹

We feel that there is a vast difference between the two positions. Where Pandit Motilalji visualizes a Free India enjoying a status different in kind from the present as a result of the deliberations of the proposed Round Table Conference, the Viceroy's letter merely² commits him and his Government and the British Cabinet to an earnest desire³ to assist the people of ⁴ India to obtain⁵ as large a degree of the management of their⁶ own affairs as can be shown⁷ to be consistent with making provision for those matters in regard to which they are not at present in a position to assume responsibility. In other words, the prospect held out by the Viceroy's letter is one of getting, at the most, something more along the lines of reforms commencing with those known to us as the Lansdowne Reforms.

As we had the fear that our interpretation was correct in our letter of 15-8-1930 signed also by Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr. Syed Mahmud and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, we put our position negatively and said what would not in our opinion satisfy the Congress. The letter you have now brought from H.E. the Viceroy reiterates the original position taken up by him in his first letter, and, we are grieved to say, contemptuously dismisses our letter as unworthy of consideration and regards discussion on the basis of the proposals contained in the letter as impossible.

You have thrown further light on the question by telling us that "if Mr. Gandhi definitely faced the Government of India with such a question", i.e., the right of secession from the Empire at India's will, the Viceroy would say, that "they were not prepared to treat it as an open question". We, on the other hand regard the question as the central point in any constitution that India is to secure and one which ought not to need any argument. If India is now to attain full

¹ The draft did not have these paragraphs.

² This word is added in the draft.

³ The draft has "a desire".

⁴ The words "the people of ", not found in *The Hindu version*, were added in the draft.

⁵ The draft has "get".

⁶ The draft has "her".

⁷ The words following this do not appear in the draft. Gandhiji simply wrote "take" indicating that the remaining part of the sentence, quoted from the Viceroy's letter, was to be copied here.

Responsible Government or full Self-Government or whatever other term it is to be known by, it can be only on an absolutely voluntary basis, leaving each party to sever the partnership or association at will. If India is to remain no longer a part of the Empire but is to become an equal and free partner in the Commonwealth, she must feel the want and warmth of that association and never otherwise. You will please observe this position is clearly brought out in the interview already alluded to by us. So long, therefore, as the British Government or the British people regard this position as impossible or untenable, the Congress must, in our opinion, continue the fight for freedom.

The attitude taken up by the Viceroy over the very mild proposal made by us regarding the salt tax affords a further painful insight into the Government's mentality. It is as plain as daylight to us that, from the dizzy heights of Simla, the rulers of India are unable to understand or appreciate the difficulties of the starving millions living in the plains whose incessant toil makes¹ Government from such a giddy height at all possible.

If the blood of innocent people spilt during the past five months to sustain the monopoly of a gift of nature² next in importance to poor people only to air and water has not brought home to the Government the conviction of its utter immorality, no Conference of Indian leaders as suggested by the Viceroy can possibly do so. The suggestion that those who ask for the repeal of the monopoly should show a source of equivalent revenue adds insult to injury. This attitude is an indication that if Government can help it the existing crushingly - expensive system shall continue to the end of time. We venture further to point out that not only does the Government here, but Governments all the world over, openly condone breaches of measures which have become unpopular but which for technical or other reasons cannot straightway be repealed.

We need not now deal with many other important matters in which too there is no adequate³ advance from the Viceroy to the popular position set forth by us. We hope we have brought out sufficient weighty matters in which there appears at present to be an unbridgeable gulf between the British Government and the Congress.

¹ The draft here reads: "starving millions living in the plains of India who make".

² The draft has "substance" which was changed to "gift of nature".

³ Added in the draft

There need, however, be no disappointment for the apparent failure of the peace negotiations. The Congress is engaged in a grim struggle for freedom. The nation has resorted to a weapon which the rulers being unused to it will take time to understand and appreciate. We are not surprised that a few months' suffering has not converted them¹.

The Congress desires to harm no² single legitimate interest by whomsoever acquired. It has no quarrel with Englishmen as such, but it resents and will resent with all the moral strength at its command the intolerable British domination. Non-violence being assured to the end, we are certain of the early fulfilment of the national aspiration. This we say in spite of the bitter and often insulting language used by the powers-that-be in regard to Civil Disobedience.

Lastly, we once more thank you for the great pains you have taken to bring about peace, but we suggest that the time has not arrived when any further peace negotiations should be carried on with those in charge of the Congress organization. As prisoners, we labour under an obvious³ handicap. Our opinion is based, as it must be, on second-hand evidence and runs the risk of being faulty.⁴ It would be naturally open to those in charge of the Congress organization to see any of us.⁵ In that case, and when the Government itself is equally desirous for peace, they should have no difficulty in having access to us.

M. K. GANDHI

SAROJINI NAIDU

VALLABHBHAI PATEL

JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

¹ The draft has "Government".

² *The Hindu* version here has "the", evidently a misprint.

³ The draft has "a tremendous".

⁴ The draft here reads: "is more likely to be faulty."

⁵ The draft here reads: "It is another matter if those in charge of the Congress organization desire to see any of us."

34. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

September 5, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your painful letter. . . . behn¹ appears to be a most sinful woman. We shall however now win her over by kindness, if we can. Your dharma is clear. At least for the present you should leave her company altogether. You should neither serve her nor accept service from her. I have written a letter to her which Narandas will read to her. You should read it. A man or a woman susceptible to mutual passion has no right to accept help from or offer it to each other. You have ceased to be man and wife, but even when the relationship exists the husband who is susceptible to carnal desire can never render pure service to his wife. Know this to have been proved by experience. Therefore, forget, at any rate for some time, that a person named . . . behn lives in the Ashram. That alone will do you good. If . . . behn finds this an impossible situation she will go. And if she goes indeed, let her leave with pleasure. Ask me if you have not understood all this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 323. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

35. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 5, 1930

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I got your letter. We should certainly feel ashamed if we fall ill. But very often illness comes to us without our knowing how it comes. Knowing this, we should be tranquil and humble and have greater faith in God. This is a good way of utilizing an illness. What remedies are you trying? Who is your physician?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4015

¹ The name has been omitted.

36. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 5, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

Narandas tells me in his letter that I have not written to you. But I do remember that I wrote to you. Do you remember any letter of yours to which I did not reply? Send me a report of the activities on that side. How is Kasumba? Why did Yukti come away? If she can write, she should write to me. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

37. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

I do receive all your letters. It is true that I do not write to you every week. I realize that what I have been writing about non-stealing and the other vows is rather complicated and it does not interest you. It is not the language that is difficult, but the ideas are difficult to grasp and they are stated tersely. That is the way of explaining a lot in a few words. Now, if you understood those things from Chimanlal or Premabehn and read them again, you would get interested. You can definitely understand it if you have the desire. I hope you are not having the asthma trouble now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9889. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

38. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I hope you have stopped worrying about your health. Why did Jamnadas¹ refuse to see visitors? If you have more news, let me know.

Has anyone ascertained how many volumes in each language the library contains? How much time do you have to give to it? What about the harassment by thieves? I suppose the rains have stopped now. The rainfall here has been very little. It is raining hard today. It was badly needed.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10233; also C.W. 6681. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

39. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI (ASAR),

I got your letter. Narandas tells me in his letter that your fainting fits have become more frequent. In such a case you require rest. Spend a few days in the Ashram or at any other place where you think you will feel happy. But you can do this only with Khurshedbehn's permission. You should write pure truth in your diary. Don't mind who reads it. It is to our good to appear to the world exactly as we are. There is in this no humiliation at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9564

¹ Jamnadas Gandhi, then in Rajkot jail

40. LETTER TO BECHARDAS DOSHI

September 6, 1930

BHAI BECHARDAS,

I have your letter. Really speaking Kakasaheb should reply to it. But just now I reply as he can write only a limited number of letters. Take it that the view expressed here is that of us both. I will say nothing about the method of giving the etymology¹. If Kakasaheb wishes, he will write about it later. After discussing the matter with him, I understand that your main work is to translate the *Agamas*². Shri Punjabhai has given the money for that work, and it is our duty, therefore, to carry out the object of the grant as quickly as possible. You should not mind it if in devoting your time to that work you have to postpone or delay work on etymology; or you may get it done through somebody else if that can be conveniently arranged. The idea in placing Bhakti Prasad at your disposal was not that he might do original work on his own, but that he might work under you and help you, and might, if he was persevering, acquire proficiency in the work.

As for your eyes I think you should lay down a limit. You should be satisfied with whatever help is available in Gujarat. Dr. Haribhai is a specialist in eye diseases. If he cannot help you, you should assume that nobody else will be able to and rest content. There should be a self-imposed limit like this for anyone who has decided to live a simple life. Do the countless poor have the benefit of help even from a Dr. Haribhai? This of course is my personal view. I can say that Kakasaheb now agrees with this view. But this is a delicate matter. Everyone should lay down the limit for himself according to his own lights and his own wish. The limits accepted by one person cannot, in such a matter, apply to all.

BAPU

[PS.]

My reason for using “now” and saying that “Kakasaheb now agrees” is that, as he tells me, he himself had formerly advised you to consult one or two other doctors. He now thinks that my view is right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1340

¹ In the Gujarati dictionary under preparation then in the Gujarat Vidyapith

² Jain scriptures.

41. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 6, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have your letter. It is well written. If you have enough work there I do not see any need of your going to Ajmer. But someone must go if the need in Ajmer is urgent. It is difficult to give a decisive opinion from here. What has Mother to say? Only the leader of the batch can take a policy decision. Ask Surendraji who is there these days.

As yet it is well-nigh impossible for me to write letters in Marathi. I get very little time even to read. Tell Janakibehn to write to us.

Blessings from Kakasaheb.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, pp. 276-7

42. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter from Tirupur. You now know all about our peace talks. I have regained the weight I had lost here. I weighed 104 lb. last Friday. I have dropped the dried fruit also. The sour limes remain. I take vegetables in the place of dried fruit. Sweet potatoes and raw tomatoes are standing vegetables. The former are roasted. A green vegetable is boiled—generally it is cabbage or marrow or the like. This change accounts for the restoration of the weight and constipation no longer worries me. If the change proves successful in the long run, the cost is considerably reduced. Let us see. I have made no hard and fast rule about the avoidance of fruit. But just now it is no deprivation whatsoever and possibly a gain in health.

My mastery over the wheel is increasing. The fatigue is no longer felt. I see that if you concentrate on the *puni* end whilst the thread is drawing, then on the point of the spindle when the thread is being shifted to the cone and then on the cone when it is brought there, you avoid breakage if the *puni* is sound. I hope shortly to increase the speed appreciably. It is better even now. But there is much room for improvement. Anyway, just now it is the wheel that absorbs my attention to the exclusion of other studies. Kaka is still at your wheel. He is getting on slowly. The carding-bow is quite all right. I have no difficulty in adjusting it. Ever since it has been with me the gut broke only once and that too after Kaka too began to work on it. He is absolutely new to it but is an extremely careful worker. Then too I deliberately cut it where I saw it had worn out. Kaka had devised a new catch for holding the spindle whilst unwinding. It is fixed to the box. The spindle is mounted on it and the thread is held between the left hand fingers. The result is that it winds tightly on the winder. There is saving in time too. On your wheel of course the spindle remains on the holders whilst the unwinding is done. The catch was wanted for the box.

I hope you have had some rest somewhere. Do not rush.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5410. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9644

43. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

I have your letter. Once again Father and Jairamdas were with me for a couple of days. Your letter to me was received at the same time and was read by Father. He also gave me your letter to him to read.

Your sketch of Mother is moving. Such indeed were most mothers of old; hence I found nothing unusual in your description.

Maternal affection however is so luminous that, although mixed with infatuation, it is ever fresh. Do not break the rule about writing to me. It would be different if you were in prison.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 73-4

44. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have a letter from you after a long time. But you blame me, like a thief turning round on the policeman. You must have got my previous letter. Sita's illness has lasted too long. Are you not able to discover the cause? As I have not seen her myself, I do not have the courage to say anything in the matter. But I make this suggestion. It would be advisable to keep her chiefly on milk, curds and fruit instead of giving her a variety of things to eat. If she is given toast, it should be of brown bread. I see no need to give her porridge. If you wish, you may give her cod-liver oil. I myself would never think of giving it to anyone. But you should attach no importance to this view. How is your ear? Write to me every week. And write in ink.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4771

45. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

Have you calmed down? If you are still not satisfied, you should continue to struggle against me. I don't wish to force you to be virtuous. No one in the world has ever been made so through force. In

any case, your desire is good in itself and I don't want to force you to remain against your wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7762

46. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAUDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

I got your letter. Because my letters are short, don't make yours also short. You know why mine are short. Into which language is Father translating the *Sirat*? During my first imprisonment, I had read that book and *Asva-e-Sahaba* and found them extremely interesting. But now my Urdu has become rusty, and in any case this time spinning leaves me no time to read.

We have no choice but to trust in God to restore your health. "What God, World Teacher and Master, has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over". Bhrrr to Father and *Vandemataram* to Mother. To your sisters, *Khuda Hafiz*.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9620

47. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

September 7, 1930

I hope Mathuradas's imprisonment has not upset you. Where do you live at present? How is your health and Dilip's? What does Mathuradas say in his letters? Does he feel any hardship? How do you spend your time? Do you take any part in public activities? Do you get any visitors? Do you visit any friends?

[From Gujarati]
Bapuni Prasadi, p. 102

¹ This is in Urdu.

48. LETTER TO SARALADEVI SARABHAI

September 7, 1930

SARALABEHN,

May God grant you increasing strength.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11134. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

49. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,

September 7, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have you letter.

You can write to me as long letters as you please. If Father visits you there, you may tell him: 'I am here with your consent. You have entrusted me to Bapuji. It is therefore my duty to do as he says. Please do not insist on taking me away. Dasharatha was prompted by his ignorant love to suggest to Rama that he ignore his pledge. But Rama refused to do so and saved Dashratha's honour and upheld the sanctity of dharma. Let me do the same, and bless me that I may remain firm in observing the vow taken by you and me.'

You may show this letter to Father. It is good that you are learning English. Improve Your health. For controlling your mind, try giving up the extra salt in your food. Pleasure of the palate also is a mental habit. You do have strength of will. I am writing a separate letter to Brother.

Are you able to understand this letter?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

50. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have necessarily to think of you every day, because I have with me your translations of the Hindi *Bhajans* of the *Bhajanavali*; Kakasaheb had asked for them. I am translating them into English with his help.¹ We both find your translation inaccurate at places. It is certainly hasty. Still, as a whole it can be considered satisfactory. We are both well. Write to me in detail about the work going on there. Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

51. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 7, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter reached me belatedly. Go if you must to serve your mother-in-law. Most probably this letter will reach you there. Observe the rules well. Be very strict regarding your diet also.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5250

¹ The work of translation was begun on May 6, 1930 and the last hymn was translated on December 15. For Gandhiji's version of the *Ashram Bhajanavali*, vide "Ashram Bhajanavali", 15-12-1930.

52. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Have not yet got the pamphlet sent by you. There is a thrill that is *sattvik* and one that is *rajasik*. What category would your writings fall in? We expect to hear more about the American lady. I hope the Ashram life will not prove too trying for her. Our joint congratulations to Mrs. Appasamy on her introduction of the wheel and the *takli* in her school.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10090

53. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

MY DEAR MATHEW,

Human speech is inadequate to express the reality. The soul is unborn and indestructible. The personality perishes, must perish. Individuality is and is not even as each drop in the ocean is an individual and is not. It is not because apart from the ocean it has no existence. It is because the ocean has no existence, if the drop has not, i.e., has no individuality. They are beautifully interdependent. And if this is true of the physical, how much more so of the spiritual world !

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1554

54. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN CHOKSI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. MOTI,

I am happy that you have gone to the Ashram. I hope you will live in peace now. If you don't receive any money even from Broach, how do you meet your expenses? Did Najuklal save anything?

Ask Lakshmi to write to me. Where is Jivandas, and what does he do at present? Where is Jethalal? Is there any news about Mani? What does she do in Bombay? Does Gokibehn take any part in public service? What is your daily programme of work? Vallabhbhai told me that Lakshmidas had fever. Is that true? They have now removed Vallabhbhai from me. He was brought here only for two or three days. That is what a prison is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12147

55. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Your regards have been conveyed to me. You are in my thoughts every day. As usual, I have the watch before me as a constant reminder. You can write to me. Are you out of the wood? My regards to Grandmother. May God give you peace of mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4719. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

56. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

One should not think too much about one's mental condition. We should keep ourselves absorbed in our appointed work and be cheerful. When impure thoughts trouble the mind, we should drive them out with good thoughts and remain peaceful. If we remain firm in our decisions, we automatically acquire self-confidence.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5251

57. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 8, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter, but see none from Motibehn.

In regard to degrees, after discussing the matter Kakasaheb and I have both come to the conclusion that there should not be more than three stages and that for each stage the name of the diploma or the degree should be the same for all subjects, whether craft or industry or art or letters or philosophy. At present there are three diplomas or degrees, *Vineet*, *Visharad* and *Pundit*, in the Vidyapith. *Vineet* (Matriculation, Entrance) is one who has acquired general knowledge in a subject. *Visharad* (Graduate) is one who has acquired proficiency in his subject to the extent of being able to teach it to others also. And *Pundit* is one who can do research in the subject and write dissertations and articles concerning it. Having regard to this, we should for the present, award the degree of *Pundit* to no one, we may award the diploma of *Dhanur-Vineet* or of *Dhanur-Visharad*. If you award the degrees or diplomas, see that you do not make them cheap. Appoint examiners and give the degree or the diploma only to those who pass according to a prescribed standard.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3744

58. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 5/9, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I again got the packet of letters on Wednesday. Read the letters to Manibehn and Bhagwanji. Read out yourself to Manibehn the letter meant for her. If you read both the letters, everything will be clear to you. I need not, therefore, give you any other instructions. I had not thought that you would have to attend to such duties too, but I should have known. It is God's kindness that you are capable of attending to them. The problem of Keshu seems to be difficult. Be careful and carry on as well as you may. What made him break with Navin? The two used to get on very well with each other. You may send me letters received from abroad, if there are any which you think should be sent to me. If a letter is very important, make a copy and send me the letter or the copy. If Dudabhai is eager to have Lakshmi with him and if the latter wishes to go, do not stop her. She is sufficiently obstinate, but watch if you have a different experience of her now.

September 8, 1930

There is barely sufficient cotton for carding to last me up to the 20th. If you have not sent any so far, send some immediately. It will be all right if you send 4 lb. Since slivers have to be made for both of us, a good deal of cotton is consumed. Kakasaheb has started only recently. He is likely to spin more as time passes. I have already written to you about the sandals.

Read about our weight and the changes in my diet, etc., in the letter to Mirabehn.

Tuesday morning, September 9, 1930

REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

This, too, is a new observance, like control of the palate, and may even appear a little strange. But it is of vital importance. Untouchability means pollution by the touch of certain persons by reason of their birth in a particular caste or family. In the words of Akha, it is an excrescence. In the guise of religion, it is always in the way and corrupts religion. None can be born untouchable as all are sparks of one and the same Fire. It is wrong to treat certain human beings as untouchables from birth. It is also wrong to entertain false

scruples about touching a dead body, which should be an object of compassion and respect. It is only out of considerations of health that we bathe after touching a dead body or after an application of oil, or after a shave. A man who does not bathe in such cases may be looked upon as dirty, but surely not as a sinner. A mother may be "untouchable" so long as she has not bathed or washed her hands and feet after cleaning up her child's dirt, but if a child happened to touch her, it would not be polluted by the touch. But Bhangis, Dheds, Chamars and the like are contemptuously looked down upon as untouchables from birth. They may bathe for years with any amount of soap, dress well and wear the marks of Vaishnavas, read the *Gita* every day and follow a learned profession, and yet they remain untouchables! This is rank irreligion fit only to be destroyed. By treating removal of untouchability as an Ashram observance, we assert our belief that untouchability is not only not a part and parcel of Hinduism, but that it is a plague, which it is the bounden duty of every Hindu to combat. Every Hindu, therefore, who considers it a sin should atone for it by fraternizing with untouchables, associating with them in a spirit of love and service, deeming himself purified by such acts, redressing their grievances, helping them patiently to overcome ignorance and other evils due to the slavery of ages, and inspiring other Hindus to do likewise. When one visualizes the removal of untouchability from this spiritual standpoint, its material and political results sink into insignificance and we befriend the so-called untouchables regardless of such results. Seekers after Truth will never waste a thought on the material consequences of their quest, which is not a matter of policy with them, but something interwoven with the very texture of their lives. Similar is the case of those who have vowed to remove untouchability. When we have realized the supreme importance of this observance, we shall discover that the evil it seeks to combat is not restricted in its operation to the suppressed classes. Evil, no bigger than a mustard seed in the first instance, soon assumes gigantic proportions and in the long run destroys that upon which it settles. Thus this evil has now assailed all departments of life. We practise untouchability against followers of other religions than our own, against those who belong to other sects than our own within the Hindu fold and even against members of our own sect, so much so that, ever busy observing untouchability, we become a burden on the earth. We have hardly enough time even to look after ourselves, thanks to the never-ending ablutions and exclusive preparation of food necessitated by false notions of untouchability. While pretending to pray to God, we offer worship not to God but to ourselves. This observance, therefore, is not fulfilled merely by our making friends

with untouchables but by loving all life as our own selves. Removal of untouchability means love for and service of the whole world and thus merges into ahimsa. Removal of untouchability spells the breaking down of barriers between man and man, and between the various orders of beings. We find such barriers erected everywhere in the world; but here we have been mainly concerned with the untouchability which has received religious sanction in India and reduced lakhs and crores of human beings to a state bordering on slavery.

Blessings from
BAPU

PS.

One Kantu Gajiwala is a resident of Surat and lives in Khapatia Chakla. I think he gave me Rs. 5 during the march. I had given instructions to make a khadi-bound diary from the handmade paper which we have and send it to him. Because of my arrest, the matter could not be pursued further. Now get a small diary, of a hundred or more pages, bound by anyone who knows the art and send it to Gajiwala. And write to me when you do so. In any case drop a postcard to him immediately.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 53 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

59. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 10, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. As your work increases, your handwriting improves. You should improve it still further. You should not try to give a flourish to the characters. For instance, the sign for the sound “u” should be written thus— é and not thus— ~. If you form the habit of writing each letter of the alphabet as it is printed, your handwriting will appear very beautiful. I wish to see you and all other women perfect in every respect. I do not exaggerate when I say that I have put all my hopes in you women. I strongly feel that the ultimate victory of non-violence depends wholly on women.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6799

60. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

[About September 10, 1930]¹

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

I hope you have overcome your grief now. The *Gita* is the medicine for your grief. Read the Gujarati translation every day and read it over and over again. Get Shantu examined by Dr. Haribhai and take the necessary measures about his teeth. Read a little every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3738

61. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. RAMA (JOSHI),

I have your fine letter. I see that Mahalakshmi copies you. There is no difference even in the handwriting of you two. This is good. But, then, does not this increase your responsibility? You should, therefore, go on rising higher in all respects. God has given you the strength to do so. He has now provided even the circumstances in which you can rise as high as you wish to. “Go forward”—that is my prayer and my blessing. I had seen even in Wardha those virtues in Mahalakshmi which you describe.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5324

¹ The source bears this date though not in Gandhiji's hand.

62. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

September 11, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I have your letter. I was very glad to read in Hamidabehn's letter about the courage which you displayed. It is but natural that Kanjibhai's daughter should be so brave. On reading about your courage, I was reminded of a parable in one of the Upanishads. It compares our senses to horses. The human soul is described as the charioteer and that which can control these horses, the senses, is described as a conqueror. That [soul] which lets itself be carried away by the horses is said to be defeated by them. As you could stop that horse by the power of your courage, so you and other young women there ought to ride the senses and control them. If you succeed in doing so we shall live in *Ramarajya*, no matter what the outward circumstances are. Show this to Hamidabehn and explain the idea to her. May God grant you still greater strength and courage. Teach Gujarati to Hamidabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2652

63. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 11, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. You must have recovered completely by now. You must observe the rule for the night. Reduce your work during day time, or keep aside your reading, etc., for the time being. If you have as much sleep as you need, you will feel fresher and be able to do the same amount of work in less time. Irrespective of whether this happens, you should let your mind rest between 9 and 4 and lie down to sleep. Start doing this immediately. I should be happy if you wouldn't argue about this. You may argue as much as you like about matters in which there is room for argument, but not on this matter.

Have you cultivated friendship with Kamalabehn Lundy?

Tell Dhurandhar that Prof. Limaye has translated *Anasaktiyoga* and that the translation will be soon published.

‘*Bheek*’ in Marathi is ‘*beek*’ in Gujarati.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10234; also C.W. 6682. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

64. LETTER TO NIRMALA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. NIRMALA (AUNT),

Your imprisonment is real and ours not so. But it is in your power to get out of your prison, and it is not in our power to get out of ours. You need not get frightened by the bone growth. You should take sun-bath only in the early morning at the time of sunrise. At least that part of the body where there is bone growth should be exposed to the sun’s rays. You will benefit more if you expose the whole body. If you eat simple food, you will certainly be able to digest it. Apart from this, do whatever else Haribhai advises.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9456

65. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA (OR BUDDHICHAKRA),

Narandas is full of praise for you. You have done quite a good deal of carding. How nice it would be if you thus worked regularly! Why don’t you write to me?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9210

¹ ‘*Bheek*’ (Marathi) means alms; ‘*beek*’ (Gujarati) means fear.

66. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI (ASAR),

I got your letter. Take some rest now before you resume work. See that your handwriting does not become worse. Compare yours with Radhabehn's. With a little effort, you will be able to improve it. Once it has improved, it will not become worse again even if you write fast.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9565

67. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHL. PANDITJI,

'Chi.' does not seem to go well with 'Panditji'. I use this form very freely these days. Sometimes I even tremble when using it. One should be fit to claim to be anybody's father. I frequently examine myself to see if I feel the love and sympathy which a father should feel and am as vigilant as a father should be, and sometimes I tremble as I do so. I can only state truthfully that I sincerely strive to cultivate these, and console myself with that thought. I certainly know that whenever I address anyone as 'Chi.', my responsibility increases to that extent. I hope God will make me worthy of that responsibility.

The early morning processions can produce much strength. I am sure that you can make a big contribution in organizing them properly. Please do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 212. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

68. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

How is it that there has been no letter from you? You must write every week. Do you write to, and keep yourself in touch with, all the women who are engaged in picketing work outside the Ashram? If you are not doing so, start writing to them. Remember that you are in the position of a mother to many of them. You have no dearth of sons and daughters. We know that all those daughters are doing work which involves danger to their persons. It is but our duty to undertake such work. We may not seek it, but when it comes to us unsought, we should welcome it and pray for God's help to succeed in it. Those women alone who, though outside the Ashram, observe the vows will be said to have succeeded in the struggle.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 41; also C.W. 8757. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

69. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

I got your letter. Both of us were relieved. We should be happy, rather than feel sorry, that others of our age do better work than we. "What God, World Teacher and Master, has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over." We can work only as much as the body which has been given us permits us to do. He who shirks work and does less than what he is capable of has cause to feel ashamed. A person like you has no such cause at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7763

70. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 11, 1930

CHI. BENARSI,

I have your letter. You were arrested and released too ! I am confident that in all that you do you will be calm, truthful and non-violent. I have, therefore, no worry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 9304. Courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

71. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Give me details about the work being done at Sarbhon. Where are you staying? Are there any men or is everything managed by women? To which place does the old lady belong? How old is she? What work does she do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9287

72. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I have your letter. I was in fact waiting for a letter from you. How is your health now? Didn't Vijapur agree with you? I hope you do not worry at all about Benarsi. He is a careful man. And ultimately it is only God who protects us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9052

73. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I got your letter. I was waiting for one in the hope that it might give me news about Pyarelal. I knew that Pyarelal was here only when I accidentally saw your wire with the jailor. Afterwards, I got a letter from Chhaganlal [Joshi] giving me news about his bad health. Here they tell me that he is all right. I shall know the truth now from your next letter.

Do not neglect your work. Have faith. Faith is required when reason fails you. Isn't that so? Have no hesitation in telling me about anything you fail to do through lethargy or any other cause. Even your writing to me will protect you, for the very thought that you will have to tell me will prompt you to be regular.

What can I do about Ba from here? You yourself should complain to Mithubehn. She certainly cannot act independently. She has gone there to work under the leadership of Mithubehn and ought to submit to it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1803

74. LETTER TO MADHAVDAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 12, 1930

CHI. MADHAVDAS,

I read in the letter from the Ashram that you went and visited Ramdas and others. I was glad. How are you? How is Krishna? Has she recovered her health now? Can you two do any work in the present movement? Where do you live?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXII

75. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,

September 12, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got you letter. I will of course write to you regularly. It will be another matter if I have to stop writing letters altogether. You too may go on writing as you please. By all means eat boiled vegetables instead of raw. When the vegetable for the day is radish, gourd, pumpkin, tomato, etc., make a habit of eating a little of it raw. If you cannot digest it, you may discontinue it.

Make only such changes as suit your body. When you get time, improve your arithmetic. Is there no letter from Krishna at all?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

76. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PARIKH

September 13, 1930

CHI. MANIBEHN (PARIKH),

Please write to me and tell me if you know now the cause of Narahari's bone growth. I trust you keep good health. How are the children? Do they study and learn anything? How do you spend the day? Write to me giving all details. Our being able to write to each other is quite an uncertain matter. Nobody knows when we may have to stop. There are no such signs just now, but after all a prison is a prison. A prisoner has no personal rights.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mohan's getting jaundice means some error in regard to his food.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5960

77. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 13, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I have not missed a single post. But it may be that letters are not dispatched from here in time. I hope Jayaprakash has recovered now. How is it you don't get any newspapers there? They get a good many in the Ashram, and can send you some. Mother-in-law must have recovered by now.

I have already informed you about my weight. Both of us are keeping fine? Can you go out for a daily walk there? Do the people also pray daily? How do you spend the day? What is the approximate population of the place? What are Jayaprakash's plans now? Will he be able to earn anything? Does he worry about anything? Even if you write directly to me, most probably I shall get your letters. At present, at any rate, I get such letters. I myself cannot write many letters direct.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3369

78. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

Y. M.,
September 13, 1930

CHI. VIDYAVATI,

I shall not use the formal '*aap*' in addressing you. But can love be expressed through words? Love is related to the heart and can be recognized through the heart. When words come from the heart, they do have some meaning. Tara's¹ is a sad story. If Tara is firm, if she has humility, courage and tolerance, she can leave the house of her in-laws and live with you in the Ashram. You alone can know if you can give her refuge. Through humility, Tara will be able to win over her

¹ Addressee's daughter

relatives in the end. That is the certain result of satyagraha. For this result, there should be sincere love even for the oppressor. Just as fire is always extinguished by water, anger is also calmed down by love.

How is your health? How is Laxmi Devi? We should have known about her. How is Jang Bahadur?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have just seen Laxmi Devi's handwriting. My blessings to her.

RANI VIDYA DEVI
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
HARDOI

From the Hindi original: Rani Vidyavati papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

79. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 14, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your Coimbatore letter before me. It is remarkable how well you have kept on the whole in the midst of the tremendous rush. It is a sign of mental calm I expect.

Keshu did offer to send me a bamboo charkha. I would not let him. The fault was mine in that I did not master the detailed working of it when there was ample opportunity for so doing. I am now doing penance by mastering it by making mistakes. I see that the *mal* and its proper adjustment have much to do both with speed and efficient working. I am getting on. I am by no means despondent. The extraordinary fatigue is gone. There need be no anxiety therefore about the wheel. Kaka is at your wheel. He can't yet get more than 80 rounds per hour.

I am sorry about Mrs. Asher's miscarriage. The chief thing they should do is to impose restraint upon their carnal desires for at least three years if they expect a full-grown healthy baby and Mrs. Asher is to become a strong and healthy mother. To this end they should live

separately if need be. Of course this restraint is in addition to simple diet, open-air life and plenty of gentle exercise. It would do her a world of good if she would take Kuhne baths both hip and sitz I am sure that if she follows the course for three years and has patience she will be a new woman. You may pass this on to Mrs. Asher if you like.

My walks must still be confined. But I am keeping quite well. The wheel and thinking about it make the time fly. And at the end of the day I get good sleep which to me means more than food. I have finished translating the 65th *bhajan*. But there is yet a long distance to cover. I rarely get time to do more than one and I have not yet failed to do one per day. Though therefore the progress is steady, it is undoubtedly slow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5411. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9645

80. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,

September 14, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I am glad you are feeling well in both body and mind. The greater your moral progress the greater will be Father's reconciliation and happiness. The only way to serve elders and for that matter anybody else is to do the right thing without ostentation and never to feel irritated. I know this is more easily said than done. But it has got to be done.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am quite well.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

81. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 14, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

I write this as you wanted me to write. But goodness knows if it will reach its destination. They allowed me to send your letter to me for Father to read. Write if you get the necessary permission. Make full use of the enforced rest you have got.¹ That too I consider a part of our service. Take good care of your health. Draw up a regular programme of work. Let me know what food you get.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 74

82. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[September 14,]² 1930

I smell mental violence even from here. People have not much appreciated non-violence as a religious principle, but even the fact that they have adopted it as a policy is evidence of a great change. From this they will one day appreciate it as a religious principle. If we could make ourselves living embodiments of non-violence, we would, when the atmosphere was unfavourable to it, be twice as vigilant and do twice as much *tapashcharya* as when the atmosphere might be favourable.

We don't pay much attention to the danger concerning women which you mention, since we always condone men's misdeeds. It is good indeed that women have come out. About those who come out successful from the test, we will say that they have really observed the Ashram vows and have understood the meaning of dharma. If any woman falls despite her striving, she will strive again and rise. If a woman had been secretly nursing gross desires and, having an opportunity now, gratifies them, we should know that she did not

¹ The addressee was put in the Arthur Road Prison, Bombay.

² *Vide* the following item. The year has been supplied by the addressee.

really observe the vows and that her hypocrisy has been exposed. We should welcome that too.

Have no fear, therefore, and don't worry on their account. Let each of us take care of himself or herself. It is for God to look after all. If even a few of us remain pure, they will save those who stray from the path. Personally I am confident that a good many of us will remain pure. I don't like the present state of affairs in which the two classes have become a mixed crowd. But it is inevitable.

So long as I can write with self-respect, my effort through letters will continue. I strive through prayers too; no one can prevent me from doing that.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 204-5

83. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 14/16, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I follow your hint concerning the women. Read my letter to Chhaganlal Joshi. You or Gangabehn should keep in correspondence with the women who have settled down for work in different places outside the Ashram. If it seems necessary and if she can find time, Gangabehn should even pay visits to some of those places. Lapses will occur in some of them, but we need not be afraid about them. We should remain, and see that others, too, remain, sufficiently vigilant and leave the result to God. What indeed is our *tapashcharya* in comparison to the degree of self-control we expect from and wish to see in others? Whatever that is, we wish to follow no other path. We wish to uphold the fullest freedom for women. It does not matter if we miss the path on our way, if we stumble, are pricked by thorns or fall down. I gave the letter on Tuesday as usual, but it must have been posted late by the office here either deliberately or through negligence. I have not complained. You should, of course, write to me whenever you do not get the letters in time. It is good that Punjabhai has returned. Have you appointed anyone from the Ashram

to look after him? I am writing to Manibhai¹ about the money for honouring the memory of the poet² which is lying with Revashankerbhai.

Tell Mrs. Zaulinger that I am awaiting her reply. She may write to me anything she wishes to without any hesitation. You have acted rightly in regard to Kamalabehn Lundy. For the present it is best that she should say or write nothing. There is plenty of silent service she can do. Balbhadra has done fine work indeed in carding. This shows that, if we refuse to regard a person as too dull-minded for a particular thing and go on encouraging him, the result is bound to be good.

I am getting on all right just now. As usual I take milk and curds. Instead of raisins and dates, I eat daily seven or eight tomatoes, four or five big-sized, baked sweet potatoes and about six spoons of cabbage or any other vegetable that is available. This helps me in passing stools. I drink at 7.30 in the morning the juice of one lemon with hot water and salt. In the afternoon, I take the juice of one lemon with soda bicarb. If this regimen suits me, it will solve the problem of constipation and effect considerable economy. I get the vegetables from what grows in the garden here. If we count the expenditure, I don't think it exceeds two annas daily, whereas raisins and dates probably cost every day not less than six annas. Those who suffer from constipation may try this diet. I cannot say that it will benefit all. About myself, too, I cannot yet say that the good effect will last. If this experiment is followed, any other food should be avoided. The baked sweet potatoes should be eaten by themselves and chewed well. They should not be dipped in milk or curds. Probably it will do no harm if one eats the skin. I do eat some. Because of my delicate stomach I am afraid to eat all. Anybody else who has a similar stomach and who tries this experiment should also avoid the skin. I would be really happy if you could find my sandals. Kusum is bound to know about them. She may have entrusted them to Premabehn. If you have not yet sent the cotton send it even by post in the last resort. Both the belts, one of six strings and the other of eight strings, were found to be too thin. They come off the pulley and go on revolving without

¹ Manibhai Revashanker Zaveri

² Rajchandra

moving the latter. Do not send me new ones in their place. Some are ready with me and I will somehow manage to make others. I asked you to let me know a simpler method because such a method would save my time.

September 15, 1930

My silence ended a little while ago and Kakasaheb read out to me Ramdas's letter to him. Ramdas says in it that he wrote a letter to me which I have not received. I was very happy that Ramdas gave in the letter to Kakasaheb detailed information about his health and studies. When he is released from jail, we shall be able to write to each other. I shall then get any letter written by him if I can keep up this correspondence. I send you the letters in cloth-lined envelopes now. I have with me only the envelopes received from you. I retain their size when returning them, so that you may be able to use them again. Otherwise I could have made them smaller and used them.

Tuesday morning, September 16, 1930

I read in papers about Ba having been harassed in Surat by the police. Is there any truth in the report?

The law, that to live man must work, first came home to me upon reading Tolstoy's writings on bread labour. But even before that I had begun to pay homage to it after reading Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. The phrase '*jatmahenat*' is a translation of the English expression 'bread labour'. Literally it means labour for *roti*. The divine law that man must earn his bread by labouring with his own hands was first stressed, not by Tolstoy but by an obscure Russian writer named T. M. Bondoref. Tolstoy took it from him and gave it wider publicity when he accepted it. In my view, the same principle has been set forth in Chapter III of the *Gita* where we are told that he who eats without offering sacrifice eats stolen food. Sacrifice here can only mean bread labour. Be that as it may, that verse is the origin of our observance.

Reason, too, leads us to an identical conclusion. How can a man who does not do body labour have the right to eat? "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread," says the Bible. A millionaire cannot carry on for long, and will soon get tired of his life, if he rolls in his bed all day long and is even helped to his food. He, therefore, induces hunger by exercise and helps himself to the food he eats. If everyone, whether rich or poor, has thus to take exercise in some

shape or form, why should it not assume the form of productive labour, i.e., bread labour? No one asks the cultivator to inhale fresh air, or to use his muscles. And more than nine-tenths of humanity lives by tilling the soil. How much happier, healthier and more peaceful would the world become if the remaining tenth followed the example of the overwhelming majority at least to the extent of labouring enough for their food. And many hardships connected with agriculture would be easily redressed if such people took a hand in it. Again, invidious distinctions of rank would be abolished if everyone without exception acknowledged the obligation of bread labour. At present these distinctions have invaded even the varna system in which there was not a trace of it originally. There is a world-wide conflict between capital and labour, and the poor envy the rich. If all worked for their bread, distinctions of rank would be obliterated; the rich would still be there, but they would deem themselves only trustees of their property and would use it mainly in the public interest. Bread labour is a veritable blessing to one who would observe non-violence, worship Truth and make the observance of *brahmacharya* a natural act. This labour can truly be related to agriculture alone. But at present at any rate everybody is not in a position to take to it. A person can, therefore, spin or weave, or take up carpentry or smithery, instead of tilling the soil, always regarding agriculture, however, to be the ideal. Everyone must be his own scavenger. Evacuation is as necessary as eating; and the best thing would be for everyone to dispose of his own waste. If this is impossible, each family should see to its own scavenging. I have felt for years that there must be something radically wrong where scavenging has been made the concern of a separate class in society. We have no historical record of the man who first assigned the lowest status to this essential sanitary service. Whoever he was, he did us no good. We should, from our very childhood, have the idea impressed upon our minds that we are all scavengers, and the easiest way of doing so is for everyone who has realized this to commence bread labour as a scavenger. Scavenging, thus intelligently taken up, will help one to understand religion in a different and truer light. If children, the old and those disabled by illness do not do bread labour, that should not be regarded as violation of the law of bread labour.

The child is, as it were, included in the mother. If nature's laws were not violated, the old would not be disabled and there would be no disease.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Khurshedbehn that, if she requires money, she should have no hesitation in obtaining it from the Ashram. If she got it from any other source, it would pain me.

There are 55 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

84. *LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN*

September 18, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

We both waited for you last evening in accordance with your message.

(1) Please send yesterday's *Chronicle*.

(2) Could you not arrange to have it sent at the regular hour daily?

(3) Please send also the Ashram post. It was due yesterday.

(4) I expect a parcel from the Ashram containing sandals and cotton.

(5) Any other parcels of books and magazines. I have of [*sic*] a pamphlet called *Caesar or Christ* and there should be *Hindu* of Madras.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, p. 287

85. LETTER TO GULAM RASOOL QURESHI

September 18, 1930

CHI. QURESHI,

I got your letter. You did well in paying a visit to Bombay. Sultana would never come near me when I was there. No wonder she remembers me now. Whenever she saw me, she would run away. Since Manilal is there with Imam Saheb to look after him, I am perfectly easy in my mind about him. Amina's courage is boundless. Though I don't mind her having given her name as a volunteer, how will she be able to keep the children in jail with her if she is imprisoned? It would be all right if she did whatever she could remaining at home. It is enough that she is ready to go to jail if it becomes necessary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6652

86. LETTER TO KAMALA NEVATIA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 18, 1930

CHI. KAMALA (RAMESH WARDAS),

I got a letter from you at last. So you understood the suggestion in my letter that you should write to me. Don't be lazy in future. How is your health? Write to me from time to time. If you do so, even that will help you to shake off your laziness. Did you meet Kikibehn¹, Gangabehn² and others in Karachi?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3042

¹ J. B. Kripalani's sister

² A. T. Gidwani's wife

87. *LETTER TO RALIATBEHN VRINDAVANDAS*

September 18, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Mani tells me in her letter that you sometimes think about me. It is but natural that you should. On my part, I think about you quite often. I see your face in my mind and remember Narottamdas, for your face resembles his. May God give you and Mother peace of mind.

Jai Shrikrishna from

MOHANDAS

SMT. GOKIBEHN

BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9810

88. *LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI*

Y. M.,

September 18, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

If I were free you would be the first visitor I would be seeing in the morning tomorrow¹. It has been many days since I last saw your handwriting. Do keep writing to me. Is your health all right? Tell Nirmalabehn that I have not forgotten her. Her innocent face often swims in my ken. What is Indu doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11553

¹ Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar fell on September 19.

89. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

September 18, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS (DHULIA),

Your letter. As you have survived the snake-bite, God will certainly exact more service from you. What treatment did you have? Was the snake poisonous? God will give you peace. Be certain that Ramanama is the *kalpadruma*¹ for us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 175

90. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

September 20, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

You seem to have grown really wise. From now on, so long as I receive your letters, you will receive my letters too. So, you have now become a store-keeperess². You must become very strong in body. Punjabhai is older than I am but he considers me his elder. Even if a nephew is older than his uncle, it is the custom, is it not, that only the uncle can bless the nephew. Do you understand me now?

If Anandi is missing me, all of you must keep her in good cheer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9890. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

¹ A mythical tree which grants all wishes

² Gandhiji uses an arbitrary feminine form in Gujarati.

91. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 20, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your long letter.

Since your health is good, I need make no suggestion.

Do you cultivate contacts with those two European ladies? If you have not been doing so, do so now.

At present it seems that God has given over your whole life to me. This will remain true till the end.¹

To which part of the country does Sushila belong who sends me her good wishes in English? The name is Gujarati or Marathi. It is certainly not Tamil. If she is a Tamil, she may be excused. If not, she should send her good wishes in her mother tongue.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10235; also C.W. 6683. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

92. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 20, 1930

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN (KHARE),

Your joining the picketing will prove a shield for the other women. As these are all novel experiences some are likely to get hurt. Still we should not retrace our steps. You have inexhaustible strength. Put it to good use and bring credit to yourself as well as to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 276. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

¹ On the occasion of Gandhiji's birthday the addressee had offered to dedicate her life to him.

93. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
September 21, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

I must now unburden myself of my second difficulty. I do not doubt a word of what you have told me about the charges of alleged ill-treatment in this prison. Yet I cannot dispel from my mind all the reports that have appeared in the Press. The writers could not have deliberately lied about everything. I am sure that some of the statements are gross exaggerations. I hope that most are, and I should like to believe that all are false. But my mind is disturbed. There may be things you do not know; there must be things which you look at from one angle and the prisoners concerned from another.

My duty in the circumstances seems to be plain. I must ask to be allowed to see them occasionally, if I may not be permitted to live with them. I have told you I desire no privileges. What comforts are allowed to me may be taken away from me. If I am isolated for the sake of the comforts, they mean little to me, whereas isolation means everything to me. I desire no comforts that may not be allowed to the other prisoners suffering from the same physical disabilities as I. I do not believe in classification which, in my opinion, is degrading. If I permit myself comforts which the other prisoners like me do not enjoy, I do so because of my physical needs¹. But I would fain sacrifice health if it has to be purchased by the sacrifice of the privilege of serving my companions, many of whom I know and none of whom I consider to be in any way inferior to me.

I was able to bear the separation so long as I was under the impression that all was well. But the knowledge that young Ratilal is no more, that Pyarelal who is like a son to me has been suffering, that the elderly Narsinhabhai was near death's door and the persistent complaints in the Press have awakened me to a sense of my duty, viz., that I should strive to the utmost of my ability to establish touch with them.

¹ From the draft available in S.N. 19980. In the source the word is obli-terated.

I know that it is not in your or the I. G. P.'s power to grant me the permission requested. I would therefore ask you please to place this letter before the Government and secure an early reply. I am aware as prisoner I have no rights and no choice as to the disposal of my body. But I know also that the upkeep of my body requires my co-operation. I should no longer be interested [in] the preservation of a body that cannot be used for the service that the dweller within yearns after. I am human. Even as a prisoner I cannot divest myself of the human in me.

I need not give the assurance, perhaps you will be able to give it, if any be required, that my presence among my companions will not be used to subvert discipline but on the contrary, it is highly likely to promote it. The moral code of a civil resister requires him willingly to submit to all prison discipline that is not in conflict with self-respect.

Lastly I would like to draw the Government's attention to the fact that when a somewhat similar incident occurred in 1923 in this very prison, I was allowed to see two prisoners with the result that what promised to be a grave tragedy was averted.¹ The present Inspector General of Police is aware of the facts of the case.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3852; also Bombay Secret Abstract, 750(5)/A, p. 207

94. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 21, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I got your letter. If you do not become impatient, you are bound to get the strength to put your ideals into practice. As we get indigestion if we start eating all at once, so also we fail in our attempt if we try to put anything in practice without first judging our capacity and this gives rise to despair. If we ourselves cannot judge our capacity we should follow the advice of some person in whose judgment we have faith and who has given the advice after considering our capacity. It will be enough if, after pouring out your heart before Gangabehn, you do what she asks you to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9566

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Jail Superintendent, Yeravada", 12-2-1923.

95. *LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI*

September 21, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I got your letter. Many kisses to Mian Abdul Majid. As for Sultana, she would not even let me touch her. How is your health now? Take proper care about food.

Have you kept up your study of Urdu?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6658

96. *LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 21, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. God has given us wings, no doubt, but we don't use them. If we forget the body, can't we fly as if we had wings? We are where our mind is. Don't we sometimes feel that while our body is in one place, our mind is in another? Where is the mind of a person who is dead? I know it is easy to say this, but difficult to live in that spirit. But, as you had mentioned wings, I have poured out this wisdom. You may follow it only to the extent that you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9288

97. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 21, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

It is rather strange that you don't get my letters. I am writing to Narandas about this. I have not let a single week pass without writing to you. I keep good health. The weight is 103. Instead of raisins, I eat gourd or some other vegetable. Milk and curds remain of course. Kakasaheb, too, is in good health. He gains one pound every week. Don't worry about us at all. How is Mrityunjaya?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do you go out for a daily walk there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3371

98. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

September 21, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I got your letter. I hear that you yourself are ill. How is that? If there are mosquitoes, you should ignore what others say and use a mosquito-net. If you cannot fix one, you may rub kerosene [on your body]. I cannot straightway request the authorities to keep Pyarelal with me. I had not made such a request even for Kaka. It is the authorities who transferred him. I am, however, trying to see Pyarelal. I made a request to be permitted to see him as soon as I heard that he was suffering from diarrhoea. He is better now. You should remember that I do not know who are lodged in this jail. You should assume that I am confined in a cage. You should have written to me as soon as you knew.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1804

99. *LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA*

September 21, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I read your letter. Overcome your resentment of Manibehn. Forget that she is your wife. Regard her as one of the countless women. Also forget the children that are with her. Regard them as not yours. Since you are susceptible to carnal urge, you should understand that you have no right to [accept] service from Manibehn even as a sister. You should not call to mind whom you have to forget; leave, therefore, all worry on her account and shake the burden off your mind. Show this letter to Gangabehn who will help you to act on this. Give up jaggery. I would recommend milk even if you could take only half a seer of it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 324. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

100. *LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI*

September 21, 1930

CHI. MANU,

Both of us feel easy in mind now that you have calmed down. When a student has grown up and can think for himself, only that which he is persuaded to do willingly will bear fruit. How much time did you take to spin 1,000 rounds? What was the count of the yarn? What was its strength and degree of evenness? Write to me and give me these details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7764

101. LETTER TO JANAKIDEVI BAJAJ

September 21, 1930

CHI. JANAKIBEHN,

You seem to be very clever. You try to evade writing to me under one pretext or another. And if from making speeches you become a dictator; a person like me would have to live in constant fear of you. Jamnalal seems to have established his business well in Nasik. I had thought he would. No one can escape him. Formerly Madu used to write to me, but now she has become lethargic like you. If she remains as lethargic as she is, I shall have to issue an order to separate her from you. How is her health now? Is Om as mischievous as ever?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 72

102. LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 21, 1930

CHI. SATYADEVI,

I have your letter. You must get your Gujarati corrected by someone. Are you keeping up the drawing? Don't you find any improvement now and then? Is Dharmakumar¹ naughty?²

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 34

¹ Younger brother of the addressee

² The original was in Gujarati.

103. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

September 21, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I was happy to read your letter containing your account of the events. I have not reproached you at all. What right have I to reproach you from here? I have only warned you. A volunteer, man or woman, who is not cautious, gets defeated. Knowing your nature, I merely warned you. Those whose means are truth and non-violence, have as their guide God who is known as Truth. That is the gist of the last stanza of the last chapter of the *Gita*. Adhering to it as if clinging to a tree, leap as far as you can. God will protect you.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11177. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

104. LETTER TO BHARATI SARABHAI

September 21, 1930

CHI. BHARATI¹,

I was very happy to have your letter written in such a beautiful hand. You have a perfect right to write to me. I should like it very much if you wrote to all your brothers and sisters. My circle of young friends is vast and I am constantly adding to it. Some jealous young men in order to denigrate the old, have made fun of them, treating them as children. If the old really become as innocent as children, the denigration will be turned into praise. I cherish the hope of getting such a certificate and so continue to enlarge my circle of young friends. All you brothers and sisters should join that circle and keep writing to me.

Your handwriting is good. You must devote a little more attention to **l**, **k** and **r**.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11274. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

¹ Daughter of Ambalal Sarabhai

105. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

September 21, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. It is well that you have sought our Kamalabehn's¹ company. Try to understand her. Do learn from her the art of nursing. You may if you wish add salt to the curd, but do not forget that adding salt only changes the sour taste of curd, it does not neutralize the acidity. I therefore suggest that when the curd tastes sour you should add soda to it. Soda neutralizes the acid in the curd. The acid combines with the soda and evaporates in the form of carbolic acid gas, leaving the curd sweet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

106. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

September 22, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

Let me point out a flaw in your calculation. If you "return the compliment", you should find out the love notes I send every week. So if love may be measured arithmetically your notes must be as many times long as all my notes put together. But thank God! Love ignores and falsifies both arithmetic and geometry. Yes, Kamalabehn is doing very well indeed.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10091

¹ Kamalabehn Lundy

107. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 22, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your Calcutta letter. You are having a variety of experiences¹. Seekers after Truth turn every one of these to good account. I hope the little illness you had was but a passing thing and that you were yourself again quickly. I hope you had the rest you wanted. I am daily making slight improvements in the travelling wheel and it gives me less and less trouble. It is wonderful what a number of details you have to attend to when you have not a perfected machine but a contrivance to help the cunning of your hands. But the greater the mastery over the wheel, the greater is the pleasure of spinning and the less the fatigue. Kaka is still struggling with your wheel. He has much past neglect to make up for. He says, he has become a spinner only here. Before, he was spinning but he was no spinner. You know what I mean. A man can make a table without being a cabinet-maker. The change to vegetables persists. There is no setback nor is there visible further progress. I want to give this experiment a full trial. Dr. Mehta sent word that perhaps sweet potatoes might induce constipation. I have therefore dropped them today. Tomatoes are a daily adjunct and a green vegetable.

You will give my love to friends wherever you are.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5412. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9646

¹ On her arrival at Howrah Mirabehn was forbidden from joining a women's procession which was to take her round the city. Nevertheless she proceeded to join the procession which was lathi-charged. She was taken to a police station and later allowed to leave. Some university students who shouted at the police for being rough with the women were mercilessly beaten. The incidents which led to a hartal the next day are described, in some detail by Mirabehn in her autobiography *The Spirit's Pilgrimage*, pp. 115-7.

108. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

September 22, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

When I don't get a letter from you, I cannot help feeling that something is wrong. Why should you feel depressed? Whenever you feel so, you should immediately pass on your depression to me. Whatever your age, from the very first day that I met you I have regarded you as a dear daughter. I can be both a father and a mother. You should, therefore, immediately let me share your depression and then be at peace.

If you feel like coming to see Kaka, take the plunge some time.

. . . behn¹ is certainly guilty of one mistake, that she went to test Bhagwanji. Nevertheless, as long as she is eager to remain in the Ashram and struggle for self-improvement, we should let her remain. Our experiments are certainly dangerous. God will see us through them all, if we have but faith in Him.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 41-2; also C.W. 8758. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

109. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 22, 1930

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I have your letter. You should write a clear hand. Your letters are well formed but not clear. They will not improve later if you do not take the trouble now. By all means go to Ajmer. Do write regularly from there too. Do not neglect your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirwad, p. 277

¹ The name has been omitted.

110. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

September 22, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

It is with a little effort that I can bring myself to put 'Chi.' before your name. I do feel for you the love which 'Chi.' would suggest, but I may not have always shown it outwardly. I got your letter. Learn carding quickly. As for spinning, set apart, if possible, a fixed time for it. The absence of love of khadi which you notice around you is but a reflection of some deficiency in us. We are the centre of the khadi movement. Just as if the sun shines with less heat the temperature around is bound to go down, so also if we "shine with less heat", that is, if we are lukewarm ourselves about khadi, what wonder that there should be a lack of warmth outside? But love is not acquired from outside; it must spring from within. If we strive for such love to spring from within us, good results are bound to follow. It was very good indeed that Rambhau¹ went to Almora.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 213. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

111. LETTER TO ABBAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 22, 1930

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. What you have said about the *mal* is clear enough, but I think I shall understand it fully only when I read the letter a second time. I have preserved the letter. Describe to me your experiences in jail. What did you read, how much did you spin and card and in what spirit did you observe the prison rules? How was your health? If you have any views to express about the method of carding which Mathuradasbhai is persuading people to adopt, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6303

¹ Addressee's son

112. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [September]¹ 22, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I got your letter. Your son-in-law is released from earthly bonds. We have taught ourselves to regard Death as a friend. What would we have done if there were no Death?

You can bring into the Ashram as many children as you wish.

I understand what you say about Kaku. Everyone will get an opportunity.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehnne, p. 38; also C.W. 8750. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

113. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

September 22, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

On the 18th I had a letter ready for Behn. On the 19th I got a wire signed by you three. These days I am taken up by the idea of a book on spinning. Many problems come up which a book should help us to solve. I shall write more about this if you feel that my suggestion can be carried out.

Do keep writing to me. I do not know how long the present arrangement of writing and receiving letters will last. how is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11554

¹ The source gives the date as “22nd Monday ’30”. In 1930 Monday fell on 22nd in September and December. This letter, however, appears to belong to September; *vide* letters to Gangabehn Vaidya, 22-9-1930.

114. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 21/23, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Where is Kamala Gandhi at present? I feel worried about her because I have had no letter from her for a long time. Where is Haridas? What is he doing? Prabhavati complains, in her letters of the last two weeks, that she gets no letters from me. I have been writing to her regularly. Has she given her correct address to you? The name of the place is Sitaldiara. As regards Harilal Desai, read the letter I have written to him. He is likely to be an asset to us. Pay him between Rs. 60 and Rs. 65 for his family and Rs. 40 for his own expenses. In all, the amount may come to Rs. 100 a month. As for the training, it will be best to adopt the method I have suggested. During the time that he is in the Ashram, I think his expenses will be less. They will, I believe, go up to Rs. 40 when he goes outside the Ashram for studying. Explain further details and make the position clear as you may think fit. Is my suggestion all right? I suppose Valjibhai knows all this.

If Giriraj does not recover his calm there, I think it would be best to let him go to Wardha. However, do what you think proper.

Read the letter to Nanibehn (Budhabhai's). Read the letter to Budhabhai, too, and, if Nanibehn agrees, make the arrangements suggested by him. If, however, she feels hurt, do not interfere. Read the letter to Manibehn before you give it to her to read. Let Gangabehn, too, read it. And also read the letter to Zainu. If he does not understand the position even after this explanation, remember that he is a guest and tolerate his absence. Read the letter to Bhagwanji, too. I think the only medicine for him is the one I have suggested. You have done quite right in sending Balkrishna to Vinoba. You also did well in offering to send others.

It fills me with great joy to know that the boys and girls have taken charge of the prayers. And, moreover, no light is required! My effort to memorize [the *Gita* verses] is in abeyance for the time being. I simply do not get the necessary time. What work can a prisoner have to keep him so busy? But that is how it is. I have to be careful about every minute. I read a little by snatching a few minutes from other work. I agree with your opinion about mixed picketing. Read the letter to Joshi. I got the cotton and the leather, and Kakasaheb his

sandals. I got mine repaired and they should now last me for at least two or three months. I accept your *namaskars* on your birthday. May God strengthen your soul and grant you a long life.

Tuesday morning, September 23, 1930

EQUALITY OF RELIGIONS. This is the new name we have given to the Ashram observance which we know as 'Tolerance'. '*Sahishnuta*' is a translation of the English word 'Tolerance'. I did not like that word, but could not think of a better one. Kakasaheb, too, did not like that word. He suggested 'Respect for all religions'. I didn't like that phrase either. Tolerance may imply a gratuitous assumption of the inferiority of other faiths to one's own and respect suggests a sense of patronizing whereas ahimsa teaches us to entertain the same respect for the religious faiths of others as we accord to our own, thus admitting the imperfection of the latter. This admission will be readily made by a seeker of Truth, who follows the law of Love. If we had attained the full vision of Truth, we would no longer be mere seekers, but would have become one with God, for Truth is God. But being only seekers, we prosecute our quest, and are conscious of our imperfection. And if we are imperfect ourselves, religion as conceived by us must also be imperfect. We have not realized religion in its perfection, even as we have not realized God. Religion of our conception, being thus imperfect, is always subject to a process of evolution and re-interpretation. Progress towards Truth, towards God, is possible only because of such evolution. And if all faiths outlined by men are imperfect, the question of comparative merit does not arise. All faiths constitute a revelation of Truth, but all are imperfect and liable to error. Reverence for other faiths need not blind us to their faults. We must be keenly alive to the defects of our own faith also, yet not leave it on that account, but try to overcome those defects. Looking at all religions with an equal eye, we would not only not hesitate, but would think it our duty, to blend into our faith every acceptable feature of other faiths.

The question then arises: why should there be so many different faiths? The soul is one, but the bodies which she animates are many. We cannot reduce the number of bodies; yet we recognize the unity of the soul. Even as a tree has a single trunk, but many branches and leaves, so is there one true and perfect Religion, but it becomes many as it passes through the human medium.

All religions are divinely inspired, but they are imperfect because they are products of the human mind and taught by human beings. The one Religion is beyond all speech. Imperfect men put it into such language as they can command and their words are interpreted by other men equally imperfect. Whose interpretation is to be held to be the right one? Everybody is right from his own standpoint, but it is not impossible that everybody may be wrong. Hence the necessity for tolerance, which does not mean indifference towards one's own faith, but a more intelligent and purer love for it. Tolerance gives us spiritual insight, which is as far from fanaticism as the north pole is from the south. True knowledge of religion breaks down the barriers between faith and faith. Cultivation of tolerance for other faiths will impart to us a truer understanding of our own.

Tolerance obviously does not disturb the distinction between right and wrong, or good and evil. The reference here throughout is naturally to the principal faiths of the world. They are all based on common fundamentals. They have all produced great saints. There is some difference between tolerance towards other religions and tolerance towards their followers. We should have equal regard for all human beings—for the wicked as for the saintly, for the impious as for the pious—but we should never tolerate irreligion.

This idea may need elaboration. If you do not follow it easily, ask me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

If you have not followed the discourse fully, it would be best not to translate it. I will certainly try myself to translate it.

There are 86 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

115. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

September 23, 1930

BHAISHRI VALJI,

You must be aware that formerly I used to write dates according to our calendar. Later I realized that this insistence was wrong. Everywhere outside India they use dates [according to the Gregorian

calendar]. We must recognize this fact. Besides there is no single calendar accepted throughout India. Different regions follow different calendars. Surely we are not going to reject everything foreign. There are other arguments too. But this would do for the present. Let me know what you think is the right thing to do. What are your activities just now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7407. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

116. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,

Tuesday [September 23, 1930]¹

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

Here's a short reply to your long letter. Instead of brooding over the past, we should think of what lies ahead of us. Look upon all the inmates of the Ashram as Meghji and shower sweet love on them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3741

117. LETTER TO VINOD KUMAR

Y. M.,

September 24, 1930

CHI. VINOD KUMAR,

I got your letter. congratulations to the Sena. How old are you? You have done well in adopting Madalasa as your sister. She is a very good and simple-hearted girl. I like your decision to observe *brahm-charya*. Simple food is very essential for that. But it is equally important to cultivate simplicity in everything else. You should never let impure thoughts enter your mind. For that you must always think good thoughts and try to live according to them. He whose mind and

¹ The original letter has a remark in a hand other than Gandhiji's, "About 25-9-1930". The nearest Tuesday was on this date.

body are engaged in good thoughts and useful work will never have impure thoughts. To achieve this it is necessary constantly to think of God.

Your must improve your handwriting.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10618. Courtesy: Madalasa Shrimannarayan

118. LETTER TO P. G. MATHEW

September 26, 1930

MY DEAR MATHEW,

The things you write about are ultimately decided by faith. Reason can take us only a little distance. Man is a person, God is not in the same sense. Man sins because he has the sense of right and wrong. Our difficulty arises through our effort to measure God by our little selves. And He eludes all measure.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1553

119. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

September 26, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I got your letter. I wrote to you about Pyarelal in my last letter. I have not yet been able to see him, but I can get news about him now. I shall of course be able to see him. Whether he will be kept with me rests on God's will. In any case, we shall meet when I am released and he will live with me then. But who knows what the future holds? Kakasaheb will be released at the end of November. I suppose Pyarelal's term will also have expired by then. At last, he now finds support in the *Gita* and the *Ramayana* and I feel greatly relieved. I could not understand why they did not help him till now. You

yourself admit that you can be safe only if you write to me. Well, then, give me full details whenever you write.

I did not ask for my old pair of sandals. There was a new pair about which you seem to have forgotten. But at present I carry on with the one I have.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1805

120. LETTER TO PANNALAL

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 27, 1930

CHI. PANNALAL,

I have your letter. I hope you know that some persons in Wardha can spin on the *takli* 200 rounds an hour. I was amazed to read this. Write to someone in Wardha and find out how one may acquire such speed. Chhotelal did give me the details.

Don't let despair come near you. It means lack of faith in God. Faith in God means hope. How is your health?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3105

121. LETTER TO YUKTI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 27, 1930

CHI. YUKTI,

Why did you write in pencil? As far as possible, children should not use a pencil. Write to me regularly now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

122. LETTER TO VINODBALA

September 27, 1930

CHI. VINODBALA,

Why do you suppose that, because you do not write to me, I don't think about you? Nor should you believe that I don't think about those to whom I do not write. I think about many such persons every day. Your letter was very good. I had sent to the Ashram a translation of a poem by Ramdas Swami about handwriting. If you have not read it get it from there and read it. Write to me regularly now. And be a very good girl.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Give my blessings to Mother. Has she now recovered peace of mind?

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

123. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

You ask me to write to you every week. But will the prison authorities allow you so many letters? I also doubt whether you will be able to write to me. Preserve your health. Make good use of every minute and keep a record of your work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 74

124. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERVADA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI (ASAR),

I have your letter. I think it best for you that till you have sufficiently recovered you should remain in the Ashram and serve there. If Khurshedbehn calls you, Narandas will not stop you from going. A volunteer should be happy to work anywhere, doing any work she is asked to do. Surely, you have not remained behind in the Ashram because you wanted it or because you were lazy? Moreover, what is the Ashram if not a place of service?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9567

125. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PARIKH

September 27, 1930

CHI. MANIBEHN,

Narahari and Ramniklal seem to be flourishing in jail. How did Mohan get the fever? Do you keep a proper check on what he eats?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5961

126. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

September 27, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

It would be wise for me to climb step by step; otherwise I shall fall. Moreover, if I start writing “Narayan” and also address you as “Narayan” when speaking to you, I may attain my *moksha*. What then?

If you have to address public meetings, that also is a good experience. All the workers are having various useful experiences. If you get any news about Rambhau, write to me and let me know. I have not heard from any of the three after they left the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 211. Courtesy: Lakshmibai Khare

127. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,

September 27, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got your letter. If we smile and remain happy even when we are alone or no one speaks or listens to us and instead people abuse us, then that is true happiness. We should never let the praise or the censure of the world affect our soul. That is what is meant by the *Gita* verses describing the character of the *sthita-prajna*, which we daily recite. If we go on reciting them every day, with sincere devotion in our hearts, some day we shall be able to live in that spirit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9289

128. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

September 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

I have letters from you both. I do remember you once every week, but afterwards give up the thought of writing to you. In a sense I look upon you as an ideal pair. You don't seem to be mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, but are more than sisters to each other. It is true

that Pannalal has had a share in bringing this about; but what could he have done if you two did not have such a quality in your nature? We have to rise much higher still. You three do have the capacity so to rise. Tell Bhai Panachand that I got his wire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3104

129. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

The responsibility on you is great. God will give you the strength to shoulder the burden.

Ambalal¹ wrote to Kakasaheb. The latter is in excellent health. He spins and cards. He walks at regular hours and eats normal food.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ramibai has got what she wanted.² It becomes her well indeed.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: *G.S. Gangabehnne*, p. 42; also C.W. 8759. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

130. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

September 27, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

I have your letter. I am glad to learn that your health has improved a little. Tell Kamaladevi when you write to her that I often think of her. Tell Father that a translation of the whole of the *Sirat* would not be fully appreciated, but it would be a valuable book if he translates its most important portions. Maulana Shibli wrote the *Sirat*

¹ Ambalal Chaturbhai Patel, then Kalelkar's student

² She had been arrested.

with Muslims in view and the book is all right for them, but the general public would not read the translation of so big a book. We already have the works of Amir Ali, Maulvi Mohammed Ali Kadiyani, Washington Irving and Carlyle. It would be a good addition to them to get a small book giving a translation of some portions of Maulana Shibli's volume. Ramdas writes and tells me that Father is becoming younger day by day, for he puts in six hours' labour of writing and his memory has improved. If so, what does it matter that his beard has turned grey? And, moreover, he teaches Mahadev French! Who would not envy him? You daughter and mother have done fine work indeed in the Kheda district, and Hamida there has been rousing the Surat district.

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do you find it difficult to read my handwriting?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9621

131. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

Are you a walking-stick or a spoilt girl or both? You have tried to improve your handwriting. You must try harder. Learn the second chapter by heart and pull Pushpa's¹ nose for me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11089. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

¹ Addressee's sister

132. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Prabhavati writes that you are not keeping well. After acquiring so much learning, why can't you keep your body perfectly healthy? It is essential to make an effort in this direction. What are you doing now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3374

133. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I was glad to get your letter. Be firm as you are in observing the rules. Ignore those who criticize. Do not even be angry with them, but love them.

There is much scope for improvement in your handwriting. With some effort you can improve it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5252

134. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have both your letters. Kalavati is showing very good progress.

You have done well in deciding to keep to the policy of self-sufficiency in khaddar. Spare diet, physical and mental labour are the remedies for nocturnal emissions. Benefits of concentration while

doing physical work are twofold: the performance improves and passions automatically remain under control.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5253

135. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 27, 1930

CHI. TULSI MAHER,

It is well that your letter came. I think of you a good deal. Mirabehn had written; it is good that your letter has also come.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6538

136. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 28, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter.

You did not get or take even the full four days' rest at Muzaffarpur. Next time I should stick to such promises. Why should rest not be taken in the spirit of service? Of course, it can be easily abused and often is. But that is no reason why honest people may not honestly give themselves rest so as to enable them to keep fit for further service. I regard it as self-delusion if not worse when a person says he is wearing himself away in service. Is such service preferred by God to service steadily and detachedly performed? Body is like a machine requiring to be well kept for full service. Enough however of sermonizing from a safe retreat. Only I do feel that I have not felt ashamed to take the required rest. That people about me have thought otherwise is because of their ignorance of the laws of rest. Rest properly and in due time taken is like the proverbial timely stitch.

Kaka has had to give up your wheel. He could not pull more than 70 rounds on it per hour. He uses the box wheel. Yesterday was the third day and he pulled 119 in one hour. He expects to do much better. I am making daily progress and do not know what fatigue is on that wheel. It runs with perfect smoothness. It will do still better when I have myself made the *mal* of the required thickness. The carding gives real music. Vithal wrote saying that we should use a candle for dressing the gut instead of leaves. This change has made the gut give much better results. I wish those who have new experiences will pass them on to me. Whatever are feasible *here*, I shall certainly try. I want to reach a high standard both in spinning and carding. There is no reason why I should stop at 160 rounds per hour. I have now confidence that I should do better. For me it is God's work. If He wills it, He will give me the strength and the ability.

Narandas tells me you are not hitting it off with Kumarappa. Charity is our talisman. I should let him do as he pleases. But of course I know nothing of the differences. N. gives only one or two lines in his letter. My weight is between 103 and 104, the food about the same.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5413. Courtesy: Mirabeau; also G.N. 9647

137. LETTER TO KASUMBA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 28, 1930

CHI. KASUMBA,

You did a very good thing in going over to Chalala. You should live as you agreed to do during our talk. Give up the idea of being polluted by anyone's touch. I trust Umiya is happy. Take interest in all the activities of Jaisukhlal. I was pleased by the virtue of firmness which I observed in you. I should like you to use it in serving others.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

138. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

September 28, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I got your detailed letter. I was glad that you wrote. It was only from your letter that I learnt that Umiya is expecting a baby. Now I understand the cause of the pain which she suffers. Is she as happy still as she was at first?

While strictly adhering to your principles, see that you do not hurt Kasumba. She has the same freedom of conduct which we claim for ourselves. If you get angry with her, she will only suppress her real feelings. I have made that mistake myself and I tell you this from experience. I have observed some fine qualities in Kasumba. But why should it matter even if she does not have any? She should not obstruct you in your way of life and you should not obstruct her in hers. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

What you write about capitalists is true. Them too we will win over with love.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

139. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 28, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. How am I likely to forget that, when covering me with rugs, you often made mistakes about their order? What an excellent father he must be who tolerated the same mistake being made day after day?

In the 84th *bhajan* in the *Ashram Bhajanavali*,¹ the third line runs thus: “*Kamal myane mot bandhi.*” If you know the meaning of

¹ This was translated on September 27, 1930.

this line, tell me what it is. If you do not know it, learn it from Valjibhai or Totaramji or somebody else who knows it and write to me, or ask any person who knows it to write to me and let me know.

You have done well in making friends with Kamala. See that she does not feel uncomfortable there. Have you become a friend of Zaulinger too? If you have not, try now. She has some doubts regarding the Ashram rules and if she wants to discuss them with you let her and do satisfy her.

How are you now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10236; also C.W. 6684. Courtesy: Premabehn Katak

140. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

September 28, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have separate letters from you all. Since you post your letters separately they do give them to me. But the understanding is that ordinarily all letters should be included in one packet.

Your leg seems to be taking a long time to improve. Probably the general weakness of your body is partly responsible for the slow recovery. Narandas complains that none of you join in prayers, etc. Is this true? Tell me clearly what the position is.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8686. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

141. LETTER TO VENILAL GANDHI

September 28, 1930

CHI. VENILAL GANDHI,

I have your letter. For your two-year-old illness the proper remedy is not a vaid's medicine but change of air and diet or, if necessary, a long fast. Hundreds recover their health in this manner.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 916. Courtesy: Venilal Gandhi

142. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

September 28, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

Do not worry about letters from me. I will continue to write to you every week so long as I am able to write letters. How are you now? What are you reading in English? How much are you able to read every day? Have you learnt to starch the yarn? Do you weave on the flying-shuttle loom or on the small loom?

Blessings to brother.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. Courtesy: Gandhi national Museum and Library

143. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 29, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I got your letter. It was a good one. You can write one still better. What is the cause of your losing weight? Do you chew your food properly? Are you suffering from any disease? How much milk do you drink? Your weight must improve. Show this letter to Narandas and follow his advice. Let me know what you do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9211

144. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
September 29, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Was there any letter of yours which remained unanswered? Of course I do remember all of you women every day. I too would have been glad if you could have spent a few months with me. But both of you have made such progress, even while you were away from me, that I cannot imagine what you could have achieved if you had been all the time with me. It is good that the children still live on fruit and so on and that you have come back to it. Why has Dahibehn not written? Blessings to all the women.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6797

145. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

September 29, 1930

CHI. PUNJABHAI (JUNIOR, BARODA),

I got your letter. Your illness has lasted too long. That is always the way of the body. It is more brittle even than a glass bangle. We should, therefore, take care of it only in order that we may be able to serve others. Get well soon. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4016

146. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

September 29, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have your two letters to answer. First, Satis Babu's question. The literal interpretation of the battle in Chapter II of the *Gita* may certainly be physical conflict. But I have not a shadow of doubt that the spirit of the *Gita* inclines us to interpret it as mental conflict. The moment this is doubted, the *Gita* will cease to be sacred scripture for me.

I hope you are well. After consulting Vinoba, do send the boys desirous of learning Sanskrit to Wardha. Chhotelal is now in jail. I am very glad to note even the slight improvement in Tarini. Give my blessings to Tarini, Charu, Arun and others. The *tapovanas*¹ like those of ancient India can exist even now, it all depends upon our *tapashcharya*. Certainly their form may be different. Our duty lies in going a step ahead of the achievements of our ancestors.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1671

¹ Sylvan hermitages

147. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

September 30, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

It was on 21st instant that I sent you my letter requesting that I should be permitted to establish touch with the civil resistance prisoners in this jail. I made the request about seeing my secretary and co-worker Pyarelal even earlier. I must now press for an early answer. I know the Government's preoccupations and, as a prisoner, I should like to spare them all the trouble I can on my behalf. But the request I have made is a peremptory call of my fundamental being. I can no longer restrain myself now. The deprivation of touch with these fellow-prisoners is unbearable for me. Unless, therefore, I get satisfaction by Saturday noon next, I must begin to withdraw my co-operation as to the upkeep of my body. To what extent I shall carry the non-co-operation, I am unable to say at present. It will be determined, as the days proceed, by the inner urge and my courage and strength. The commencement will be made with my refusing all food except the ordinary convict diet, i.e., such of it as I can religiously take. I can take only five natural ingredients in addition to salt. Therefore so far as I can see, I can take only *kanji* and *bajari* and *juwari* chapati. I may not take dal or vegetables as they contain more than five ingredients. The *kanji* and chapati I shall take on the responsibility of and at the desire of the authorities. I am not sure that after years of abstention from them, my system can cope with either. I have arrived at this compromise to start with, because I am anxious to cause as little embarrassment as I can. I would like the Government not to regard this letter as a threat but consider it as an act of courtesy and consideration. My desire is not to take the Government unawares in any serious steps I may take in order to vindicate what is to me a human right.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3853; also Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750(5)/A, p. 207

148. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 25/30, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I start with your letter. Last week I ran short of time and had to be very brief about some points. Write and tell me, if you know, all about the persons who live in Rajagopalachari's Ashram, where Subbiah and his wife are and so on.

Punjabhai must now endure his suffering and pass his days in peace. If you can, have a further discussion with Mrs. Zaulinger. She seems to be a wise and good lady, but she takes time to understand our point of view in everything. I don't see anything wrong in letting her join the night-watch, if she feels so inclined. Her argument is correct. Indian sisters may not be ready to move as freely as she is ready to do; if, however, anyone wishes to join her, she may. I have merely expressed a view from here without knowing all the circumstances there. Do what you yourself think proper.

What shall I say about Keshu and others? Read the letter which I shall write to them this time and give it to them. Keshu is an upright young man. He will probably understand his dharma in the course of time, and so I don't feel like writing anything to him. You, for your part, should be bold and tell him what you think right. This time, of course, I will write to him.

My diet consists of three pounds of milk turned into curds and taken at two meals, and milk once. Then nine tomatoes, small or big as supplied and the required quantity of boiled vegetables such as cabbage, pumpkin, etc. I add salt afterwards if I require. I gave up sweet potatoes four days ago. Dr. Jivraj visited Kakasaheb and he thought that it would cause constipation. I had again found it necessary to take enemas. I, therefore, decided to see the effect of giving up sweet potatoes. I observe no change. If I keep up my strength, I will not resume sweet potatoes. I didn't think they were doing me any harm. It is the water of this place which seems to cause constipation to a person of my constitution. There is, however, no cause for worry at all. I shall be weighed this evening and will mention the weight in this letter. Enemas are nothing new to me, but I should certainly like to do without them if possible. I wish to carry on without fresh fruit as long as I can. If by eating vegetables I do not

succeed in getting rid of enemas and if I feel weak in the slightest degree, I will resume dates and raisins. No one should worry on my account.

My spinning is improving. The speed seems to be increasing. At any rate, I don't feel tired now. I will not be too eager for the present to increase the output. I feel a little unhappy that I have had to abandon the effort to memorize the *Gita* verses. But I am waiting for an opportunity to resume it. In the beginning, I used to try to memorize them while spinning. But I saw that that interfered with the spinning. I realize every day the necessity for ever more concentration for good spinning. I see that there is a great difference between mere spinning and the art of spinning. I wish to learn the art. Maybe I shall not succeed in acquiring it during this life. I will be satisfied if I am not slack in my effort. I realized that my eagerness to learn the *Gita* verses by heart while spinning was a sign of my slackness. That was against the teaching of the *Gita*. I wish to memorize the *Gita* verses if I can do that and at the same time acquire proficiency in spinning, but I would be false to the teaching of the *Gita* as I understand it if I tried to learn its verses by heart at the cost of my spinning. Plead with Amidas. I am writing to him. How can we ask a person like him to leave the Ashram?

I shall not be able to send two discourses. Perhaps I will continue the discourse on equality of religions. I feel inclined to omit the subject of swadeshi. I feel that by writing on it I may violate to some extent my resolution to make no reference to political subjects. Even if I write about swadeshi from a spiritual standpoint, I am bound to include in the discourse something which would have an indirect connection with politics. If I feel that I can write on the subject without touching on politics, I will try. Let me see if I can do so.

There is no point in forcing Giriraj to stay there against his wishes. If Balkrishna invites him to go to Wardha, what harm do you see in his going? He is a good man, but he cannot think clearly. Balkrishna's company is likely to benefit him. Since you have written to Vinoba offering to send more persons, why not Giriraj? If he feels happy, he will certainly work. It does not seem right to me to abandon him. But, I again seem to be meddling with what I should leave alone. Don't, therefore, attach much weight to what I have said. Treat this merely as a suggestion intended to help you to come to a decision. It is possible that I may have formed my opinion without knowing all

the facts of the case. I have so much confidence in your decisions that, when my reason does not accept any of them, I feel that that must be so because of my ignorance of some facts. And now I reply to your questions:

1. There is no question of asking him to leave the Ashram, but I would not ask him to stay on either if he decided to leave.

2. He should not go to Wardha without the consent of the Ashram authorities.

3. If he does anything against the wishes of the Ashram authorities and forfeits their confidence, the Ashram cannot support his children.

4. If the Ashram is not in a position to look after Katu and Vimu, I cannot think where we can send them. If at present Giriraj has no share in looking after them, the Ashram may, if it can, look after them in case he goes to some other place with the consent of the Ashram authorities. If, however, the children have become unmanageable, Giriraj should be told so.

5. I think the Ashram should give Giriraj the necessary financial help to enable him to make some other arrangement. The amount of such help should be fixed by the Ashram. I think I have now replied to all your questions.

Read my letter to Giriraj.

I do not have the necessary data to enable me to decide about Manibehn. But from what I have understood I feel that she should be permitted to go to her place if she is very keen on doing so. It is a question not of what Bhagwanji wishes, but of what Manibehn wishes. If she wants to stay on, she should be welcome to do so, on this condition, however, that she should forget Bhagwanji. She should not wish or hope to see him. She should submit to the Ashram rules as the other women do. If she is not willing to do this, she should leave.

I understand what you say about Mirabehn and Kumarappa. Your decision seems right. I am writing to Mirabehn.

Where is Jethalal at present? The names of the fruits which you said would be on display in our exhibition gave me a pleasant surprise. I didn't even know that you had planted grapes.

You need not send my worn sandals. There was a new pair. If Kanti does not know about it, that is the end of the matter. As I told

you in my letter, I have been able to manage for the present. We shall see later what we should do if you do not succeed in finding the new pair. Why shouldn't a pair from the stock of sandals in the Ashram do for me? A pair like the one you sent for Kakasaheb will be all right for me. I would like the sandals better without the *dalia* such as Kakasaheb's pair has. Do send the money for Pyarelal's living expenses. You can adopt no other course in his case. He ought to have drawn money even earlier, which he did not do. The Ashram is all that he has in the world, call it his friend or anything you will. What you have done about Gokibehn is worthy of you. Of course, nothing could have been sent to her from the Ashram. You could have approached Dr. Mehta, but I liked it very much that you gave the sum from your own resources. I am sure she needed it. I went through the figures of spinning on *Rentia Barash*¹. They are very good indeed. I think Khurshedbehn wants some more women. Find out exactly what she wants and send someone if you can. If you cannot, give her convincing reasons why you cannot. As far as I can see, no mature woman worker is now left there who can go and join her.

September 26, 1930

I was weighed today. The weight is a little above 103, which means that there has been some improvement. Kakasaheb weighed a little below 115. That means that there has been no improvement during the past week. It may not be unusual for him to lose half a pound or a quarter of a pound occasionally.

You did the right thing in not sending me B. J.'s leaflet. You cannot send it.

September 27, 1930

Lilavati has again become impatient to go and join Khurshedbehn. If the latter knows her condition and still calls her, I think it may be best to let her go. Rather than that she should remain in the Ashram and feel restless, it is better that she should go and return wiser from experience. Do what you think best. Satis Babu had made a balance costing 3 annas for weighing slivers, etc.; if you can find that or any other similar balance, send it with someone who may

¹ The twelfth day of the dark half of *Bhadrapad*, which was Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram Calendar

be coming here. Do you have any news about Anna who was spreading Hindi in Madras?

September 28, 1930

Did you get the yarn which Kakasaheb had sent through Bal for the Goseva Sangh? He had sent, through Shankar, 8,500 yards for the Charkha Sangh. Will it be delivered to you there or will it be delivered at Ahmedabad? Read what I have written about Miss A. in my letter to Mirabehn.

Tuesday morning, September 30, 1930

As I told you in my letter last week, I have translated into English the discourse on Equality of Religions and send the translation herewith. If Valjibhai has translated it and if his translation has already been printed, he should read the translation which I am sending. Anybody else who wishes to read it may do so and the last person should hand it over to Mirabehn. If Valjibhai's translation has not been printed, he should carefully go through my translation and then publish whichever he likes. Do you intend to publish the discourses in Gujarati only or their English translations also?

This subject is so important that I dwell a little further on it. My meaning will perhaps become clearer if I describe here some of my experiences. In Phoenix we had our daily prayers in the same way as in Sabarmati, and Mussalmans as well as Christians attended them along with Hindus. The late Sheth Rustomji and his children too attended the prayer meetings. Rustomji Sheth very much liked the Gujarati *bhajan*. "Dear, dear to me is the name of Rama." If my memory serves me right, Maganlal or Kashi was once leading us in singing this hymn, when Rustomji Sheth exclaimed joyously "Say the name of Hormazd instead of the name of Rama". His suggestion was readily taken up, and after that whenever the Sheth was present, and sometimes even when he was not, we put in the name of Hormazd in place of Rama. The late Husain, son of Daud Sheth, often stayed at the Phoenix Ashram, and enthusiastically joined our prayers. To the accompaniment of an organ, he used to sing in a very sweet voice the song "*Hai bahare bagh*", "The garden of this world has only a momentary bloom". He taught us all this song, which we also sang at prayers. Its inclusion in our *Bhajanavali* is a tribute to truth-loving Husain's memory. I have never met a young man who practised Truth more devotedly than Husain. Joseph Royeppen often came to Phoenix. He was a Christian, and his favourite hymn was "*Vaishnava*

jana". He loved music and once sang this hymn saying "Christian" in place of "vaishnava". The others accepted his reading with alacrity, and I observed that this filled Joseph's heart with joy.

When I was turning over the pages of the sacred books of different faiths for my own satisfaction, I became sufficiently familiar for my purpose with Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Hinduism. In reading these texts, I can say that I felt the same regard for all these faiths although, perhaps, I was not then conscious of it. Reviving my memory of those days, I do not find I ever had the slightest desire to criticize any of those religions merely because they were not my own, but read each sacred book in a spirit of reverence and found the same fundamental morality in each. Some things I did not understand then, as I did not in Hindu scriptures. I do not understand those things even now, but experience has taught me that it is a mistake hastily to imagine that anything that we cannot understand is necessarily wrong. Some things which I did not understand first have since become as clear as daylight. Equimindedness helps us to solve many difficulties and even when we criticize anything, we express ourselves with a humility and courtesy which leave no sting behind them.

One difficulty still remains. As I stated last time, the acceptance of the doctrine of Equality of Religions does not abolish the distinction between religion and irreligion. We do not propose to cultivate tolerance for irreligion. That being so, some people might object that there would be no room left for equimindedness, if everyone took his own decision as to what was religion and what was irreligion. Such a question may be raised and one may even make a mistake in deciding what is religion and what is irreligion. If, however, we follow the law of love, we shall not bear any hatred towards the irreligious brother. On the contrary, though we see that he follows irreligion, we shall love him and, therefore, either we shall bring him to see the error of his ways or he will convince us of our error, or each will tolerate the other's difference of opinion. If the other party does not observe the law of love, he may be violent to us. If, however, we cherish real love for him, it will overcome his bitterness in the end. All obstacles in our path will vanish, if only we observe the golden rule that we must not be impatient with those whom we may consider to be in error, but must be prepared, if need be, to suffer in our own person.

As I have stated earlier in this letter, I think I will omit the subject of swadeshi. I have yet to think on what subject I shall write next.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 70 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

149. LETTER TO R. V. MARTIN

October 2, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

Mr. Quinn has been having a chat with me about my letter of 30th ultimo. If you are authorized to let me see periodically in the yard where I am kept, those of my friends whom I may find it necessary to see for the sake of service, I should be quite satisfied. Of course, I would not discuss politics with them nor send any political message, nor say or suggest anything calculated to subvert prison discipline. As I told you this morning, my object in wanting to see these friends is to serve them and, if you would believe it, assist the jail authorities wherever it may be possible even as I did in 1923.

From a photostat: S.N. 19982

150. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 2, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

Your letter. The beauty of trees and plants surpasses that of electric lights as the beauty of real tomatoes surpasses that of clay ones. Have you ever heard any one's hunger being satisfied by clay tomatoes?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9891. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

151. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 2, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

If you wish, you may certainly keep the wooden sandals. But what will you do with those bits of wood? Keep them if you think that they will add an inch or two to your stature. I would condemn your action as smacking of idolatry. I used to keep with me a photograph of my father. I had hung his photographs in the drawing-room and the bedroom when I was in South Africa. When I used to wear a chain, it had a locket which contained small photographs of my father and elder brother. I have now put them away. That does not mean that I feel less reverence for them now. In fact they are more deeply engraved in my heart today. I think of their virtues and try to cultivate them. I can worship countless gods in this manner. If I tried to keep with me photographs of them all, I would have no room to put them in. And if I tried to keep their wooden sandals, I should have to acquire a piece of land for the purpose. As a man of experience, I advise you, therefore, to follow me when I am walking on the right path. That will be a thousand times better than keeping my wooden sandals, and if anybody follows your example, I would welcome that. On the contrary, if anybody saw the sandals with you and followed your example blindly, would he not fall into a pit? Think on this and then do what you wish.

He who understands and does his duty, his cravings have already left him. A person whose cravings have not left him has no sense of duty. Our cravings are like a huge mountain which no man can cross over by climbing. The only course for us is to raze the mountain to the ground. To give up our cravings is to become conscious of our duty. Suppose that I wish to go to Kashi. I even know the path which I should follow to reach it. What other craving, then, will force me to stray from that path? I have no other craving but to reach Kashi, and that is satisfied. What more do I want then? You have an opportunity for service which has come to you unsought. You should get fullest satisfaction in doing that service with single-minded devotion. Whatever opportunities for human company and for reading you get while doing that duty, may

be availed of. Apart from that, you should desire nothing. This, according to me is yoga, “skill in works”, “equimindedness” and *samadhi*.

If, however, all this seems idle preaching to you and you thirst for reading, by all means satisfy your craving. Reduce the burden of work on you and take rest. How you may do this, you can decide only in consultation with Narandas. He is a man of profound understanding, patience and goodness. He will certainly help you. What more can I say to cheer you? A person like me can only suggest the direction which you should follow. It is on oneself, however, that you and everyone else should depend for peace of mind.

I understand what you say about Sushila. In future, let her send her good wishes in Marathi. My blessings to her.

I understand that after having enjoyed Panditji’s music, a person like you will not enjoy music by anybody else. But why should you not, yourself, lead the *bhajans*? If you have the courage to do so, ask them to let you do it. If you wish, I will write. You certainly know how to sing. I have not forgotten that you used to sing *bhajans* almost every night. How are your tonsils? Did you get them examined by Dr. Haribhai?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10237; also C.W. 6685. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

152. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 2, 1930

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

As advised by the doctor, do take a full month’s rest. The work of service will never end. If you become stronger, you will be able to work better. Moreover, our programme is such that wherever we are, we can do some work. Write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8989

153. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 2, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter.

If you think you are not worthy of being a daughter, how much more fit should I become to be a worthy mother and father to you? If I who claim to be both, am slack in my effort to be so, I shall have no place anywhere in the three worlds. Let us, therefore, not argue who is worthy and who is not. If a son or daughter is unworthy, the parents bear no small responsibility for that.

I understand the reason for your depression. Instead of thinking that you have to do this, that or the other thing, you should think that God does all that and uses you as His instrument. If you think thus, you will feel no burden at all. It is God who carries the burden, and His shoulders are so broad that however heavy the burden we place on them He does not feel it even as much as we would a speck of dust on our hand. We should, therefore, forget 'I' and 'Mine'. "It is I who do this— that is our ignorance, like that of the dog who thinks he draws the cart": this line by Narasinh Mehta expresses his own experience. '*Shakat*' in this line means a cart. If we believe that the dog who walks under a moving cart draws it, then we may believe that the burden of our tasks is on us; but anyone who works for the love of God will never find his task a heavier burden than he can carry. He does not have to take upon himself anything. Tasks come to him unsought. He goes on working cheerfully, with God's name upon his lips. You sing with sincere emotion: "Make me your servant." Think over the meaning of that *bhajan*. Also think over the meaning of the two verses which we have added to the prayers for women. It is the Lord's assurance to those who surrender themselves to Him that He will carry the burden of their happiness and welfare. Why, then, should we worry? This is looking at the matter philosophically.

But even if you and I feel agitated, what escape is there for us? Our relationship with the Ashram is like the Hindu marriage bond. The tie can never be loosened. Instead of thinking whether others are half-hearted or firm in their attitude, you should ask

yourself whether you are half-hearted or firm, and that is all that is necessary. Certainly seek what comfort Nath can give you. Talk with Narandas and pour out your heart every week to me. If you can free yourself for a few days and pay a visit to Kakasaheb, that, too, will give you some comfort.

Do not work so hard that you get exhausted. One should always preserve a sense of proportion in undertaking work in the spirit of service. We can do that only if we have cultivated the attitude of non-attachment. Non-attachment means freedom from the sense of 'I' and 'Mine'. The saying that while sleeping one should stretch out one's limbs according to the length of the covering has great wisdom behind it.

Read this letter again and again, think over it and overcome your depression and put your heart in the *bhajan* when you sing "Make me your servant".

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: *G. S. Gangabehnne*, pp. 42-4; also C.W. 8760. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

154. LETTER TO BALVIR SINGH

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 2/3¹, 1930

BHAI BALVIR SINGH,

Your letter. The work at Khadi Bhandar constitutes not only proper work but also excellent work. Performance of *yajna* implies spinning for half an hour at least. These jobs cannot be evaluated on a comparative basis as both are part of your duty. Hence you have to find time for spinning just as you have to find time for meals. It takes only one day to prepare enough slivers to last for a month. Fewer slivers will be required if you spin to the fineness of 20 or 30 instead of 10. Talk it over with Mahavirprasadji. Kakasaheb sends you his blessings.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 10538

¹ Not quite legible

155. LETTER TO MAJOR MARTIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

October 3, 1930

DEAR MAJOR MARTIN,

With reference to our conversations, by 'friends' I mean those civil resistance prisoners whom I know. I should want to meet only those who may be reported to be suffering from illness or ill-treatment or might have been reported to have so suffered. This right too, I should exercise with as much restraint as possible. If it is necessary to explain my meaning further, you will please let me know. I want to have no mental reservations.

As for postponing the enforcement of my resolution, I am sorry I must not do it, if satisfaction cannot be had in time. But it need cause no immediate worry as in the initial stages, I should be eating such ordinary convict food as I can religiously take.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3854; also S.N. 19983

156. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY

October 3, 1930

DEAR MOTI BAPU,

I have replied to your wire. I must not exert myself to give you a long reply to your loving letter of 15th instant. I appreciate your deep love and know that the Sangh is with me in all acts of love.

Sardar and Mahadev join me in sending you love.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 11037

157. LETTER TO PARASRAM MEHROTRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 3, 1930

CHI. PARASRAM,

Your letter. Do as Shankerlalji says. You must go on with your task despite the world's ridicule. Do not picket the dealers in mill-made slivers, but persuade them with love. On no account give up truth and non-violence. You will then automatically acquire mental strength.

Continue to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C.W. 4965. Courtesy: Parasram Mehrotra

158. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

October 4, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. What you write about weavers is true. There is a special class of workers in Ahmedabad who starch yarn. We see such workers elsewhere too. Cannot we supply starched warp to weavers? If you ask Ramjibhai and the others, they also will come and help. They will have to do the work entrusted to them by Chhaganbhai or Surendra. If, however, you feel that I should write to them, write to me again. I have had no letter yet from Motibehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3745

159. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

October 4, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS (DHULIA),

Your letter. Do not take it so much to heart. Recite Ramanama and be cheerful. Bear whatever pain there is after taking the necessary treatment and do whatever service you can. No reason to worry if you cannot get up [early] in the morning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 177

160. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 5, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this after taking silence. Have just seen your portrait in a group published in the *Times Illustrated Weekly*. You are spinning on the *takli* and looking fit. Then I saw in the columns of *The Bombay Chronicle* that you were in the women's procession and spoke at their meeting. So you are again near my lodgings and probably this will be in your hands at the Ashram.

Yes, S. Aiengar's daughter is a very good woman but she was hysterical even when we were travelling from Mysore. When you write to her please give my love to her and tell her I often think of her. It is a sad thing—her father's case. It is the same thing with him as with the daughter. He can be hardly considered responsible for many of his strange acts. Did you see him at all? Where did you stay whilst in Madras?

Last week, Kaka having been given my wheel, I thought I would finish my quota on yours. I tried hard but I could not make it work. The spindle won't turn. Whether the resin was ineffective or what the cause was, I could not divine. But there it was refusing to turn. Then I thought of the Gandiv of Surat. I found it to be an extraordinarily effective thing. For the last two days I have been finishing the whole

of my quota on it and that in very good time and without the slightest fatigue. It has captivated me and I want you to try it. It is essentially a poor man's wheel. The inventor is no mechanic. How it has come to him, I do not know. But every part of it, in my opinion, shows solicitude for the starving. It costs Rs. 1½ but it can be made for only 8 annas, I am sure. It is the lightest wheel going in India. It requires the least attention. It occupies the smallest space of all the wheels I know. A little child can work at it. Thousands of these wheels can be manufactured in a day if the discs and spindles are kept in stock. Its mechanism is simplicity personified. You naturally draw a fine thread. The very first I drew was over 30 counts. And I fancy that it can compete with any in giving speed. It admits of certain improvements, which can be made without adding a pice to the cost. I have made two and this reduces the cost. The original has noisy wooden holders. I have discarded them and put on coir rope picked up from rubbish. I have broken up the jingling glass bars on the spindle and wound a few turns of yarn to hold the spindle in position. This has made it absolutely noiseless. Such is the opinion of a new convert, who has tried it only for the last four days. It may, therefore, need modification. But it is undoubtedly a case for believers to give it a fair trial. I am writing to the inventor suggesting certain improvements and am writing to Keshu too to examine, try and if my preliminary observation is at all sound, to improve it. There are other merits I must not describe, as I have many more letters yet to write. If you can think of the reason that has prevented the spindle on your wheel from turning, please tell me.

How did you find Brajkishore Babu? Is he better? Did you see Prabhavati? She is much reduced and her latest letter says she had high fever.

And your health? You must not break down at the Ashram. You will have met Kamalabehn Lundy. Of course you will befriend her. She appears to be a very good woman.

Both of us are keeping excellent health. My weight, if anything, shows a slight increase. The vegetable experiment seems to have proved a success and it gives me joy to know that the disappearance of even dried fruit reduces the cost very materially. In vegetables, for the last two days, I have been taking spinach which has moved the bowels automatically. I take sweet potatoes off and on. I hope you have by now got all my letters. I have missed no week.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5414. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9648

161 LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
October 5, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have your letters. Of course you are in your place being there. If you are uniformly gentle, you will win Father over completely.

You must not damage your health by denying yourself the food you may need. You may not accept furniture that you do not need from Father but you should ask him to send you something that it will please him to send you and that you may need. you should have no hesitation in asking Father for gifts and should not take it ill if he refuses to give them.

Love to you and Vidya.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

162. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

October 5, 1930

CHI. MANU,

How did you get fever? Ordinarily you would deserve a prize for the way you take care of your health. You have succeeded, by your own efforts, in building up a strong body. It is for you now to preserve your improved health. When Kakasaheb is released, let him find you a trained worker in a fit condition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7765

163. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 5, 1930

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have your letter. I am very glad that you teach in the class. Give your whole-hearted devotion to the work and cultivate the utmost interest in it. Love all children as you do Manu. A letter from you will not increase my burden in any way. Write to me from time to time and ask me any question you wish to. How is your health now? What do you think has been the effect of the fast on the whole?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7454. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

164. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 6, 1930

CHI. GOVIND,

I have your letter written in a beautiful hand. Write to me from time to time about your activities. Do you read anything? What is your weight now?.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3945

165. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 6, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You must have received my letter posted directly to you. I am expecting a wire from you. Why should you become ill? See that you do not harm your health. If you cannot improve your health there, go

and live in the Ashram. No one will oppose your going there for the sake of your health. Since you are in Patna, you can give me news about everyone there. I am quite all right. Kakasaheb's health keeps improving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3375

166. LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL

YERAUDA MANDIR,

October 6, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (PATEL),

I have your letter. You have given much information, but the handwriting has not yet improved. If you make an effort to improve it, you will certainly succeed. If you don't improve it at this age, it will for ever remain bad, as mine has remained. I hope you do understand that we commit violence in writing to anyone in a bad hand.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4054

167. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAUDA MANDIR,

October 6, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. If Mathuradasbhai is really ready to take you with him and if Narandasbhai permits you to go, I see no harm in your going. Improve your handwriting. And increase your weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9212

168. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

October 6, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have gone through your letters. Your opinion is not likely to be free from faults because it is in your nature to suspect rather too much. Your duty just the same is to guard your own self. Your duty is to keep quiet after having promptly informed Narandas about whatever evil you happen to notice. Only in this way will you be able to make some progress. Do not regard the Ashram as forsaken so long as there is even a single votary of the vows of truth, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 325. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

169. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 2/7, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the Ashram packet yesterday. Mostly the packets are handed over to me on the very day on which they arrive.

Read the letter which I am writing to Harilal Desai. I have nothing to write about Giriraj this time. Do what you think best. I was glad to read about Zainu. I am writing to Bhagwanji. His letter will have no effect on me. I know his nature. I felt after reading Madhu's letter that she was a very innocent girl. I am sure Navin and others will learn simplicity by and by. I am happy that you trust others. No one who does so has ever lost anything in the world. The suspicious gain nothing; on the contrary, they often lose something and exchange worry for peace of mind. Take care about three things in regard to all who have got malaria. They should see to it that they clear their bowels. If they do not do that in the natural course, they should take either a purgative or an enema. Even after the fever has come down, they should take 5 grains of quinine daily for a week, dissolving the quinine in lime juice and adding 10 to 15 grains of soda bicarb to the mixture, drinking it as they would soda water. There will be, and

ought to be, effervescence, when the mixture is prepared. Further, for at least one week after the fever has gone they should live on milk and black dried grapes or boiled vegetables. Those who have had no attack of malaria should, if they sleep where there are mosquitoes, rub kerosene over the exposed parts of the body before going to bed. In any case everyone should keep his stomach light. Amidas does cause me worry. I should be happy if my letter has had any effect and he has started taking milk.

Punjabhai may follow his inclinations and live as he wishes. If Jamna is treated by the Udasi Vaid who treats Chandrashankar, she may also benefit. Chandrashankar is all praise for him. Go and see him once. Read my letter to Gangabehn. Give her some time and console her. If she comes to Poona even on the excuse of visiting Kakasaheb, she will have change of air for three days. Keep urging Nathji. His presence, too, may give peace to Gangabehn. Tell Mahadev's mother that you are glad she has come, and that she should not think of returning to Dihen in the immediate future. If possible, she should stay on permanently in the Ashram. Read my letter to Chhaganlal. You will see from it what restraints should be observed by those who write to me. If in any letter they are not observed, it should be kept back and not forwarded to me. I think Khadag Bahadur's letter did not observe them. Premabehn, too, seems worried. Read the letter to her and console her. Read my letter to Kamalabehn Ludi. Some of her suggestions deserve to be welcomed.

October 4, 1930

Read my letter to Chhaganlal Joshi. Everyone who writes to me should observe the restraints which I have mentioned in it. Any letters which violate them should be kept back. Khadag Bahadur's letter was of that type.¹ I don't want to burden you with the responsibility of reading all letters. But you may glance through a letter by anyone who is writing for the first time. Letters by the women never contain anything objectionable. You will, therefore, need to read only a few of them. I certainly feel sometimes that I should put in a separate packet the letters which I write to people there. Perhaps the task of redirecting the other letters is much too heavy a burden on you. I cannot think what I should do to reduce it. Since those letters are not such as I

¹ Repetition of the four preceding sentences seems to be inadvertent.

need not write, I continue to burden you with the task of redirecting them.

Read my letter to Harilal Desai, so that you may bear in mind the suggestion I have made in it. I have recently started spinning on the Gandiv spinning-wheel. I like it. I can spin on it with almost the same speed as on the portable spinning-wheel. I hope to increase the speed. With a few improvements, this wheel can perhaps be made a perfect model. Read what I have written about it in my letter to Ishwarlal Vimawala. Read what I propose to write about it in my letter to Mirabehn too. I should like someone in the Ashram to try it. You, too, may examine it. I have suggested to Ishwarlal that he should send two or three wheels. I have seen quite a number of models, but at the moment I think that among them all this is the only one worth trial and examination. I will write further about it after I have had more experience of it.

Tuesday morning, October 7, 1930

I got the cotton and the yarn belt. The cotton was particularly welcome, as Vallabhbhai is being supplied with slivers from here. I am awaiting the scale, but there is no urgency about it.

Humility cannot be an observance by itself. For it does not lend itself to being deliberately practised. It is, however, an indispensable test of ahimsa. In one who has ahimsa in him it becomes part of his very nature. A preliminary draft of the rules and regulations of the Satyagraha Ashram was circulated among friends, including the late Sir Gurudas Banerji. He suggested that humility should be accorded a place among the observances. This suggestion could not then be accepted for the reason that I have just mentioned. But although humility is not one of the observances, it is certainly as essential as, and perhaps even more essential than any of them. Only it has never come to anyone by practice. Truth can be cultivated as well as Love. But to cultivate humility is tantamount to cultivating hypocrisy. Humility must not be here confounded with mere manners or etiquette. One man will sometimes prostrate himself before another although his heart is full of bitterness against him. This is not humility, but cunning. A man may chant Ramanama or tell his beads all day long, and move in society like a sage; but if he is selfish at heart, he is not meek but only hypocritical. A humble person is not himself conscious of his humility. Truth and the like perhaps admit of

measurement, but not humility. Inborn humility can never remain hidden, and yet the possessor is unaware of its existence. The story of Vashishtha and Vishwamitra furnishes a very good case in point. Humility should make the possessor realize that he is as nothing. Directly we imagine ourselves to be something, there is egotism. If a man who keeps observances is proud of keeping them, they will lose much, if not all, of their value. And a man who is proud of his virtue often becomes a curse to society. Society will not appreciate it, and he himself will fail to reap any benefit from it. Even a little thought will suffice to convince us that all creatures are nothing more than a mere atom in this universe. Our existence as embodied beings is purely momentary. What are a hundred years in eternity? But if we shatter the chains of egotism and melt into the ocean of humanity, we share its dignity. To feel that we are something is to set up a barrier between God and ourselves; to cease feeling that we are something is to become one with God. A drop in the ocean partakes of the greatness of its parent, although it is unconscious of it. But it is dried up as soon as it enters upon an existence independent of the ocean. We do not exaggerate when we say that life on earth is a mere bubble. How is it possible to cultivate such utter humility? It develops of itself if we understand the spirit of our observances. Can one who aspires to follow truth ever be a proud man? A life of service must be one of humility. He who would sacrifice his life for others has hardly time to reserve for himself a place in the sun. Inertia must not be mistaken for humility, as it has been in Hinduism. Because it has been so mistaken, lethargy and hypocrisy have often flourished in its name. True humility means most strenuous and constant endeavour entirely directed towards the service of humanity. God is continuously in action without resting a single moment. If we would serve Him or become one with Him, our activity must be as unwearied as His. There may be momentary rest in store for the drop which is separated from the ocean, but not for the drop in the ocean, which knows no rest. The same is the case with ourselves. As soon as we become one with the ocean, in the shape of God, there is no more rest for us, nor indeed do we need rest any longer. Our very sleep is action. For we sleep with the thought of God in our hearts. This restlessness constitutes true rest. This never-ceasing agitation holds the key to peace ineffable. True humility, therefore, requires us to dedicate ourselves to the service of all living creatures. When we have surrendered our all in this manner, no day in the week is a day of rest for us. This supreme state of total

surrender is difficult to describe, but not beyond the bounds of human experience. It has been attained by many dedicated souls, and may be attained by ourselves as well. This is the goal which we of the Satyagraha Ashram have set before ourselves; all our observances and activities are calculated to assist us in reaching it. We shall reach it some day all unawares if we have truth in us. It is unattainable if we consciously strive for it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

There are 61 letters today.

Some women from the Ashram should go and see Khurshedbehn. If you have some news about Manibehn, let me have it.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

170. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 7, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I was able to see Pyarelal last week. They had permitted very little time for the meeting. He had certainly become weaker, but is better now. He gets milk, etc. He is well looked after. I hope that I shall be able to see him several times again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1806

171. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. SHARDA (BABU),

I have Your letter. One reason why you do not like to spin is that you are not fully aware of the fact that through spinning you can serve millions, or, maybe you are not as much interested in serving them. If that is the case you should correct your attitude.

Another reason may be that you have still not mastered the art of spinning. Interest is bound to develop if you could spin fine yarn, the thread does not snap and the spinning-wheel hums along without a jarring sound. Have you ever seen the Andhra women spinning at an exhibition? Who would not be interested in spinning if he could spin like them. The same applies in the case of the *Gita*. You will like it if you realize its worth.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10023. Courtesy: Sharda G. Chokhawala

172. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

YERAUDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I have your letter. My congratulations to Chandan. You also should give your name for the competition. If you get the prize, you may use the money for helping somebody. Those who do not require any incentive such as a competition provides, should none the less join one for the sake of other people. My blessings to Chandan, Tara and Vasant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7466

173. LETTER TO KAPILRAI MEHTA

YERAUDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. KAPIL,

They got your letter at Vile Parle. Although one's home may be near, one should not go there for the sake of the comforts one may get there or for the love of one's relations. But there can be no objection to a worker going to his home to get proper nursing during illness, with the willing consent of his co-workers and in order to lessen the burden on them. It depends on one's attitude. You should

take care of your health and improve it. How can you let it become delicate at this young age? Sun-bath, *pranayam*¹, *shavasan*² and eating less help considerably in asthma.

Kakasaheb is quite well. He sends his blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3975

174. LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI

Y. M.,
October 10, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

I have your letter. I got the tomatoes, lemons and papayas sent by you and Nirmalabehn. It irks me that you should spend the least bit of time or money on such things. You have surely gone beyond the stage where you needed to give outward expression to your love. One may incur such expense if it is necessary—here it is not. We both keep good health. The exhibition seems to have gone off very well. I have also received the booklet³ containing quotations about swadeshi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11555

¹ Deep breathing

² Lying still on one's back

³ By Nandalal; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 9/14-10-1930.

175. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 10, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

Your handwriting is gradually improving. I can see from your letters that you are trying. Learn well by heart the chapters of the *Gita*. Be particular about the pronunciation. Is Pushpa learning anything by heart?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11090. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

176. LETTER TO NARAYAN MORESHWAR KHARE

October 11, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

I have your letter. I hope your fever has completely left you. I approve of your idea of reading the *Ramayana* among the village people and cultivating contacts with them by that means. But do not let the opportunity for contacts with them be your motive for reading the *Ramayana*. If you read the *Ramayana* among them, it should be only in order that they may learn wisdom. If you incidentally get an opportunity of coming into contact with the villagers, that should of course be welcome. That is, you should start reading the *Ramayana* with the intention of keeping up the practice. Or you may read it occasionally as a means of cultivating contact with the people, as you do many other things for the same purpose; that would, then, be a different thing. Understand the distinction between the two points of view. I don't think I shall be able to write the reminiscences of Gokhale. My preoccupation with spinning will let me do nothing else.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 240. Courtesy: Lakshmi Bai Khare

177. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. The postcard addressed to you at Patna does not seem to have reached you, for I had asked you in it to send me a wire but I did not get any. I now learn from the letter that your mother-in-law has passed away and that both Jayaprakash and you have been a good deal shaken. Why should we ever grieve over death, which no one can escape? Moreover, the lady was quite ill. She has been released from her suffering. Hence, those whom she has left behind suffer because of their selfishness. Your duty now is to see that you get strong quickly. I don't think your disease has yet left you. For some time, you may also write directly to me. This in addition to the letters which you should continue to send through the Ashram. May God grant patience in suffering to you all. I keep good health. The weight is 104. I think that is quite good.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3372

178. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

CHI. MOTIBEHN,

At last you have written to me, after having kept me without a letter for a long time. Treat all children who are put under your care as your own. If you learn by heart some chapters of the *Gita*, you will find that you feel more peaceful in mind. If not more, learn only one verse at a time. Try to memorize a verse after you have understood its meaning and learn to pronounce each word in it correctly. Vithal, Mahavir and some others can do it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3746

179. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. Who else is there with you in Siddhapur? Wherever you go, write to me regularly and give me all news, whether important or unimportant.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6219

180. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 11, 1930

BHAI VITHALDAS,

I have received your letter, along with the figures sent by you. I know that stocks of khadi are again accumulating. Do not lose heart. According to me, the flood has not reached full tide yet. If we have faith, it is bound to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9774

181. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
October 11, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You are greedy. It is of course good to be greedy when you are young. But while being greedy one should also exercise restraint. Hence, of all the things you may wish to learn you should first learn what will be more useful for service. Another restraint is that whatever you learn you must do thoroughly and not leave half way. Do learn sewing. But do not be hasty. One reason why

you do not enjoy weaving is that you do not yet know it well. In the beginning all efforts at learning seem uninteresting. Many people do not like arithmetic because they find it difficult to learn. But those who know it can enjoy it as much as they would a novel. Another reason is that you do not still have enough love for the poor. How can a person who realizes that every yard of khadi that he produces will help to cover the back of a poor man fail to take pleasure in producing it? A mother does with joy for her child and God for his *bhakta* what other people would find a boring task. The truth is that we do not as yet feel real love of service. A servant should find equal pleasure in all forms of service. All service given sincerely is of equal worth. Ponder over the verse “He who offers me with devotion a leaf, a flower, or fruit or water. . .”¹ Ask me if you still do not understand.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Write to Brother and give him my blessings and tell him that the books sent by him have been received. Of course you both have Kakasaheb’s blessings.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

182. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 12, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have your letter. I received it after a long interval. But it is a perfect one. I believe that the strength which women possess is given them by God. Hence they are bound to succeed in whatever they undertake. It is very good indeed that Hamidabehn is with you. Though a girl, she strikes me as a mature and saintly woman. Ba, it seems, is doing some good running about. I see that all the women

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, IX, 26

will have to shoulder a still heavier responsibility than they are doing. But let us bear constantly in mind those three verses from Chapters IX and X¹ which we have recently learnt to recite, and remain unconcerned.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5325

183. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 12, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

The Ashram is for the men of ordinary category. It cannot be said that the Ashram is curt towards Girirajji if he has reached the height you regard him to have reached, but that his great soul can no more be accommodated there. The decision taken by Narandas is spiritual. The spiritual point of view is to act as guided by whatever ideals we have accepted for the Ashram. Personally I think Giriraj has fallen into delusion. I would not engage myself or involve another in the regimen undertaken by us if it is not going to help us realize the *atman*. It is possible that God might live in the house of a scavenger and He may not be found in that of a Vedantin. Our action should accord with our lofty sentiments. Giriraj is a noble person, he is humble too; he will therefore come round after his ramblings. The credit will go to the Ashram even if we were to learn from him in case he proves our way to be wrong. Please remain calm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 326. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

¹ Of *Bhagavad Gita*

184. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. There is not the slightest reason to be grieved by the death of friends. None ever dies before his time. The notion of untimely death is a delusion. Even the death of a day-old baby is not an untimely one. It only means that the actions to be performed through that body had been performed. We feel pained by death only because of our ignorance and selfishness. We feel agitated over the death of friends or others because of our ignorance of the soul's attributes and because we do not wish ourselves to die. Yes, we owe a duty to the widows. If they come and can observe the rules, in my view at any rate there should be no objection to admitting them. However, as the responsibility lies on Narandas and Gangabehn, you should discuss the matter with them. Show this letter to them.

Though Kalavati is indeed in a hard plight, she will be fully tried and the strength of her mind tested. I am writing to her. I have received the Hindi translation of Kumarappa's speech. Mahavir Prasad's zeal is beyond praise. He has already started working for the third edition of the *Gita*.

You ought to get over your depression now. If any depressing thoughts or impure desires arise in your mind, note them every time and drive them out. Do not let your mind dwell on them; do not even debate within your mind how they occurred, but keep the mind engaged in good thoughts. The golden means of doing which is that the mind, too, should be kept fully occupied in some external activity, so that it may have no time at all to wander.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 5254

*185. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI
THAKKAR*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I have your letter. We can easily get rid of any habit when we begin to dislike it. And a woman with your strong resolve should experience no difficulty at all in doing so. You are doing well in clinging to the diet which you have adopted. As we observe others becoming more indifferent towards or losing faith in the programme of picketing liquor-booths, etc., we should become more vigilant ourselves and let our faith shine more brightly. That is bound to produce an effect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6800

186. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR
October 12, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I have your beautiful letter. If Hamida learns Gujarati well, surely the credit will go to you. It is because picketing of liquor-booths is a difficult job that it has been entrusted to women. It requires the utmost purity of character and the deepest faith. Women possess both in greater measure than men.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2653

187. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

You need not spare me the trouble of reading a letter. A father is always eager to get a letter from his son or daughter. For about ten or fifteen days, I lived only on, vegetables, milk and curds; that is, I had stopped eating even raisins and dates. I have started taking these again from today. After some time, I will go back to vegetables. In that way I shall discover what suits me best. If I can do with vegetables, that will save money too. But I will not persist [too long in the experiment]. The present weight of 104 lb. is quite good. How is your health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9290

188. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You should certainly write to me and let me know your thoughts on Manibehn's departure, as also all that you think about other matters. Your last letter was all right. Let the world see us as we are. We should especially show ourselves as we are to those whom we love. No one can immediately put into practice his or her ideals. But everyone can strive to do so. This you do everyday. Hence the end is bound to be good.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G. S. Gangabehn, p. 44; also C.W. 8761. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

189. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

Both the interpretations are good. The one suggested by Nathji, however, is likely to be more authoritative.

It is our good fortune that you have recovered your peace of mind.

Enter Sarojinidevi's heart. She needs the warmth of human sympathy. Try to find some free time for such tasks. You will have to undertake much more responsible tasks in future.

Are you now free from worry about your health? Do you feel all right? What do you eat?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10238; also C.W. 6686. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

190. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 12, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Got your letter. I am never late in replying. In fact, you don't write and therefore feel that my letter reaches you late. If the postscript to your letter is in Satyadevi's hand, her handwriting is as good as yours. Therefore she should surpass you in a short while.¹

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 31

¹ The original was in Gujarati.

191. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[October 13, 1930]¹

CHI. MIRA,

I hope you have got the straying letters. I am sure they have not been intercepted, but have been delayed in transit from place to place.

It is evident, my 'scolding' as you call it, was well deserved, for you have returned in a dilapidated condition. On the top of that, you had a bad accident. Now you would be as good as your word and take full rest. I was much relieved to understand that you had been visiting the Sardar. That showed that you were well enough to travel.

I am still at the Gandiv wheel, and my rapture continues, if anything it has increased. I am spinning scientifically now, i.e., with a yard measure underneath the track of the yarn as it is drawn. I can draw 8 threads in one minute and I pull at least two feet to each draw. This means 240 rounds or 300 yards per hour. But of course, I do nothing of the sort in an hour but that is not because of any defect in the Gandiv. The less output is due to breakages and consequent waste of time. But since adopting the method of concentration, breakages have very considerably reduced. I therefore often reach 200 yards per hour which for me is very good. You will publish nothing just yet of my views about the Gandiv. I want the report of those who may try at the Ashram. Most of all I want your report, if you have the leisure and the inclination to give it a trial. I know that you all have not the time that I have for these experiments. You will therefore do whatever is possible and if you think it necessary. I, having nothing else to do, may easily exaggerate the merits of a thing which I may have disregarded before as I did and which now gives comparative satisfaction.

¹ The 100th hymn, referred to in the postscript, was translated on this date; Vide "*Ashram Bhajanavali*", 15-12-1930. The letter however bears the date "12-10-1930" in Mirabehn's handwriting.

For the past two days I have gone back to raisins and dates just to see if the cold I have had anything to do with the vegetables. Whether it is a coincidence or what, it is as good as gone today. In any event health is quite good. Weight 104.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Today I have finished the 100th hymn. Only two remain to be translated of the Hindustani hymns. This means I am nearly half through with this work.

From the original: C.W. 5415. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9649

192. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 13, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

As long as you are free, I must get a letter from you every week. How is your health? Do you digest food properly? Do you still take medicine? What work have you taken up? How is Nimu? And Sumitra? What happened about the khadi implements centre? The real test will be now. But there is nothing which we did not expect.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6860

193. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 13, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Inspire Dhiru and Rambhau to write to me. Walk slowly. Do not take upon yourself much work. I liked your having gone away from Almora. Do not take upon yourself any big responsibility. Teach those who come. Remain satisfied with what the

three of you can do. Who are the persons now in Almora whom I know?

Is Mrs. Cook there? Where is Mohan Joshi? Has Shantilal recovered completely? What do you do about milk there? What is the expense incurred? Write to me regularly. For the time being, Kakasaheb has suggested *Savyasachi* as the name for your spinning-wheel and it seems to be good. The only fault perhaps may be that it is a Sanskrit word. There is no harm if you stop thinking about yourself. 'Enjoy today, who has seen tomorrow'.

There is food for Abha, too, in this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32938

194. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 9/14, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your packet was given to me late last evening. I will certainly inquire why you got the post late. But that will often happen and you should not, therefore, worry if you do not get the post on the day expected. You should, however, be regular in posting the letters at your end.

Both of us were weighed today. We are weighed every Thursday. Kakasaheb's weight is between 115 and 116, which means that there is some improvement. My weight came to 104. I have discontinued taking enema since four days ago. I eat *tandalja* and that has had a beneficial effect. I have not given up *ratalu* altogether. I intend to take it twice or thrice in a week. On the other days I will eat *patakalu* or some other vegetable. I still continue tomatoes. So far, I have not felt the need for fruits. If the weight remains steady, I intend to continue as I am doing. My promise that I will take care of my health in whatever experiments I make should reassure all of you.

I do not feel that your letters are too long. I should certainly like to see that the burden on you does not increase. Your work is to see the letters which I write, to distribute them to the addressees and to write to me. I think your having to send letters written by others is an extra duty. It is so because really speaking it is not right for me to

express opinions from here. It is a mere accident that we are able to send and receive letters.

I got Radha's long reply. She writes in it about . . .¹ having stolen something and other such matters. She says that Keshu was upset when he knew about the thing. What are the facts? Read the letter I shall write to . . .².

I have nothing to say about your decision regarding Giriraj. I think it is perfectly correct. You alone know all the facts. I hope to know by and by what has been done about the children. What can one say about Amidas? His courage inspires nothing but respect. I feel unhappy in so far as I was responsible for his vow of not taking milk.

Now that his father is there, I don't worry any more about him. We should do all we can to look after him. It is God who will protect him.

I suppose Bhagwanji will accept responsibility for Manibehn's expenses. I saw Pyarelal. No harm has been done to his health. It is weak, though. I believe I shall now be able to see him frequently. He gets bread and milk at present.

I didn't see any letter from Chitalia. I don't remember at the moment the sum which he requires as help. I think I did ask someone to note it. His letter is likely to be in one of the files. Shivabhai and Chhaganlal will probably know about it. Perhaps Raojibhai, too, may know. Chitalia himself will be able to tell you. Has he asked for

Rs. 1,500 for the building? Ascertain the position and do what you think best. If necessary, you may write to me again about the matter. Read the letter I have written to him.

October 13, 1930

I read the new ordinance. You, too, will have to think about the matter. I myself wish to say nothing from here. Discuss the matter with the person who is the leader there and go on doing what you think right. I am not surprised by the ordinance. I did expect some such measure.

¹ The names have been omitted.

² *ibid*

Tuesday morning, October 14, 1930

In this series, I have dealt cursorily with the importance of vows, but it is perhaps necessary to consider at some length their bearing on a godly life. Now that I have discussed all our vows except that of swadeshi, let us consider the necessity of vows. There is a powerful school of thinkers who concede the propriety of observing certain rules but do not acknowledge the necessity of vows. They go even so far as to suggest that vows are a sign of weakness and may even be harmful. Again they say that, if a rule is subsequently discovered to be inconvenient or sinful, to adhere to it after such discovery would be positively wrong. They say: "It is a good thing to abstain from liquor, but what harm is there in taking it occasionally, say on medical grounds? A pledge of total abstinence would be a needless handicap; and as with liquor, so with other things. Why may we not even speak an untruth for a good end?" This argument does not convince me. A vow means unflinching determination, and helps us against temptations. Determination is worth nothing if it bends before discomfort. The universal experience of humanity supports the view that progress is impossible without inflexible determination. There cannot be a vow to commit a sin. Such a vow represents a wicked nature. In the case of a vow first thought to be meritorious but later found to be sinful, there arises a clear necessity to give it up. But no one takes, or ought to take, vows about dubious matters. Vows can be taken only on points of universally recognized principles, which, however, we do not habitually act upon. The possibility of sin in such a case is more or less imaginary. A devotee of Truth cannot stop to consider if someone will not be injured by his telling the truth, for he believes that truth can never do harm. So also about total abstinence. The abstainer will either make an exception as regards medicine, or will be prepared to risk his life in fulfilment of his full vow. What does it matter if we happen to lose our lives through a pledge of total abstinence? There can be no guarantee that our lives will be prolonged by liquor, and even if life is thus prolonged for a moment, it may be ended the very next through some other agency. On the other hand, the example of a man who gives up his life rather than his pledge is likely to wean drunkards from liquor and thus become a great power for good in the world. Only they can hope some time to

see God who have nobly determined to bear witness to the faith that is in them even at the cost of life itself.

Taking vows is not a sign of weakness but of strength. To do at any cost what one ought to do constitutes a vow. It becomes a bulwark of strength. It makes no difference whether such a resolve is called a vow or known by some other name. A man, who says that he will do something “as far as possible” betrays either his pride or his weakness, though he himself may attribute it to his humility. There is, in fact, not a trace of humility in such an attitude of mind. I have noticed in my own case, as well as in that of others, that the limitation “as far as possible” provides a fatal loophole. To do something “as far as possible” is to succumb to the very first temptation. There is no sense in saying that we will observe truth “as far as possible”. Even as no businessman will look at a note in which a man promises to pay a certain amount on a certain date “as far as possible”, so will God refuse to accept a promissory note drawn by a man who will observe truth “as far as possible”.

God is the very image of the vow. God would cease to be God if He swerved from His own laws even by a hair’s breadth. The sun is a great keeper of observances; hence the possibility of measuring time and publishing almanacs. He has created in us the faith that he always rises and will for ever continue to rise, and thereby given us a sense of security. All business depends upon men fulfilling their promises. There could be no commerce if merchants did not regard themselves as bound by their word to one another. We thus see that keeping a vow is a universal practice. Are such promises less necessary in character building or self-realization? We should, therefore, never doubt the necessity of vows for the purpose of self-purification and self-realization.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

About the Gandiv spinning-wheel and about my diet you will get some news in my letter to Mirabehn.

There are 63 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

195. LETTER TO FENNER BROCKWAY

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
October 15, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I see your name among the senders of the telegram of birthday greetings from London. I send my thanks to you and the other friends through you, as I do not know the Secretary's address.

I hope there is no after effect left of the wretched accident¹ you had near Madras.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, 750 (34), Pt. I, p. 279

196. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 15, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. Mirabeau too had made some reference.

No one is perfect in this world. Our duty is to rid ourselves of the imperfections and that is what human effort is for. Despair has no place as long as we put in our own efforts. In spiritual matters we need infinitely greater courage than what we need in worldly matters. One should never give up self-confidence. Faith can make everything possible.

I too hold that Pujya Malaviyaji will not fall ill. In fact, I believe that he will have true rest and peace in the jail.² He very much needed both for many years. God has thus granted him both.

¹ Fenner Brockway had met with a car accident in late 1927. *Vide* "Letter to A. Fenner Brockway", 11-2-1928.

² Madan Mohan Malaviya was arrested a second time on August 27 while attending the meeting of the Congress Working Committee. He was sentenced to six months' simple imprisonment.

Give an account of your health in the next letter.

I hope you will have no apprehension if khadi accumulates. Are you making an experiment in regard to the dairy?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6187. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

197. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
October 16, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

The authorities have given me your greetings wire. it shows that Vidya is now with you. I am glad. I hope she is keeping well.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope you got my previous letter.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

198. LETTER TO LILAVATI

October 16, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I was glad to know that you have remained calm. What was the cause of your fasting for three days? Don't forget that you are only a child. A child should not take upon itself the burden of the whole world. Really speaking, all of us are children. There is only one grown up being, God. He shoulders the burden of all. Why, then, need we worry? All that we should do is to serve Him as His slaves.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9317

199. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

October 16, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Your intentions are no doubt pure but one should never be content with one's purity of motive[alone]. The necessity of knowledge has been accepted for the reason that one may not commit an error in spite of a pure motive. This also you should know for certain that as you achieve purity the Ashram too becomes pure to that extent. The purity of the Ashram is not different from that of any Ashramite. As far as the Ashram goes, there is no one who can surpass Narandas in the matter of rendering help in spiritual difficulties. Totaramji can also help.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 327. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

200. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday evening [October 16, 1930]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got the letters sent by you. I write this letter specially regarding Amidas. It will, therefore, be immediately cleared. Will Amidas agree to take raw eggs? There are two kinds of eggs, one to which exception may be taken and the other unexceptionable. The former are those which ultimately produce chicken, and the unexceptionable are those which produce no life. Hens lay such eggs without their having been inseminated by cocks. This is a well known fact. Parnerkar will probably know about it. Such eggs are available in the market. Mostly Europeans look after the production of such eggs. There is a farm for this purpose near Miraj. You will find some correspondence on this subject in my file. You need not, however, search for it. Many Parsis in Ahmedabad will be able to give you information about where such eggs are available. Personally I believe that eggs of this kind are less

¹ As in the printed source

objectionable than milk. In eating them, we do not deprive any creature of its food, as we do by taking milk.

If Amidas agrees, obtain such eggs immediately. They are to be used in this manner. Break an unfertilised egg, mix its contents with eight ounces of water and keep the mixture in a bottle. Give him an ounce of this mixture every hour. He will soon gain strength. The mixture will completely serve the purpose of milk. I can say that Manu's life was saved by this mixture. Such eggs are a hundred times better than cod-liver oil. Tell Amidas that if there is any sin in acting upon this advice, I take it upon myself. I have not publicly advocated the use of such eggs because, when self-indulgence is on the increase and all kinds of medicines are being consumed without hesitation, I did not think it proper to add one more to the list. Amidas's case is quite different. I hope Parnerkar has recovered.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Please reply to this soon.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I; also *Bapuna Patro*—9: *Narandas Gandhine*, Pt. I, pp. 144-5.

201. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

[Before *October 17, 1930*]¹

CHI. SUSHILA,

This time your letter gave detailed information. If Sita is given enough fruit to eat, she need have no vegetables at all. For the present, I think fresh milk, fruit and curds, which should not be sour, will be all right for her. If her teeth are strong enough, she may be allowed to chew a few hard biscuits or pieces of *khakhara* during the day. She should learn to chew properly what she eats. Madhavjibhai's two children are being brought up on this diet, and they have radiant health. Have you consulted a doctor for your ears? I think Manilal informed me that you intended to consult somebody. If you once get them examined by a doctor whom you know and understand the

¹ From the reference to the forgotten friend, it appears this was written before the letter to the addressee dated October 17, 1930.

nature of the trouble, you will stop worrying. Go on writing to me regularly. I have forgotten the name of that friend of mine—the lady who had become very friendly with me at the time of your wedding.

Give my blessings to all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4781

202. LETTER TO PATRICK QUINN

October 17, 1930

DEAR MR. QUINN,

The accompanying is a letter about a friend who is on his death-bed at the Ashram. If necessary will you please refer to Major Martin and post the letter immediately. It may then reach even tomorrow morning and who knows may be instrumental in saving a life!

Have you sent the *Social Reformer* to Sardar Vallabhbhai? Here is a letter for him to see regarding a common sick friend. And have you referred his daughter's letter to him?

If you ordered the dates yesterday, they have not yet been delivered to me.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

N.B.

The Ashram people have been complaining for the past two weeks that they get the post two or three days late.

Mahatma Gandhi: Source Material for a History of the Freedom Movement in India, Vol. III, Pt. III, p. 288

203. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. But how did you fall ill? Was there any mistake about your diet? As far as your asthma is concerned you must treat it so ruthlessly that it does not visit you again. You will succeed if you are firm. Do you take sun-bath? Do you massage your chest? Do you keep your bowels clean? After the morning prayers you must do deep-breathing on an empty stomach. This would clear the lungs. We must take deep breaths so that the oxygen may clear our lungs. You must understand this point from Chimanlal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9892. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

204. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I have your two letters. It is not likely now that you will get this. Don't take your worries with you to the jail. We have learnt from the *Gita* that God takes upon Himself our cares. Remember, moreover, that when our thoughts are waiting for an opportunity to show themselves in action, they become more powerful than action. Those, therefore, who are ever ready for work, their thoughts, too, bear fruit. You should not mind if you get rest and the others outside are tested.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5495

205. LETTER TO GOKIBEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was very glad to have your letter. Death is a highway which all of us must tread, whether we wish or no. And though countless travellers tread it, it ever seems deserted. Hence this is also the path of supreme peace. He who is afraid to take it, feels agitated; he who remains fearless enjoys the bliss of peace.

Jai Shrikrishna from
MOHANDAS

SMT. GOKIBEHN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9811

206. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have never believed anything against Dahibehn. I have seen no sign of impurity in her conduct or in her eyes. I think she has done well in refusing to leave the place. I had a letter from Raojibhai.

The time seems to have come now for the women to shoulder a heavy responsibility. God will help them to do so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9291

207. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

I have your letter. I shall expect letters from you from time to time. For the present, you should write regularly. Do not get disheartened. I saw Pyarelal again. I shall see him once more. He has no complaint now. I read in the papers about the Government having taken possession of the Sevashram hospitals too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1807

208. LETTER TO RATILAL SHETH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

BHAI RATILAL,

I have your letter. You may send me the *valkal*¹. In the past also someone had sent a garment like that from Africa. I think it was given away to some person at his request.

I hope all your difficulties in your business are over. *Vandemataram* to Narbheram and other friends.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7165

¹ Garment made from tree bark

209. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. PUNJABHAI,

I have your letter. I am sure you will not be left free for many days. When you are back in jail, try not to fall ill. If you have discovered the cause of your illness, remove it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4017

210. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I got your letter. I must apologize to Bharati. She can certainly ask what sort of a friend I must be if, after having been such a friend, I forget even her name! But won't she show regard for the infirmities of old age and forgive me? If she doesn't mind, ask her to write to me. Personally I believe that the only remedy for your ear complaint is better general health. Since you also believe so, you should take Kuhne-baths and sun-baths as I have advised you to do. You should also do sufficient exercise. You should go out for a walk in the early morning. What is the condition of Tara's head? I was pleased to see Nanabhai's handwriting. Tara should send my blessings to them both.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Did Manilal lose 40 lb.? It could not be. Inquire again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4773

211. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

I got your letter. Why pine over what you do not get? Formerly, prisoners were not allowed to receive any visitors. Now they have relaxed the rule somewhat. For the present, therefore, I receive visitors. Is it not our principle that once we are in prison, we must not mind if we are not permitted to receive visitors? Rather, that is a matter of honour for a prisoner. If we think this way, we would not feel hurt. Does Sumitra still suffer from constipation? She must get over it. I have already asked you concerning Nimu. Now that you have fallen in love with reading, do not leave it off. Read a little of whatever you like, even if you get only ten minutes for it. When you go again, try to improve your arithmetic.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

212. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

I am not satisfied with your letter so far. Tell me your daily routine. When you start writing regularly, you may merit a different adjective. Your handwriting is good this time. I was glad to see Maitri's handwriting at the end of your letter. I shall await her full letter.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 32

¹ The original was in Gujarati.

213. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 17, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I have your letter after a long time. We should form the habit of being indifferent to what pleases or does not. Wherever we may have to stay by way of duty should be agreeable to us. What is like or dislike to one desirous of serving! Do not fear people's talk. Stick to your decision. That woman alone who does not waver from her resolve even at the gallows truly observes dharma.

Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5256

214. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. In your previous letter I saw no impropriety. You had only poured out in it the thoughts which agitated your mind and you had a right to do so.

Humility cannot be learnt through formal training, but it grows of itself as one cultivates the spirit of non-violence. Outward humility of behaviour, which we find in royal families, can be learnt in a formal manner. It is, however, not true humility, but is only a part of cultured manners. In the humility which I advise, one has to forget the sense of 'I' and become a mere cipher. Can that be learnt through any lessons? But one who has realized the body's transitoriness and has in some measure become aware of the self soon becomes humble. What fine humility would it be on your part if, even though I should speak in anger to you, you merely listened with lowered eyes like those of a poor cow and did not even feel angry with me? Such humility comes

only when you have learnt true self-respect. If you have not understood my meaning, ask me again and again. I shall not get tired of explaining it. Have you completely recovered now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8687. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

215. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 18, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. Describe to me your experience in Bombay. You are not well advised in refusing to get your throat examined by a doctor. A disease must be nipped in the bud. A stitch in time saves nine. This saying is completely true.

I interpret image-worship in two senses. In one form of image-worship, the person who contemplates the image becomes absorbed in the contemplation of the qualities for which it stands. This is image-worship in its wholesome form. In the other form of it, the person who contemplates the image does not think about the qualities but looks upon the image itself as the primary thing. This is idolatry and is an evil.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10239; also C.W. 6687. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

216. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your wire, but very late. Did you get my letter afterwards? Both of you must have recovered your peace of mind now. I see from your wire that now your health at any rate is all right. The weakness must disappear. Do you go out for a walk daily? What does Jayaprakash intend to do?

My health is good. I have again started eating dates and raisins.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3373

217. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. From others' letters I see that you had fever. How is that? I hope no one there will fall ill. The time for real work seems to be approaching now. Even when working the hardest, we should never feel worried within. It is God who does everything and we are only instruments in His hands. If this truth sinks into our heart, we shall never feel worried.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6801

218. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAUDA MANDIR,
October 18, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

God is testing you in every way and so far you have emerged successful. Why should we grieve when Tarini died discharging his duty? Because Tarini was performing much service we may grieve out of selfishness, but from an unselfish point of view Tarini's death was preferable. Such a frail body caused his soul much pain. We may believe for certain that a dutiful soul like his is bound to be reincarnated and serve even more.

I have received Satis Babu's translation¹. I am tempted to brush up my Bengali in order to understand it well but the thought of charkha deters me. See the annotation on the tenth² shloka for "Better is knowledge than practice."³ The meaning will then be clear. But if you have doubts still, write to me. How are Charu and Arun? Give my love to all brothers and sisters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1672

¹ Presumably of *Anasaktiyoga*; vide "Letter to Hemprabha Das Gupta", 14-12-1930.

² Of *Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter XII, which reads: "If thou art also unequal to this method of constant practice, concentrate on service for Me; even thus serving Me thou shalt attain perfection."

³ *Bhagavad Gita*, XII. 12

219. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 19, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter from Bombay.

I was glad to learn that you were feeling better. You must not let the mind get into the state described by you. If you work with detachment, you will refuse to be rushed and you will refuse to let anything get on your nerves. Having put one's whole heart into a thing entrusted or undertaken, one can leave the result to God. *Then* there can be no rush and no worry. You know the story of King Janak. He was Duty personified. His capital was in flames. He knew it. But some busybody reported it to him. His answer was, "What care I whether my capital is reduced to ashes or remains intact!" He had done all he could to save it. His going to the scene of operations and fussing would have distracted the attention of the fire-brigade and others and made matters worse. He was but an agent of providence. As such he had done his part and was therefore 'quits' and at ease. So may, must, we be, if we have done our best, whether our work flourishes or perishes.

The Gandiv still gives me joy and satisfaction. Nothing has yet broken down. Whereas I took five hours before, I now finish well within 3 hours. The afternoon is now free for other work except for the *takli*. So on your travels you may take the Gandiv if it gives you as much satisfaction as it gives to me. The cost of the pattern that I have is one rupee including the spindle and a box scooped in the platform and an incredibly simple device for keeping the spindle on one side of the platform. For price and simplicity this wheel has no match. I have discarded the bamboo holders and the wretched glass cylinders. I think I told you this. And it works without any foreign sound at all.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5416. Courtesy: Mirabehn

220. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I hope you have not been overcome with fear. Chhaganlal will have some peace now and the people will be tested. For the women, too, the time of testing is approaching. My faith is becoming stronger. We should become all the more resolute and vigilant, and be ever filled with joy in our hearts.

You should write to me more regularly now. God will assuredly bless us.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Whenever there is further news about Dhuru and Vimbu, let me have it. Where is Kevalram? And Nirmala? Ask them to write to me.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5326

221. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. RAIHANA,

You seem to be a very clever girl. After writing two or three letters in Gujarati, the poor girl now writes to me in Urdu! But how is it love which asks for a return? All the same, I will do my duty and make the return. I found no difficulty in reading the letter since you have written it in such a clear and legible hand and the words you have chosen are so simple. Now onwards you may write half your letter in Urdu. It will help me since it will brush up my Urdu, and I may even write to you in Urdu provided all of you do not laugh at me among yourselves. If I do that, will you not then consider it a full return?

And you are as jealous as you are cunning, and jealous of no other than Father. But no matter; now that he is becoming youngerday after day, he will ask you to give him an account of your work. I could not decipher one or two words in your letter. I have kept the letter with me, and I will read it again and decipher those words; at any rate I will try to do so. The letter paper is full now, and there is no space to apply a third adjective to you. About that some other time.

Khuda Hafiz.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9622

222. LETTER TO KASUMBA GANDHI

YERAVIDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

CHI. KASUMBA,

I see that there is still no harmony between Jaisukhlal and you. Having come to know you better, I don't feel inclined to lay the blame on you. It is only that you two have different natures and, therefore, cannot live in harmony with each other. In these circumstances, it is best that you should now live apart from each other. God has blessed you with a large family. You ought not to feel unhappy that you have no son. We make no difference between a son and a daughter. A daughter is the same to us as a son. Moreover, all the girls are wise. You should, therefore, live perfectly contented. Jaisukhlal will meet your expenses. Be devoted to each other, though living apart. Don't feel unhappy in any way. Neither of you is following an improper path. When you can forget yourself and feel one with Jaisukhlal, you may certainly go back and live with him. If you encourage the girls to go and live in the Ashram, they will be happier in life.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Write to me a full letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U /III

223. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

Y. M.,
October 19, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. I had also received the previous one. I have already written separately to Kalavati.¹ I am now writing to Benarsidas.² You did well to inform me. Behn Shanta³ must have fully recovered now. She requires hip-baths and frictionbaths. Consults Kuhne's⁴ book for a description of both. It is the experience of women that friction-bath brings quick and significant benefit. You seem to have had a fair measure of success in stopping funeral feasts. If pure-minded people make a sustained effort they are bound to succeed sooner or later. The difficulties experienced in sending Kalavati home should have been anticipated. That is what the world has come to. When the times are changing people of older generation are bound to feel some of the things of the new age irksome. If the new age bears with their displeasure while firmly going its way, it will prevail without much noise.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 5290\

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Kalavati Trivedi", 17-10-1930.

² Benarsidas Chaturvedi, who had lost his wife

³ Addressee's younger sister, residing in the Ashram at this time

⁴ Dr. Louis Kuhne

224. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 19, 1930

BHAI BANARASIDAS,

Bhai Kashinath has given me the news of your wife's death. A great calamity has befallen you. We have given up the fear of death, but we grieve out of selfishness. I understand you have children of tender age. But why grieve over that too? Such things do happen in the world. All such events are moments of trial to us. Only such an occasion can prove if all our assiduously acquired knowledge is truly assimilated. May God grant you peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2525

225. LETTER TO AJITENDU DE

October 20, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have carefully gone through your letter. It is difficult to advise you without coming in personal contact with you. But generally I can say that if you hear the clean voice of conscience you should follow it at any cost. If you have the slightest doubt, you should obey your parents' wishes.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. AJITENDU DE
8 HARI PAL'S LANE
BEADEN STR. P. O.
CALCUTTA

From a photostat: G. N. 10515

226. *LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK*

October 20, 1930

MY DEAR HENRY,

I had your and Millie's loving message. You are never absent from my mind. How is Leon?

My love to you all,

BHAI

PROPERTY OF H.S.L. POLAK
265 STRAND
LONDON, W.C.R.

From the original : Gandhi-Polak Correspondence. Courtesy : National Archives of India

227. *LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 20, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I felt happy on reading your letter. I keep good health. How is your health? I have no doubt at all that you two will always use your gifts in the service of noble causes. Do you intend to stay in Poona for the present?

To you both,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6596

228. LETTER TO TEHMINA P. JOSHI¹

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 20, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was very glad to read your letter. I very well remember all that we talked about. I am pleased to see your name in the papers occasionally.² I would have been surprised [only] if you did not work as much as you do. I had observed your capacity in our very first meeting.

Please write to me regularly.

How is Bhai Godrej's health? How is his farm work getting along? Please convey my *Vandemataram* to him.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 114

229. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON, POONA,
[On or before *October 21, 1930*]³

PANDITJI NEHRU
MUSSOORIE

PRESS	REPORTS	HEALTH	DISTURBING.	PLEASE	WIRE
FULLY.	SUGGEST	ISSUING	DAILY	BULLETIN.	LOVE.

GANDHI

Bombay Secret Abstracts, (34) 750, Pt. I, p. 269

¹ Younger sister of Ardeshir Godrej who had donated Rs. 100,000 for the cause of temperance and untouchability, and had in consequence lost his Government contracts.

² As a speaker at meetings on temperance and untouchability

³ This was forwarded by Major R. V. Martin to G. F. S. Collins, Secretary to the Government of Bombay, with the following note on October 21, 1930:

"Gandhi wishes to send the attached telegram to Motilal Nehru. Will you please let me know if there is any objection to its dispatch?"

230. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 16/21, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. The occasional delay in your getting my letters can't be helped. "Make the best of today, for who knows what tomorrow will bring?" This is true of our present circumstances too. If the men in charge of the factory at Bardoli have not been arrested, what about the goods in factory? I read in newspapers that they, too, were confiscated.

It was a matter of surprise that the Ashram had remained free from malaria. At last it could remain so no longer. I think it can be kept free from it. In the malarial season, one should take care and see that one's stomach is light. Starchy and other indigestible foods, like pulses, should be avoided. If those who have escaped malaria so far take care, they will be able to preserve their health. The water in the well should be disinfected with potassium permanganate or chlorine. I think these can also be added in the water fetched from the river. If a few drops of the solution are poured into the river water where it is stored, it will acquire a light rose colour. After a while, the colour will settle at the bottom. You should consult a doctor for more information about this. I will write a separate letter about Amidas,¹ which is likely to be posted only tomorrow. Inform me on what day you get it.

Inform Jamnalalji that I do not request the authorities to bring anyone here. I did not do that even for Kakasaheb. Jamnalalji or anybody else who wishes to come may do so by trying on their own or through Government's kindness. I have been able to arrange that Pyarelal should see me from time to time. There is an element of selfishness in requesting to be provided with a companion and, therefore, I do not make such a request. What I should like is to be kept with all the others. But how can I expect such good fortune? Somebody who came to visit Kaka told him that Mathuradas, too, had made a similar request. I have already written to you about Giriraj. I don't feel that your decision is wrong.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-10-1930.

Write to Rajaji and tell him that generally I do not write to eminent leaders and, therefore, I will not write to him either. But I remember him every day.

Ask him to give me news about Lakshmi and Subbiah's wife. What state of health has he brought with him?

October 19, 1930

I see Prabhavati's name in your list of letters, but I don't find her letter. I don't think they have kept it back here. Either it must have been left out there or her name came to be included this time just because she writes every week. Anyway I had a wire from her giving me news about her health. She seems to be all right.

In Wardha they have been spinning on the *takli* very regularly. You must have read a description of their work in Balkrishna's letter. Bhau's speed is 132 rounds for half an hour. This is wonderful. You should find out how such speed can be acquired and publish a detailed description. My satisfaction in regard to the Gandiv spinning-wheel remains what it was; if anything, it has increased. Read my letters to Mirabehn and Ishwarlal Vimawala on the subject. The latter has written to me saying that he will send one more wheel to me too. Pay him for it and for the wheels which may be received in the Ashram. Send me your conclusions after you have tested the model. Also send me the figures of the count, strength and evenness of Kakasaheb's yarn received there.

Read what I have written in my letter to Maganbhai about the spindle-bearer in use in Bardoli. My own experience is that it is superior to the type fitted to the spinning-wheel in use in the Ashram and in all other models. If this is true, we should fit our spinning-wheels with the same type of spindle-bearer as they use in Bardoli. If my judgment is wrong, I should be corrected. If anyone prefers the type being used in the Ashram and if he has had experience of that being used in Bardoli, he may write to me about this matter. It is my belief that even from the point of view of speed the Bardoli spindle-bearer would ultimately be found superior to the others. If I get the necessary facility, I will try to fit even the Gandiv spinning-wheel with that type.

I wrote to you last Friday about Amidas. You must have received the letter. I may even get your reply before this letter is posted. Send me a wire if you have not received that letter. I will then discuss the matter again.

October 20, 1930

Read my letter about Kanta. It seems she wants to go out for a few days at least. Think about the matter. From here, what

I feel is that she may go for a few days wherever she likes. She is both truthful and brave. She will be able to look after herself. She will also keep any promise she makes. This is my own experience, however. You should do what you think best. Find out what she wishes.

Tuesday morning, Diwali,

October 21, 1930

My blessings to all the friends there. My *Vandemataram* and due regards to everyone. May we be filled with greater spirit of service during the next year, and become fitter instruments and more awake to our duty in that regard.

We make frequent use of the word '*yajna*'. We have raised spinning to the rank of a daily *mahayajna*. It is therefore necessary to think out the various implications of the term '*yajna*'. '*Yajna*' means an act directed to the welfare of others, done without desiring any return for it, whether of a temporal or spiritual nature. 'Act' here must be taken in its widest sense, and includes thought and word, as well as deed. 'Others' embraces not only humanity, but all life. Therefore, and also from the standpoint of ahimsa, it is not a *yajna* to sacrifice lower animals even with a view to serving humanity. It does not matter that animal sacrifice is supposed to find a place in the Vedas. It is enough for us that such sacrifice cannot stand the fundamental tests of Truth and Non-violence. I readily admit my incompetence in Vedic scholarship. But the incompetence, so far as this subject is concerned, does not worry me because, even if the practice of animal sacrifice be proved to have been a feature of Vedic society, it can form no precedent for a votary of ahimsa.

From this definition of *yajna* it follows that a primary sacrifice must be an act which conduces the most to the welfare of the greatest number in the widest area, and which can be performed by the largest number of men and women with the least trouble. It will not, therefore, be a *yajna*, much less a *mahayajna*, to wish or to do ill to

anyone else even in order to serve a so-called higher interest. And the *Gita* teaches, and experience testifies, that all action that cannot come under the category of *yajna* promotes bondage.

The world cannot subsist for a single moment without *yajna* in this sense and, therefore, the *Gita*, after having dealt with true wisdom in the second chapter, takes up in the third the means of attaining it and declares in so many words that *yajna* came with Creation itself. This body, therefore, has been given us only in order that we may serve all Creation with it. And therefore, says the *Gita*, he who eats without offering *yajna* eats stolen food. Every single act of one who would lead a life of purity should be in the nature of *yajna*. *Yajna* having come to us with our birth, we are debtors all our lives and thus for ever bound to serve the universe. And even as a bondsman receives food, clothing and so on from the master whom he serves, so should we gratefully accept such gifts as may be assigned to us by the Lord of the universe. What we receive must be called a gift; for as debtors we are entitled to no consideration for the discharge of our obligations. Therefore we may not blame the Master if we fail to get it. Our body is His to be cherished or cast away according to His will. This is not a matter for complaint or even pity; on the contrary, it is a natural and even a pleasant and desirable state, if only we realize our proper place in God's scheme. We do indeed need strong faith, if we would experience this supreme bliss. "Do not worry in the least about yourself, leave all worry to God,"—this appears to be the commandment in all religions. This need not frighten anyone. He who devotes himself to service with a clear conscience will day by day grasp the necessity for it in greater measure and will continually grow richer in faith. The path of service can hardly be trodden by one who is not prepared to renounce self-interest and to recognize the conditions of his birth. Any service rendered by such a person will be tainted by selfishness. But, then, men of such utter selfishness are rare in this world. Consciously or unconsciously, every one of us does render some service or other. If we cultivate the habit of doing this service deliberately, our desire for service will steadily grow stronger and will make not only for our own happiness but also for that of the world at large.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 58 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

231. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

There is no question of jealousy when it comes to learning from somebody. Who says it is jealousy? Don't again let asthma come anywhere near you. Your handwriting is not bad at all. It will no doubt improve gradually. Where is Shakaribehn? Tell her or write to her that she should write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9893. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

232. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM D. SARAIYA

October 23, 1930

CHI. KAKU,

You wrote in a really beautiful handwriting. But your letter was a blank sheet of paper, so to say. You didn't even tell me what work you had in Bombay. Where do you live? Kakasaheb sends his blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do you pray? Do you understand the *Gita* correctly?

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2806. Courtesy: Purushottam D. Saraiya

233. LETTER TO PADMA

October 23, 1930

CHI. PADMA¹,

So you blame me! You yourself never write, but expect letters from me. What is the nature of the tumour in the throat? You should get that ascertained immediately. Did you show it to Gangabehn? Do you spin daily on Prabhubhai's spinning-wheel? I should be happy if you do. How fine it would be if you spin that number of rounds every day! How is Sharda's health? What do you read? What food do you take? Do you go to bed daily exactly at nine? What work did you do in the U.P.? Whom did you meet while there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6113

234. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 23, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter. It is the opinion of an experienced doctor that to guard against rheumatism in old age one must regularly take soda bicarb. You probably know that I must be taking nearly 20 grains of soda every day in one form or another. Plaster may help a little. The cause of the disease is inside the system. This pain is a warning to you not to mind expense on fruit. You should live mainly on milk and fruit. If you let the rays of the sun fall on the knees, that will help you. Eight in the morning is excellent time for doing that.

Kaku does not tell me in his letter what work he has taken up.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8762. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya; also *Bapuna Patro-6: G. S. Gangabehnne*, p. 44

¹ Daughter of Sitala Sahai

235. LETTER TO MANGALA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

CHI. MANGALA,

I have your letter. Does your mind wander while you are reading the *Gita*? Do you follow the meaning of the verses? Tell Pushpa that if she insists on not learning anything, I shall have to pull her long nose and make it longer.

Your hand must be all right now. Does Kamala write to you occasionally? Ask her to write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11091. Courtesy: Pushpa Naik

236. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

October 23, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have had no letter from you. I have asked you to write to me at least once a week so long as you are free. Reply to my questions.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

237. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 23, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Your letter. Why should Satis Babu mourn the loss of Tarini? We all have to reach the same destination to which Tarini has gone. We must not grieve even out of selfishness. Tarini did not run the Pratishthan nor do you. God does it, we are merely the instruments. If we accept this, what does it matter if God transfers us from one assignment to another?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1673

238. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,
October 24, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Your letter. The best way you can return Mother's love is to deny yourself the joy of her company and personal service to her. Till Father wants you under his roof, you are better away from home. I am sure mother will feel happy in the thought that you are doing well in body and mind. At the same time you should shed all irritation against Father. Do not count against him every remark he may make about you. You must cultivate a big heart. And then you will find that Father will be reconciled to you the sooner for your broad-mindedness.

My love to you and Vidya.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

239. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

It was a very happy coincidence that you went to Mussoorie and were able to meet everyone. I have found Nandlal's booklet about spinning quite satisfactory. There are of course mistakes in it. I have pointed out some of them. I am still corresponding with him. He may be able to write if he makes more effort. I do not think Prabhudas can write. Krishna would be able to write better than him. Prabhudas has not worked much with his hands. Kaka (Kalelkar) would be arriving there within a month.¹ It is being arranged that he should make a major contribution to it. The book must be made perfect.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32733

240. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

This time your letter was good. There is no reason why your weight should not increase now. If you take exercise, keep your mind cheerful and masticate your food properly, it is bound to increase. Never despair. When you go out for a walk, run for some time. While you do so, keep your mouth shut and breathe through nostrils.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9213

¹ D. B. Kalelkar was released on November 29, 1930.

241. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

October 24, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You ought to understand that one whose [own] mind is not integrated cannot weigh the merit or demerit of others. I for one know Giriraj well. He has lofty ideas but his strength to live up to them is very inadequate. Yet I have hopes for him because he is always striving. The aim of the Ashram is to insist on truth and on conduct conforming to truth. Everything is organized with Truth as the focal point. There are not many ideals in the world and there ought not to be. The apparent manifold is only a golden lid hiding the Truth.¹ When it is removed we will see the One alone.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 328. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

242. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

October 24, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

In fact I had intended to write to you last week, but I just forgot to do so. I have gone through the whole of the manuscript of your proposed book. I liked it very much indeed. I felt in it your overflowing love for the carding-bow. I was spell-bound by the work and could not read it critically. Now I shall get only a printed copy. I will then read it critically and make suggestions, if I have any. You advise rubbing [the string] with leaves even after it has been rubbed with candle-wax. Vithal says in his letter that if it has been rubbed with candle-wax, nothing more is necessary. Please clarify who is right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3747

¹ *Ishopanishad*, v. 15

243. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. Write to Rukhi and ask her to write to me. What will Benarsi do in Kashi? As the climate there is said to be very good, Rukhi is bound to keep good health there. I have a letter from Navin, in which he declares his innocence. See him and speak to him gently; tell him firmly what you know and of the truth of which you are convinced. If Navin proves himself innocent and you find that you or Keshu had mistakenly thought him guilty, we should feel happy. Investigate the matter in a perfectly detached spirit. The matter is not light and should not be dropped. Nor should you let your mind be exclusively occupied with it. Your handwriting seems to me like a beautiful picture to look at. This time your margin is not quite straight, and draws attention to itself, in contrast to the beauty of your handwriting, as a black particle of dust floating in milk does.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8688. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

244. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 24, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

Why do you say: "What more can I write?" So many things happen within the span of one week! You must be capable of describing them. A multitude of thoughts arise in the mind of a girl of your age. The thoughts can be written down, but on one condition—one must have the zeal and the concentration of mind for it. If you maintain diary and note down everything, you can find from it the topics to write upon.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, p. 32

¹ The original was in Gujarati.

245. LETTER TO NARAYAN DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 25, 1930

SHRI NARAYANRAO,

Or should I address you as Bablo¹? You have drawn beautiful lines² and curves indeed. But, instead of scribbling such marks, learn to make every letter in a word as beautiful as a picture. I believe you must be full of fun now because Mahadev has returned. Don't send him back immediately.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9474

246. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter as also your detailed directions about the working of the Bihar wheel. I attended to all the matters as you have put except the point where the *mal* should cross. I do not know whether it crossed nearest the platform or away from it. However I shall make another effort to see whether it works at all or not. It ought at least to work. Meanwhile the Gandiv continues to give much satisfaction. It has not yet caused any trouble and did I tell you that it did not require the removal of the spindle after each day's work. After the work, it is hung up on the wall. It thus requires no attention every morning as all the other wheels do. And the more I work it, the greater becomes the conviction that it is capable of giving as much output as any single wheel. I have got the scales now. I seem to spin 24 counts and over and my highest speed is 200 rounds, very considerable improvement on the box wheel. Only once do I remember having attained that

¹ A baby boy

² The word is illegible here.

speed on it. However I know that my opinion is worth nothing unless more efficient spinners confirm it from their own.

I am glad you are not going to tour just now. You should build up your body anew. We are both keeping good health. I weighed last Thursday 105 and Kaka 117. I have considerably reduced the vegetables and gone back to dates. There will be still variations.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5417. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9651

247. LETTER TO MAHENDRA V. DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

SHRI MANSINH¹,

Decide whether I should address you as ‘Desai’ or ‘Chi. Manu’ and let me know in a letter written in beautiful handwriting. Do your President and Secretary still play childish pranks, or, now that they are office-bearers, have they become serious-minded?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7408. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

248. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter written from Nasik. Do you remember that I wrote to you about Dhurandhar’s translation? It is all right if he has translated the book, but, now that Limaye has also translated it, we shall have to consider whether we should publish Dhurandhar’s

¹ Son of Valji G. Desai; Gandhiji lovingly called Mahendra “Mansinh”

translation. The fact that with rest you feel better shows that you always carry the burden of work on your head. The virtue of non-attachment consists in doing the work but not feeling its burden.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10240; also C.W. 6688. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

249. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 26, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

After many weeks I have a letter from you. It seems Nanibehn is not with you. How did you fall ill? Whenever you have no appetite, you should fast. It does not matter if you feel weaker. That weakness will not be real. If you cannot fast completely, you may eat fresh fruits like grapes, oranges, etc., but nothing else, and take an enema every day to clear the bowels. You should take care and preserve your health. It would be advisable to drink only boiled water. Write to me regularly. There is still much work to be done by women. Who is the other woman worker with you? My blessings to Bhai Panachand.

Blessings from

BAPU

PS.

Both of us are in good health.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3106

250. LETTER TO KUNVERJI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

BHAI KUNVERJI,

I have your letter. If you have not yet become a beloved guest of the Government, you will get this letter. Lakshmidas having gone, let me know what new arrangement is made. When you meet the inmates of the temple¹, give my blessings to them. After all these years of work, people should be able to devise means on their own.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2687

251. LETTER TO LAKSHMIBEHN KHARE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 26, 1930

CHI. LAKSHMIBEHN,

Though the letter is from Panditji I am writing to you. I always wish to write to anyone who is unwell. Why should you fall ill while serving? But illness always comes like a thief, however watchful one may be. I hope you have driven out the intruder. Do not neglect your health. Does Mathuri still feel weak? Some children become sturdier after an attack of smallpox. This happened in Manilal's case. Write to me in detail.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 277. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

¹ Prison

252. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

October 26, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

Tell brother that he should now leave only after improving his health. It is possible to serve even while remaining in the Ashram. Blessings to him from us both. Doing a thing intelligently is bound to give joy. Such work becomes artistic. And true art always gives joy. One may even say that art means joy.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

253. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

October 26, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Kashinath sends some extracts from your letters. I see from them that you are extremely disturbed. There is nothing like perturbation for those who are devoted to duty in a detached manner. One who has consecrated all to God has no occasion for agitation. There is no possibility of any harm resulting from Jiji's¹ exertions due to grinding.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5255

¹ Presumably the addressee's mother-in-law

254. *LETTER TO SHANTA*¹

October 26, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

Kashinath writes that you are expecting a letter from me. I had no idea that any letter was still unanswered. I am glad to learn that you are keeping well and devoting your time to various tasks. All are conscious of the gains directly derived from the Ashram, but the devotees of Truth know that their unseen gain is immensely greater than what is obvious. I wish you could realize this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5257

255. *TELEGRAM TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI*

POONA,

[*October 27, 1930*]²

PROFESSOR TRIVEDI

VIDYAPITH

AHMEDABAD

BOTH GRIEVED LEARN MANU'S ILLNESS. WIRE CONDITION.
WE PRAY FOR RECOVERY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 1000

¹ Younger sister of Kashinath Trivedi, residing in the Ashram at this time

² From the postmark

256. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

I am glad you are giving yourself rest. Hope Savitri¹ and children are well. Please thank Prof. Radhakrishnan² for the book and the paper.

Love to you all.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3186

257. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 27, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

You have become very nervous. But you have no reason for it. If now the burden of running the home has fallen on you, you are strong enough for that. If the responsibility is yours, you ought to have the corresponding rights too. You can manage your home as it seems best to you. Jayaprakash will certainly help you in that. You may talk about everything with your father-in-law with the freedom of a daughter. At first he will feel embarrassed but by and by you will see that he, too, will talk freely with you and remove the difficulties from your path. Moreover, you have servants to help you. You should take due care of your health while looking after the affairs of the home. Do not work beyond your strength. Save some time for reading, for going out for a walk and resting, and make yours a model home. It will be a problem for you only if you do not have full authority to do what you wish to do. But I simply cannot believe at the moment that you will not get such authority. Have confidence in yourself. Learn to be firm. God will save you and lead you. In any

¹ Addressee's wife

² Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

case, do not be cast down by grief. You may write to me more often if you wish to. You can write to me even directly, without thinking whether or not I shall get your letters. May God protect you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3376

258. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI ANUPCHAND MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 27, 1930

BHAISHRI BHAGWANJI,

I got your letter. I felt unhappy on reading the news about Bhai Revashanker. His simplicity was indeed as you describe it to be. I have no doubt that his soul rests in peace.

I send with this a letter to Devchandbhai in regard to Sudarshan, but what more can I do from here in this matter?

I am very much pained to know what you say about Bhai Narbheram. It would give me a great shock to believe that he could be dishonest. My advice regarding him is that you should suggest to him to let an arbitrator examine the claim against him and give his decision. If he does not agree, you should put up with the loss. I would not advise you to take the matter to a court of law. The prestige which the Bank of England enjoys in London, or rather in the whole world, is enjoyed by Kars [anji] Moolchand in our small world of Rajkot. In their respective spheres, they enjoy equal prestige. I should very much like that prestige to be re-established. You should certainly not fight [in a court]. Money is not the only important thing in life.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5813

259. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

BHAI TRIVEDI,

You two, husband and wife, your relations and your friends have again cause for worry about Manu. I shall know tomorrow whether you got the wire which I have sent today on behalf of us both. I know that you have a strong mind and I need not, therefore, try to give you courage. Such illnesses also test us. We should not think that we shall always be happy because we believe in God. However, both Kakasaheb and I feel sure that Manu is safe. It is God's will that he should serve Him in this very body. As long as the illness remains serious, send me news daily. I believe it will be possible to arrange so that I get your message every day.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 999

260. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

CHI. MANU,

So you are ill again! But you enjoy God's grace. Since you possess great strength of mind, both of us believe that by the time you get this letter you will be out of danger. You have surely learnt to remain calm and patient in all circumstances. Take complete rest and fully recover your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7766

261. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

October 27, [1930]¹

I got your letter. I felt very happy to read it. Dilip must be looking big now. I have never seen him after I met him in Deolali. If you go and mix with friends from time to time, your mind will remain peaceful. Pyarelal is in this prison, but he is not kept with me. I do see him occasionally, however. If you have cultivated no love for reading, I would advise you to do so. There are many books published by the Navajivan Karyalaya which are worth reading and which you can easily understand.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 102

262. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 27, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I liked your letter because I found it to be sincere. Read over and over again what I have written about *yajna*.² It is possible you will find in it the key to understanding the spirit of service. This time too I am going to elaborate on the same theme. Think seriously about it. Be patient. God will protect you. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

¹ According to the source the addressee started writing to Gandhiji in 1930 when her husband fell ill in the prison.

² *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 21-10-1930

263. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
October 27, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have received your letter; also Anasuyabehn's. We do not know when our real New Year starts. Or shall we say that it has started on the 12th March? For the time being, I am spinning on a *takli*. But I do not like such a slow speed. In Wardha they spin 132 rounds in half an hour. 80 rounds are quite common. if you have people who are experts in spinning on the *takli*, let them write to me about that art of spinning. I have of course asked for the instructions from Wardha. Instructions from two or three places would be more than sufficient. I have acquired good speed in spinning on the charkha. I think I can still improve.

This is the second urgent letter to you. Harjivandas writes from Amreli that he is not getting certificate for [his] khadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32729

264. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 23/28, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

Your packet was given to me on Wednesday (yesterday) in two parts. It was divided into two parts by the authorities here. Let me know when and in what condition you received the packet which was dispatched from here on the 21st. It is enough for me that you do not feel it as a burden to have to handle my correspondence. So long as they let me, I shall continue to write as I have been doing. Give me whatever news you get about Amidas. If you have any comments to make about my views concerning eggs, please do. I know definitely that Pyarelal has not been transferred to Nasik. We shall meet again in a day or two. Ascertain the position about Chitalia and pay him any sum you think proper. We should not refuse to help him to face his difficulties. Did you ask Chhaganlal Joshi? He may, perhaps, have

kept a note somewhere. Does he not live next to you? Also let me know how he is. I am glad that Mirabehn has for the present dropped her idea of going out of the Ashram. I have had no letter from Devdas, whether long or short. Did he send it directly from jail, or in some other manner? I will inquire about it here after I hear from you. Ask Jivarambhai to write to me.

There was a note by Chandrakanta to the effect that a letter by Kumarappa was included, but there was no such letter. Instead, there was a letter from the Rev. Holmes. It is addressed C/o Kumarappa. Kakasaheb thinks that that made Kanta say that there was a letter from Kumarappa. Manilal has asked me for suggestions for reading. I must have gone to sleep with this thought in my mind, and so I had the following dream. My advice for reading is as in the dream which I am narrating. I dreamt that Manilal was standing by my side and that Devdas, a child, had climbed on to my lap and had fallen asleep. Manilal told me that he had wasted many years of his life without reading anything and that the desire for reading had now awakened in him. He, therefore, asked me to guide him. I expressed my regret that I had not been able to do much for my children's education. I then wrote down as follows for Manilal: "Study the whole of Gokhale's book on arithmetic. Study his books on algebra and geometry too, if you get time. You should learn the history and geography of India in some detail, and of the world in outline. You should read Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God Is within You*, for Sanskrit Bhandarkar's books and the *Gita*, in Gujarati *Navajivanmala* and K's¹ *Jivanshodhan*, and finally Tulsidas's *Ramayana* and a text on arithmetic, both in Gujarati. You should get the books through Maganbhai." At this point I woke up from the dream. There was something more still, but I do not recollect it. That is, I had forgotten it even when I woke up at 3.30 a.m. I like the advice I gave in my dream. Manilal may read what he can, and what he finds interesting, from the above. Or, rather, it is Mahadev who has awakened Manilal's interest in reading. He should, therefore, be guided by Mahadev. I should not hold on to an opinion expressed in a dream; and, moreover, I cannot at present think out a reading list for Manilal. I would give the same advice to Ramdas. I attach no importance at all to the dream. Manilal's problem was in my mind. I had also been thinking about Devdas's letter. It is not, therefore, surprising that, owing to some disturbance in the stomach, I

¹ K. G. Mashruwala's

got such a happy dream. Write to Brijkrishna and tell him that the understanding is that, as far as possible, I should not write to prisoners and hence I do not write to him. I think about him every day, all the same. Tell him that he should take the utmost care of his health. He should make the best use of every minute and keep note of how he spends his time. Let him take this as a letter to him. And he should continue to write to me.

Tuesday morning, October 28, 1930

I wrote about *yajna* last week, but feel like writing more about it. It will perhaps be worthwhile further to consider a principle which has been created along with mankind. *Yajna* is duty to be performed, or service to be rendered, all the twenty-four hours of the day, and hence a maxim like “The powers of the good are always exercised for a benevolent purpose” is inappropriate, if benevolence has any taste of favour about it. To serve without desire is to favour not others, but ourselves even as in discharging a debt we serve only ourselves, lighten our burden and fulfil our duty. Again, not only the good, but all of us are bound to place our resources at the disposal of humanity. And if such is the law, as evidently it is, indulgence ceases to hold a place in life and gives way to renunciation. For human beings renunciation itself is enjoyment. This is what differentiates man from the beast. Some object that life thus understood becomes dull and devoid of art, and leaves no room for the householder. But I think in saying this they misinterpret the word ‘renunciation’. Renunciation here does not mean abandoning the world and retiring into the forest. The spirit of renunciation, should rule all the activities of life. A householder does not cease to be one if he regards life as a duty rather than as an indulgence. A cobbler, a cultivator, a tradesman or a barber may be inspired in their work or activities either by the spirit of renunciation or merely by the desire for self-indulgence. A merchant who carries on his business in a spirit of sacrifice will have crores passing through his hands, but he will, if he follows the law, use his abilities for service. He will, therefore, not cheat or speculate, will lead a simple life, will not injure a living soul and will lose millions rather than harm anybody. Let no one run away with the idea that this type of merchant exists only in my imagination. Fortunately for the world, he does exist in the West as well as in the East. It is true such merchants may be counted on one’s fingers but the type ceases to be

imaginary as soon as even one living specimen can be found to answer to it. All of us know of a philanthropic tailor in Wadhwan. I know of one such barber. Everyone of us knows of such a weaver.¹ And if we go deeply into the matter, we shall come across men in every walk of life who lead dedicated lives.

No doubt these sacrificers obtain their livelihood by their work. But livelihood is not their objective, but only a by-product of their vocation. Motilal was a tailor at first, and continued as a tailor afterwards. But his spirit was changed and his work was transmuted into worship. He began to think about the welfare of others and his life became artistic in the real sense of the term.

A life of sacrifice is the pinnacle of art and is full of true joy. Such life is the source of ever fresh springs of joy which never dry up and never satiate. *Yajna* is not *yajna* if one feels it to be burdensome or annoying. Self-indulgence leads to destruction and renunciation to immortality. Joy has no independent existence. It depends upon our attitude to life. One man will enjoy theatrical scenery, another the ever new scenes which unfold themselves in the sky. Joy, therefore, is a matter of education. We shall delight in things which we have been taught to delight in as children. And illustrations can be easily cited of different national tastes.

Again, many sacrificers imagine that they are free to receive from the people everything they need and many things they do not need, because they are rendering disinterested service. Directly this idea sways a man, he ceases to be a servant and becomes a tyrant over the people. One who would serve others will not waste a thought upon his own comforts, which he leaves to be attended to or neglected by his Master on high. He will not, therefore, encumber himself with everything that comes his way; he will take only what he strictly needs and leave the rest. He will be calm, free from anger and unruffled in mind even if he finds himself inconvenienced. His service, like virtue, is its own reward, and he will rest content with it.

Again, one dare not be negligent in service or be behindhand with it. He who thinks that he must be diligent only in his personal business and unpaid public business may be done in any way and at

¹ The allusion probably is to Kabir.

any time he chooses, has still to learn the very rudiments of the science of sacrifice. Voluntary service of others demands the best of which one is capable, and must take precedence over service of self. In fact, the pure devotee consecrates himself to the service of humanity without any reservation whatever.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The person in the Ashram who spins best on the *takli* should write to me and explain how he spins, how he imparts spinning motion to the *takli*, what is the length of the thread which he draws out at one time, etc. I feel unhappy that I cannot go beyond 44 rounds per hour. Prof. Trivedi has sent me a pair of scales, and, therefore, you need not send one from there.

There are 72 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

265. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 28, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

The stock of uncarded cotton with me is about to be exhausted. Till now, I used to get it from the Ashram. This time may I trouble you? My hope in making this request is that, if you do not keep a stock of such cotton, you will start doing so. The cotton should have been ginned by hand. It is difficult to card with hand the cotton from the bales prepared in a ginning press, and the yarn spun from such cotton is not of good quality. If you do not keep a stock of such cotton ginned by hand, you may obtain some from the Ashram or from Vithaldas Jerajani. It may also be available in the Khadi Karyalaya. I make this request so that you may take all this trouble.

Kakasaheb and I have been making the fullest use of your sewing-machine.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4814. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

266. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

October 28, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your spiritual restlessness is in a way to my liking. True peace will emerge out of it. Bhai Mahavir Prasad may continue to do the khadi work and you need not worry about it. But I am confident that you will gain some peace by putting not only money but your heart too in some noble work. I can understand that you have to devote a great deal of your time to your business, but being engrossed in it all the time will neither profit the business nor bring you peace of mind. Read carefully what I have written during this week about *yajna*. Be that as it may, I believe that your efforts are so determined and your heart so pure that you will surely gain peace and discover your true way.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Where is the lady I met in Mussoorie and how is she? My blessings to her.

From Hindi: C.W. 6188. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

267. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 30, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

You sent me the cotton by return of post! It is of very good quality indeed. I had forgotten to mention the quantity required. You guessed it correctly. When it is exhausted, I will certainly trouble you again. I hope you did suppose that my motive in persuading you to stock hand-ginned cotton could not be merely that you may have a stock of such cotton with you. I take it that spinning is being done in your. "cottage"¹. But in case you secure the slivers from elsewhere or have been using the cotton of pressed bales, I thought that you

¹ Punning on the word "Parnakuti"

alsomight, if required to send me hand-ginned cotton, start stocking and using such cotton for your own spinning. I did get, on the 12th of *Bhadrapada*, a tin jar and three glass bottles containing dried grapes and other fruit, but I was told that they were sent by Sundaram. It is only from your letter that I learn that you also had sent fruit, whether it was the same that I have mentioned above or different from that. Otherwise I would have certainly written to you to acknowledge receipt of the gift. If you give me more details about it, I will make inquiries here.

Blessings from

BAPU

LADY VITHALDAS THACKERSEY

“PARNAKUTI”

YERAVDA HILL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4815. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

268. LETTER TO UPTON SINCLAIR

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

October 30, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I read your *Mammonart*¹ with absorbing interest and *Mental Radio*² with curiosity. The former has given me much to think, the latter did not interest me. Nobody in India would, I think, doubt the possibility of telepathy but most would doubt the wisdom of its material use.

I will now avail myself of your kind offer and ask you to send me your other volumes or such as you think I should read.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

UPTON SINCLAIR, ESQ.

STATION A P., PASADENA

CALIFORNIA

From a photostat: G.N. 2552

¹ Books by the author, published in 1925 and 1930, respectively

² *ibid*

269. LETTER TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES¹

YERAVDA,
October 30, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your warm letter of 9th Sept. last. I may not say anything beyond thanking you for the letter.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

REV. J. H. HOLMES

From a photostat of the original : C. W. 113520. Courtesy : Robert D. Berman. New York

270. LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA

October 31, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I am glad you have expressed yourself freely on the question of 'vows'.

You seem to me to misunderstand my meaning. No fault of yours. You have not the original before you. I have not seen the translation. The word 'vow' is also an unsuitable equivalent for the original 'ozr'. But the best thing for me is to explain what I mean and then leave you to find the exact word if you endorse my position. If you contest it, you should continue the correspondence till we have thrashed the subject out.

You seem to think of vows publicly administered to audiences. This may or may not be good. The 'vow' I am thinking of is a promise made by one to oneself. We have to deal with two dwellers within: Rama and Ravana, God and Satan, Ormuzd² and Ahriman³. The one binds us to make us really free, the other only appears to free us so as to bind us tight within his grip. A 'vow' is a promise made to Rama to do or not to do a certain thing which, if good, we want to do,

¹ The letter was written while Gandhiji was in custody and not able to speak his mind.

² The holy and the evil spirits according to Zoroastrian scriptures

³ *ibid*

but have not the strength unless we are tied down, and which, if bad, we would avoid, but have not the strength to avoid unless similarly tied down. This I hold to be a condition indispensable [to]¹ growth. I grant that we are higher than the sun, how much more necessary for us to be at least as true and faithful as the sun if not truer and more faithful? If in matters of commerce, a man who vacillates is useless, why should he fare otherwise in matters spiritual which carry with them infinitely greater consequences? If you hold that I must speak and do the right thing at any cost, you grant my whole position and so you also do if you grant that, at the peril of my life, I should be faithful to my wife or friend. You can easily multiply such instances. For me Jesus was pre-eminently a man of unshakable resolution, i.e., vows. His yea was yea for ever. A life of vow is like marriage, a sacrament. It is marriage with God indissoluble for all time. Come let us marry Him. *Verb Sap.*

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10081

271. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,

October 31, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have been wondering why there is no letter from you. I hope you have not come away from Sarbhon defeated or tired. It does not matter even if that is so. Can anybody rise above his or her nature? Our duty lies in trying to go as far as our nature will permit us to do. The rest is in God's hands. We should be satisfied if our conscience tells us that we have spared no effort. I suppose I shall know by and by what you intend to do now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9292

¹ The original has "of".

272. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have both your letters, the one which you wrote directly and the one which you sent through the Ashram. All this nervousness doesn't become you. Learn to endure the misfortune which has befallen you. If your health does not recover there you must go to the Ashram. After your health has improved, you may again assume the responsibility of running the home. With weak health, what can you do even if you remain there? I simply cannot understand why you should get fainting fits. It seems you fret too much. Stop doing so. Have faith in God. Let His will be done. We are mere puppets in His hands. For some time, you should drop me a postcard every day. I shall always get it. I have written to Jayaprakash. If he shows the letter to you and wishes to discuss the matter with you, advise him as you think proper. Give up all worries. You may freely write to me anything you wish to. I don't know why you did not get my postcard. I hope you will get these letters without delay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3377

273. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

This letter concerns Bhai Jayaprakash Narayan. He belongs to a respectable family of Bihar and he is also the son-in-law of Brijkishore Babu, the noble worker of Bihar. Till now he was with Jawaharlal in the Congress office. He has studied in America for seven years. Now, after his mother's death, he feels the necessity of earning some money. He needs Rs. 300 per mensem. In my opinion, Bhai Jayaprakash is a worthy young man. If possible, absorb him

somewhere and pay him his requirements. Bhai Jayaprakash will himself give you further details about his antecedents.¹ I know Babu Brijkishore's daughter² very well. She has lived in the Ashram for a considerable time. I have rarely seen a girl like her, resolute and utterly devoted to duty.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6189. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

274. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 1, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. I am glad. You are entitled to write as you do. Your grief moves me. Your love for your mother³ is commendable and becomes you. I enclose a letter to G.D. Birla.⁴ Take it to him and see him. However, I must caution you. I myself have drunk deep from the fountain of motherly love. I was devoted to my parents; I worshipped them. And yet in your love for your mother I see attachment. Your love should be informed with knowledge. Your mother has died in the body. Her spirit has not perished. The body had to perish one day. Your love should now undergo a transformation. Our true mother is the motherland. Your filial love should be transformed into love of the motherland and to make it endure you should dedicate yourself to the service of the motherland. You must not distress yourself that an expert doctor was not called. Millions of mothers get no medical assistance. And I cannot admit that they are thereby necessarily the losers. Even the best of doctors cannot confer immortality on anyone. Therefore, in my view you and everyone else should give expression to your filial love by dwelling on the virtues of the departed and emulating them and you should devote all your energies for the cause of the motherland. Please

¹ The letter from Jayaprakash Narayan was enclosed with this letter.

² Prabhavati, wife of Jayaprakash Narayan

³ Who had passed away in early October; *vide* "Letter to Narayan Moreshwar Khare", 11-10-1930.

⁴ *ibid*

discuss this With your father. If what I say appeals to you show this to your father and seek his consent for dedicating yourself to the work of service. Of course you had already made such a dedication. But the death of your mother has created a new situation and reconsideration may be the duty. However, if my advice does not appeal to you, you may use the letter to Ghanshyamdasji and earnestly try to earn a livelihood. I shall not be distressed thereby. Consult Prabhavati also. Keep writing to me and if at any time you need my help let me know. If it is not beyond my power I will help you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

275. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 2, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. If Shanta has been trying the bath cure, let me know the effect it has. We had two copies of Kuhne's book. I think there is a Gujarati translation also. Kalavati had good experience of life at home and it is also to the good that she is now returning of her own accord.

Rukmini's suicide excites deep pity. I think that there must have been some other cause also behind this suicide. Has anybody investigated the matter further? Has not the women's group discussed it? As the place is near Godhra, Mama is likely to know something. If the report is correct, there should be widespread public agitation about the case. If you get time, inquire further and let me know the result. Who is the writer of the original letter? You cannot send me the Kashi newspaper. But is it not clear enough, what he must have stated?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5258

276. LETTER TO RADHABEHN GANDHI

November 2, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I have your letter. Read mine over and over and go on asking me about what you do not understand in it. I preserve both my self-respect and humility if, when someone kicks me and tries to force me to salute him, I suffer the kicks but do not get angry and wish well of the person kicking me, do not utter even one word in reply and still refuse to salute him. Once a person kicked me and tried to force me to sit at his feet, but I said nothing to him, never wished him ill even in a dream, and yet refused to sit at his feet. I believe I had preserved both self-respect and humility. When the incident took place, I was not at all conscious that I was being humble or anything of the sort. I narrate it now only in order to explain my meaning. You can think of many similar situations. You may even recall some from your own life, and it would be very good indeed if one formed the habit, and learnt the art, of reflecting on such incidents in one's own life rather than in another's. In doing so, one should not search for incidents in one's life which show one's own virtues. Our virtues are for others to see. We should try to discover our shortcomings.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

It is also humility to see one's own shortcomings.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8689. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

**277. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI
THAKKAR**

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 2, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

You are doing fine work indeed and winning credit for yourself and for the cause. You at any rate should keep illness at arm's length. Ramabehn must have arrived there now. If the children have arrived, and if they can write, let them write to me. Ramabehn should write and tell me what she saw in Bombay. Have the children returned with improved health? My blessings to all the brothers and sisters.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6802

278. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 2, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I am very glad to receive your letter. Those who regard even death as God's favour ultimately stand to gain. You too are benefiting thus. There is no end to your progress. Today you are doing more than a man could do. And I expect this from all women. Woman's capacity is in no way inferior to man's for God's work, but, in ahimsa and the like, it is definitely superior. The description of Tarini's *shraddha* is enlightening. When is Satis Babu to be released? I hope Arun and Charu are well. My blessings to all the Ashram inmates.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1674

279. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 2, 1930

CHI. RAMACHANDRA¹,

I was glad to have your letter. Boys of your age spin with proficiency, recite the *Gita* and understand the *Ramayana*. What do you study? How much do you spin in an hour and what is the count?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5259

280. LETTER TO JAISHANKAR TRIVEDI

November 3, 1930

BHAI TRIVEDI,

We have received the letter you sent us. The telegram also reached me. I am relieved. Manu has survived a real danger to his life. From this we should believe that he is destined for some great achievement. At any rate such are the qualities of character we observe in him at present. After consulting a doctor . . .² I do feel that it would be good if he becomes fit enough to be taken . . .³ to Almora or some other place like that. Revashankerbhai's Dhiru benefited much by such a visit. His bone disease was even more serious than Manu's. Prabhudas also improved by staying there. Some defect seems to have been left still in the ribs, etc. If it disappears completely, we may perhaps rest somewhat free from fear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7767

¹ Seven-year old brother of Kashinath Trivedi who was then residing in the Ashram

² Here a line is missing in the source.

³ *ibid*

281. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. MANU,

Both of us were very happy to read Father's wire about you. Do not be in a hurry to resume work. It would help you very much if, after you have regained strength, you were to go to Almora or some other place like that and stay there for some time. When you have recovered your normal strength, write and tell me how you got such a serious illness.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I got your letter after I had finished the letter. We were very happy. Kakasaheb had written to you and advised you to go to Poona after discussing the matter with me. Do go there. But you see that I am looking beyond the immediate present. May God protect you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7768

282. LETTER TO PANNALAL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. PANNALAL,

It is a good question you have raised. Exactly the same question was raised formerly regarding Andhra. The decision arrived at in the end was that we at any rate should try to produce in Gujarat the khadi required for Gujarat. The same thing applies in the case of the Punjab. The principle of local production is the very basis of the khadi movement. Every province, every district and in fact every village should produce the khadi which it needs. In the final analysis, the difference in price between khadi and other cloth does not count. Khadi will be dearer than mill cloth if people, though they understand the principles of economics, do not spin to meet their own requirements; if, none the less, they wear it for the sake of the poor,

they would find khadi cheaper in the long run than other cloth. Think over my definition of swadeshi. We have only one way open to us to meet the difficulties which we now experience, and that is, to decide the principle and then cling to it. For all that, private dealers are sure to order khadi from the Punjab or other places. We will not obstruct them. If you do not understand why this is the right course, you may ask me again.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3107

283. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 3, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

Write to Sushila and tell her that I had seen Pyarelal on Saturday. He has now completely recovered. He has got back his original weight. He drinks three pounds of milk and eats one pound of bread. When he wants, he eats vegetables too.

What shall I say about your irregularity?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1808

284. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 3, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

If you have symptoms of jaundice and get acid eructations, I am sure what you should do is to fast for at least seven days. While you are fasting, you should drink every day at least four pounds of water, mixing soda bicarb and/or salt with it. You should break the fast with fruit juice and then start whey and rice in required quantities. During

the fast, see that you take an enema and Kuhne bath daily. I am sure that you will not become bed-ridden with a seven-day fast. You may even be able to do a little work every day. In any case the fast will do you no harm.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6689. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

285. *LETTER TO JAMNA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 3, 1930

CHI. JAMNA,

You did very well in going to Bombay. If you keep good health there, don't be in a hurry to return. My blessings to Kalyandas, Dharamdas, Premkunvar and other men and women whom I met but whose names I forget. What occupations do Kalyandas and Dharamdas follow at present?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 545. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

286. *LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 3, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

You were restless when you wrote your letter. You have said thrice in your short letter, "I can't think what to write." If you write slowly, as if you were practising in a copy-book, you would certainly be able to write a good hand. You who have some work or other to do during the whole day, why can't you think of anything to write about? It is natural that you wish to meet me. We shall meet when God wills, and till then should keep patience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4055

287. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 3, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. Since you have not said anything about your health recently I conclude that it is all right. Do you go for walks? Blessings to Brother from both of us.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

288. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3 1930

CHI. NIMU,

I had a letter from you after so many days. It seems nowadays you have become Ba's secretary. How is your health? Is Sumitra all right? Does she still suffer from constipation? So long as one can get ink, one must never write with a pencil.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

289. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 3, 1930

CHI. DURGA,

This letter of yours is good. Some errors in expression there are, but they do not matter. You must cultivate the habit of revising the letter. Some errors can thus be corrected. It is preferable to brush the teeth before prayers. What are you learning in sewing? Tell me how

much can you spin on the *takli* and the charkha in an hour and of what count? If you have not noted the speed, please do and inform me. Do you know how to ascertain the count? It is a very good habit to recite Ramanama while going to bed.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalata, pp. 32-3

290. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 30/ November 4, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet today. The piece of leather which you sent for the sandals was not good enough for repairing the soles. It is hardly a month since the repair was done but the soles have again worn out. The hard leather required for soles and heels is made from hide of a particular part of the body, generally of a buffalo. If you get such a piece, send it to me. In the alternative, you may send another pair of the same number as, or of a number higher than, the one you sent for Kakasaheb.

I think I wrote to you that you need not send the pair of scales. If I did not, please understand from this that I don't need it. Trivedi came and gave me one.

I know your attitude. So long as Mahadev is outside, you will not take upon yourself the burden of making a final decision, and you are right in that. I had a long letter from Keshu. He seems to have been deeply hurt. He has bitterly complained against you, but his letter has had no effect on me. You should, however, take him into confidence and ask him to tell you all that he feels. I know that he is impulsive by nature. But he is a sincere youth and very eager to do service. He is, however, impatient to increase his knowledge and do original work. I may be wrong in my judgment about him. You should, however, call him and hear all that he has to say. Afterwards write to me and give me the impression you form. I know that he

¹ The original was in Gujarati.

spends money rather freely. But I have observed that, in spite of that, he is simple in habits. He adheres to his charge against . . .¹ and it is a serious one.

We need have no fears about Kanta and Sumangal. They are close relations. They are first cousins and have grown up together. Despite this, I, too, had a suspicion and expressed it to them. But I felt that they were innocent. Sumangal was Kanta's teacher once and she has great faith in him. And, moreover, if we suspect brothers and sisters, where would we end? We have adopted an attitude of full trust in the women. If we burn our fingers as a result of that, we will endure our misfortune. Unless we are prepared to take some risks, we shall fail to do our duty towards women. The Hindu man is under a heavy debt to the Hindu woman.

October 31, 1930

The clock struck nine when I wrote the last sentence and I laid down the pen. We have resolved not to work after nine, as far as possible.

I got your letter about Amidas. I am satisfied now. His firmness will be rewarded. I felt that it was my duty to tell him what I knew. If you want me to decide about Chitalia, I suggest that you should send him Rs. 1,500. I think my speech referred to the past but made no reference to the future. He cannot claim any money on the basis of that speech. But I do not have sufficient data to come to a decision on the point. I trust Karsandas and, since he has asked for the sum, I think it is our duty to pay it. In future, however, he may draw what he needs with Jamnalalji's or Kishorelal's consent; that seems all right to me. Copy out this part of the letter and send it to Karsandas when you remit the money to him. He should give his opinion whether or not he agrees with me.

November 1, 1930

Along with this you will find letters to Prabhavati and Jayaprakash and one to Ghanshyamdas about them. Put all the three in the same envelope and dispatch them immediately. The couple is passing through extremely difficult circumstances just now owing to the death of Jayaprakash's mother. Do the persons in the Ashram who spin weigh the quantity of waste yarn? If they do not, they should start

¹ The name has been omitted.

weighing it every day. If anyone has been doing this, let me know the quantity of yarn he or she wastes. What is the highest average speed per hour attained by anyone in spinning? A person may, after careful preparation, attain excellent speed on one occasion; but that does not give the same value as the average speed maintained by someone who has kept a record for a year. In calculating this, the time spent in replacing a broken belt or in cleaning a belt should also be taken into account. Don't you agree that the figures given by a person would be correct only if he has included in them the time spent thus?

Tuesday morning, November 4, 1930

We have discussed the Ashram observances, their necessity and the meaning of *yajna*. I propose now to discuss the meaning of the book, as I have understood it, on which we meditate daily and from which we recite some portion every day so as to complete all the chapters in a week, the book which we have accepted as our spiritual lighthouse. A letter which I had once received had suggested this to me, but Govindji's letter received last week made me decide to take up the subject. He says that he tries to read the *Anasaktiyoga* but finds it very difficult to understand. Though I have tried to explain the meaning of the verses in a language which everyone can understand, a literal rendering is bound to present difficulties to the reader. If the subject itself is difficult, how much can simplicity of language help? I, therefore, intend here to present the subject itself in a manner easy to follow. A book which we want to consult in every activity of our life and with whose help we try to solve all our spiritual problems—if we try again and again to understand the meaning of this book from all possible points of view and meditate over it constantly, we shall ultimately come to be filled with its spirit. In all my spiritual difficulties I run to mother *Gita* and to this day she has never failed to comfort me. It is, therefore, not impossible that others who seek similar comfort from her may, if they know what new light I get from it every day, receive further help or see some altogether new meaning in the work.

I propose today to give the substance of Chapter XII which deals with *bhakti*. Whenever there is a wedding in the Ashram, we ask the couple to learn by heart and ponder over this Chapter as one of

the five sacrifices they have to offer. Knowledge and action in the absence of devotion are dry as dust and are likely to make us confirmed bondslaves. Let us therefore commence this study of the *Gita* with a heart full of devotion.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 62 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

291. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 4, 1930

BHAI KHAMBHATTA,

I got both your letters and the Jivan spinning-wheel. It is not clear from either of your letters whether you got the letter I wrote to you at your Poona address. I will take care of the Jivan spinning-wheel and ultimately return it to you. I will also let you know my experience of it after I have tried it. Both of you should take care of your health. Your minds, of course, are pure. Kakasaheb is quite well. He will be released on the 28th at the latest.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6597

¹ The discourses, like those on the Ashram vows which preceded them, were intended to be read out at the Ashram prayer meetings; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 22-7-1930. They were later published under the title *Gitabodh* and an English translation appeared under the title *Discourses on the Gita*. For the text of these discourses, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

292. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 6, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I do not think there is anything special about the Gandiv I got. It gave all the trouble, you had, to Kaka. I found out the cause of the trouble, removed it and it has never once given trouble. The second *mal* must be as thin as possible. I am using what Narandas sent from the Ashram. I think 6 threads. For the moving wheel the *mal* knot should be from the outside. Neither need be too tight. The wheel must move without any jerk. It may be that the metal rings are not rigidly fixed in the wheels or the axles are not straight or in a straight line. To me its beauty lies in its smooth working and less liability to go out of order. But as I have said in my last letter, you need not divert your attention for the sake of the wheel. I suppose it is true about wheels as it is true about most things that what suits one does not therefore suit all others. Experts have to adjust values of different types. We workers must be satisfied with that which will give the maximum of work with the minimum of trouble. If I had the requisite mechanical training or was a genius in the art, I should love to become an expert in carding and spinning and judging bows, wheels and *taklis*. But I must treat it as a forbidden ambition, though I do not leave off the search. The search for me here is duty Lo/keZ-

Long or short, I hope to do at least one *bhajan* daily. The Marathi I finished with Kaka's assistance. The Bengali too I began but on learning from K. that they were all translated by the Poet himself or under his supervision, I left off, thinking it a profanation even to attempt. I have now, therefore, only 42 *bhajans* to do. Marathi being very short, I was able to do sometimes even three per night. I hope to finish before 42 days are out .

One question in your letter just now stares me about the Gandiv. I mount the wheel end on a beam of wood nearly 3 inches high and I fix it on to the beam with 2 movable pins. It thus lies slanting from top downward. It can be even mounted on a box to lie flat. K. tied it to the cane bottom of a chair and worked seated in a chair. I am glad you saw Alexander. He wrote to me directly. The letter was given

to me about 10 days after its receipt. I knew from him that he was able quite by accident to see you. When you write to him please give him my love and tell him I had his letter. I must not attempt to write separately to him. Sufficient unto the day is the good thereof.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5418. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9653

293. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. I am glad you are feeling yourself again. Please do not feel bound to try the Gandiv wheel. I know you have many things to attend to and with a regularly going wheel, you might be able to finish your sacrificial spinning without any bother.

Give Andrews my love. I can write a formal letter to him. But I do not want to write a mere formal letter to him. I would far rather let my silence speak to him. The pen is often a superfluity, if not a hindrance, to heart's flow.

Mahadeo must not overstrain himself. I have written to him strongly about him, but you should pull him up whenever he is reckless about his health. My cold had disappeared altogether and, therefore, I did not even think of it when I wrote to you last week. Yes, just now it is a combination of dates and vegetables, the latter sparingly. But for the cold, I was getting on all right with the vegetables. I may not give you more time this week.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I hope to finish the hymns earlier than I had expected.

From the original: C.W. 5419. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9652

294. LETTER TO PADMA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. The tumour must be cured. Do not neglect it. If Gangabehn were not with you, I would have certainly felt worried because of your having gone out of the Ashram. But since she is with you, I feel easy in my mind. Write to me regularly. You should write your letters in a bold and clear hand.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6114

295. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. Though Manilal has lost 40 lb., he seems to have preserved his strength, for he has asked my advice about what to read. Pragji's request regarding the Phoenix Ashram seems reasonable to me. However, it is for Manilal and you to decide about the matter. Moreover, I do not have even enough facts to arrive at a decision. Secondly, it is the common experience that, in such matters, only the person who held charge last can give the right decision. Even if Bharati's handwriting is bad, she should write. Why should one feel ashamed to write to a friend? I must ask Krishnakant to forgive me. I don't even remember his face. I have of course heard his name from you and read it in your letters. Won't he forgive me if I send him heaps of blessings? Ask him. If he does not forgive me, plead on my behalf. Can you say that Sita has now become as strong as she was in South Africa? Do you give her fruit to eat? Convey my blessings to Pragji and write to him and tell him that service lies in doing the duty which comes to us unsought. Who are now with Gomati? What food do they get? Give me all the news you have about her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4774

296. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. You will realize truth more and more as you will stop observing what others do and concentrate on your work. Nor should you plunge too much into thinking. Of course one has to think up to a point. After that one should depend only on faith. The mind too like the body suffers from indigestion when overstuffed. Like the body the mind too needs to be put at rest. That is why there has been enjoined constant repetition of Ramanama and other *mantras*. They instantly put the mind to rest. Now the meaning: The higher and the lower [*para* and *apara*] means, so to say, the unmanifest and the manifest. The *Gita* often discusses them. Let us understand it briefly as the Lord (Ishwar) or Brahman or even Truth. Self-evident truth is the higher and the other realized by an individual is therefore finite: [i.e.,] lower. A person who has a glimpse of (this aspect of) the Lord in His higher form is relieved from the good or bad fruit of his actions and all his problems and misgivings disappear. The *Gita* II. 59, viz., ‘the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme’ also conveys the same sense. A person who becomes engrossed in discharging whatever duty naturally comes to his lot, has as good as realized the *para*¹ and this ought to put an end to his problems. He who cannot experience it has not [yet] identified himself with his duty. I have here tried to put it across so that you may understand it fully, but do ask me if you cannot, in spite of this.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 329. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

¹ The source has *apara* which is obviously a slip.

297. LETTER TO BALIBEHN VORA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. BALI,

I got a letter from you after many days. You may keep Manu with you and let her live as you wish and as may please Ba. I don't wish at all to hurt you and your sister, and at any rate I would not do so from here. I know the great love that you two have for the children. Do not worry about Kanti. He is a brave boy and God, the Lord of us all, protects everyone. You may see him whenever you get an opportunity and you should afterwards write to me and give me news about him. I do occasionally have news about him, of course, from other sources.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 5058. Courtesy: Surendra Mashruwala

298. LETTER TO KRISHNAMAIYADEVI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 7, 1930

CHI. KRISHNAMAIYA,

I don't remember any letter of yours to which I did not reply. If I have omitted to reply to any question, ask it again.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6220

299. *LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

November 7, 1930

I got your letter. I was happy to read it. Besides *rotla*, what else does Mathuradas eat? Does he take milk, fruit, etc.? Does he get any food from outside or does he eat only what he gets in jail? Is there space where he can walk a little? Does he have the strength to do it? Does he have any companion with him? Get all this information and write to me. Pyarelal is quite well. I also had a letter from Shankaran. When he comes to see you next, tell him that I had replied to his letter. Does Dilip get sufficient exercise? Do you take regular walks, too? If you do not, you should. If you have started reading anything, let me know what it is.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi: p. 103

300. *LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 8, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I got Father's last letter. I do not write a separate letter to him. You will now rapidly recover your normal health. It may also have happened that, during this illness, you got rid of the toxins in your body. I suppose all of you are in Poona now. This letter, therefore, will have wandered about a bit before you get it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7769

301. LETTER TO DUDHIBEHN VALJI DESAI

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. DUDHIBEHN,

I have had no letter from you recently. I am writing this because Valji has gone back to the temple. Do you feel nervous? We shall win true swaraj only through the sacrifices of men of his sincerity and purity. We should, therefore, rejoice at his self-sacrifice, and not at all feel unhappy. God protects everyone. Write to me about all your circumstances.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7409. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

302. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

BHAI NANABHAI,

I read your remarks below Tara's letter. What you have been doing is enough. If a person three feet in height feels unhappy because he cannot reach with his hand as high as a man six-foot tall can do, he condemns the Creator of the world. He who does his duty with love and devotion for God and to the best of his ability, discharges his debt fully. I believe that you do this. Why, then, should you feel discontented or unhappy? You should, of course, try and find out why your body is so weak. But it seems that all of you brothers have weak constitutions from your birth. You should discover the cause and if, in your own case, there is no remedy, you should remove it in respect of persons under your care.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 4776

303. LETTER TO TARA MASHRUWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. TARA (OF AKOLA),

I have your letter. (After how many months did I get one?) You say nothing about the headache from which you suffered after the injury to your head. Give me one day's sample from your diary. You can teach Sita a little Sanskrit even as she plays with you. She should of course sing *Jhanda Uncha Rahe Hamara*¹, but likewise she should also keep murmuring some easy verse from the *Gita*.

Give my blessings to Mother.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4775

304. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

I wrote to you even before I got your letter, after reading in the papers about Kanjibhai's arrest. How fortunate all of you are? To what term has your father been sentenced? How old is he? And you cannot say that only you have been left out. It was no ordinary courage you displayed when you held the horse a prisoner. God inspired you with such strength at that moment. Win many similar triumphs in future.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2654

¹ "May Our flag fly high"

305. LETTER TO LALITA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 8, 1930

CHI. LALITA,

I have your letter. You have done all right in going with Gangabehn. Work sincerely now and be brave. For your age, the handwriting is bad and the language also is not quite correct. Make an effort and improve both. You can do that even while you stay there. What you will require for the effort is not time but perseverance. Progressing slowly, you can improve quite a lot.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9218

306. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 8, 1930

CHI. KANTA

I have your letter. It is well that you have gone with Gangabehn. Serve her with care and be brave. You have the capacity. You have the desire. You now have an opportunity. May God give you good health. Promise me that you will never do anything shameful. Gangabehn also has great faith in you.

May God bless you. Do write to me in detail from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

307. LETTER TO GOVIND PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

CHI. GOVIND,

I have your letter. If your eyes are weak, it is right that you should not read much. How many chapters of the *Gita* have you learnt by heart? If you learn the whole of the *Gita* by heart, you will have plenty of material for reflection when your mind is not occupied otherwise. Then it will not be necessary for you to read anything else. You should, of course, fully understand what you learn by heart.

Is the yarn which you spin sufficiently strong? Is it even? Who makes the slivers?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3943

308. LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

BHAI JUGATRAM,

Your letter is full of information. So far, everything seems to be going as it should. We are being tested well in every respect. As long as you are free, write to me regularly. The fact that all the activities are going on normally is a sign of great efficiency.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2686

309. LETTER TO RAMCHANDRA KHARE

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

CHI. RAMBHAU,

I have your nice letter. Your handwriting too is good. It is all right that you draw lines. I do not remember having not replied to any of your letters.

It is good that with the advance of winter you are also gaining weight. If you take enough exercise you will beat the cold instead of the cold beating you.

Do you write to Lakshmibehn from time to time? It is good that you are learning *bhajans* by heart. You have to preserve and enhance the prestige of Panditji's position. That will happen only when you outshine him. Panditji never had the opportunity that you have at your age.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 286. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

310. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

CHI. SHANKERLAL,

I have your letter. It would be nice if Prabhudas wrote about the science of weaving. I cannot suggest anything right now about spinning, etc. Discuss it with Kaka when he is released. I have talked to him mainly about these subjects. He has become quite familiar with the difficulties faced by the spinners.

Have you come across any spinning-wheels that deserve to be given a prize at first sight ? If so, we must appoint an examiner and finish that work. Amubhai and Mathuradas are qualified for it. You have to be connected with it of course. I suggest that Purushottam and Kesu of *Jeevan-chakra* should be taken as advisers. If Annada Babu has studied the science of the spinning-wheel, he too should be taken as an examiner. I cannot think of other names at the moment.

Prabha Devi¹ wrote to me about Tarini². Satis Babu has been rendered helpless without him.

I had also read in the newspapers about Brailsford's³ visit. I also read his commendation of the work. What are Manhar and Prabodh doing?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32731

311. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

November 9, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Go and see Devakinandan's spinning-wheel. The name *Savyasachi*⁴ is of course too high-sounding for your spinning-wheel. 'Bharat' will not do either. Since, however, you reminded⁵ me of Maganlal, I have suggested his name for your spinning-wheel. It was he who transformed spinning-work into a science. That name, therefore, is not improper for your spinning-wheel. 'Magan' means 'roominess' and also 'pleasure'. It is your claim that your spinning-wheel gives people pleasure. And finally, Maganlal had the virtues of Bharat⁶ and Bharat was his ideal. Your purpose⁷ also will therefore be served. After this, you may adopt whatever name you like. If Bhavanidutta is a fit person, you should take him in. You should not say 'such a one' with reference to any person. If Bhavanidutta does come, you should provide him food and drink at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33009

¹ Hemprabha Das Gupta

² Who passed away in Octobers, 1930; *vide*, "Letter to Lilavati", 16-10-1930.

³ H. N. Brailsford, English journalist, author of *Rebel India* (1932)

⁴ 'Savyasachi' was one of the names of Arjuna, who could shoot arrows with both the right and the left hand. Here, it would mean a spinning-wheel which could be turned with either hand.

⁵ Presumably, by his inventive skill

⁶ Rama's devoted brother in the *Ramayana*

⁷ Prabhudas's desire to name his spinning-wheel 'Bharati'

312. LETTER TO BUDHABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 9, 1930

BHAI BUDHABHAI,

I received your letter. Practice writing with ink. Writing with a pencil is a form of violence to the reader. Of course, when writing with a pencil cannot be avoided, one is helpless.

A fast is not a substitute for eating less. A fast by itself sometimes involves eating too much. The right way of ensuring that you eat less is that at every meal, you should ask them to serve you only once, and that too, only in a small quantity. Never eat so much that your hunger may be fully satisfied. Stop eating as soon as you feel that you have eaten so much as would permit you to eat the same quantity again. As long as you have not accustomed yourself to eating sparingly, it would be desirable not to insist on eating only five articles of food at one meal. Eating sparingly will by itself mean that you eat only a few articles of food at a time. You may take salt in reasonable quantity. If you settle down at one place, why should you not grow in the yard some vegetables which would take only a short time to grow? For instance, you could grow fenugreek leaves.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Firmly cling to your resolution not to be alone with Parvati.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33122

313. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

I got your cheerful letter. I am very happy to know that you have regained health. I have often observed that people who enthusiastically respond to a call for service and plunge into the work improve in health.

Write to Pragji and tell him that his living in exile is also a form of service. When the Ruler of our destinies requires him in India, He will certainly bring him here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2688

314. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. You must have received my detailed letters. I will arrange that you get a Gujarati newspaper. I remember that you had written to me about it some time ago, but I forgot the matter altogether. What a careless fellow I am! I want you soon to recover your calm. I hope my letter to Jayaprakash comforted him. You may also write a separate letter and post it directly to me, whenever you wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3378

*315. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI
MADHAVJI THAKKAR¹*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

. . . will not remain backward. Both the positions are acceptable to us. Having shed fear, why should we worry about anything? My blessings to all the women.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6803

316. LETTER TO BULAKHIDAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

BHAI BULAKHIDAS,

I have your letter. It is only through sacrifices such as yours and your wife's that the drink evil will end. I hope that your wife has now fully recovered. Give my compliments and blessings to her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3138

317. LETTER TO ABBAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. ABBAS,

I got your letter. I have hit upon a simple method of ascertaining the count of yarn, and it is this: the number of rounds in the quantity of yarn equal to the weight of one anna should be taken

¹ The addressee cannot be identified. However, the letter is listed in the G.N. Register among those addressed to Mahalakshmi Madhavji Thakkar.

as its count. I understand what you say about the rest.

I hope you keep good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6304

318. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 10, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your long letter. But it was not too long for me. You should not worry about your spellings when writing to me. Your aim should be to explain your meaning, and I follow what you say.

You have undertaken a heavy responsibility. But the Lord protects you. He has rewarded your work with success in the past and will do so in future as well.

I am writing to LilabeHN. How can we help her if she herself does not keep up courage? We have resolved to solve the problem of women. In fact it is being solved. They have submitted themselves to a fine test. The whole world has its eyes on the women of India. Write in detail to me from time to time. If you don't get time to write, ask somebody else to do so. You should make someone your secretary.

I have received no letter for Kakasaheb yet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 45; also C.W. 8761. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

319. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

November 10, 1930

CHI. MANUDI,

Your letter was very good. And the handwriting was fine, too. You should make further progress. I see that your rate of spinning per hour is greater than mine. Do you spin 306 rounds or yards? I hope you know that there is a difference between the two. A round=4 ft., and a yard=3 ft. On which type of wheel do you spin, and what is the

count of the yarn? Nobody, including myself, knows when I shall be released. Even the Government doesn't know. But why should we think about the matter? What difference does it make whether or not I am released? You ask me to send you a picture. But how can I get one in jail? We can't get such things in a jail. If, however, I come across any, I will preserve it for you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1505. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

320. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

November 10, 1930

Khuda Hafiz

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

I have your letter. I was very glad.¹

Shouldn't you regard this much Urdu enough for the day? If, even after your second lesson I do not write a few lines in Urdu, you might give me up as an unteachable pupil. What should I do then? If you don't have to spend too much time and take too much trouble in writing Urdu so neatly, continue to write to me in Urdu. That would help me to keep up some Urdu without special effort. You are all free to laugh as much as you wish at my bad handwriting and at spelling that is still worse. But please don't give me up as unteachable.

But I must say that there is no limit to your cunning. I don't know where you learnt it. I certainly do not remember to have taught that. The poor girl! As soon as I permit her to write in Urdu, she goes further and asks me to write in Urdu. But, having adopted you, how can I get away from the fact? *Vandemataram* to Mother. Embrace Father on my behalf, and pull his beard hard.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. RAIHANABEHN

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9623

¹ The letter so far is in Urdu. The rest is in Gujarati.

321. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. If you keep good health without milk, I don't wish to press you to drink it. Don't wait till your health has completely gone down before you start drinking it.

For some time, write to me regularly. About Chalala, do what is possible after discussing the matter with Shankerlal. How are Ramjibhai and Jivanlal? Convey my blessings to both.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III

322. LETTER TO SHANTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 10, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Kashinath writes that you have fever again. How is it? You must be careful in everything. It is well you have gone with Gangabehn. You can come back if the climate there does not suit you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5260

323. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[November 11, 1930]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time, too, I got your packet in two parts, first the English letters and then on the next day the others. There was also a previous occasion when this happened. They open the packet and look into the letters, hurriedly or carefully as they feel inclined before they hand them over to me. They are of course required to read the letters. The

¹ The letter was evidently begun earlier and completed on this date.

letters are given to me in two parts so that I may get some of them at any rate as early as possible.

I had again a long letter from Keshu. I find much substance in what he says. He has gone deep into the matter. I have formed the impression that . . .¹ is hiding something. Read my letter to Keshu and to . . .² before you pass them on. I have asked him what he thinks about Keshu. I think his unpunctuality and other shortcomings are such as we can tolerate. Being sincere, he does not want to make a false show. He refuses to do anything which is beyond his capacity or which does not appeal to him. But he has certainly the spirit of service in him. Since he is pure at heart, I think it is our duty to bear his minor faults. But Mahadev is there now and he says that he will abide by Mahadev's decision. If Mahadev cannot settle the matter, in the last resort I will do so.

What you say about Hari-ichchha is correct. If you cannot stop the marriage from taking place in the Ashram, put up with the event. I had indeed guessed about it and that is why I put that question to Harilal in my letter to him.

Did you read the further details about speed in spinning on the *takli* which Balkrishna gave in his letter this time? It is increasing there. I count the attainment of this speed a very important achievement. I remember that four years ago a speed of hundred rounds per hour was considered excellent. Now 160 rounds is the standard for passing, according to Vinoba. Gangabehn has undertaken a big task. But God has always blessed her undertakings with success. Don't mind if Kusum has gone. Who will now help you personally? I am sure you will feel hard pressed for want of enough workers to help you. Owing to so many hands having left, the burden of work is likely to increase rather than diminish. Who will take Kanta's place? Send me a final list of all the women who leave.

I approve of your diet. If it suits you, it is almost an ideal combination. Do not increase the quantity of ground-nuts and do not eat ground-nuts and copra on the same day. The quantity of milk must not decrease now. Half a pound is the minimum you should take. It is Dr. Muthu's view that that quantity supplies the necessary vitamins. If you feel weak, increase the quantity of milk or curds.

¹ The names have been omitted.

² *ibid*

Read my letter to Bhansali. If he still wishes to be admitted, do what you think best. If you are firm with him, you will have fewer difficulties with him. Also read my letters to Lilabehn.

I don't see any substance in Mathew's suspicion. Read my reply to him. Parnerkar should take rest. Perhaps change of air may also be necessary. He ought to improve his health.

I must get now a strong piece of leather for the soles or a new pair of utility shoes. There are people who deserve "shoes", but, when they get them, they do not accept them very cheerfully. I, on the other hand, became fit for "shoes" long ago and am now impatient to get them!

Send with anyone who may come on a visit here Krishnadas's books in Kashi's possession. I am in no hurry about them.¹

Tuesday morning, November 11, 1930

Tell Devdas that I have still not received his letter. Where and when was it posted? What did he say in it? Let him write again. If he can give me the date of that letter, I can make further inquiries.

Does anyone go and visit Somabhai and others who are in jail? I know that it is difficult to visit such a large number. But you should select those who are likely to be visited by nobody else. It would be good if you could make some arrangement for visiting such prisoners.

Prabhavati gets no Gujarati papers at all. We regularly receive *Mumbai Samachar* and other papers, and out of these you should send one or two to her. She wrote to me about this once or twice but I forgot to mention it in my letters. I had a separate letter from . . .² yesterday. Before I could write to him the letter which I wished to do, I had this letter of repentance from him and so the reply which I have given to him is altogether different from what it would otherwise have been. The impression I have formed from his letter is that he is still hiding much. You will understand this if you read my

¹ For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide*, "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch. I.

² The name has been omitted.

letter. It has been a painful story.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Read my letter to Surendra Mashruwala. Call him and tell him that, if he wishes to come and stay in the Ashram, he is welcome to do so.

There are 82 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

324. *LETTER TO SURENDRA MASHRUWALA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 11, 1930

CHI. SURENDRA (OF VIDYAPITH),

I got your letter. You need not feel worried. The disease from which you suffer is quite common these days. If you take nutmeg, take only a pinch of it daily. But the real remedy is mental. You should always keep your body and mind fully occupied. Never remain in a place where you are alone. You should eat simple food, and at fixed hours. If you stand it, you should bathe in cold water. You may live in the Ashram, if you feel happy there, or go to Wardha. I think you will probably feel uncomfortable at Wardha. If you prefer to go to the Ashram, Narandas will call you up there. Don't worry at all. I will certainly write to you frequently. You should write freely to me. More in the next letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

After Kakasaheb is released, take his advice and then do what you wish.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1506. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

325. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 11, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. I have tried the Jivan spinning-wheel. It works quite well but at present I am experimenting on the Gandiv wheel. The Jivan wheel is used by Kakasaheb. He finds it quite convenient to spin on it, whereas he did not on the Gandiv wheel. Personally, I have fallen in love with the latter for its simplicity and low cost. However, I can give no final opinion yet. Why cannot you experiment with a milk diet in Bombay? There is no risk at all in doing so. Probably curds will agree better than milk. If the palate is no problem with you, I would advise you to try the experiment of a milk diet immediately. It will certainly do you no harm; it provides sufficient nourishment.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

BHAI BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA
275 HORNBY ROAD
FORT, BOMBAY

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6598

326. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 11, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Are the *Gita* recitations at Pratishtan conducted on the same lines as at Sabarmati? In that case, you may note that we have decided now to complete the recitation within seven days instead of fourteen. Write what you and Satis Babu think about it. If the period in which you complete the recitation is different, you need take no notice of this letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1675.

327. LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 12, 1930

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

Though I wrote to Mira only the other day sending you my love and telling her I must not write to you as I could not write all I wanted to, I cannot restrain myself from writing to tell you how delighted I have felt to get a letter from you directly. I think of you every day and that often. You will give a good account of yourself wherever you are and you do so because you will always be where you are led.

I have not got any of your two books as yet. I read the *Times* review copied in a local newspaper.

I was sorry to hear that Gurudev had not kept well in America and that he was returning. The marvel is that he can stand the strain at all at his age. Please give my love to him and the Greggs.

Love.

MOHAN

[PS.]

Kaka is with me given as companion. He sends you his love. Both of us have kept well.

C. F. ANDREWS, ESQ.
C/O PHELPS STOKES FUND
101 PARK AVENUE
NEW YORK CITY
U.S.A.

From a photostat of the original: C.W. 9318. Courtesy: Africana Museum

328. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 13, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. The arrangement about translating my remarks on the *Gita* chapters is quite good. I shall look forward to the joint handiwork. I want to pour myself out into those chapters. This

means additional work for you and will take up a great deal of your time. However, I know you won't feel the strain of it, as you love that work.

Here is a letter from Andrews, this time, for me to send you. He could not restrain himself from writing to me directly. I have at last given him a few lines. Don't give any time to the Gandiv till Keshu has obtained mastery over it and gives you a machine in working order. For me it continues to provide further delights. The original *mal* for the motor wheel at last had to be discarded, as I could not cut it any further for tightening it. It has to be fairly stout and thick. I had nothing with me in the hand-spun *mals* of the required thickness. As you know, I criminally neglected to learn how to make these little odds and ends. And I was bent on having only the hand-spun stuff. I had to give full two hours to the first attempt. It was successful and was possible only because only a short length was required. My second attempt took me barely half an hour. I had to make another for emergency, which occurred at once, for the original threads from which I made the *mal* were weak. I have now thought of a device of quickly twisting to the required strength practically any number of threads. My third attempt will therefore mean still less time. And meantime I am having now an accumulation of little bits of stout hand-spun chords which I can use for watchguards and the like. All this gives me delight and comfort, for it means greater mastery over the wheel. And this has become so easily possible because of the incredible simplicity of the Gandiv. But I am not going to regard my opinion as final or authoritative till I have corroboration from someone who knows much more than I do of the mechanism of the charkha. But I warn you against regarding this detailed description as any incentive for you to tackle the Gandiv. I know if I was outside, I could not have given all this time, thought and attention to the thing. It might not have even been desirable if it was to exclude other urgent matters. I have given you the details merely to share my joy with you. The charkha, the *takli* and the bow have become a fascination with me. I do not seem to get tired of them. Daily I wish I had more time to give to these things. I want to secure greater output on all the three. But I am so clumsy and so stupid and slow. Somehow or other I feel that it is not the rigidity of old age that prevents from gaining a greater output. I have not the proper knack I fear. However I find satisfaction from the knowledge that God will accept this little offering

as the best possible for me in the circumstances. If you can stand the cold bath in winter, nothing can be more bracing. You will not strive against nature. If there is no instantaneous warm reaction, you must revert to the warm bath. The condition of reaction is vigorous rubbing with the bare hands. I had sorrowfully to give up cold baths only after that wretched attack of pleurisy in London in 1914. Your food is quite good. It may be necessary to take more ghee. Experience has shown that you need a fair measure to keep strength, heat and weight.

Gangadevi may walk a little. She must take measured steps and begin with a few minutes only at a time. All risk of a setback should be avoided. She will get rid of the urinary trouble by taking a hip-bath. If the water is chilly a little hot water may be added to take the chill off. This hip-bath is almost an infallible remedy.

Is not this uncle, who has married, somewhat elderly and who vies with you in indifferent spellings, though very learned?

So according to your birthdate, you are only a babe a few months old!! You have therefore many a summer to look forward to.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5420. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9654

329. *LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 13, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your letter. Continue to have sun-bath and oil-massage. While spinning on the *takli*, the thread should never snap. I could not understand your saying that there is little waste on the spinning-wheel. If you tell me the amount of waste in a given number of rounds of a particular count I would understand it. Calculate it this way. There is another way also. Find out how often you pulled out the yarn and how often it snapped in the course of half an hour. Is it clear to you that there is a difference between calculating the waste and [the frequency of snapping]? If you have understood this, write to me what this difference is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9894. Courtesy: Sharda behn G. Chokhawala

330. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 13, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your insipid letter. How is it that, though participating in such a great revolution, you could not think of anything to write about? It is possible, of course, that the mind may be stunned by the great changes taking place and reason may stop working; if so, one cannot think of anything to write about. At such a time, one's mind may be wholly absorbed in work and can think about nothing else. If you are in such a sublime state of mind, I have nothing to say. I would then be satisfied even with a letter to this effect: "Bapu, everything is going well. Vasumati."

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9293

331. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI¹

November 13, 1930

I also see an error of principle in what you say regarding spinning and French. Having dedicated yourself completely to spinning, you cannot do anything else for your personal benefit while spinning. If somebody comes for a chat with you, you may talk with him for the sake of good manners. But you cannot argue that, instead of his taking up your time in talking, he may as well teach you French. You may, if you so wish, escape from the necessity of having to talk to him, and he also will not go on talking just in order that he may stay longer. But once he has agreed to be your teacher, he is bound to sit with you sufficiently long. All this has reference to the time when we are spinning for *yajna*. I have been realizing the force of this argument in my own experience. If, while I am spinning, I start thinking about other things, the speed of spinning and the count and

¹ The source does not mention the addressee. But in "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 13/17-11-1930 where Gandhiji discusses spinning as *yajna* he asks Naranadas to "understand" what he has said on the subject in his letter to Mahadev Desai. Presumably this is the letter.

evenness of spinning are adversely affected. Imagine Romain Rolland or Beethoven playing on the piano. They would be so absorbed in the music that they would neither be able to talk with anyone nor think about anything else. An artist is not apart from his art. If this is true in regard to the music of the piano, how much more so must it be regarding the spinning-*yajna*? It may be true that, as we are today, we cannot act in this spirit but that is another matter. If we keep our ideal pure, we are bound to succeed one day in putting it into practice. Let me repeat that I am not criticizing what has happened. Pitifully imperfect myself, what right have I to criticize anybody? Do I put into practice all that I know to be true? If I had done that, the seven lakh villages would have been filled with the sweet music of the spinning-wheel long before now. If even now I could live perfectly in conformity with what I know to be right, the cult of the spinning-wheel would spread fast all over the country though I am here in jail. "Though the aspiration is beyond my strength at present, the mind is set firmly on it. If God so decrees, I shall become the essence of light." (Plagiarized from Raychandbhai, with apologies to him) I shall tire of praising the music of the spinning-wheel when Malaviyaji does of praising the *Bhagavata* Purana. We cannot, of course, speak of a spinning-wheel Purana. It will be for those who come after us to compose a Purana and they will do so if we have achieved anything which can be a worthy theme. Just now, we are composing a few tunes of the spinning-wheel music. How great the music will be which ultimately results from them, will depend on our *tapascharya* and the measure of our self-dedication. . . .¹

. . . I shall now dwell further on the argument of the previous letter.

I think the ideal is that we should observe complete silence when engaged in the spinning-*yajna*, and think exclusively about spinning, that is, khadi or go on repeating Ramanama. We should, of course, understand Ramanama in a wide sense. Really speaking, we should go on repeating Ramanama silently to ourselves all the time, whether or not we consciously utter it with our lips. It should be the unvarying accompaniment to all our thoughts and activities, like the tune on the *tamboora* in a musical recital. When, however, our attention is not

¹ Omission as in the source. What follows seems to have been taken from a subsequent letter.

wholly absorbed in the work which we are doing, we should consciously go on repeating Ramanama. While spinning, we generally talk with somebody or listen to what people tell us or do some other work. This kind of spinning is certainly not *yajna*. If the *yajna* of spinning is a sacred obligation, the time which we give to it should be wholly dedicated to it. He who lives his life in the spirit of *yajna* and works without attachment will always be engaged in one task at a time. Though I know this well enough, I was the first to sin (be it more or less) in this respect, for it can be said that I never sat down in a secluded spot to spin quietly, that is, in complete silence. On my silence days, while spinning I either used to hear the mail being read out to me or listened to what people wanted to tell me. Even here I have not given up that bad habit. Is it any wonder, then, that though I spin regularly I have made no progress at all in the field and have barely acquired the speed of 200 rounds an hour? I see in myself many other deficiencies, besides this; for instance, while I am spinning the thread snaps, I do not know how to make a belt, know very little about spindle-holders, cannot tell the quality of cotton, cannot ascertain with precision the evenness of the thread and cannot judge the quality of the fibre. Does this befit one who claims to do spinning as *yajna*? Is it then surprising that the progress of khadi should be slow? If God is in truth God of the poor, and certainly He is that, and if khadi is the symbol of His grace, then I am the oracle, or what you will, who proclaimed this truth, and yet how slack have I been in putting into practice my own teaching! I, therefore, never feel tempted to criticize anybody else in this matter. I am only trying to describe to you my own deficiency in this regard and my pain, and the self-understanding and knowledge which result from that pain. Though I have occasionally expressed such sentiments while talking with Kaka, you are the first person to whom I have expressed them so clearly, and I got the opportunity to do this because you combined the study of French with spinning. Let me repeat that I see no fault on your part in having done that. On the contrary, I see what an imperfect preacher of the *mantra* of spinning I have been. I knew the *mantra* but did not observe its ritual perfectly, and, therefore, it failed to reveal its full power. Apply to all activities in life the argument which I have applied here to spinning. You will then be able to feel in

your imagination the wonderful peace and sense of fulfilment which we can experience in our life. This is the meaning of the verse, “Yoga is skill in work”.¹ If we cultivate this attitude, we shall attempt only what is within our capacity to do and shall rest content with it. I am convinced that by working in this spirit we shall have contributed most to our own development and that of society. But all this will be mere philosophizing if I myself do not follow it in practice in everything I do. I am certainly making progress day by day in my effort to do so. What will happen when I am released, God alone knows. If possible, observe this at least in practice. Spin in this systematic manner the number of rounds which you regard as your daily contribution to the spinning-*yajna*. You may spin the rest in any manner that you can, for the purpose of increasing the country’s wealth. I feel tempted to go on writing still further. But I think I should stop here.

[From Gujarati]

Gitabodh, pp. 29-32

332. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

November 13, 1930

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I came to know only from your postcard that you had been released. Pyarelal had completely forgotten to tell me about it. How did you get scabies? It is a disease which is in fact quite easy to cure. I hope you observe proper restrictions in your diet. Write to me and tell me how long you were in the temple, and describe your experience in it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9501

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 50

333. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 13, 1930

CHI. GANGADEVI,

I have not written for a long time and you seem to have taken a vow of not writing to me unless I do. I have written to Mirabehn fully regarding walking and the pain you have. She will explain to you. Do not hesitate to write to me anything you feel like. How is Totaramji?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2543

334. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

BHURRR TO WHITE-BEARDED YOUNG MAN, THREE WEEKS' GUEST,

If I write in Gujarati to the daughter, who, though a mere girl, tries to look old, why should I not write in the mother tongue to the father who, though old, is getting younger day by day? In the West people communicate by means of wires, and transmit images too. I have the gift of the East. I see before me a youthful face, white-bearded but bursting with hearty laughter, and I hear the man telling the reporter: "I shall be back in the guest-house within three weeks." I have in my pocket the likeness of his face notwithstanding that I don't have a pocket. The old man has played his part marvellously well. The whole family is like him! May God protect him. *Khuda Hafiz.*

Bhurrr from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9573

335. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

What shall I write to you? Once you sat down to write to me, you could give me plenty of news. Now adhere to the resolution you have made. You can, if you wish, complain about your lot to me. We must find our happiness in suffering. One may say that that is the teaching of the *Gita*. I don't however wish to give a sermon.

I had at last to ask them to send me a pair of sandals. I require no clothes. I use the rug supplied from here. And I also have with me the one which I had taken with me when starting for the march. I have received plenty of khadi. I hope you are all right now. Kakasaheb will be released by the 28th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1809

336. LETTER TO TEHMINA P. JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I *have*¹ your letter. I am not and will not be bored. Please do not hesitate to write to me whenever you wish. It was good that you mentioned Dadabhai [Naoroji] in your letter. He was like a father to me. When I first reached England he was the only senior person to whom I had a letter [of introduction]. He took me under his care then and never left me afterwards.

It was he who led us during our early days in South Africa. Every fortnight (almost) I used to have a letter from him. Today I am enjoying the fruit of his paternal blessings.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 115

¹ Underlined in the source

337. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

November 14, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Real progress appears to be slow but in fact it is the short cut to our destination. As man engages more and more in the service that has fallen to his lot, without attachment to the results, he attains freedom from desire without effort. Control over the sense-organs, too, then becomes an absolutely easy thing.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 330. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

338. LETTER TO PADMA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 14, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

What a careless girl you are! Why do you write what looks like the marks left by a fly crawling across the sheet, and spoil your handwriting right from this age? Can you not get ink there? And you don't write anything about your health. You are quite right when you say that our sacrifices are nothing as compared to the sacrifices made by the women on that side. Well, then, learn to make similar sacrifices while you live there and devote yourself wholly to service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6115

339. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

When you get this letter, you will have been released. I heard that you had had fever recently, but I hope you have completely recovered now. Let us wait and see when you return as the Government's guest. I have heard from others about your activities in jail, but I should like to have a first-hand account from you. Has Amina calmed down now? Did Qureshi see you?

Blessings and Vandemataram from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6646

340. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 14, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Your letter to Kakasaheb was received late. I understood the situation better from it. People certainly give you credit. But exercise the utmost patience. You have taken upon yourself a great responsibility. But you should meditate over those three verses which we have recently included in the prayers. Those who work for God with His name ever on their lips, He makes them His special concern and ensures the success of their undertakings, and it is He who guides them; why, then, should we worry?

Padma seems to have got fever. She has a swelling too. If you cannot judge what to do to cure her, get her examined by Haribhai. If you can judge what to do, don't be afraid to apply any treatment you think best. Even when doing that, you should feel that you are guided by God and take measures which seem best at the moment; having done that, you should rest completely free from worry. Do not take upon yourself a burden beyond your strength to carry.

Man has ill-treated woman and is still doing so. But the remedy for this ultimately lies in woman's own hand. If she stops thinking

that she is weak, she can be free this very day. The really strong are not those who are strong in body. Ravana, who was a demon, that is, had physical strength, was helpless before the seemingly weak Sita. I am sure you remember the story. Sita was under the protection of a boon to the effect that anyone who cast an evil glance at her would be instantly burnt to ashes. Ravana knew this and that is why, though he carried her away, he could not touch her person with impure thoughts. He had to entreat Sita to let him embrace her. He threatened her time and again in the hope that she might yield; but unless she yielded of her own free will he was, in spite of his strength, as helpless as a goat. Though physically Sita was utterly helpless, in spirit she was a lioness.

We know the meaning of a boon. It is only a symbol. Every woman who has inviolable purity of character enjoys the same boon as Sita did. Any man who casts an evil glance at such a woman would be instantly burnt to ashes. If man has ill-treated woman, the reason is that she, too, has yielded to lust. Being enslaved by passion, both forgot their higher nature, forgot that they were souls and remained mere bodies. So far as the body is concerned, man is undoubtedly the stronger of the two. Hence woman was enslaved by man and the impression came to prevail that she was helpless before man, that she was weak and always needed man's protection.

As souls man and woman are equal. If a man does not recognize his spiritual nature but a woman does, the latter is the stronger of the two, as Sita was stronger than Ravana, and the other remains weaker, as was Ravana. Don't believe, moreover, that this was possible only in the time of Rama. Even today there are countless Sitas in the world who require no man's help and are yet safe against all danger. One such is Janakimaiya. You must have seen her. Whenever I went to Bombay, she came and saw me. She had not much intellectual capacity to speak of, but had boundless strength of spirit. She must have been good-looking in her youth. She embraced a hard path of service in the prime of her youth. I have known other Indian women like her, and also Englishwomen. They are examples of but a small measure of spiritual strength. A woman who has fully grown in soul deserves to be revered as the world's mother.

For those who wish to cultivate such strength, *satyayuga* exists today. Your task, therefore, is to make women strong. That is the right method of securing justice from men. A man like me may guide you

and awaken other men to a consciousness of their duty. But my capacity for serving women is limited.

Women alone can serve women perfectly. It is my ambition, through the Ashram, to prepare not one such worker but many. An opportunity to do so has presented itself to us just now.

If you have not followed this, ask me to explain again.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: *G.S. Gangabehnne*, pp. 45-7; also C.W. 8764. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

341. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 14, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

You must have got my letter acknowledging receipt of the cotton, and also the one I wrote in reply to yours. Please send again three pounds of cotton. I hope all you sisters are well.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4816. Courtesy: Premlila Thackersey

342. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (JHAVERI),

I got your letter. I see that you are really ill. It will be enough if you can get fruits like oranges, sweet lemons, fresh grapes, etc. It will also help you if you take dried black grapes or raisins soaked in water. As long as there are symptoms of dysentery, you should very

carefully remove the skin, or drink the juice. Whenever the stomach is out of order, you can certainly fast for a few days no matter how weak you are and you will always find that fasting benefits you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3108

343. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You certainly did well in consulting a doctor. But I cling to the cure I have suggested. You may, if you wish, carry out the doctor's treatment afterwards. Fast for at least seven days before you do anything else. We should never be afraid of fasting. During a seven-day fast, you will be able to attend to almost all your work. When I first undertook a long fast, I did not rest for a single day and experienced no difficulty on that account. It was a seven-day fast. At that time, I did have some fat on my body. Only a person who has no reserve of fat is forced to lie down during a fast. After two days of fasting, you will actually feel stronger. For two days, you may get a feeling of being hungry, but it will disappear after that and real hunger will return when the blood has been purified. Till that time, you should take an enema every day and keep the bowels clean. If, after taking the enema, you remain in the *ardha sarvangasan* posture, the water may even reach the large intestine. You may omit this, however, if you do not know how to do it. During the fast, you should drink plenty of water with soda bicarb and salt mixed in it. You may mix five grains of salt and ten grains of soda in every eight ounces of water and may safely drink up to eight cups of such water. You should also take sun-bath. I should like you to do this without any fear in your mind. You may tell the doctor about it, if you wish. Probably he, too, will approve of this cure. Many doctors now know about the miraculous effects of fasts.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10241; also C.W. 6690. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

344. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
November 15, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have both your letter and your report. The report is very good. As far as possible do not use pencil for letters to be sent by post. Let me know especially about your mental state there. Serve Gangabehn well.

Where is Brother? A letter from him was expected but I see none.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

345. LETTER TO KAMALA NEHRU

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 15, 1930

CHI. KAMALA,

I have your letter. The letter addressed to Ba has also been sent to me. I do not know what was decided in the end. Ba writes that she had fallen ill and people told her that her presence was needed more in areas around Bardoli. Yes, I have seen the prize given to Jawahar.¹ He deserves even more. But for the present this should satisfy us. It will be a real test for the people when no leaders are out and only then will the women too get the real chance. I find that Krishna² and now Shyam Kumari too have been released. How sad! There is no need for you to be unhappy over the situation in U. P. Those who are not awake now will awaken later. Who is going to

¹ Jawaharlal Nehru who had been arrested on April 14, 1930, was released on October 11 and rearrested on October 19, and sentenced to 23 months' imprisonment.

² Krishna Nehru

remain untouched during this final moment of trial? Let us love everyone and deal with them patiently. Everything will be well if we remain firm in our duty. Give me all the news about Father.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10869. Courtesy: Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

346. LETTER TO KRISHNA NEHRU

Y. M.,

November 15, 1930

CHI. KRISHNA,

What a clever girl you are? You came out so easily. Let us see what you do now. Did you have any information about that crazy man who paid the fine? The same thing happened to Shyam Kumari. All of you will be having enough chances. You need not feel sad.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: C. W. 10868. Courtesy: Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru

347. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 15, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

All right, I drop 'Dear Sister'. However I may have addressed you, I tried to be like a father. Daily I pray to God to make me worthy of your love and confidence. The thought of women like you makes me feel the hand of God in the *yajna* of self-purification. Your Hindi is so lucid that I don't find any trouble in understanding it. The truth is that language is inadequate for heartfelt emotions. They just

manifest themselves. Krishnadas is now released. Welcome him as one of your own. I have a letter from him. Anyway I have written to him to see you.

My letter about the *Gita* must have reached you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1676

348. *LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 16, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

If a man makes an unalterable decision to do or not to do a particular thing, it is for me a vow. The strongest men have been known at times to have become weak. God has a way of confounding us in our strength. Hence the necessity of vows, i.e., invoking God's assistance to give us strength at the crucial moment. But I must not strive with you. It seems to me that we mean the same thing but express it differently—you in Spanish and I in Italian, shall we say?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10082

349. *LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 16, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have just got a letter for the first time from Manilal. He informs me that he keeps very good health. He has lost not 40 lb. but 22 lb. Even that is a lot. But he seems to be very cheerful, and has also been reading a great deal. God has given him the strength to live in all circumstances. Moreover, he is simple at heart and so God always

protects him. Probably you know all this, but the more often you hear the same thing the happier you will feel. Write to me regularly. Coax Bharati to scribble letters of the alphabet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4777

350. LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 16, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

I have your letter. It is true indeed that you make a great many plans in your mind. But, then, you are not too old to carry out many of them at the proper time. Just now, however, in devoting oneself whole-heartedly to the work one has taken up lies the pursuit of painting or music or Sanskrit; it is marriage for those who want to marry and the vow of virginity for the unmarried. Write to me from time to time letters as long as the last one and fearlessly put before me all your thoughts, whether they are wise or foolish.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4056

351. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 16, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I have your letter. As long as you continue to get fever and the doctor forbids you to leave the bed, you need not yourself write to me. It will be enough if you ask the person attending on you to write a few lines. Of course we were happy to read your letter. There is no

hurry about Almora at all. I certainly would not insist that you should go. I had only made a suggestion. It is for the doctors to consider it

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7770

352. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

November 16, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got a letter from you after many days. Kakasaheb does read your letters. When you write a letter to me, it is as good as writing to him. You cannot write anything specially for him in a letter to me. But now it will not be even two weeks before he is released. Your experiences have been useful. You are right when you say that whether a person learns or not depends mostly on how hard he works. All that a teacher can do is to point out his error when he goes wrong.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6221

353. LETTER TO RADHA GANDHI

November 16, 1930

CHI. RADHIKA,

I got your letter. A good book too can be a revered guru. But God is the only true guru. When we learn to feel His presence in our heart, we shall have met the revered guru whom we seek.

I had heard about Hari-ichchha's betrothal. But it is from you that I hear about her wedding. To whom was she married, and how many persons attended the wedding? If Hari-ichchha is there, ask her to write to me. What is there to be shy about? What is the age of the husband? What is he? If you don't know all this, inquire and tell me. Rukhi is being tried well. Are you all right now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 9315. Courtesy: Radhabehn Chaudhri

354. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 16, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your painful letter. I feel extremely unhappy that you get fainting fits every day. You must get away from there and go and live in the Ashram and cure your fits. This disease cannot be cured with medicine. Only change of air and congenial company will cure it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3379

355. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 16, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Your letters are very precise. I learn many things from them. Don't be disheartened, or get angry, if some women do not keep their word. The wrong habits of many years will not change in a day. But a rope leaves a mark even on granite, if it rubs against it day after day. We should have faith that in the same way even hearts as hard as stone cannot but feel the effect of the rope of love continually rubbing against them. I have written to Chandra. If Chandra wrote the letter without help from anyone, it was a very good letter indeed. MY blessings to all the women.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6804

356. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAZAJ

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. RUKMINI,

I got a letter from you after many days. I was glad to learn that you had completely recovered your health. I hope the others also have recovered. What does Benarsilal intend to do there? How do you find the air at Kashi? I suppose you know that Nagardas Gandhi of Limdi lives there. His wife came and lived in the Ashram for some time. And Anandshankarbhai¹ also is there. If you have not met all these persons, meet them when you get an opportunity to do so. Ask Benarsilal to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9054

357. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 16, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

You must have got my letter. That Prabhavati is daily suffering from gastric trouble is intolerable. A change of climate and congenial company can cure it. I would request you either to escort or arrange to send Prabhavati to the Ashram. She can return when cured.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3380

¹ Bapubhai Dhruva

358. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

4.30 a.m. November 13/17, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

They sent me your packet at 4.30 p.m. on Wednesday, that is, yesterday.

The devotee “renounces all undertakings”.¹ This means the devotee will not draw up schemes of future expansion. For example, if a merchant who deals in cloth now has any plans of selling firewood as well in the future, or if he, having one shop only, thinks of opening five more shops, that would be *arambha* (undertaking) on his part, and the devotee will have none of it. This principle is applicable to service of the nation as well. For instance, a worker in the khadi department today will not take up cow-keeping tomorrow, agriculture the day after and medical aid on the fourth day. He will do his best in whatever has come to him. When I am free from egoism, nothing remains for me to do.

‘The Lord has bound me with a cotton thread; I am His, no matter where He leads me. I have been stabbed with the dagger of love.’ A devotee’s every activity is planned by God. It comes to him as in the natural course of things. He therefore rests content with, ‘this, that or anything else’ (येन केनचित् ।) This is the meaning of ‘re-nouncing all undertakings’. The devotee does not cease to work; indeed he is nothing if not a worker. He only ceases to think needless thoughts about his work. It is these that he has to renounce.

‘This has been acquired by me today; that purpose I shall gain tomorrow’² —this is the opposite of ‘renouncing undertakings’.

I think this answers your question fully. Ask me if anything is left out. Keep this portion with the discussion which is proceeding.

If, along with the new pair of sandals, you have not sent a piece of leather for repairing the soles, and if you can get such a piece and send it, with someone who may be coming on a visit here, please do send it, or send it by sample post provided it does not cost much, so that I can use when necessary even the worn-out sandals.

Write to Jamnalal and tell him that I wish him success in his holy

¹ Vide “Letters on the Gita”, 21-2-1932.

² *Bhagavad Gita*, XVI. 13

resolves. A time will come when he will not have to plan undertakings in this fashion. God will load him with tasks of service one after another. He will not have to plan for them or seek them. Just now, his planning for them is all right. From this he will come to taste the joy of *bhakti*. So long as there are no rains, we have no choice but to exert ourselves and draw water from wells, rivers, streams, etc. But, when the clouds burst in the sky and we have the Ganga flowing at our doorstep, what else need we do then? I think the work he could do in Nasik would have been beyond the capacity of anyone else. All the same, it would be good if others, too, tried. In my own case, I have to content myself with a sincere effort, and I apply to others the same yardstick as I do to me. I can say or write much more about this, but all that can wait till we meet. As for what the heart feels and wishes to convey, I have set it down above. This for Jamnalal.

I have written to you about . . . ¹. It is but right that none of us is satisfied with his confession. The evil in his heart is deep. I have of course written strongly to him. I suppose all of you must have expressed your dissatisfaction to him. So long as we are not satisfied about his purity, we cannot ask him to do any public service. He himself may do it on his own in the spirit of sacrifice. You may act in this matter as you think best. We need not be angry with him. We should act as love may prompt us to do. It is only the person on the spot who can realize what love requires him to do in certain circumstances. From a distance one can send no instructions about that.

4.45, November 15, 1930

Tell Manilal that the letter I received this time is the only one I have had from him. I did not receive his earlier letters. If he did write any, how did he send them, that is, with whom? I will inquire if I get definite information. If he is eager to have letters from me, I too wish to write to him. But I have a general understanding with the officials that I would not write to prisoners, and I abide by it. I enjoy sufficiently good freedom in other respects in the matter of writing letters and so I do not quarrel with them unnecessarily for further concessions. When our attitude is that we should be content in jail even if they do not permit us to write any letter at all, we ought not to quarrel on such grounds. Even so, we do send messages. Manilal,

¹ The name has been omitted.

however, should write as often as he is permitted to do. I have already written to you about his studies and he must have got the message. His present programme of reading is good enough. But the plan which I have suggested seems to me methodical and complete. If, therefore, he can take interest in those books, he should follow that plan. Sushila wrote to me saying that he had lost 40 lb. in weight. I suppose that was an error. Or did he really lose as much as that at any time? Has he now been recovering it or has the reduction come to stay? How about his strength? He is right in his view about Phoenix. If the paper is running at a loss, they should close it. Ask Manilal to write to that effect. I, too, will write, when I am permitted to do so. I had a letter from Pragji. The Headman has just gone out and will decide what reply to give after he returns. Meanwhile you can write to him and tell him that I think Pragji ought to get all the powers which he asks for.

I am awaiting your reply regarding the letter which Devdas wrote to me.

You will find something about spinning in the letter to Mirabehn. I will write to her tomorrow. You will find something more important still in the letter to Mahadev,¹ which I want all of you to understand. To spin by way of *yajna* and to take up spinning as labour in order merely to add that much to one's earning are twodifferent things. In *yajna*, the actual work, though extremely important, is of secondary value. In spinning undertaken as labour, the actual work is all that matters. Irrespective of whether it is anything more than that, even as work it bears fruit. In doing anything as *yajna* one is not concerned with the fruit of one's labour and, therefore, the fruit is immeasurable. That is, *yajna* completely fulfils one's cherished desires. In performing such a *yajna*, one must lose oneself in one's work. By doing that one learns the science and art of working. Anyone, therefore, who would work in the spirit of *yajna* should have such qualities as purity of heart, etc., and should do his sacrificial work with single-minded devotion. He would not even think about anything else when working. A worker inspired with such spirit of sacrifice should have mastered all that is known about the science of spinning and should be daily adding to the existing knowledge. If a peson who has voluntarily embraced the path of sacrifice has made mistakes through negligence or want of means or for any other reason, he should have the strength to rectify them as and when he

¹ Vide "Fragment of Letter to Mahadev Desai", 3-11-1930.

detects them. I use the word 'spinning' here in a symbolical sense. It stands for proficiency in all the processes relating to cotton. You will think this a big task, which it is and is not. It is not a big or difficult task for those who have recognized its necessity, for they will be making some progress every day towards mastery of these processes and will grow in purity of heart day by day. A person who works in the spirit of sacrifice will be a lover of truth and will, therefore, after he has realized the necessity of working in this spirit, go on voluntarily increasing his knowledge and proficiency without having to make a strenuous effort. Even if he has to do so, he will look upon that as God's grace and not a hardship. I feel, therefore, that all of us should adopt the method which I have explained in a previous letter and understand this deeper and truer meaning of *yajna*. I have explained sufficiently clearly in my letter to Mahadev how much I myself am to blame for our failure to understand this and put it into practice.

5 o'clock, November 16, 1930

I forgot to tell you in my last letter about Kakasaheb's suggestion to reduce exactly by half the time for completing once the devotional reading of the *Gita*. You must have read about it if you saw the letter to Vinoba. I forgot to tell you that you should read that letter. His suggestion is that we shall be conforming better to the tradition if we complete one reading in a week. Anyone who wants to join in the middle of a week will not then have to think how far the reading must have progressed. Every week you will be reciting the same verses on a particular day. If we complete the reading in a fortnight, the verses read on a particular day of the week change from week to week. It is true that completing it in a week means twice as much time every day. If we read through the whole of the *Gita* at one time, we would take an hour and a quarter or an hour and a half. At the rate of an hour and a half for the whole *Gita*, it will require six and a half minutes per day to complete the reading in fourteen days and 13 minutes per day to complete it in seven days. Those who are interested in the reading will not grudge the extra 6_ minutes. To those who are not interested, even the 6_ minutes being given to the reading at present are a burden. This is Kakasaheb's argument in support of his suggestion. Both the suggestion and the argument appeal to me. Think about them independently and, if they appeal to you, put them before the other members of the group and discuss

them. Discuss them with Mahadev if he is there. Those who join in the reading voluntarily and with true understanding of its meaning should be consulted first. If their view is against the suggestion, the matter need not be pursued further. It should be put before the rest of the group only if they welcome it. I have even prepared a time-table for completing the reading in seven days. I do not give it here just now. I will send it if the suggestion is favourably received. But no, there will be no need to write about it, for Kakasaheb will be there in two weeks' time and he will personally explain the scheme. I will add this, however. I think it would be right to permit those who are not even today interested in the reading to leave the prayer-meeting when the reading begins. The reading always comes last, so that everyone will be present during the main part of the prayer, guests and visitors excepted of course. In Wardha, and most probably in the Pratishtan too, they do the reading of the *Gita* in the same manner as we do at Sabarmati. We should, therefore, find out whether the suggestion suits them too, and so I wrote last week to Vinoba and Hemprabhadevi. As we understand better the importance of the devotional reading of the *Gita* and come to look upon the work as the lighthouse which guides our actions in life, we shall be less inclined to grudge the practice of completing the reading in one week. Much will depend, of course, on the person who leads the reading. If he puts his whole heart in it, he cannot but make it interesting. If we meditate during the whole day on the chapter which was read at the prayer-meeting, we shall discover new meanings in it and understand better those which we know.

A *mahavakya* lends itself to ever new interpretations, and the *Gita* is a *mahavakya*.

Afternoon

I got the sandals today. However, send a strong piece of leather for the soles when you find it, so that I can wear the old pair for a few months more.

Monday morning, November 17, 1930

On Tuesdays the letters are posted, if at all, only if I hand them over by 11 a.m. Hence I feel pressed for time for writing the discourses on that day. If, therefore, I write out the discourse on

Monday morning, I can finish everything in time and Kakasaheb will have sufficient time to read it slowly.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

Monday afternoon, November 17², 1930

[PS.]

I have tried the sandals on for a day. They fit me very well. Since Lady Vithaldas sends me cotton, I don't want you to send any. If, therefore, she writes to you and asks you to send some, do so.

Do observe the distinction between letters which may and those which cannot be forwarded. It is a good rule that news about public developments which cannot be given to newspapers cannot be given to me either.

There are 60 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

359. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

November 17, 1930

CHI. KASHI,

I see from Chhaganlal's letter that you suffer from constipation. I think that if it does not respond to change of diet, enema is the best remedy. That is the experience of the present-day doctors. I may say that it is only with the help of enema that I am able to keep well. The enema water should be lukewarm and should be inserted slowly. Soda-bi-carb and salt should be added to the water. At least two pounds of water should be inserted into the intestines and retained for about five minutes, if possible. Take sun baths. The abdomen should be massaged daily. Do this patiently. The enema should be taken in the morning on an empty stomach.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33091

¹ For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch.

II.

² The source has "November 18", but Monday was on November 17.

360. LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 18, 1930

BHAI BABALBHAI,

I have your letter. When Kakasaheb is released, he will guide you. Write to me from time to time. If you have not acquired mastery over the *takli*, do so. What is your speed on the spinning-wheel and on the *takli*? How much cotton can you card in an hour? What count of yarn do you spin? Give me all this information.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Kakasaheb has read your letter. He sends you his blessings.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9454

361. LETTER TO B. J. B. GALVIN

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 18, 1930

DEAR MAJOR GALVIN,

(1) Here is the usual post I send on Tuesdays. Will you please order its despatch today?

(2) There should be a spinning-wheel for me there. Could I have it please?

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 4504. Courtesy: Prof. B. J. B. Galvin

362. LETTER TO PYARE LAL GOVIL¹

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,
November 19, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Your touching letter of 28th ultimo has been given to me. My sympathy goes out to you in your affliction and I should be glad indeed if this letter brings you any comfort.

In my opinion you are in no way to blame. Having got the lady doctor you were quite right in trusting her. I do not believe in constant change of doctors and hakims. We must trust those whom we get to tell us when they need assistance or are in doubt as to their diagnosis. Sometimes it may be found that the trust was misplaced. But these are risks and chances of life which we must take always. I hope therefore that you will not worry yourself over what you consider was your negligence. This much you know yourself that you did not wilfully neglect anything. More no man can do.

¹ This was in reply to a letter dated October 28, 1930 from Pyare Lal Govil, Sub-Judge, Muzaffarnagar, U.P. He had lost his parents some 15 to 20 years ago and his only sister 16 years before writing. Narrating the circumstances of the death of his only child, a 24-year old daughter, following a delivery, he wrote that the sepsis from which she was suffering could not be diagnosed in time. He blamed himself for "culpable mistakes" resulting in her death. He further wrote: "If God has made destinies and every thing happens as has been fixed beforehand then there is no use in praying for mercy. If He is powerless then He need not be approached.

The following *shankas* [doubts] arise:

1. What *prayashchitta* should I perform to wash off this sin of utter carelessness?

2. How to give rest to her soul?

3. Could she have not been saved if correct and timely help had been given?

4. Is God powerless in changing the course of destinies? If so then there is no use in prayer, nor in taking medicines nor in asking for medical help, or in making any efforts that way.

5. Does a soul wander here and there for any length of time after departing from this body?

6. How should and can I know that she has taken birth anywhere else?

7. The idea that I have been very careless haunts me every moment, although I can swear that I did not know that I was making any mistake when I made them, else I would have never made them. I do not know what had become of my discretion and sense. Now I want nothing but I wish to know if I can in any way help her soul to get rest and stay in Heaven. If so what should I do?

Very kindly give your *ashirvad* for the departed soul."

Now for the answers to your questions:

(1) No *prayashchitta* is needed because in my opinion there was no carelessness on your part.

(2) No one can *give* rest to another soul. Her rest will come from herself.

(3) It is impossible to say what would have happened if other assistance had been procured. In spite of the ablest expert help kings have to die.

(4) There ought not to be much sorrow or fuss over an inevitable event. Death is the lot of every created thing, nor need it be considered as a calamity. Death is in reality a deliverance.

(5) What the soul does after discarding a body is in each case surmise but it is a certainty that the soul does not perish with the body. Let us trust the laws of God or nature for the rest.

(6) States before birth and after death are invisible as the *Gita* affirms and experience confirms. But we can infer from our present state that the condition after death is at least likely to be a second, though modified, edition of the present.

(7) We the survivors can certainly help the departed dear ones by wearing into our own lives all that was good in them. For if they know anything of what happens here they must be consoled by the knowledge that we are treasuring their memories by adopting what was best in them.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

One question has been omitted by oversight. God is never powerless. But His laws are immutable. We do not know them. Nor do we know His will at a given moment. Therefore we adopt within bounds such remedies as may commend themselves to us. Prayer is to the God within. It does not provoke God to change His will but it enables us to know His will which is everything.

M.K.G.

From a copy: C.W. 9305. Courtesy: D. B. Kalelkar; also *Harijan*, 15-2-1948

363. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

YERAVIDA JAIL,
November 21, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Today I have sent you a telegram about Prabhavati which you will have received. I await your reply.¹ I hope you have sent her to the Ashram. The best thing of course would be for you to go with her and have her fixed up there. Any programme about her future work can be decided after she gets well. I understand your sorrow. I have thought over it. You should not say anything to Prabhavati. If she is moved by desire there will be no problem. But if she has no stirrings of desire, it becomes your duty to protect her. I need hardly remind you that women have as much right to freedom as men. It is my firm opinion that if one partner in marriage has sexual urge it is by no means the duty of the other partner also to have such urge, though it is the right of the partner with the sexual urge to satisfy that urge. This is perhaps one of the causes of polygamy. Just as it will be considered immoral for a man to cohabit with a wife who is ill it should also be considered immoral to cohabit with a wife who has no sexual desire. It is therefore my earnest advice that if Prabhavati has no craving for sex you should give her freedom and find yourself another wife. I see no immorality in that. After all what is to be done? How can your craving be forcibly stifled? You consider sex necessary and beneficial for the spirit. In such a situation I would not consider a second marriage immoral from any point of view. In fact I feel that your doing so may well set an example to others. Many young men use force with their wives. Others visit prostitutes. Still others indulge in even worse practices. Prabhavati has chosen to live the life of a virgin. You do not wish to practise *brahmacharya*. Therefore I see nothing wrong in your respecting the wishes of Prabhavati and finding yourself another wife. If you cannot think of another woman, you should, for the sake of Prabhavati, observe *brahmacharya*. If your love for prabhavati is really true you will find that as soon as you go near her your sexual craving will subside. I have placed my views before you. Do as your duty bids you. May God grant you the strength to do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Vide "Letter to Prabhavati" 24-11-1930.

364. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

November 22, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Do not mind the length of your letters. You won't tire me at all. Jairamdas says you still do not feel that you are supporting yourself. You should throw off this tenderness. What you are getting is not a donation; it is what you earn. He who gives his best to the work he takes up and gets what he needs for living, earns it. If you were leading a luxurious life and getting paid for it, I would myself say that you were not living correctly. You must therefore get rid of this sensitiveness. I am glad you had all those precious hours with Jairamdas. The way to cultivate faith in God is to recognize our nothingness and thus be humble as a particle of dust. You know the prayer to Mother Earth in our morning verses. The best of us at his very best is a tiny thing and utterly helpless. And yet we are not so helpless the moment we know that we are sparks from the Divine which is in us. Faith does not come from reason. Faith is believing. Believe in God because those whose names we hold sacred have believed and testified.

You will keep up a respectful correspondence with Father even though you may scent coldness on his part at times.

Yours

BAPU

[PS.]

If you see Acharya . . . ¹ well. And remember me to Dr. Choithram² and Malkani³. Where is Jairamdas kept?

About Vidya in my letter to her. Does she or do you understand that letter?

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

¹ Mutilated in the source

² Dr. Choithram Gidwani's

³ N. R. Malkani

365. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

November 22, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

You should write to me in order that the burden of giving me the news about everyone's health and about the activities there may not rest on Narandas. When you write, you should give me news about Jamnadas too. Convey my respectful greetings to Grandfather and Grandmother. I think about both of them every day and pray for their blessings. Have you completely recovered now? Give me a sample account of your activities on any one day.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 900. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

366. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 22, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I have your letter. If you will only realize that the verses¹ are a part of our prayers and that, therefore, we should learn them by heart, you will be able with some effort to get absorbed in them. You should not lose heart if you do not succeed in the effort. All those who recite them do not become absorbed in them. If, however, you continue to have faith and recite them, one day you will find that you can become absorbed in them. Moreover, the verses have a deep meaning. If you meditate over it, that, too, will help you to concentrate on them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 1810

¹ Of *Bhagavad Gita*

367. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI G. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I think my memory is as weak as yours, but this is the method I followed, and still follow, for memorizing whatever I did, or do when I get any time for that, and I have no doubt that it is the best one. We should first try and understand the meaning of what we wish to memorize and the relations of the different parts to each other. After we have done this, all that remains to do is to commit to memory the poet's words expressing that meaning and those relations. This is easy to do. Try this method and memorize Chapter XII. Arjuna asks: "As between one who worships in this manner and another who worships the Unmanifest, who is superior?" Reflect over the reply to this question and then try to memorize the verses. This is interesting, involves no waste of energy and, because we have faith, the meaning sinks in our heart while we try to memorize the verses.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9502

368. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

You have written a very good letter indeed this time. For your age, your handwriting is still poor and ill-formed. Make a patient effort and improve it. You like Narandasbhai's spinning-wheel because it is respectable and is maintained in good condition. You are doing right in mixing milk with *raab*. It is also good that you eat *khakhras* and not rice. If you do as much physical work as you can, your body will certainly become strong and your weight will

increase. You will be doing . . .¹ service in a spirit of non-attachment if you adopt the attitude that you will go with Raojibhai and stay with him if he takes you. A true servant does service wherever he lives.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9214

369. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I have your letter. Kakasaheb will meet you now in a few days. Get rid of your fever and your pain by a strong effort of will. I can understand your being proud of the fact that Kakasaheb's birthday and yours fall on the same date. We should try to cultivate in ourselves the virtues of the person of whom we feel proud. You are doing that. May God give you a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7771

370. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAUDA MANDIR,
November 22, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

If Mother lives near the Ashram, you will feel easy in mind and will also be able to go on with the work of service.

It is not obligatory on anyone to marry a particular person and nobody else. If, however, a Hindu woman wishes to marry a Muslim for good and sufficient reasons, we should not believe that she would be committing a sin if she did so. How, then, can we object to a woman marrying a so-called untouchable? Such a person is not a

¹ One word is illegible in the source.

non-Hindu. There is no necessary connection between marriage and the varna system. We should remember that marriage is a universally accepted religious institution intended to put a restraint on gratification of lust, and limit the field of choice for individuals. I think I have fully answered your question.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5261

371. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

November 22, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

There are two reasons why you do not like to spin. One, you do not realize that it is for the sake of the poor nor do you know the poverty of the hunger-stricken. Two, you are not good at spinning. Therefore, know the poor and if you understand our duty to have compassion for the poor you will be interested without any effort. Then you will feel that you should spin as much as you can and as well as you can because you will be spinning for them.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati: C.W. 257. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

372. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 23, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

It was bad to have got fever again. But I suppose it is no use fretting over it. There is undoubtedly poison in your system. It upsets it on the slightest pretext. Whenever possible trace the cause and avoid it in future. If it is rest that is needed and if you cannot take it at the Ashram take it where you think you can get it. You may even go to Vijapur where Chhaganlal is or some such quiet place. Even a week's change may set you up.

You will be pleased to hear that I have set the Bihar wheel going. I followed your instructions and it went. The holders required attention. I opened out the holes. I am not working at it because I am

making experiments with the Gandiv which still gives promise of possibilities. I am describing the changes in my letter to Keshu. I would speak to you about the Bihar wheel. The alteration you have made doesn't seem to me to have added to the utility of the wheel. The original length of the platform is the ideal length. The length in the "improved" machine is too much for drawing the thread away from you and too little for drawing it towards you. The original holders may admit of a change. I am trying the coir holders in the Gandiv and they have worked exceedingly well. In the coir holders the spindle moves in the rough and smooth convex surface of the coir twine. Hence it moves with the minimum of friction. In the Bihar holders the spindle moves lazily on 1/8th inch flat surface. Hence there is avoidable friction. The coir holders undoubtedly last long, take no time to make and hold oil better. Coir twine is available anywhere. It can be picked from waste. These hints are for you to note and follow out where you have leisure. Another good piece of news. For the last three days I have been trying one of the *taklis* you left here. It is giving me more satisfaction than the one I have made and on which I was working. The mouth of mine is wretchedly made. Yours is much better. I read today the translation of my summary of the first chapter of the *Gita*. I can trace your hand in it. The sense has been fairly preserved.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5421. Courtesy: Mirabeau; also G.N. 9655

373. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

November 23, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have your letter. The remedy for your ill health is hipbath and sun-bath. Ramanama is prescribed for peace of mind. If sexual desire disturbs you, you should suppress it. There is only one way of staying near the Divine Light, namely, to serve the children of God. That Light cannot point any other way. Can you read my handwriting and understand my argument??

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

374. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

November 23, 1930

CHI. NIMU,

It will be good if you keep writing to me as you are doing now. It is as well that Sumitra knows me only by my photograph. In a way, it is a pleasant game. If one gets annoyed with a photograph, one can tear it up. one can even beat it up and, if one feels so inclined, one can bow to it. Moreover, a photograph will have only as many virtues as we imagine it to have. Who knows what the original is like? We cannot even have an idea of his bad qualities. And if one gives vent to one's irritation with him, he may even . . .¹ And so, on the whole, the name has more worth than the person bearing the name.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

375. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 24, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have been getting your letters. You must have got the letter which I wrote you. I sent it to the Patna address, since that is the address you had given in your letter. I had sent a wire to Jayaprakash asking him to send you to the Ashram. His reply was that, if your health did not improve, he would. I am eager to know what you intend to do now. May God give you peace of mind and health. In any case, do write to me regularly. Don't give up courage.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3381

¹ A word here is illegible in the source.

376. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 24, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

You had forgotten to sign your letter. I understand what you say about Sarbhon. You did right in leaving the place only after consulting Nath, Narandas and Mahadev. It was not then necessary to explain things to me in detail.

I am afraid the constipation may persist. Don't neglect to write to me regularly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9278

377. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 24, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. When we do not set out to reach a place out of our pride but are led by God, we feel on arriving at the destination that we have arrived not a moment too soon. Our task is a difficult one. We trust in God for success in it.

Think over the verses in the women's prayers. Every one of those verses would seem to have been composed for circumstances like the present. We should realize today the value of Draupadi's prayer.

I hope no one shows antipathy to, .¹ Does everyone know about her?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp. 47-8; also C.W. 8765. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

¹ The name has been omitted.

378. LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI

November 24, 1930

CHI. HARILAL (DESAI),

I have your frank letter. I understand what you say regarding the marriage. Has the man any children? Is his mother alive? Has Hari-ichchha gone to her husband's house? It was certainly wrong of you to have given up the tannery work. I see in your action a weakness common in our society. The reasons to which you yielded while leaving the work were before you when you took it up. Only yesterday, while I was translating Prayer No. 127, I read the following verse in it;

Revolve the thing in your mind carefully before you act,

Never go to fight in a battle in blind rivalry of others,

If you go, fight till you are hewn to pieces.

If you break your vow once, you will not know where to end.

You have also not properly understood your duty to your mother. Suppose a mother belongs to a society in which drinking is common. Her son gives it up as an evil, but the mother tries to dissuade him from doing so, and threatens to commit suicide if the son gives up drinking. In these circumstances, is it the duty of the son to give up what he regards as his duty? To honour the word given by Dasharatha, Rama left for the forest and let Dasharatha die. Though Kaikeyi entreated Bharata with piteous tears, Bharata clung to his decision not to accept the throne. Judging by common standards, had Kaikeyi done anything wrong? She was one of the many queens, and in any case she had her husband's word. What sin had she committed in demanding the throne for her son? But Bharata saw sin in her action and disregarded her entreaties.

I have not written this to reproach you. I cannot feel angry with you. I have written what I have done because I thought it my duty to explain to you what your duty was.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6625

379. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 24, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter giving me all details. I was glad. I don't always remember the reasons behind my decisions. You have proved yourself a true soldier. It is a mistake if you believe that, by remaining there, you are not doing a soldier's duty. All persons are not sent to the front. Many recruits are kept in reserve. Moreover, very responsible persons are required at the head-quarters. One must of course give up fear of danger and face it whenever it comes. But anyone who needlessly rushes into danger is not a soldier but a fool. I look upon Narandas as a true soldier. Who knows what dangers are in store for you? True soldiership lies in abiding by God's will. That is non-attachment. If we express that idea in common language, it means that we should act as ordered by the general to whose discipline we have voluntarily submitted ourselves.

The Ashram children have complained in their letter against Dharmakumar, that he is dirty. Dhiru seems to know about it. Inquire about this.

I understand your view about the ceremonial recitation of the *Gita*. On this issue you may quarrel with Kakasaheb to your heart's content. Personally, I think that at the back of your opposition to the proposal is your aversion to or lack of faith in the prayers themselves. If you had your way, I think you would have nothing besides the *dhun*. I would advise you to have faith in all the items of the prayers. If possible, concentrate your attention on the meaning of each item. If you cannot do that, have faith that the words you hear are noble and that even the fact of listening to them will do you good, and attend to them respectfully. Please do not understand from this that I wish to convert you to the proposal for completing the recitation in seven days. I have written this to convince you that there is some meaning in the prayers behind which lies fifteen years' *tapascharya*, with unswerving faith, on the part of some of us.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10243; also C.W. 6691. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

*380. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI
THAKKAR*

November 24, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

Madhavji writes and tells me that you keep worrying about the children. Why? Reflect over the verses which we recite daily and burn up all worries. God will look after the children. I have written a letter to Calcutta. We may request the elders as earnestly as with propriety we can and then, trusting them, rely on God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6805

381. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 24, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

I got your letter. I had sent a translation of a poem by Swami Ramdas about the art of writing. Did you hear it read out? If you don't know about it, request Premabehn to explain it to you and then try to write in that manner. Kakasaheb himself will go there now and give his blessings to you all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5755

382. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

November 24, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I have a letter from you after many days. I have heard about Qureshi having gone to jail again. He has done the right thing. Have all of you been able to keep yourselves well in Dhandhuka? Is it colder there or less cold [than in Ahmedabad]. Do you ever go out for a walk?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Convey my salaams to your father-in-law.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6668

383. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

November 24, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The question is this: Vithal says that it is not necessary to rub [the string] with leaves if it has been rubbed with candle-wax. You say it is necessary. If it is, why is it? Vithal should correct his error. We find that rubbing with candle-wax is enough. The cotton does not stick [to the string].

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3748

384. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,

November 24, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. As far as possible avoid things containing chillies. If there are chillies in *dal* and vegetables, you must not of course eat the *dal*, indeed you should also avoid the vegetables. If

milk or buttermilk is available, you can have either with the *rotis*. Or you can have the *roti* just with salt. You will be able to carry on like this for some time at least. Do you get buttermilk and milk? Live very carefully. Write to me about all that you observe. Write to Father and Mother from time to time.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

385. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

November 24, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

I have your letter¹. Satis Babu's discourse is excellent. It expresses well his mental state. Those desirous of living as inmates of Sodepur Ashram should scrupulously observe the Ashram regulations. If you cannot have such people, you may run it with paid workers or close it down. Herein lies our test. To what extent it is right to run it through paid workers is a different matter. Let us hope such an occasion never arises. The running or the closure of the Ashram rests with God.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1677

¹ The addressee in her letter had expressed disillusionment about the sincerity of the Ashram workers. In the absence of Satis Chandra Das Gupta, she was attempting to run the Ashram on her own. She had expressed the possibility of employing paid workers if the efforts of the Ashram inmates were inadequate, and had enclosed extracts from a letter from Satis Chandra Das Gupta which was more in the nature of a discourse upon Tarini's death. (S.N. 16758-m)

386. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

At night, November 21/25, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter on Thursday (20th) morning. You should not forward any letters unopened. Open every letter before forwarding it. You may not read the letter, if the correspondent so desires, but even that on the understanding that the correspondent should write about no subject which is forbidden. Confidential letters, therefore, should be about personal matters only. Adhere to the method which you have been following.

It is certainly a painful matter that undesirable freedom was taken in several respects at the time of Hari-ichchha's marriage, but you did right in tolerating everything patiently and giving all possible help.

Sometimes dharma lies in setting aside such rules. The attitude which you adopted was inspired by the spirit of non-violence. A principle has no exception. When, however, the rules and regulations framed to embody a principle are felt to kill its spirit, they may be set aside. The occasion of Hari-ichchha's marriage was of this kind.

At the present time I have dedicated myself heart and soul to spinning and other related processes, and I find myself constantly thinking about the subject. Since we do spinning as a form of *yajna*, we should be very exact and regular in doing it, display the utmost perseverance and sincerity in our work and become very proficient in it. Most of us have no knowledge of even some elementary things about spinning. We should acquire it now. That is, everyone should be able to ascertain the count, strength and evenness of his or her yarn and keep a record of these. One should also keep a record of the time spent every day. If we do these things habitually, they will take very little time. Everyone should pay attention to increasing his or her speed, but without wasting yarn. People should also learn to keep the spinning-wheel in repair. That is, they should know how to make the belt, *jotar* and spindle-holder. They should know about the different models of spinning-wheels. But you should not be burdened with the task of thinking about all these matters and getting people to carry out my suggestions. I have nothing else to engage my attention, but you

have to face new responsibilities and problems every day. These suggestions, therefore, should not impose a burden on you. You may carry out, and persuade others to carry out, only those suggestions which people can easily take up and act upon. Other people, too, should concern themselves with these things and think about them. Everyone should do what his interest and capacity incline him or permit him to do. You will find in the letter to Lakshmidas a description of my experience in this regard too; please read it.

Saturday morning

You have given a pleasing description of the service you are doing. Take care that you do not fall ill through all this labour. You have the spirit of non-attachment in you in good measure. There is little likelihood, therefore, of your falling ill. Krishna is bound to protect those who dedicate their work of service to Him. Your losing weight is a good sign indeed. You have had a good crop of fruit in the Ashram. Mathew has not described what freedom he takes. He has merely stated that he takes freedom. If you know in what respect, let me know. We keep him in the Ashram because he is a good man. I, too, believe that he will come round some day.

When you have no time because of pressure of work, it will suffice if you write only a few lines. You will find it easier if you write down from time to time what you think you must tell me. Don't you see that that is what I do here, though I am not as busy as you are? I don't depart from my daily routine in order to write these letters. That routine, of course, concerns the hours of meals, sleeping, answering the call of nature and spinning. The hours which are not taken up by these activities are practically all spent in writing letters, except on Tuesday. I know that you can arrange properly all your work, but even then I feel tempted to write this. It is also a test of non-attachment to work, that a person who has cultivated it will not feel that he is working under pressure even when he is busy with a variety of tasks. There is an excellent thought in an English saying. It is that a busy man can always spare time for others. The point is that such a person, even though working hard, is always found as fresh as if he had no work and no one is disappointed by him.

I was very happy that you could take in Dhiru and Vimu. It was also good that those two children felt drawn to the Ashram of their own accord. Let me know how Dhiru behaves now.

Amidas's experiment is worth watching. From here, I see an error in it. If he does no work and rests all the time, he can certainly live on fruit, but his experiment will not have succeeded. That is right food for the body which gives it the necessary strength for the ordinary duties of service. To get such strength, he should be able to digest almonds and such other tissue-building foods. My experience so far tells me that a weak stomach cannot digest foods like almond, whereas it can digest the same nutrients from milk. However, I don't wish to write about this to Amidas or suggest it indirectly to him. His sincere faith will probably give him the required light. Let us hope that he will correct his mistake, if he is making any, and that he will learn from his experience the value of milk or discover some vegetarian substances similar in value to foods of animal origin.

...¹'s case is a sad one. I did feel something unattractive on his face, but I believed that he was a good man and used to dismiss the other thought from my mind. And I was right in doing that. Even when he fell at times, he continued to struggle and it is possible that he has succeeded in his struggle by now. If so, the expression on his face may also have changed. It was said about Socrates that till the last his face did not seem like a good man's. There is, therefore, only one path for creatures like us who are always liable to error. We should always assume a man to be good till we come to know something against him.

Give me the names of Chandrakanta's father and mother. I will then write slips for them. What you have written to them is right. They ought to give up worrying about her. It would be best if Kanta's mother does not come to the Ashram. She will probably be a burden on Gangabehn. Punjabhai's becoming unconscious occasionally is God's grace. That seems to give him some rest. It would be best if Champa's delivery takes place in the hospital to which Amina was admitted. She will get all facilities there and will be well looked after, and nobody else will be put to trouble. Some woman or other who can be spared from the Ashram may visit her from time to time and stay with her. If this is possible, suggest it to Champa. If she agrees, she will find the arrangement convenient.

Monday morning, November 24, 1930

Most probably I wrote to you that I had received the bark-sheet sent by Ratubhai. I used it till this day as a covering when sleeping,

¹ The name has been omitted.

but it has not become soft. I do not know whether or not it can be washed. As it remains stiff, I thought it would be more useful for spreading on the floor and that is what I have started doing from today. I am sitting on it just now.

Vinoba tells me in his letter that he has sent two *taklis*. I have made inquiries. They do not seem to have been received here so far. I wonder if they have been received there. If you have received them, send them here.¹

I call this chapter the key to an understanding of the *Gita*, and the gist of it is that life is given us for service and not for enjoyment. We have therefore to impart a sacrificial character to our lives. Intellectual assent to this proposition is only the first step, but such assent and conduct in terms of that assent are bound to rid our heart of its impurities in course of time. But what is real service? In order to obtain the right answer to this question, restraint of the senses is essential, as it gives us a clearer and clearer vision of the God of truth. Service rendered with selfish motives ceases to be sacrifice. Hence the urgent need for the spirit of detachment. When this is understood, all manner of controversies lose their meaning for us. 'Did Krishna really ask Arjuna to kill his relatives? Could such killing ever be a part of one's duty?' Questions like these are set at rest for ever. When detachment governs our actions, even the weapon raised in order to strike an enemy down falls out of our hand. But a mere pretence of detachment serves no useful purpose. If only we persevere in our effort, detachment may come to us perhaps the very first day, or maybe only after a thousand years. We must not worry over the time this takes, for the effort carries within itself the seeds of success. We must however be on our guard and make sure that it is a genuine effort, and that there is no self-deception. And this is certainly possible for us all.

I have thus been able to complete Chapter III in two parts. I have now fifteen minutes left to me in which to finish this letter. The title you have suggested for these discourses is rather long. It seems you propose to publish them one by one. Kaka suggests a short title *Gitabodh*². I like it. The intention behind the present attempt is that it may help those who read the discourses to understand the meaning of

¹ For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*" —Ch. III.

² Light on the *Gita*'

the *Gita* as I have understood it. I don't know whether I shall succeed in my aim. But that is the intention behind my attempt and, therefore, the title *Gitabodh* suits the discourses very well. I doubt the necessity of an English translation of these discourses. But the final decision can only be made there. As for the suggestion to complete the devotional reading of the *Gita* in a week, Kakasaheb will now discuss it personally. If no one likes the idea, we certainly don't wish to act upon it.

Blessings from

BAPU

After 8 a.m., Tuesday

[PS.]

Dudhabhai is in jail. Ascertain in which jail. If he is in Sabarmati Jail, someone should go and visit him. Where has Somabhai taken up work? I wrote to Jairamdas and told him that I was not eating fresh fruits. My reason for doing so was that there was a statement by the 'lathi' Department¹ of the Government that it was not true that I had given up eating fresh fruits in protest against lathi charges and that I still ate them. I have already told you what I eat. However, I give here the history so far, so that, if an occasion arises, you may issue an authoritative rejoinder. I had given up fresh fruit for the most part during the salt-march. I had resumed it after I was brought here. But I gave it up after I heard about lathi-charges. I must have accepted it for three or four days when I heard about the lathi-charges. That was the position when Jairamdas met me. After that, with a view to overcoming constipation and saving expenditure, I gave up the dry fruits which I had been eating, namely, dates, currants and raisins and started eating vegetables only. For some days I ate both fruit and vegetables and then went over exclusively to vegetables, but realized that I could not keep fit on them alone. So I again went back to dates and raisins. Among the vegetables, I used to be supplied unripe *papaiya*. Sometimes the *papaiya* would be ripe and I would eat that too. This did not happen while Jairamdas was here. I must have accepted about ten times ripe *papaiya* supplied from the garden here. Lemon, I of course take every day, and Jairamdas has mentioned the fact. His statement, therefore, is quite correct and the Government's on the whole incorrect. It is only recently that I have been receiving *papaiya*

¹ Probably the Home Department

and no one can say, because I eat it, that I live on fresh fruit. Probably no official knows about this fact at all, for the *papaiya* is supplied to me along with raw vegetables. It is never bought from the market. This is the position. Kakasaheb will be released on the 29th and he will of course state the correct position more clearly. My belief is that the Government official [responsible for the statement] has made no distinction between fresh and dry fruits or that he has assumed, from my having accepted a basket of fruit which may have been brought by a visitor and which I may have passed on to Kakasaheb, that I myself had eaten the fruit. God alone knows how the statement came to be issued. If no controversy follows, you need not go out of your way to issue any statement.

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 64 letters today.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

387. *LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
November 25, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have a letter from you this time after many week. I hope Chhaganlal will make good use of his enforced rest. Though late, the cutting off of Vimala's hair is to be welcomed. Everything has its own appointed time. You need not feel sorry that you did not get her hair cut off earlier. The idea was so completely new that it is not surprising that a mother should not accept it readily. It is best that you should accept anything I may suggest only if you are convinced about it; you will then cling to it. It is my duty to have patience till I succeed in convincing you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5327

388. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

November 25, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I have your letter. If Mother definitely refuses to come and if Kalavati does not live with her to look after her, I can see only one alternative. Either you yourself should go and live with her or engage a servant who would look after her. Which of the two courses it is your dharma to adopt, your heart alone can tell you. It is not a matter on which you may consult somebody else. It would be improper for any person to tell you what your dharma is in this matter. The problem is so delicate that nobody else can suggest a solution

Did you come to know anything more about that woman who committed suicide?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5262

389. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

November 27, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

I have your letter. Premabehn does not spare the rod; have you then complained to her about this? I shall certainly plead on behalf of you and Chandan.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 258. Courtesy: Lakshmibehn Khare

390. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

November 27, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter and report. The report is excellent. You say that you saw no cow in the places which you visited; the position is the same in almost the whole of Kheda district. People are selfish and are simply not interested in keeping cows. That is why we have taken up cow-protection work.

Who cooks your meals?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 48; also C.W. 8766. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

391. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

November 27, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

When I think of Prabhavati I feel that the sooner she goes to the Ashram the better it will be. That she will go to the Ashram if she does not recover will mean that she will go when her illness has become worse. You who have been educated in the West should understand that illness should be tackled at its inception. I have known cases of hysteria where recovery was effected by the transfer of the patient to a different place. In Prabhavati's case it is doubly necessary that she should have a change of weather. She is ailing and she is also faced with a moral crisis. In a freer atmosphere she will be better able to know her heart and she will also discover her duty. The difficult question before you is that of freedom of women. If Prabhavati has as much freedom as you, you must concede to her the right to think for herself.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

392. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

November 28, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. Many children suffer when they cut teeth. Hence it is nothing strange that she does too. But her cold should go. Somebody should carry her and walk in the sunshine. The head should be kept covered. This will warm up the skin and make it less sensitive. I believe the cold will then disappear.

Once you have formed the habit of keeping accounts, you don't find it a burden to do so and discover through experience the very great value of the practice. Whether or not one's life is peaceful should make no difference in this matter. There are some things which we should try hard and learn to do with a peaceful mind even in the midst of highly distracting circumstances. Write to me regularly once a week.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6859

393. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

November 28, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter written from Arrah. I posted a letter to you yesterday to Sitabadiyara. This too I hope you will get. If your health improves there, I have nothing more to say about it. It will not, however, be good sense to go to the Ashram after your health is nearly ruined. While improvement is still possible, you will recover if you go and stay there for some time. Then you will also have some peace of mind to think about your problems and be able to judge what your duty is. You should know that you are not subject to anyone's authority. It is we who make ourselves free or subject to someone's authority. If you understand this, you will be able to face the whole world.

I am more or less all right. Kakasaheb will be released tomorrow—to put it more correctly, he will be imprisoned, for he is free here.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. PRABHAVATIDEVI
C/O BABU HARSOO DAYALJI
REVENUE OFFICER
ARRAH, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3382

394. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 28, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I cannot stop wondering whether you will be able to preserve your health in the midst of all the wanderings there. I know I should not worry. In all things God's will prevails. You can write to me everything which you can send to newspapers for publication. What you cannot send to the papers, you cannot write to me. You should follow this rule in giving me news about the present activities. About yourself, you may write anything. I keep all right, more or less.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9294

395. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

November 28, 1930

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

I have your letter. It was a beautiful one. The more I think about religion, the more convinced I feel that its essence lies in truth and non-violence. In the very beginning occurs the name Rahim. Does it not stand for non-violence? We look down with contempt on the thing because we do not know how to employ it. Once we have learnt how to employ it, we will never forsake it.

That you still pass sugar in urine is a bad sign. If you can exercise sufficient control over yourself, that is, master the body, you should live exclusively on unboiled milk. You should mix nothing with it. Such milk is perfect food. If you live on it only, sugar is bound to disappear. Even fruit is not good for you. Nor is there anything else which will agree with you. You may certainly eat curds. If you can, do this for the sake of the country at least;

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6647

396. LETTER TO AMINA QURESHI

November 28, 1930

CHI. AMINA,

I have your letter. I hear from Imam Saheb that you have become impatient to go to jail. That is not proper, however. When God wills that you should go to jail, you will get an opportunity without seeking it. It is enough that you yourself are ready. Till that time comes, look after the children. Preserve good health and do whatever service you can from home. It is possible in this struggle to serve even from home. It is enough that you have shed fear.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

How far have you progressed in your study of Urdu?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6659

397. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

November 28, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. The deduction that violence prevails in Bengal due to insufficient propagation of my ideas seems to be wrong. The atmosphere in Bengal has always been surcharged with violence which is the reason for the lesser dissemination of my ideas there. But if we

remain true, the atmosphere in Bengal is bound to change. This does not mean that you may give up your resolve. Do your best to propagate it but do not expect appreciable results too soon.

Blessings to the Ashram inmates.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1678

398. *DUTY OF SATYAGRAHI PRISONERS*¹

[Before November 29, 1930]

Our civil disobedience is fulfilled when we seek imprisonment. Disobedience would cease to be civil if we defied legitimate jail discipline. We may not therefore shout or create a row in the jails. We may not refuse work when it is demanded of us according to rules. We should rather be anxious to do as much work as we can and that too as efficiently as we are capable of. It would be nice if even ‘simple prisoners’ volunteered to do some useful work not necessarily with a view to getting any remission. Prisoners undergoing simple

¹ This was quoted by D. B. Kalelkar in an interview to *The Bombay Chronicle*. On the basis of the discussions he had with Gandhiji before his release on November 29, 1930, he observed: “He does not think himself competent enough to guide the political struggle today because he is removed from the field of action. To a satyagrahi, imprisonment is a civil death. But as a prisoner he can give authoritative instructions for prospective satyagrahi prisoners. Daring my stay with him in the Yeravda jail I discussed with him various aspects of the jail life and elicited from him some useful instructions. He had no objections to my sharing them with workers in the cause of swaraj. I give them below as they occur to me.

A satyagrahi should realize that his antagonism or disobedience ceases as soon as he is convicted by the court. He is not out to paralyse jail discipline. In war, a prisoner lays down his arms and capitulates when he is caught. The enemy can always rely on the words of a true ‘soldier-prisoner’. A prisoner of war would not try to escape, would not try to deceive when he is allowed an amount of liberty on the strength of his word of honour. We, as satyagrahis, should try to be ideal prisoners in jails. We must always be prepared to abide by the rules of jail discipline so long as they do not go against the ordinary canons of humanity and self-respect. I have sometimes heard some young satyagrahis arguing against submitting to jail discipline. They say: ‘We came to jail because we wanted to disobey the laws of Government. How do you ask us to obey the rules inside the jail? We are pledged only to non-violence but we will certainly defy the Government even in jails.’ “

imprisonment have helped a great deal in easing tense situations by merely offering to do hard labour. Whatever work we turn out is so much addition to the National Wealth.

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1931

399. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

[Before November 11, 1930]¹

CHI. KANTA,

I have your letter. You can go as Premabehn did, after obtaining permission, If there is a reason you also may go with permission as Premabehn has done, so arranging the time that the work does not suffer when you have a reason or feel an irresistible wish to go. You may tell Narandas. You will not be able forcibly to restrain your mind. Restraint should be exercised with understanding.

Brother should improve his health. The cure rests in his own hands. If one pays attention to the right amount of exercise, regularity in all work, hip-baths and moderation in eating, the health does improve in a large measure. There can be no question of giving the sewing-machine to a person who does not know how to use it. Of course if there is somebody to teach, it may be lent. You cannot be expected to teach sewing since all your time belongs to the Ashram. Gangabehn or Narandas may arrange for a teacher. Have I answered all your questions ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

¹ From the reference to the addressee's desire to leave the Ashram; which she did before November 11, 1938; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 11-11-1930.

400. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,

Night, November 30, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I was very happy to read your letter. It is two days now since you broke your fast. By the time you get this letter, you will have forgotten all about the fast and will be enjoying new youth. If you do not have that experience, I would not regard the fast as a complete success. I expect that you will describe the result of your fast in detail. Your experience should be a guide to others. You know, of course, how to return to normal diet gradually after the fast is over. You will feel very hungry immediately after a fast, but you should certainly not eat as much as the stomach demands. You should gradually increase the quantity of milk and curds, and eat nothing between the meals. You may of course eat juicy fruits. I hope you do not count expense in that regard. Your body should become completely healthy. I am not surprised to hear that you could work normally during the fast. I have observed many people doing so. And that is my own experience, too. Those who have been harbouring many diseases in their bodies feel stronger during a fast. At any rate there is a brighter light on their faces.

I am satisfied with the children's account sent by you. Krishnavijay seems to stand first in every item. Is there no one who can take Dudhibehn's classes in her absence? I know that in the present circumstances you cannot ask anyone about this. What can you do when so many women are outside the Ashram? All the same, if there is any person to whom you can entrust the work, do not hesitate to ask him or her.

Dhurandhar must have been released. Tell him that I remember the discussions I had with him. I also remember his diary. Ask him to write to me. Let him describe his experience, too. He should also write about his future plans.

Mathuri has a complaint against you, that you beat children. Sometimes you even use a rod. If this is true, give up the practice. One should never beat children. Crosby has written a book called *Tolstoy as Teacher*. Probably it is in our collection. Read it. It has now been proved that physical punishment does not reform children.

I know that anyone who is accustomed to use the rod while teaching will find it difficult to give up the practice. But that is also true of an armed soldier. He thinks that without his gun he can get nothing done in this world. Our Ashram exists to prove that we can do without a gun. This is true in regard to children. I will not write more than this just now. If necessary, I will go into further argument after I get your reply.

I hope that you had plenty of sleep during the fast, and that now you regularly go to bed early. One ought to have sufficient sleep. Man needs sleep more than he does food. Fasting in regard to food benefits one, but fasting in regard to sleep wastes away one's body. It dulls the brain and makes one restless. Do not, therefore, be careless about sleep. I would not complain if you sleep soundly between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m.

You will read about my experiment in the letter to Mira.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10244; also C.W. 6691. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

401. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

November 30, 1930

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

Your letter to hand. You must resolutely get up at 4 a.m. It does not matter if you do not have any motions. Cleanse your mouth and say the prayers; drink a bowlful of cold water after cleansing the mouth. Go out for a walk after the prayers. Walk briskly. This will induce motions. You will feel warm instead of cold. Don't worry if your bowels do not move. After the walk, you can occupy yourself in whatever task you choose. Go to the lavatory when you feel the urge. You will be cured by doing so for some days.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

RINGAS (RAJ.)

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 768

402. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

November 29/December 1, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

This is time after the morning prayer 29-11-1930. It is fairly cold. But I do a little writing after the prayer and before walking out on the bugle of 5.30.

I am glad you were better when you wrote your letter. We can only learn really in everything as in the matter of health-keeping by making repeated mistakes and profiting by them. This is an introduction to my confession rather than a warning to you. Last Thursday I suddenly developed a bad stomachache. I could have avoided it but stupidly did not. As you know I have been lately living on curds. They agreed very well though the bowels could be moved only by the enema. But as you saw the weight was going up and I was otherwise fit. So I continued the curds and then too the thick part. That induced further constipation despite the enema. That was sufficient warning to stop at least curds or better still all food for a day. I would not and suffered for the day. I voluntarily brought out what I had eaten and in a few hours the pain subsided. Nothing but raisin water the next day and I was quite fit though at once I lost 3 lb. in weight. It is ever thus with me. My weight beyond 95 is evidently an uncertain quantity probably made up of poisonous matter. I determined too to get rid of the constipation if it was at all possible, so I have continued the stopping of curds. (Here is the bugle and I stop for the time being). To resume at 8 p.m. And I am now taking cooked leaves and tomatoes and dates or raisins. The bowels have moved naturally, strength has been maintained and the weight has suffered no further reduction. Yesterday I added sweet potatoes and today 12 almonds. No one need be alarmed at this change. If I feel weak or lose weight steadily, I shall at once revert to milk and shall feel all the better for the milk fast. If on the other hand the change agrees it will be a source of additional joy. Therefore you should all rejoice over the change. If it works, it is well. It is well also if it does not. I shall take no risks.

So Kaka left and he wept as he left. We had come so close to each other. Within two hours of his departure they sent me Pyarelal and of course he has taken possession of me. I put him on your wheel. He spun 83 rounds. It went practically as I had set it up. We have now concocted some improvements on the holder. He is at one such whilst I am writing this. Somehow or other I can only think of

the wheel and all it connotes. The Gandiv too is undergoing considerable improvement. I hope to try the improved wheel tomorrow. I will have a movable wheel and will have a spring for tension. If it works well, the output must increase. I am gradually getting control over the *takli*. My speed on your *takli* went up to 87 rounds per hour. But Vinoba says I must first try the steel *takli* and he has sent me two and I am trying to work at it. I haven't yet got the result expected. But I am daily gaining confidence and hope soon to be able to pull 100 rounds per hour on the *takli*. (As it was 9 p.m. I had to stop here. I resume at 4.30 a.m. after prayer Sunday.) I understand about the Kumarappa differences. If Mahadev is gone Kaka has now come. He may be of help in adjusting differences. The golden rule is not to fret if things go contrary to one's wishes and to yield where resistance is useless or likely to be misunderstood, where there is no principle at stake and where in an organization responsibility is not solely one's own. The virtue of charity comes into play only when one comes in contact with a variety of opinion and conduct. Strict and even harsh with ourselves, charitable and even lax with regard to others. In the end, we find that we are neither strict regarding ourselves nor lax regarding others. The fact is we do not as readily observe our own blemishes as we are to detect those of others. Hence the terrible truth "Pluck the *beam* out of thine own eyes before you remove the *mote* from thy neighbour's" or Burns's (Is it not?) "O that we could see ourselves as others see us." In practice I have found that it is best to search about ourselves and to assume the truth of friends' criticism of ourselves and to take them in the first instance at their word when they disown guilt or defect. But enough of this morning sermonizing. You will act as the spirit guides you.

Love.

BAPU

8.45 p.m. 1-12-30

[PS.]

Pyarelal began well on the Bihar wheel. But it proved a failure. I fitted up the other Gandiv and it worked splendidly without a hitch. Through the favour of the Superintendent I have got the Gandiv with my improvements incorporated. It promises to work well. I have just tried it. The food experiment continues.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5422. Courtesy: Mirabeehn; also G.N. 9656

403. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

November 29/December 1, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

Though you had resolved to write every week, there has been no letter from you this week. I look upon this as a serious lapse. One may say that there is nothing as grave as violating a solemn resolution. This is such a common weakness that we don't realize its gravity. But you should know that it is a grave weakness indeed and guard yourself against it. When you have nothing to write, you may sign on a blank sheet, as Chhotelal does. But it is not likely that a child will have nothing to say to its father or mother.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

December 1, 1930

Pyarelal took Kakasaheb's place on the 29th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1811

404. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

December 1, 1930

CHI. MANU (TRIVEDI),

From what Payrelal reports after having seen you I gather that you have recovered your strength. You must have talked with Kakasaheb to your heart's content. Take care and do not fall ill again. Don't be impatient to resume work. He whose aspiration is noble and who is always eager to serve works even when physically not working.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7772

405. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

November 27/ December 3, 1930

Thursday morning

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time your packet was handed over to me as soon as it came yesterday evening. I have received the copies of *Vratavichar*.

If Chi. Kusum is firm in her decision, I like it. Since in any case she will not marry before swaraj is won, why should she bind herself just now? The right thing would be to act upon her inclination at that time. Convey this view of mine to both Devchandbhai and Jamnalalji. Ascertain Kusum's real wishes. She should not advance this as an excuse if in the depth of her heart the real reason is different. She is completely free to do what she wishes. I would tell this same thing to the two young men too; if they are ready to wait till we get swaraj, why should they wish to bind themselves or bind any girl now? A brave man or *bhakta* would not do that, and if Kusum is a brave girl and if she has decided to marry, she should marry a brave youth. I will write to Ghanshyamdas.

Why does Manilal refuse to take milk? If he keeps up his strength, however, I don't insist that he should take it. Only, he should not be obstinate in refusing to take it. If he is losing weight, he should take it. Why doesn't Devdas write?

Friday morning

Ever since I had heard about Amidas, I was filled with admiration for him. He has achieved perfect victory. He was like one of the ancient sages in keeping his pledge. I believe the Ashram to have been sanctified by his having stayed there. Let all of us learn from Amidas how to die cheerfully for the sake of our pledge. If he had been inspired by my example in taking the vow of refraining from milk, etc., he had acted hastily. I think that no one should copy my example in this respect till I myself succeed in keeping such a vow. It is, however, clear to me as daylight that, having taken the vow, Amidas could not break it. A vow taken with open eyes, even if it means a risk to the body, ought not to be broken. A vow which would do harm to the soul ought not to be taken and, if such a vow has been taken, it is one's moral duty to break it. For instance, no one can take

a vow that he will always speak untruth, for such a vow harms the soul. A vow always to speak the truth may mean a risk to the body and may cost us our life, it may even seem to harm the interests of the country, but it must be kept. I will write a letter to his father. Read it and send it on to him.

Saturday morning

As regards Sorabji's insurance, inform him that it is beyond our means to pay the premiums. He should manage somehow to pay them and should send the receipt. Write to Jalbhai too about this. Make a note of Budhabhai's decision concerning Nanibehn and inform her about it, and go on recovering the money till the amount is paid up. I was not satisfied by . . . 's¹ letter. Read the reply which I have written to him. So long as we entertain a suspicion about him, he cannot join the struggle. Only those inmates of the Ashram who are pure in our eyes may Join it.

Take the utmost care about the [spinning] *yajna*. Endeavour to remove the deficiencies in such work. Everyone should learn to test the strength and count of yarn, and should actually do so every day. A rough and ready method of testing the strength can be easily invented. It should be invented and everyone should test the strength of his or her yarn with its help. If the yarn spun by each is woven separately, we would know its strength better.

It was very good indeed that Sitala Sahay came. But how did he escape the attention of the U.P. Government? Show Shivabhai's letter to Kakasaheb before you send it to me. If the facts he mentions are such as can be given publicity, there is no objection to his writing to me about them. On the contrary, there may be some advantage in informing me about them. But leave the responsibility in this regard to Kakasaheb.

. . . 's² case is a moving one. I cannot understand how . . .³ came to form such a connection. I will write to him. Read the letter and pass it on to him.

Sunday night

I have written the letter I mentioned above. It has turned out to be a very important one. I should like it to reach him.

¹ The names have been omitted.

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

I got the *taklis* sent by Vinoba. Read the letter to Mirabehn for information about my health. They sent Pyarelal here immediately after Kaka had left. Read the back of page 1 for the discourse.

December 2, 1930

Inform Mahadev that he should write even from the jail, if he can get time and is permitted to write. More next week.

Blessings from

BAPU¹

[PS.]

The third, the fourth and the following fifth chapter should be read together, as they explain to us what the yoga of selfless action (*anasakti*) is and what are the means of practising it. If these three chapters are properly understood, the reader will have less difficulty in tackling what follows. The remaining chapters deal in detail with the ways and means of achieving *anasakti*. We should study the *Gita* from this point of view, and if we pursue this study we shall find without much trouble a solution of the problems which confront us from day to day. This calls for daily practice. Let everybody try it. If for instance he is angry, let him remember the verse dealing with anger and subdue that enemy. Supposing we heartily dislike somebody, or are impatient or gluttonous or in doubt as to whether we should do or should not do something or other, all these difficulties can be solved with the help of mother *Gita* if we have faith in it and give it constant study. Our daily recitation of the *Gita* as well as this series of letters is a means to this end.

The bugle for 5.30 a.m. has sounded.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PPS.]

There are 52 letter.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

¹ For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*"—Ch. IV.

406. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

December 3, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I heard from Jamnalalji that a friend or a partner of yours had lost heavily in speculation. The message also says that this has caused you sorrow. Speculation itself implies loss. Then why take it to heart? A direct lesson drawn from this loss can even be a source of happiness. Why don't you and your friends take a vow not to indulge in speculation any more? Earnings from speculation can never be truly ethical.

Write about *Pujya* Malaviyaji's health.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6190. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

407. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 4, 1930

CHI, MIRA,

The Ashram post received last evening brings your disturbing letter. It does not cause anxiety but it furnishes food for reflection. What is the cause of this breakdown in health? In any case you *must* give yourself complete rest. You must relax both mind and body. Therefore please go gently. Read the 6th chapter [of the] *Gita*. Yoga should be undertaken gently. What work we are doing is yoga. Please drop me a card daily.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5423. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9657

408. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 4, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got both your letters. I was glad to learn that your mother and others had arrived. If you take your meals with your mother with Narandas's consent, I should not object. However, there is certainly a moral flaw in what you are doing. You ought to make it clear to Mother that the life which you two live is different from normal family life. Of course the financial aspect of the matter creates some difficulty. But I have stated here only the ideal. Do not take my words to mean that you ought to take your meals in the common kitchen, as we cannot always live up to an ideal and sometimes in actual practice we have to compromise it in order that we may not be forced to give it up altogether. As for your relations with Father, strictness is necessary. You should tell him in the plainest language that he should give up hopes of your taking up a job or a profession and earning money. By telling him this, you will serve him, for, as long as there is the slightest hope, he will continue complaining to you, but will cease doing so or rather the complaining will cease of itself, when he has given up the hope. This is human nature. When hope is entirely gone, despair itself turns into a sort of consolation. There are here several prisoners serving life sentences, who have no hope of being released and, therefore, live cheerfully. Those whose position is uncertain, like mine, suffer. They keep on hoping from day to day that they would soon be released. In other words, the cause of the pain in your relationship with Father is in your own mind. If you have understood your dharma clearly you should not so much as give a thought to Father's complaining. To borrow money from friends to help Father to pay his debts and relieve his burden to that extent is not a good policy. It would be better not to receive such private benefits from one's friends. Here again, I have merely stated the ideal. It may be advisable, in case of necessity, to borrow money from Mahavir Prasad and others if your relations with them are intimate. Solve all these problems with the master key of non-attachment.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5263

409. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

December 4, 1930

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I have your letter. It was a beautiful one. Dhiru's firmness is wonderful. His inclination towards mischief reflects this firmness of his. Let us hope that some of these Ashram children will excel us all in service when they grow up. If we are pure in our hearts and become daily purer, that is bound to be so.

I am not surprised by your description of the conditions in Kathiawar. That lethargy shows that we have still a long way to go. Indeed such effort is the essence of our spiritual striving. We need not, therefore, worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, pp. 281-2

410. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 4, 1930

I got all the information I wanted. I am not surprised to know that Mathuradas has been making very good use of his time. This experience will do him good. The separation is a test of your strength. I was happy to learn that Dilip and Jyotsna keep good health. Pyarelal is with me now. Both of us are well. Write to me from time to time.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 103

411. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

December 4, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

There is no letter from you this time. I think you must have written the letter but it may not have reached the Ashram in time. I am used to having your letter every week and so when it does not come I wonder.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

412. LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 4, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

I had your letters. You must improve your handwriting. It can be accomplished by writing with care. Good that Mother¹ and others have come. If you go to Kheda, be very careful and immerse yourself in service. Follow Gangabehn's instructions.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I understand about the mill-made slivers. No need to say anything just now.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5264

¹ Addressee's mother-in-law

413. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

Y. M.,

December 5, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Depression overtakes you because you think too much about things other than the task before you. This is a sign of unfaithfulness; You will cease to worry about any other thing the moment you realize that you are to devote yourself body, mind and soul to the duty undertaken by you. Truth demands this.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm, Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

414. LETTER TO ROHINI KANAIYALAL DESAI

December 5, 1930

CHI. ROHINI,

What you say is true. Let the Government seize all the goods they wish and auction them for nothing. The truth is that, under an oppressive Government, those who follow the path of right can own no property. If any is left with them, they should know that the Government can seize it whenever it wishes to do so. Our struggle does not at all depend on wealth and property.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2655

415. LETTER TO MANU GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 5, 1930

CHI. MANUDI,

I got your letter. Since you are learning lathi exercises, I shall have to learn them from you. A letter in a word should not be split from the rest of the word. If there is not sufficient space at the end of a line to complete a word, you should leave the available space blank. The correct word is not *nabadai* but *nabalai*. When the ‘u’ sound is short, it should be indicated by the sign **q** and not by **w**. For the present, pay attention to correctness in handwriting and not to flourishes. If it is correct, flourishes will follow without any effort on your part.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 1507. Courtesy: Manubehn Mashruwala

416. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 5, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

Do you want compliments for your fast and the cheerful spirit you kept up during the period? I have already written to you about what to eat. Avoid uncooked vegetables for the present, and certainly do not eat pulses. You should take milk and curds and eat *khakhra* and boiled vegetables; if you can get fruits, like *papaiya* and *mosambi*, you will not require vegetables. I, personally, see no need for medicines. Apart from any other consideration, I am generally averse to taking any medicine of which the ingredients are not known to us. The fast must have completely served the purpose of medicine. I think it is necessary to continue sun-bath. See that you have enough sleep.

Do make some arrangements about children’s education.

I liked Dhurandhar's letter very much. I have observed that everything he does is neat and clean.

Convey my blessings to Sushila on the occasion of her birthday.

When you went to Rajkot, you must have called on Jamnadas. Did you meet Manu? How is Purushottam's health?

Is any work being done in Jamnadas's school? Did you see any activity in Rajkot in connection with the movement? I hope to have news from you about all such matters.

Keep a watch on Dharmakumar's bad habits. Explain the position to Durga. If she pays attention to the matter, she can do much.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

In line two of the 139th *bhajan* in the *Bhajanavali*, occurs an expression, *nijanamagrahi*¹. If Narandas or some other Gujarati knows its meaning, understand it from them and explain it to me. If you yourself know it, so much the better.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10245; also C.W. 6693. Courtesy: Premabehn Katak

417. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

December 5, 1930

BHAI TYAGIJI,

I was very pleased to have your letter. Take milk if the weakness does not go despite a regular diet. Try cooked cereals before you do that. Don't be obstinate. I was sorry to learn of the conditions in Gurukul. Is Abhayji aware of them? What was Ramdevji's reply? Baldev may well learn carpentry. Write to him, he should learn to construct charkha, loom, *takli*, etc. Who is the principal in Vri[ndavan]

¹ One who clings to the Name, which is his very self

Gu[rukul]? Tell Premrajji to write to me how all things are. What is going on there?

BHARATIYA PATHSHALA
FARRUKHABAD BAPU

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I never knew that your Urdu letters were like print, they are very good.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3266

418. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 6, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (DESAI),

Your letter consisted of three sheets, but they seemed to have lost the middle sheet. I did not get it. If you remember its contents, write to me again. Pyarelal's health has become very good. His weight is 122 pounds. He gets three pounds of milk, one pound of bread and vegetables.

At present, both of us have become crazy about spinning.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1812

419. LETTER TO BULAKHIDAS

December 6, 1930

BHAI BULAKHIDAS,

God will indeed test us in a thousand ways. But that will not make us lose heart. Both of you should devotedly go on doing your work till the last.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3139

420. LETTER TO MAHENDRA DESAI

December 6, 1930

CHI. MANU (MANSINH),

I got your letter. You should take care and write a more legible hand. How much do you spin daily?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7411. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

421. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI PANDYA

December 6, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. Your interpretation of the term *abhyasa* is correct, as also of *chittavrittinirodha*. *Dhyana*=*Upasana*, i.e., ultimately it could mean faithfully observing one's own dharma. In my view here the word *dhyana* is used in a narrower sense. *Dhyana* refers to our silent sittings at the time of our worship and prayers. This brings about a [sense of] dedication to the Lord, which in its turn gives rise to a disinterested attitude. No social service is possible without self-purification, which again develops in the course of social service. It is all right therefore that doubts arise in your mind but you should not fall into their currents. If they are resolved so much the better; if not you should have faith that they would be solved as you go on serving.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 334. Courtesy: Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

422. *LETTER TO SHANTA SHANKARBHAI PATEL*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 6, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

You did well to pay a visit to Shankarbhai. I was happy to learn about Kamala's self-control. If you display the virtue which your name suggests and write your letters with a calm mind, your handwriting will improve. If a person cannot fast by dropping even one meal, he or she should learn to do so by patient effort, especially one who wishes to observe *brahmacharya*. Do you know that only recently Premabehn fasted for seven days? During the period of the fast, moreover, she continued the daily chores, including washing clothes and fetching water. And you say that, after you had missed one meal, your hands were shaking. The cause was the condition of your mind, and not of the body. Do you see?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3990

423. *LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI
THAKKAR*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I have your letter. What you say is true. No one ought to give up his or her work for any reason whatever. This is the ideal. We should not feel unhappy if everybody cannot act up to it. We should not criticize such a person even in our thoughts. We should be strict in judging our own weaknesses, but generous in judging others. This is not goodness but the correct principle to follow. We have no knowledge of the struggle which the person whose weakness we observe may be making. It is the effort which matters. It may be that we are free from a particular weakness, but that may not be the result of any effort on our part. There is no merit in our refraining from

flesh-eating, since we are accustomed from birth to do without it. But there may be great merit in the self-denial of a person who was a habitual meateater but has given up eating it now, though he may repeatedly break his vow. Hence the right thing is that we ourselves should do the best we can to follow a rule perfectly, and be satisfied with what others can do. You have been getting good experience. I am sure that you will come out successful from the test. The diet which you follow is the right one.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6806

424. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 7, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

Hitherto I had been an admiring reader of your articles. That admiration remains, but now there is added to it the viewpoint of a student and a critic. I see that your book is not a self-teacher on the subject. By reading it one cannot learn carding. Even those who know it a little would not be able to carry out the reforms you suggest. The book is excellent in itself, but as a self-teacher it seems to me incomplete. As far as I have understood your book I think you have rejected the method you had explained to me and have followed a new one. I thought I had already adopted it. But on reading your book again, I find that I had done nothing new at all. Now my suggestion is that you should send me a draft lesson as if you were teaching me the method. It is not necessary to rewrite the whole of your book. How much cotton should I hold out to the string at a time and in how many pulls should it get carded? With how much cotton should I begin the carding? Should the pad be arranged anew every day and why should it be of half-carded cotton? And should that in its turn be carded the same day? Should all the cotton put on the mat in the beginning be carded the same day? As we pull at the string, the bow also swings, doesn't it? The left hand should be used only for raising and lowering the carding-bow and it is moved forwards and backwards by the action of the rod; isn't that what you mean? If you

cannot find time to explain all this, don't pay any attention to this letter. Your main work is to examine those who are learning there and improve their proficiency. I am like a by-stander who is looking on. I know that I have no right to engage your attention on such matters just now. This letter has two aims, one to point out the deficiencies in the book and the other to seek help for myself. Treat the second as of less importance. I have put briefly to Vithal the questions I have asked above. Let him give me his time. He will learn something while doing so.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3749

425. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

December 7, 1930

DEAR DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

Now there are two teachers in place of one, a girl and a grey beard. So the pupil is now done away with. Let us see what happens. This exercise is enough, isn't it.¹ Anyway, am I not making progress? Moreover, I have Pyarelal for companion now, and he is well-versed in Urdu. However, I would not take up much of his time for this, as he devotes all his time to spinning. You should, therefore, point out mistakes in my spelling. You should not, in your present state of health, spend much time for me. As I have plenty of leisure, I will read your letters slowly and carefully. Mother is partial to Father. His handwriting is an old man's and yours that of a youngster. But let that be. Though a person may own a white beard, he may be young in mind and may play a thousand games—teach French to someone, translate from other languages and revolve all manner of plans in his mind. Others may be young in years, but old in mind. Of course I would not say that you are quite that, but you will cease being so if your septum trouble is cured. The news of that operation did not frighten me. In fact, I am never frightened by an operation. But I am

¹ These four sentences are in Urdu.

certainly eager to have news about your health. Convey to Dahyabhai my blessings or *Vandemataram*—whichever he desires. I was glad to have that news about him.

*Khuda Hafiz*¹.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9624

426. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

December 7, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got both your letters. You have not been arrested so far, though of course it would be good if you were. You should remain unconcerned whether or not you are arrested. Go on patiently doing all your work. I see that you have been having very useful experiences there. I have Pyarelal with me now.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9295

427. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 7, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I got your letter. By not attending prayers in order that they might help in putting out the fire, the women offered real prayers. This is an example of non-action in action. You fulfilled the real purpose of prayers. Moreover, one can go on repeating Ramanama to oneself even while running to the place where fire has started in order to help put it out.

Finally, the person whose life is dedicated to service and who has burnt his or her egotism lives his life in the spirit of prayer. We pray morning and evening in order that we may be able to live thus, and,

¹ This is in Urdu.

therefore, when a fire breaks out, or in similar circumstances, one may even drop prayers. But such occasions are rare.

Pour out *amrita* against the poison which you describe. Violence is conquered by non-violence, untruth by truth, lust by self-control, anger by forbearance and avarice by generosity.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 48; also C.W. 8767. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

428. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 7, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I knew two or three persons of the name ‘Stuart’. One was a magistrate and afterwards became an officer in the army at the time of the Zulu rebellion. Another was a lawyer. I had become fairly intimate with the former. Is it that same Stuart who is there? Do you also wish to follow Manilal? Will you carry with you or leave behind Sita *alias* Dhairyabala *alias* whatever other names you have given her?

How many women work there?

To all of you,

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4778

429. LETTER TO PADMA

December 7, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

I got your letter. Because Gujarati is not your mother tongue, why should your handwriting be bad? What connection has one’s handwriting with the language in which one is writing? You may write in the Devnagari script and show me that you can write neatly. A letter

in a word is like a drawing. A person who knows drawing can write a beautiful handwriting in any language.

If anyone presses us to eat food which we never eat, we should politely but firmly refuse—in the end that will please the other person.

We should not be rude to any British officer whom we may meet.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6116

430. LETTER TO TOTARAM SANADHYA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 7, 1930

BHAI TOTARAMJI,

Clay may be applied on the head. A mud-cap can be placed on the head while working in the sun. I used it on many occasions during the march.¹ A towel spread over with clay and tied on the head forms a cap and provides protection. How is Gangadevi's health? Does Dhiru behave well? Is he very boisterous?

Blessings from

BAPU

PANDIT TOTARAMJI

HARIJAN ASHRAM

SABARMATI JN.

B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2540

¹ The reference is to the Dandi March.

431. *LETTER TO ANASUYABEHN SARABHAI*

December 7, 1930

CHI. ANASUYABEHN,

Though I do not write to you frequently, you are always in my thoughts. How is Mridula? Did you meet her? How is her health? Khurshedbehn will be well. Did you meet Mani? Do they all stay together or separately?

God is kind. Is Bharati getting along all right?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: G. N. 11556

432. *LETTER TO BABALBHAI MEHTA*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 8, 1930

BHAI BABALBHAI,

I got your letter. There is no need to do *prayashchitta* for having eaten in the company of all classes of persons in jail. *Prayashchitta* has no reference to cleanliness or lack of it. It is enjoined for eating food served by a person belonging to a community other than one's own. One who does not believe in this restriction should never perform *prayashchitta* on that account. About other matters, Kakasaheb will guide you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9455

433. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

December 8, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have reserved your letter to the last deliberately in the hope of hearing from you before or on Monday in reply to my postcard which I wrote to you on Thursday and which I hope you duly received. It contained an inquiry about your health. This obstinate

constipation is disturbing. I hope when this reaches you all the effect of the attack would have worn out. I have got rid of mine by simply dropping proteid food for a while. I am now taking proteid through almonds. I should love not to go back to milk. Save now for a visible weakness, the result has been excellent. Almonds I am taking very cautiously and I cannot sustain the strength on green vegetables merely and about an ounce of almonds. I have gone to the ounce only for the last two days. I must take a cereal. I have not decided what to take. I want to try *bajri* or *juwari*—whatever the jail chapati for the day. If it agrees, the problem may be solved to my entire satisfaction. But there will be no haste, certainly no obstinacy. Immediately I feel the need, I shall go back to milk.

In another ten days I shall have finished the translation of the *Bhajanavali*. It has given me such a joy. I am not satisfied with the performance. Save for the fact that it is an act of love, it has no other merit—certainly no literary merit. But it will help you to know the meaning of the *bhajans* and that was all I aimed at. And when this is finished I hope to begin the other, viz., translation of preface to the Gujarati *Gita*. I do not think I shall translate the verses, but I shall go through one of the existing translations and where it is different from mine, I shall note it and translate all the marginal notes. This will simplify my work and save a great deal of labour. Please share this with Kaka. He will feel interested in the proposal.

The improvements in the Gandiv have exceeded all expectations. It now runs smoothly. It has the tension which was absent. But I am not going to weary you with a description of the improvements. I am describing them in a letter to Keshu. I am sure that for speed it cannot now be excelled by any other wheel. But that has still to be tested. My assurance won't create more yarn, I know.

You *must* give yourself ample rest and must not work under tension. It is good for the wheel but not for human beings.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5424. Courtesy: Mirabeen; also G.N. 9658

434. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday morning, December 4/9, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter yesterday evening. They pass on the packets to me and post them to you with great care. It seems that the packets are delayed in posting by a day.

The doctor wishes to come during Diwali. Does that mean after nine months? Or does he mean the Christian Diwali? If he means the Hindu Diwali, a great many things will have happened by then.

Mahalakshmi and Madhavji are very conscious of the deep significance of a pledge. Hence both of them should be pained by a violation of even the letter of a pledge. But we should be satisfied if everyone keeps a pledge as he or she understands it and to the best of his or her ability, and it seems that most people do so. You should keep them vigilant.

Do what you think best about Giriraj. Since you will have to bear the burden, I will accept your decision as the only proper one. I know that Krishna will always have his own way. If he keeps good health, I think he is likely to do great service in future.

I believe the same about Purushottam. Let him write to me from time to time.

Pyarelal is improving quite well in health. I hope it will not go down while he is with me. His being with me is like a goat being near a wolf. A goat tied in front of a wolf will grow thinner every day even if you feed it on the finest grass. Something of that sort used to happen to Pyarelal. I hope that is not so now. I blame myself a good deal for what used to be. Let us see what God wills. He will get what he wants by way of food. At present, he takes milk and curds and eats bread, vegetables and *papaiya*.

I had not imagined that Parnerkar would mismanage things as badly as he has done. He is a worker with pure motives, but it seems that he cannot cope with work. You did very well in being strict with him and getting the accounts in order. I hope he will take rest now and improve his health. Should we assume that the business at Bidaj is running at a loss? If you think it necessary to reduce the scale or wind up any of our activities, do so. Anyone who works in the spirit of

non-attachment soon discovers the measure of his ability. He will never be too eager to do things and never undertake anything beyond his capacity. Really speaking, he does not have to seek work. Work comes to him unsought, and he does his best to do full justice to it. To the world he seems a man who has no work, for his face betrays no anxiety and he never complains about the burden of work. In fact he carries no burden. He entrusts his burdens to Lord Krishna and dances as He wills.

Jethalal had written to me saying that he would send a report of the work done. I have not received the report. I understand what you say about Kamalabehn Lundi. That is what marriage is. The desire for it has its source in lust and attachment. Marriage is called a sacrament because it is a means of controlling lust. That is how it was conceived, at any rate. But this intention is now forgotten, and so for most people marriage has become a means of self-indulgence. I will write to Gangabehn and Nanibehn.

I have been watching your experiment in diet. Give me detailed information from time to time. It will certainly benefit you if you eat only a small quantity of groundnuts. You may not even need them when you have milk and curds. There is certainly some truth in the advice which research-workers now give against eating many articles at a time. All the foods are not simultaneously digested in the same manner and to the same degree and, therefore, a mixture of too many of them disturbs the stomach. The description of compassion was very good indeed. You say that you have sent the printed copies of the discourses; that may also mean that they are being dispatched now. I have not received them.

Friday morning

I have given all details about my health and my diet in the letter to Kakasaheb, and so I do not repeat them here. I had assumed that you would send for Keshu and hear his complaint, and that was why I did not write about it in my letter. But I give a summary now as far as I remember what it was.

1. You get angry with him without any reason.
2. Once he tried to explain matters to you, but you did not listen to him and shouted at him so loudly that all could hear you and you said many improper things.
3. You are very partial to Kusum, Navin and Dhiru and do not even listen to any complaints against them.

4. You have taken away from him the management of the factory without any reason.
5. Damodardas left the Ashram out of disgust at your partiality.

I have written to Keshu and told him that just as I used to be under Maganlal's spell and saw no faults in him, so am I under yours and see no fault in you, and will not, therefore, be ready to believe anything about you which I have not myself observed. I, however, advised him to open his heart to you and tell you everything. He merely said in reply that he was not satisfied by my letter. After that I have kept quiet since he was to have a talk with Mahadev. Now you should, yourself, call him and show to him his complaints which I have described. If I have misunderstood him, he will correct my mistake. If I have left out anything, he should add that. You may then try to satisfy him if you can. I have written to him and advised him to take up some work, no matter what it is. I have told Kakasaheb about him. I have advised him, too, that he should see Kakasaheb. I have no doubt that it will do him no good whatever to remain without work.

If Harilal Desai wants to take up service in the Ashram and if you think there will be no harm in giving him a job do give him one. He is unmethodical in work but he is a young man of transparent sincerity of purpose. I think it will be worth while having him as one of our workers. Did you read the long letter which . . .¹ wrote to me? He will produce no effect on me unless he tells me something concrete observed by himself. I believe . . .² to be a pure-hearted girl. . . .³ has also produced on me the impression of being pure in heart and one who would speak the truth. I had a happy experience of him also during the march. He had spread the fragrance of his character in the Kashi Vidyapith too. It is true that he has been guiding . . .⁴ and trying to raise her level, but I have seen in him nothing but the attitude of a brother and teacher.

Silence Day afternoon

Try to find soon a piece of leather to repair the soles of the sandals. I find that the soles of the new pair, too, are none too strong. Signs of its wearing out could be seen today. About my health and

¹ The names have been omitted.

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

diet, you will find something in the letter to Mirabehn and a little in the letter to Kakasaheb too. Hence I say nothing here.

These days I seem to be able to observe small things with greater attention, and so I cannot help noticing the character of the handwriting in the different letters received in the packets sent by you. I am trying to improve my bad handwriting. You must have observed this in every letter of mine. Bad handwriting is of course a form of discourtesy. Discourtesy in every form is violence, but bad handwriting is direct violence too. Anything which causes unnecessary pain to our neighbour or to any living creature is nothing but violence. I have twice as much experience as others of what pain and inconvenience are caused to the reader by bad handwriting. I have, in the first place, the experience of having to read letters written in bad writing by others and also the experience of the pain caused to others by my handwriting. My aim in saying this is to advise all inmates of the Ashram, men and women, boys and girls, to take great care to write a good hand. This requires no time but only some thought. One must have love for the other party. Let all of them observe the following rules:

1. They should leave enough space between the words.
2. They should avoid flourishes in the letters.
3. They should never leave a letter half-written.
4. They should not let the letters flow into one another.
5. As far as possible, they should write to no one in pencil.

If they follow these rules, they will certainly be able to make their handwriting legible. Haste signifies attachment. Let no one write in haste. Everyone should be content with what he or she can write slowly and patiently.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 83 letters today, but No. 36 seems to have been omitted and so, really speaking, there are 80 only. The 81st is for the brother of the late Mangaldas Sheth. Have it delivered to him immediately.

The separate sheets of the discourses are included in the total number.¹

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./I

¹ For the text of the discourse which followed, *vide* “Letters on the *Gita*”—Ch. IV.

435. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 9, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have had no letters from you for some time. I do feel worried. But I believe that everything must be all right. God will look after you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3383

436. *LETTER TO J. C. KUMARAPPA*

December 11, 1930

MY DEAR KUMARAPPA,

I note what you say about Kamalabehn. May she prosper in the right sense!! 'This correspondence' need not cease. I would gladly continue it if you will further cross-question me. Many things I have noticed become clear through sheer lapse of time and consequent, unconscious observation.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 10083

437. *LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI*

December 11, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I have left not one single letter of yours unanswered. I hardly think they have been intercepted. I have answered all your questions. I do hope you will get them all.

For avoiding constipation try green leafy vegetables and tomatoes only without any protein food for two or three days. This plan has worked well with me. Alternatively try stewed French plums without anything else.

Love to you both.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am well but am not taking fresh fruit.

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

438. *LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI*

December 11, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR) ,

I got your letter. I observe no harmful effect on my health. I see that the changes have done me nothing but good. Do not worry on my account at all.

Pyarelal's time is taken up as under: 375 rounds on the spinning-wheel, 100 rounds on the *takli* and making the required number of slivers. This work leaves him very little free time. The *takli* takes up two hours of his time. I, too, do almost the same work. I spin 100 rounds on the *takli*, but am satisfied with 275 on the wheel. The total comes to 375.

What you say about the girls is correct. Write to me more plainly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1813

439 LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

December 11, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your beautiful letter. What you have thought about Father is only right. I shall say nothing more about it. I hope you were successful with Ghanshyamdas.

As regards the motherland being considered as your mother there is a flaw in your thought. Just as loving one's mother does not mean that one should not love another's mother, so also loving one's motherland does not mean hating other countries. Where there is no love for the motherland love of the world is an illusion. And since the motherland has a greater right over us, being proud of the motherland without any ill will for other countries is only proper. I cannot directly care for the children of the whole world. But if I care lovingly for the children who are in my keeping I shall to that extent be doing service to the children of the world. The case of the motherland is exactly similar. After all it does matter in which land and in which atmosphere we are born. Ahimsa has its origin in this thought. In so far as ahimsa means universal love it can have direct application in our serving the creatures who are nearest us.

I hope you will now take Prabhavati to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

440. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

December 12, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

If one does not like a particular name, he should himself suggest a better one. If Dhiru suggests a better one, we will keep it. As far as I am concerned, I like the name 'Magan' for your spinning-wheel. The three reasons given by you are even more appropriate.

Do not at all think about how long you will have to stay in Almora. You know of my desire of setting up an ashram there. Just take it that you are running an ashram on a rented place. A person

who runs an ashram is not different from others. Any place where the rules of an ashram are followed, is like an ashram. You are a society of eight persons. You have with you there *the Gita*, *the Ramayana* and the spinning-wheel. What more do you want? For running the ashram, it is necessary to have some persons. Just take it that you three are the ones sent there for the purpose.

Devotion of Tulsidas was the devotion of the future generation. Rama in a human form did not exist in Tulsidas's time. His utterances are imaginary . . . even if Rama in a human form did exist in his time, his origin as God in human form took place in a later period. Compare the seventh chapter of the *Gita*, to the grief of Rama. "I am the Creator of all the three qualities." Wherever we find deceit and fault in God, we need not accept Tulsidas's saying that God has no faults and that we should not do as He does. We have to observe the rules of proper conduct. We cannot abide by the text of the inimitable book of Tulsidas, but have to abide by its inner meaning. What does not appeal to us should be set aside. One experiences the mind's quality of forgetfulness every minute. Think over it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32944

441. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 12, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. I gave up fresh fruit on learning of the sufferings outside. Now Pyarelal is with me. Eating, drinking, [spinning] *yajna* are all karma or actions. An action that does not deserve to be undertaken is *vikarma* or perverse action. *Akarma* is absence of action, i.e., action undertaken by man without attachment or desire for the fruit. A perverse action cannot be undertaken without attachment. Do write if you have any doubts. Your health must be good when you come out [of jail].

We both are well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2385

442. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 13, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your p.c. was duly received. The absence of any further news from you, I take to mean perfect restoration. After each illness you are soon well, because the treatment followed is natural, but every sickness leaves behind it a legacy of weakness unless the system is allowed full rest and the mind relieved of tension. I suppose the mental control is the most difficult. For this the sovereign remedy is the application of the *Gita*. Each time mind suffers a shock, there is failure in application. Let good news as well as bad pass over you like water over a duck's back. When we hear any, our duty is merely to find out whether any action is necessary and if it is, to do it as an instrument in the hands of Nature without being affected by or attached to the result. This detachment appears a scientific necessity when we remember that in bringing about a result more than one instrument is employed. Who shall dare say 'I have done it' [?] I know you know all this. Nevertheless, I drive the truth home, so that from the brain it may percolate to the heart. So long as it remains in the brain only, it is a dead weight on it. Any truth received by the brain must immediately be sent down to the heart. When it is not, it suffers abortion and then it lies on the brain as so much poisonous matter. What poisons the brain poisons the whole system. Hence the necessity of using the brain as it should be merely as a transmitting station. Whatever is there received is either transmitted to the heart for immediate action or it is rejected there and then as being unfit for transmission. Failure of the brain to perform this function properly is the cause of almost all the ills that flesh is heir to as also for mental exhaustion. If the brain simply performed its function, there need never be any brain-fag. So whenever we suffer from illness generally there is not only a dietetic error but there is also failure on the part of the brain to function properly. The author of the *Gita* evidently saw this and gave the world the sovereign remedy in the clearest possible language. Whenever therefore anything preys upon your mind, you should meditate on the central teaching of the *Gita* and throw off the burden. Let us hope there never will be a recurrence of the terrible constipation.

As to Kumarappa if you have enough charity and goodwill forward to him all the criticism you receive leaving the result to take care of itself. It is a duty you owe to him to let him have the criticisms. You may now use Kaka too for the purpose of sending your messages.

For me the milkless experiment continues as yet without any bad result. The weight has suffered a further decrease of 3 lb. but the vitality remains. One cause of the decrease in weight is that I am most cautious about increasing the quantity of cereals and almonds I take. Almonds remain at 3 *tolas* and *bajri* and *juwari bhakhari* a quarter, i.e., about 2 *tolas* each time, i.e., at 11 and 5. I may soon increase the weight. Anyway the condition of the bowels is extraordinarily good. I quite agree with you that the enema as a habit is a bad thing and should be got rid of, if at all possible. It has been possible with the dropping of milk as it had become when, on going to Wardha, you will recall, I had dropped milk. Indeed but for my folly in hastily following Gopalrao I might still have been flourishing on the diet I had then adopted. The present diet is a slight modification of the Wardha one.

Whenever you are ill, you will not hesitate to write to me at once without waiting for the weekly letter day.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9283. Courtesy: Mirabehn

443. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

December 13, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I got all your letters together. It is good that the women have been arrested. I give all the news about myself in the common letter and, therefore, say nothing in letters to individual persons. My health is all right. I have given up milk at present and eat a *rotla* of *jowar* or *bajra*, vegetables and three *tolas* of almonds. And in addition, lemons of course, and sometimes dates. This diet has helped me to get rid of the need for enemas. But I must wait and see whether I can keep it up. The weight has gone down, but I do not worry about that at all.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9296

444. LETTER TO NIRMALA DESAI

December 13, 1930

CHI. NIRMALA,

I got your letter. I do not remember any letter of yours to which I did not reply. Why did Mother go back? Did she not feel happy there? Or had she come only for a few days? How is your leg now?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9457

445. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

December 13, 1930

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

I have your letter. Write in ink and shape the letters well. Good that all have arrived at the Ashram. Tell Jiji¹ to give up the practice of untouchability and live in peace. There is no dharma in untouchability.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5265

446. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

I am not aware that I have not replied to your letter. It would not be surprising if I had forgotten in my hurry. You are constantly harassed by asthma. Why don't you drive it out? There must be something wrong with your diet or you may be getting excited. One does get asthma when one's feelings are excited.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9895. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawa1a

¹ Literally, 'elder sister', here addressee's mother who was then at the Ashram.

447. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 14, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. I understand what you say about punishing children. Your argument is an old one. It is a vicious circle. Punishment did you good and so you think you should punish the children. When the children grow up, they will do the same. This is exactly the argument by which people justify their faith in violence. It is our aim to rise above this misleading experience. I admit that that requires patience. We have come together in the Ashram to cultivate that patience. Our aim is not just to impart education to children or teach them discipline, but to build character in them. Education, discipline, etc., are means to that end. If the result of building character in them is that education and discipline are neglected, let that be so. I understand your argument, though. I also see that there is no ill will behind your use of the rod. But there are certainly anger and impatience behind them. May I make a suggestion? Call a meeting of the children. If any of them say, 'You may punish us, and in this manner, if we play mischief or disobey you', you may punish them in the manner which they suggest. You should not punish those who do not want you to punish them. If you try this method, you will see that you do not need to punish them. You should keep up this discussion. Do not give up arguing out of impatience or despair. Till your reason is convinced of what I say, you should follow your own path. I know that you are dedicated to truth and, therefore, I am sure that you will realize the truth ultimately.

Your diet seems to be all right.

You did not describe your visit to Rajkot.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10246; also C.W. 6694. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

448. LETTER TO PADMA

December 14, 1930

CHI. PADMA,

I have your letter. This time the handwriting was better. Improve it still further. I was happy to learn that there was nothing serious about the tumour. All the same, take care of your health. I am glad that you write every detail in the diary. To what term has Sarojinidevi been sentenced?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6117

449. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

December 14, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

As you used quite a big slip of paper for me, I have preserved it. If Dhuru uses bad language, you should lovingly persuade him not to do so. You should also inform Premabehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5756

450. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 14, 1930

BHAI NANABHAI (AKOLA),

I have your letter. You have got a worthy son-in-law indeed. He has gone away to live in a rest-house. And now Sushila will follow. And then Tara. Surendra also has been pressing his name as a candidate. I feel happy. This is true dharma. Till now, we used to enjoy pleasures in the name of religion. If Tara can stand it, let her

take sun-baths. You also will benefit considerably from them. Along with them, you should take hip-baths in the prescribed manner. And the food should be simple.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4779

451. LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA

December 14, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

I got your letter full of information. Ask Jugatram too to write. I am all right wherever I am, whether in or out of jail. God holds the string and I dance as He pulls it.

Kanjibhai's self-sacrifice is great, and his courage greater still. Convey my compliments to him.

I have written to Napoleon.¹

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2689

452. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 14, 1930

CHI. MANI (SARDARIJI),

Now that you are out of prison, I expect to get from you a letter filled with details of your experience. How do you do?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 75

¹ Chhotabhai Kalyanji Mehta

453. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. I have already replied to Kalavati. The treatment being given to Mother seems to be all right. There is no doubt that constipation is the root cause of many diseases. I will describe for your information the experiment I am making at present, which has succeeded in curing my constipation at least. For two or three days I took boiled leafy vegetables, together with which I had also boiled unripe tomatoes. That by itself cured the constipation. Then I started adding crushed almonds, gradually increasing the quantity to three *tolas* and now I have been taking a few *bhakharis* made of *jowar* and *bajra* flour. This seems to keep up my strength. Of course I can say nothing definitely. I can do that if I can go on like this for two or three months. Anyone who wishes to follow my example should do so with great care. Both Santok and Radha know about the two types of bath described in Kuhne's book. They should prove very beneficial for Kalavati. We do not have a copy of the book¹ on mouth hygiene.

Convey my compliments to Dr. Sarjuprasadji. I wish him success in his work.

How do I deserve any blessing for the low prices of grain? Wouldn't the cultivators, for their part, curse me? There are several reasons for the prevailing low prices. As far as I am concerned, I see no objection to making extracts from my letters provided they are taken with Narandas's consent.

Pyarelal is happy and cheerful. He has two editions of the *Ramayana* with him, and he is not therefore, anxious to have other books now. After coming here, he had perforce to stop his reading.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5266

¹ Entitled *Mukhacharyavijnana*

454. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 14, 1930

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

Your letter. That 1,000 copies of the Bengali edition of *Anasaktiyoga* have been sold augurs well. In winter mornings it is good to expose as much of the body as possible to the sun rays between 9 and 10. It is also beneficial to take some raw onion with *roti* by way of medicine during winter. Onion has many qualities, though some drawbacks too. The main drawback is that of smell, but that can be avoided by taking a small quantity.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1679

455. LETTER TO SHANTA

December 14, 1930

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Looking after Jiji is also a kind of national service. It should be performed without attachment. Jiji needs to be served and there is nobody else who can do it. We have no self-interest in this service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5268

456. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA TRIVEDI

Sunday [On or after December 14, 1930]¹

CHI. RAMACHANDRA,

The letter bears no signature, but it is certainly from you. Your effort in improving your writing is good. Keep it up. Tell Jiji that, in regard to observance of dharma the question of Father's pleasure or displeasure does not arise. Ultimately everyone is reconciled if we observe dharma. We have the example of Mirabai before us. Jiji should not practise untouchability if she regards it a sin, as she ought to.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5291

457. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 15, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

From Jayaprakash's letter, it seems you must be in the Ashram now. It has been arranged now that letters from you should be handed over to me as soon as they are received. But I got no postcard or letter either today or yesterday. If you have still not gone over to the Ashram, do so immediately. Even after you have gone there, you should write to me daily for some time. Your fainting fits must stop, and I think they will in the Ashram. If you require fruit, etc., don't hesitate to ask for it. And don't plunge into work immediately. You have done enough work in the Ashram in the past, and hence you should take complete rest now. Don't burden your mind with worries. Everything will happen as God wills it. Meditate over the hymn *Premal Jyoti*².

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3384

¹ From the contents it appears this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated December 13, 1930. The Sunday following it was December 14.

² A Gujarati rendering, by Narasinhrao Divetia, of Newman's *Lead, Kindly Light*

458. “ASHRAM BHAJANAVALI”¹

1

प्रातः स्मरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वम्

Early in the morning I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge) and *sukham* (bliss), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculate Brahma which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements—earth, water, space, light and air.

20-12-1930²

2

प्रातर्भजामि मनसोवचसामगम्यम्

In the early morning I worship Him who is beyond the reach of thought and speech and yet by whose grace all speech is possible. I worship Him whom the Vedas describe as *neti neti* (not this, not this). Him they, the sages, have called God of gods, the unborn, the unfallen, the source of all.

7-5-1930

¹ *Ashram Bhajanaivali* is a collection of devotional songs which formed part of the morning and evening prayers at Gandhiji's ashrams. They were in various languages and taken from various sources, some of them obscure, but all fairly popular in Hindu religious tradition. Gandhiji rendered these into English for Mirabehn's benefit, in the first place, during his imprisonment in Yeravda Central Prison. The work of translation was begun on May 6, 1930 and the last hymn was translated on December 15.

In 1934 George Allen & Unwin Ltd. brought out an adaptation of the work by John S. Hoyland. (For Gandhiji's permission for its publication, *vide* "Letter to J. S. Hoyland", 15-12-1933.) But in order to make the poems acceptable to English readers, Hoyland omitted a great deal, "chiefly Indian names and symbolism" but also much else so that at places it is difficult to recognize the original in the adaptation. See for instance Gandhiji's translation of verse 8 and Hoyland's adaptation of it (p. 388).

The version reproduced here is taken from a photostat of the original work in Gandhiji's hand (C. W. 4903).

² Note by Gandhiji: "1st verse rewritten on 20-12-1930." Gandhiji first wrote it on May 6, again on November 20 and then finally on this date.

3

प्रातर्नमामि तमसः परमर्कर्वीम्

In the early morning I bow to Him who is beyond darkness, who is like the sun, who is perfect, ancient, called Purushottama, (the best among men) and in whom (through the veil of darkness) we fancy the whole universe as appearing even as (in darkness) we imagine a rope to be a snake.

8-5-1930

4

समुद्रवसने देवि पर्वतस्तनमडिले ।

O! Goddess Earth with the ocean for thy garment, mountains for thy breasts, thou consort of Vishnu (the Preserver), I bow to thee; forgive the touch of my feet.

NOTE. Bowing to the earth, we learn to be humble as the earth which supports the beings that tread upon it. Earth therefore is rightly the consort of the Preserver.

9-5-1930

5

या कन्देन्दुतुषरहारधवला या शुभ्रवस्त्रावृता

May the Goddess Saraswati (of learning), the destroyer completely of black ignorance, protect me. She who is white as the *mogra* flower or the moon and a garland of snow, who has worn white robes, whose hands are adorned with the beautiful bamboo of her *veena* (a kind of violin), who is seated on a white lotus and who is always adored by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and the other gods.

10-5-1930

6

वक्रतुण्ड महाकाय सूर्यकोटिसमप्रभ ।

O God with a curved mouth, big body, refulgent like ten million suns, keep me ever free from harm whilst doing beneficent acts.

NOTE. This is addressed to God represented by the mystic letter ‘ॐ’ pronounced ‘Om’. Mark its curved mouth and big body. Its mystic splendour has been sung by the Upanishads.

11-5-1930

गुरु ब्रह्मा गुरु विष्णुर्गुरु देवो महेश्वरः

Guru (teacher) is Brahma, he is Vishnu, he is Mahadev, he is the great *Brahman* itself. I bow to that guru.

NOTE. This refers of course to the spiritual teacher. This is not a mechanical or artificial relationship. The teacher is not all these in reality but he is all that to the disciple who finds his full satisfaction in him and imputes perfection to him who gave him a living faith in a living God. Such a guru is a rarity, at least nowadays. The best thing is to think of God Himself as one's Guru or await the Light in faith.

12-5-1930

[शान्ताकारं भुजगशयनं पद्मनाभं सुरेशम्]

I bow to Vishnu, who is peace incarnate, who lies on a snake bed, from whose navel grows the lotus, who is the supreme lord of the gods, who sustains the universe, who is like unto the sky, who has the colour of clouds, whose body is blissful, who is the lord of Lakshmi (goddess of good fortune), who has lotus-like eyes, who is knowable by the yogis through meditation, who dispels the fear of the wheel of birth and death and who is the sole Ruler of all the worlds.¹

13-5-1930

[करचरणकृतं वाक्कायजं कर्मजं वा]

Forgive, O merciful and blessed Mahadev, all those sins of mine, of commission or omission, mental or actual and whether done

¹ Hoyland's adaptation of this reads:

I bow to Thee, O Saviour-God:

The universe is stayed in place by Thee;

To those who seek Thee Thou dost show Thyself;

Known in the heart's most secret meditation:

Thou drivest far the fear of death, the fear of life:

And Thou, Thou only,

Commandest by Thy sovereign sway all worlds;

To Thee I bow, O Saviour-God.

through the hands or the feet, the speech, the ears or the eyes. Let Thy will be done.

14-5-1930

10

[नत्त्वहं कामये राज्यं न स्वर्गं नापुनर्भवम्]

I desire neither earthly kingdom nor paradise, no, not even release from birth and death. I desire only the release of afflicted life from misery.

15-5-1930

11

[स्वस्ति प्रजुनः परिपालनतताम्]

Blessed be the people; may the rulers protect their kingdoms by just means, may it be always well with the cow¹ and the Brahmin²; may all the peoples be happy.

16-5-1930

12

[नमस्ते सते ते जगत्कारणाय]

I bow to Thee the *sat* (*see* first verse), the cause of the universe, I bow to Thee the *chit* (1st verse), the refuge of the world, I bow to Thee the one without a second, the giver of salvation, I bow to Thee the Brahman, the all-pervading, the eternal.

17-5-1935

13

[त्वमेकं शरण्यं त्वमेकं वरेण्यम्]

Thou art the only refuge, Thou art the only one to be desired, Thou art the sole protector of the universe, Thou art self-revealed, Thou art the sole creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe, Thou alone art supreme, immovable, unchangeable.

18-5-1930

¹ Note by Gandhiji: "Cow=agriculture"

² Note by Gandhiji: "Brahmin=education"

14

[भयानां भयं भीषणं भीषणानाम्]

Of all the fears, Thou art the chief, of all that is terrible Thou art the most terrible, Thou art the motion of all life, Thou art the holy of holies, Thou art the sole regulator of the mightiest places, Thou art the greatest among the great. Thou art the chief among all protections.

19-5-1930

15

[वयं त्वां स्मरामो वयं त्वां भजामो]

We think of Thee, we worship Thee, we bow to Thee as the witness of this universe, we seek refuge in Thee the *sat*, our only support, yet Thyself needing none, the ruler, the barque in the midst of this ocean of endless birth and death.

20-5-1930

16

[विपदो नैव विपदः संपदो नैव संपदः]

That which goes by the name of adversity is not such; nor is that prosperity which goes by that name. To forget God is adversity; ever to think of Him is prosperity.

21-5-1930

17

[विष्णुर्वा त्रिपुरान्तको भवतु वा ब्रह्मा सुरेन्द्रोऽथवा]

Let him be whosoever he may be whether Vishnu or Mahadev, Brahma or Indra, Sun or Moon, Lord Buddha or Mahavir, obeisance be ever only to him who is free from the poisonous effect of desire and anger, who is filled with compassion for all life and who is purified by a perfectly virtuous life.

22-5-1930

[हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम्]¹

The face of truth is overlaid with a golden lid, O God, remove it so that I may see the true light.

23-5-1930

[अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान्]²

O God, the Knower of all the ways, lead us along the right path so as to enable us to reach the goal; wrestle with our dark sins; we make obeisance to Thee again and again.

24-5-1930

[श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतः]³

Both that which is good and that which is pleasing face man. A wise man will discriminate and will certainly prefer the good to the pleasing whereas the foolish one will prefer the pleasing thinking it to be profitable.

25-5-1930

[सर्वे वेदा यत्पदं आमनन्ति]⁴

I shall tell thee in one word that state which all the Vedas establish, to which all the austerities are dedicated and desiring which devotees observe *brahmacharya*. It is Om.⁵

26-5-1930

¹ Ishopanishad, 15

² Ishopanishad, 18

³ Kathopanishad, I. ii. 2

⁴ *Ibid*

⁵ Note by Gandhiji: "4, page 24, 6th ed."

[न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकम्]¹

The sun does not carry its light there, nor the moon, nor the stars, not even lightning can penetrate there, how then can this fire? All of them derive their light from It and all this (universe) is lighted by Its splendour.²

27-5-1930

[तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये]³

Those knowing ones who with austerities and faith live the forest life in peace begging for their food becoming sinless enter through the sunny gate that abode where dwells that well-known immortal changeless Being.⁴

28-5-1930

[आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु]⁵

Regard the soul as the warrior, body as his chariot, reason as the charioteer, mind as the reins; they call senses horses, sense-objects meadows; wise men have said that the soul acts through the mind and the senses.⁶

29-5-1930

¹ Kathopanishadm II. ii. 15

² Note by Gandhiji: "This should have been later. It is the translation of verse 14, p. 28, 6th edition."

³ Mundakopanishad, I. ii. 11

⁴ Note by Gandhiji: "Verse 15, p. 28, 6th ed."

⁵ Kathopanishad, I. iii. 3-4

⁶ Note by Gandhiji: "5-6, p. 24"

25

[विज्ञानसारथिर्यस्तु मनःप्रग्रहवान्नरः]¹

He whose reason is like an experienced charioteer and whose mind is under control like the reins crosses over safely and safely comes to the journey's end, the excellent abode of Vishnu.

30-5-1930

26

[उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत प्राप्य वरान्निबोधत]²

Awake, arise, and learn wisdom from the wise. The sages say to traverse this way (through life) is as difficult as it is to walk along the edge of a razor.

31-5-1930

27

[अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो]³

Even as fire though always the same assumes different forms as it passes through different media, so does the indwelling spirit, though essentially always the same, appear different passing through different media

1-5-1930

28

[वायुर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो]⁴

Even as the air though always the same assumes different forms as it passes through different media so does the indwelling spirit, though essentially always the same, appear different passing through different media.

2-6-1930

¹ *Kathopanishad*, I. iii. 9

² *Ibid.*

³ *Kathopanishad*, II. ii. 9

⁴ *Ibid.*

[सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर]¹

Even as the sun which gives light to all the eyes remains unaffected by the external defects of these eyes so is the oversoul dwelling in all that lives not affected by the, external woes of mankind.

3-6-1930

[एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा]²

Those wise men alone, not others, attain eternal happiness who feel dwelling in themselves that one all-controlling power which³ pervades all life and though one appears as many.

4-6-1930

[नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानाम्]⁴

Those wise men alone, not others, attain eternal peace who feel dwelling in themselves that God who is the permanent essence among the impermanent, who is the life in all that lives and who though one fulfils the desires of many.⁵

5-6-1930

[परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान्]⁶

Having realized (the impermanence of) the status to be obtained by works, a Brahmin should cultivate detachment. Stability cannot come from activity. To know that he should reverently approach a teacher who knows the Vedas and is intent on God.

6-6-1930

¹ Kathopanishad, II. ii. 9.

² *Ibid.*

³ The source has "who".

⁴ *Kathopanishad*, II. ii. 13

⁵ Note by Gandhiji: "For 14 & 15 verses *see* leaf 8."

⁶ *Mundakopanishad*, I. ii. 12

[तस्मै स विद्वान् उपसन्नाय सम्यक्]¹

To him thus come with due reverence, calm of mind brought under control, the wise teacher imparts divine knowledge whereby one really knows that permanent Being who is truth incarnate.

7-6-1930

[प्रणवो धनुः शरोह्यात्मा ब्रह्मतल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते]²

Pranav (Om) is the bow, the spirit is the arrow and Brahm[an] is the target; therefore one must shoot unerringly so that the spirit becomes one with Brahm[an] like the arrow (with the target).

8-6-1930

[भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थि छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः]³

When one realizes Godhead one's⁴ heart is rid of difficulties, doubts vanish and works do not bind.

9-6-1930

[ब्रह्मैवेदं अमृतं पुरस्तात्]⁵

This eternal Brahm[an] is before and behind, is in the right and the left, is below and above, pervades everywhere, is the universe, is above all.

10-6-1930

¹ *Mundakopanishad*, I. ii. 12

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ The source has "his".

⁵ *Mundakopanishad*, II. ii. II

[सत्येन लभ्यस्तपसा ह्येष आत्मा]¹

Self-realization comes always through truth, *tapas* (austerity), true knowledge and *brahmacharya*. Seekers who have become free from sins realize the immaculate refulgent spirit within themselves.

11-6-1930

[सत्यमेव जयते नानृतम्]²

Truth alone triumphs, never untruth. That way which the sages whose purpose is fulfilled traverse, which is the way of the gods and where is the great abode of truth opens (for us) through truth.

12-6-1930

[नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो]³

This spirit is not attainable by the Vedic study or by feats of intellect or by attending discourses. It is attainable only by him who woos it. It reveals itself to such a one.

13-6-1930

[नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यो]⁴

This realization is not possible for the weak or the indolent or those who resort to unmeaning austerities. But the soul of the wise man who remedies these defects enters the abode of Brahm[an].

13-6-1930

¹ *Mundakopanishad*, II. ii. II

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid*

⁴ *Ibid*

41

[सम्प्राप्यैनं ऋषयो ज्ञानतृप्ताः]¹

All those who have well understood the meaning of life through Vedant and science, whose hearts are purified through sannyasa, being intent on the immortal, on death enter *Brahmaloka* and become free.

15-6-1930

42

[वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः]²

All those who have well understood the meaning of life through Vedant and science, whose hearts are purified through sannyasa, being intent on the immortal, on death enter *Brahmaloka* and become free.

15-6-1930

43

[यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रे]³

Just as rivers rushing towards the sea leave their names and forms and merge in the sea, even so do wise men leave their names and forms and merge in the paramount divine Being.

16-6-1930

44

[स यो ह वै तत्. परमं ब्रह्म वेद, ब्रह्मैव भवति]⁴

He who knows that great Brahm[an] I becomes It. In his family no one ignorant of Brahm[an] is possible. He passes grief and sin. He becomes free from the bonds of the heart and becomes immortal.

17-6-1930

¹ *Mundakopanishad*, III. ii. 5

² *Ibid*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

45

[यतो वाचो निर्वर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मानसा सह]¹

He who knows that Brahm[an] which not reaching both speech and mind return, fears nothing. He does not burn thinking, 'Why have I not done this good thing? Why have I committed that sin?

18-6-1930

46

[युवा स्यात् साधु युवाध्यायकः आशिष्ठो द्रढिष्ठो बलिष्ठः]²

A young man should have character, should be studious, full of hope, determination and strength. For him all this earth should be full of riches.

19-6-1930

47

He may not witness dances, he may not attend meetings, gatherings and revel, he may not gossip, he should cultivate a love for solitude, he may not resent incorrect conduct by the teacher and his family, he may not engage in talks with women except as may be necessary, he should be gentle, calm, modest and determined, he should shun idleness, anger, envy; he should fetch a pitcherful of water for the teacher both morning and evening and fetch wood from the forest.

20-6-1930

48

[बलं वाव विज्ञानाद्भयोऽपि ह]³

Soul-force is superior even to science, for one man having soul-force will shake one hundred learned men. When one has that force he is ready to go to a teacher, he serves him, then he becomes fit to sit near him, he ponders over what he has heard; he becomes wise, he does his duty, he has experience. The earth keeps its place through

¹ *Taittiriyaopanishad*, II. 9.

² *Taittiriyaopanishad*, VIII. 2

³ *Chhandogyopanishad*, VII. viii. 1

that force, the heavens retain their place through it, the mountains, the gods, mankind, the brute creation, birds, grass, plants, game, insects, moths, ants, etc., all life are sustained by that force. Therefore cultivate that force.

21-6-1930

49

[मधुवाता ऋतायते]¹

May the winds, the waters, the plant life, the evening and the dawn, the dust of the earth, the heavenly vault which is like father, the trees, the sun and the cows be a blessing to us.

22-6-1930

50

[ज जातु कामात् न भयात् न लोभात्]

One may not abandon one's faith for the satisfaction of a desire, or from fear or ambition, not even for saving one's life. Faith is permanent, happiness and unhappiness are fleeting things. The spirit is immortal, the result of its actions—the body—is evanescent.

23-6-1930

51

[यदेव विद्यया करोति श्रद्धयोपरिषदा तदेव वीर्यवत्तर भवति]²

Work done with knowledge and faith and in a prayerful spirit becomes most effective strength.

24-6-1930

52

[यं ब्रह्मारुद्रमरुतः स्तुन्वन्ति दिव्यैः स्तवैः]

I bow to that God whom Brahma, Varuna, Indra and the Maruts adore with divine hymns, of whom the Vedic singers sing in the Vedas with the *angas*, the *padas*, the *kramas* and the Upanishads, whom the yogis see in their meditations with minds fixed on Him and whose end the *devas* and the *asuras* do not see.

25-6-1930

¹ *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, VI. iii. 6

² *Chhandogyopanishad*, I. i. 10

53

KUMAR MANDIR PRAYER

[ॐ सह नावतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु]¹

Om! may God protect us, may He support us, may we make joint progress, may our studies be fruitful, may we never harbour ill will against one another. Om *shanti, shanti, shanti*.

26-6-1930

54

[ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय । समसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय ।]²

Om! From untruth lead me unto truth, from darkness lead me unto light, from death lead me unto life everlasting.

27-6-1930

55

[योऽन्तः प्रविश्य मम वाचमिमां प्रसुप्ताम्]

I bow to thee, O God, who being almighty and having entered my heart, gives by His power life to the silent tongue, the hands, feet, ears, skin and other members of the body.

28-6-1930

56

WOMEN'S PRAYER

[गोविन्द द्वारिकावासिन् . . . कुरुमध्येऽवसीदतीम्]

O Govind, dweller of Dwarika, Krishna, Thou beloved of the Gopis, O Keshav, dost Thou not know that the Kauravas have surrounded me?

O Lord, Thou Lord of Lakshmi, protector of Vraja, deliverer from affliction, O Janardana, save me [from] the ocean of misery in the shape of the Kauravas.

O Krishna, Thou great Yogi, soul and protector of the universe, O Govind, deliver me lying hopeless in the midst of the Kauravas and seeking thy support.

29-6-1930

¹ *Taittiriyaopanishad*, II (*Shantipath*)

² *Brihadaranyakopanishad*, III. 28

57

[धर्मं चरत माऽधर्मम् 1 सत्यं वदत नानृतम्]

Act righteously, never unrighteously; speak truth, never untruth;
look far ahead, never shortsightedly; look above; never below.

30-6-1930

58

[अहिंसासत्यमस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रियनिग्रहः]

Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, purity and self-control, these, said Manu, are the common duty of all the four divisions.

1-7-1930

59

[अहिंसा सत्यमस्तेयं अकामकोधलोभता]

Ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, freedom from passion, anger and greed, wishing the well-being and good of all that lives is the duty common to all the divisions.

2-7-1930

60

[विद्वाद्भिः सेवितः सद्भिर्नित्यमद्वेषरगिभिः]

Understand that to be religion which the wise, the good and those that are free from likes and dislikes follow and which is I felt in the heart.

3-7-1930

61

[श्रूयतां धर्मसर्वस्व . . . पापाय परपीडनम्]

Listen to the essence of religion and assimilate it through the heart: one should never do to others which one would not wish done to oneself.

That which has been said in countless books I shall say in half a verse: service of others is virtue, injury to others is sin.

4-7-1930

62

[आदित्यचन्द्रावनिलोऽनलश्च]

The sun, the moon, the wind, the fire, the sky, the earth, the waters, the heart, the god of judgment, the day, the night, the evening,

the morning and dharma itself are witnesses to man's actions, i.e., he can conceal nothing.

5-7-1930

63

FROM "DWADASHAPANJARICA [-STOTRA"]

[मूढ जहीहि धनागमतृष्णाम्]

O foolish one, give up the desire for amassing wealth, make thy mind pure and free from desire, .satisfy thy mind with what thou may'st obtain through thy own labour.

6-7-1930

64

[अर्थमनर्थ भवय नित्यम्]

Always believe that wealth is illth. It is simple truth to say that there is no happiness coming from its possession. It is known to all that rich people fear even their own children.

7-7-1930

65

[कामं क्रोधं लोभं मोहम्]

Shun desire, anger, greed, possession and ask thyself 'who am I'. Those foolish ones who don't strive for self-realization go to perdition.

8-7-1930

66

[त्वयि मयि चान्यत्रैको विष्णुः]

In thee, me and others there is but one God who suffers us all; thou art angered for nothing. See thyself in all and everywhere, give up thy ignorance in the shape of differentiation.

9-7-1930

67

[नलिनीदलगतसलिलं तरलम्]

Like the precarious drops on a lotus leaf this life is fleeting.
Know this world to be full of disease, egotism and affliction.

10-7-1930

68

FROM "PANDAVAGITA"

[प्रह्लादनारदराशरपुण्डरीक]

PANDAV: I think reverently of the holy ones: Prahlad, Narad, Parashar Pundarika, Vyasa, Ambarisha, Shuka, Shaunaka, Bhima, Dalbhya, Rukmangada, Arjuna, Vasishtha, Bibhishana and other great saints.

11-7-1930

69

[स्वकर्मफलनिर्दिष्टां यां यां योनिं ब्रजाभ्यहम्]

KUNTI: O Krishna, no matter in what species I am born due o my actions, may my devotion to you grow in strength.

12-7-1930

70

[ये ये हताश्चत्रधरेण राजन्]

DRONA: O King, those who were killed by the Wielder of the Discus, the Lord of the three worlds, Janardana, have gone to the abode of Vishnu. For even the wrath of God is like his boon.

13-7-1930

71

[त्वमेव माता च पिता त्वमेव]

GANDHARI: O Thou God of gods, Thou alone art my all, mother, father, brother, friend, knowledge, wealth.

14-7-1930

72

[नमो ब्रह्मण्यदेवाय . . . केशवं प्रतिगच्छति]

VIRATA: Ten thousand ten obeisances to the great God Krishna, Govind the benefactor of the cow, the Brahmin, the whole universe.

PRAHLAD: O Lord ! O Changeless One ! may my devotion unto Thee remain for ever constant, no matter where among the thousands

of species I may take birth. May my love for Thee be pure and even as intense as the love of the worldly man for his sensepursuits and may it never fade from my heart ever intent upon Thee.

BHARADWAJA: Good fortune and victory, never defeat, attend upon those whose hearts are ruled by lotus-like Janardana.

MARKANDEYA: That moment or occasion when one does not think of Vasudeva means as much waste, loss, ignorance, folly, stupidity.

SHAUNAKA: Devotees of Vishnu needlessly worry over food and clothing. Surely He who sustains the whole universe is not going to neglect His devotees.

SANATKUMAR: Even as the waters dropping from the heavens are received into the ocean, so is the worship of the different gods received unto Keshav.

15-7-1930

73

SELECTIONS FROM "MUKUNDAMALA"

[श्रीवल्लभेति वरदेति दयापरेति]

O Mukunda, grant that I may always say: O Vallabh, O Giver of boons, O Fount of Mercy, O Lover of devotees, O Destroyer of the wheel of birth and death, O Lord, O Thou with a serpentine bed, O Thou Refuge of the Universe.

15-7-1930

74

[मुकुन्द मूर्ध्ना . . . मरणेऽपि चिन्तयामि]

O Mukunda! With head bowed down I ask of Thee only this that by Thy grace I may never from birth to birth lose sight of Thy lotus feet.

O God! I have no relish for dharma, nor for wealth nor yet for worldly enjoyments; let whatever is to happen happen as a result of my past actions; only this prayer I regard as of utmost importance: may my attachment to Thy lotus feet be unshakable.

O Thou Destroyer of hell! I do not care where my lot is to be cast, whether in heaven or on earth or in hell; only grant that I may ever think of Thy feet more beautiful than the lotus during the rains.

[भवजलधिगतानां द्रुह्मवाताहतानाम्]

Vishnu becomes like a ship protecting men sailing on the ocean of birth and death, tossed to and fro as by the wind, by the pairs of opposites such as happiness and misery, borne down by the weight of guarding sons, daughters, wives and the like and sinking in the storms of violent passions.

16-7-1930

75

[भवजलधिमगाधं . . . कृष्णरसायनं पिब]

O, my heart, you need not be afraid that you cannot cross this unfathomable and difficult ocean of birth and death; thy single-minded devotion to the lotus-eyed, hell-destroying God will surely save thee.

O Lotus-eyed One! with hands folded, head bowed, body moved, throat choked, eyes bathed in hot tears, may our life close ever drinking in the nectar in the form of the meditation of Thy lotus-like feet. O Cupid! Get thee gone from my heart which is the seat of the lotus-like feet of Mukunda; thou art already scorched by the fire from Siva's eyes; why will you not remember the might of Vishnu's discus?

O thou wrong-headed fool ! Why dost thou afflict with drugs this body which has hundreds of weak joints, which is liable to certain decay and which is subject to constant change? Drink in the one life-giving potion—the name of Krishna.

17-7-1930

76

[नमामि नारायणपादपङ्कजम् . . . जनानां व्यसनाभिमुख्यम्]

I touch the lotus feet of Narayana, I worship Narayana always; I take the holy name of Narayana, I remember the changeless essence called Narayana.

O how passion deadens man's senses; for though he can take, he never does take any of the many names of God such as Ananta, Vaikuntha, Mukunda, Krishna, Govind, Damodar, Madhav.

18-7-1930

BHAJANS

[जेहि सुमिरत सिधि होइ, गणनायक करिवरवदन]

O elephant-mouthed one, the chief of *ganas* by thinking on whom one attains salvation and who is a storehouse of knowledge and virtues, may Thy grace descend upon me; O merciful one by whose mercy the dumb speak, the lame ascend steep hills and who washes off all the scorching dirt of Kali—shower thy blessings upon me.

19-7-1930

[दीन को दयालु दानि, दूसरो न कोऊ]

For those in want there is no other than Thou so merciful, so generous! What is the use of my carrying my wants to others? They appear to me as much in want as myself. Gods, men, sages, demons, serpents and others exercise sway only during Thy pleasure. The world, eternity, the four Vedas proclaim that Rama is the beginning, the end and the middle; Thine is the Kingdom. To ask of Thee is not begging. Thy devotee comes to Thee for Thy well-known nature; for hast Thou not taken under Thy protection stone, beast, trees, bird? O Thou, son of Lord Dasharatha, Thou hast turned beggars into kings, Thou art the refuge of the distressed. I am Thy slave. O merciful God, say if only once: “Tulsidas is Mine.”

20-7-1930

[तू दयालु, दीन हौं, तू दानि, हौं भिखारी]

Thou art merciful, I am in distress; Thou art the giver, I am a beggar; I am a known sinner, Thou art the forgiver of mountains of sins; Thou art the help of the helpless and who can be so helpless as I? There is none so afflicted like me, there is no deliverer like unto Thee; Thou art the creator, I am a little creature; Thou art the lord, I am a slave; Thou art father, brother, teacher, friend, all in all to me; if I have only faith, I know that there is much between Thee and me; may Tulsi somehow feel the protecting power of Thy holy feet.

21-7-1930

When shall I conduct myself thus by the grace of the merciful Rama that I shall cultivate the nature of good and true men; that I shall be satisfied with whatever accrues to me in the ordinary course and shall expect nothing from anybody; that I shall carry out the resolution to serve others in thought, deed and word; that I shall not burn with the scorching fire of the unbearably harsh language of others when I chance to hear it; that I shall be free from pride and have a mind equipoised and not delight in narrating the defects of others and that I shall give up all anxiety about the body and will not be elated by happiness and downcast by misery?

Tulsidas declares: being steadfast along the foregoing path I shall attain the boon of unchangeable devotion.

22- 7-1930

O my soul! How foolish art thou, thou leavest the celestial waters of Ramabhakti and runnest after the mirage even as the *chatak* bird being thirsty mistakes a volume of smoke for a cloud but finds neither coolness nor water and damages its eyes into the bargain; or even as the hungry hawk seeing its own reflection through a glass floor falls upoh it forgetting the injury done to its own face. O merciful God, how long need I relate my misdeeds? Thou knowest the minds of Thy devotees. Tulsidas says: Lord, think of Thy promise and deliver Thy servant from the insufferable misery.

23-7-1930

O Lord! Hear this my prayer. Remove my ignorance which makes [me] cherish expectations of and faith in others rather than Thee. I want neither heaven nor good intellect, nor riches nor possessions nor greatness. I want an ever-growing devotion to Thee without expectation of reward. May Thy grace save me even as the tortoise its eggs from succumbing to the weakness of my irresistible

evil nature; Tulsidas prays for deliverance from all egotism and attachments of the body.

24-7-1930

83

माधव मोह-पास क्यों टूटै ?

O Madhav, how can this bondage of infatuation be broken? Not even a million external remedies will remove the internal malady. No amount of fire underneath a cauldron will destroy the moon reflected in a cauldron filled with ghee. The bird living in the hollow of a tree will not be killed by cutting the tree (from above). Even so a mind devoid of disciplined thinking will never be purified by any external means. When the heart within is impure and full of evil passions, no amount of external cleansing of the body will purify it. Can the snake inside its mound be killed by destroying the mound? Tulsidas says that without the grace of God there is no clear discrimination and without it no one may hope to cross the deep ocean named the universe.

25-7-1930

84

मैं कहि कहौं विपति अति भारी ।

O Raghuvir, help of the distressed, to whom shall I take the tale of my great misery? My heart, O my God, is Thy abode, but many thieves have entered therein and although I am beseeching and imploring them to leave it, they are using unbearable force; ignorance, delusion, greed, pride, arrogance, anger, passion—all enemies of free knowledge are causing much trouble, O Lord, and thinking me to be helpless are crushing me, I am alone, the thieves are many, no one hears my cries; Lord, there is no escape from this either; O Lord of the Raghus, protect me. Tulsidas says: Listen, O Rama, thieves are looting Thy house; my great anxiety is lest they should bring discredit on Thee !

26-7-1930

85

ऐसी को उदार जग माहीं

None is so generous in this world as Rama who is merciful to the distressed without requiring any service in return. There is no one like him. That state which even sages fail to attain after devotion and self-denial he bestowed upon the Vulture and Sabari and then thought he had not given much. The kingdom that Ravana got from Sivji after

having offered his head Rama gave to Bibhishana as if it was nothing. Tulsidas says: O my mind, if thou wouldst have the real good then worship Rama who out of the abundance of his grace will answer thy prayer.

27-7-1930

86

जाके प्रिय न राम वैदेही

Shun those people as enemies who are not devoted to Rama and Sita, be they ever so good friends. (For Him), Prahlad left his father, Bibhishana his brother, Bharata his mother, Bali his teacher, the women of Vraj their husbands and they all rejoiced (in their sacrifice). A friend is desirable only so long as he is attached and devoted to Rama. What more need I say, what is the use of the eye-powder that destroys the eyes? Tulsi says: In my opinion, he who is devoted to the feet of Rama is in every respect my friend worthy of love and dear as life itself.

28-7-1930

87

कौन जतन विनती करिये

What should I do to be able to pray? I am afraid, for looking at my conduct I realize my defeat; I obstinately refrain from doing the things which make God merciful towards His devotees and I follow the path that leads me into the trap of misfortune and daily misery. I know that I should be safe if I gave myself in thought, word and deed to the service of fellow creatures but on the contrary I am vainly jealous when I see others happy. The Vedas, the Puranas and other scriptures proclaim the necessity of cultivating firmly the companionship of the good but my pride, passion and jealousy turn me away from them. I always delight in that which will lead me unto misery. Now tell me, O Lord! how may I be delivered from this misery? I can only be saved if Thou according to Thy nature will have mercy on me; Tulsidas has no other hope; how long shall he remain in this mire?

29-7-1930

88

जानत प्रीतरीत रघुराई

Raghunath knows what love is. He sets aside all other bonds and accepts only real love. Dasharatha expressed paternal affection by giving up life and made his fame immortal. But look at the greatness of Rama—he held the Vulture as superior to such a father. He even

forgot his beloved Sita when he saw his friend Sugriva grief-stricken over the separation of his wife. Here was his brother lying senseless in the battle-field but he was thinking, at the time, of Bibhishana. Whether at home, or the teacher's house, or the home of friends or the father-in-law's, wherever he was treated, he never experienced the richness of those feasts as that of the wild berries provided by Sabari. When the sages begin to narrate His original nature they humbly acknowledge their inability to do justice to the theme and are happy to call themselves friends of the Bhil or take pride in calling themselves companions of monkeys. Tulsidas says: If thou, having known this nature and this love of Rama, hast not devotion in thine heart, then, O fool, thy mother in giving thee birth uselessly threw away her youth.

89

रघुवर ! तुमको मेरी लाज ।

O Raghuvir, my shame is Thy shame. I am ever seeking Thy protection and Thou art noted as protector of the weak. I have heard it said of Thee that it is Thy promise that Thou wouldst save sinners. And I am an old sinner; take my ship ashore. To destroy the sin of Thy devotees and to remove their distress is Thy only task. Be merciful, O Lord, to Tulsidas, and give him the boon of Thy worship.

90

जागिये रघुनाथ कुँवर

O Prince of the Raghus, wake up; the birds are singing in the grove. The moon will disappear presently, the chakravaka bird is off to meet her lord. The threefold breeze is gently blowing, the leaves are rustling. The morning sun is on the horizon, darkness of the night is gone. The bees are humming, the lotus has opened its leaf. Brahma and others are in meditation; the gods, common people and sages are singing hymns of praise. Thus when it was rising time Rama opened his eyes. Tulsidas is overjoyed to see the lotus face of Rama who gives valuables as gifts to the poor.

30-7-1930

मेरी मन हरिजू हठ न तजै

O Lord, my mind will not give up its waywardness. I try every day to control it but it will not change its nature. As a woman, although she recognizes the pains of labour, foolishly forgets them and goes to her foolish husband or as a greedy dog, even though it gets knocked on the head, meanly continues to visit the same haunts and is not ashamed, even so is this mind of mine wilful and unconquerable, I own defeat in spite of various efforts. Tulsidas says: It will come under subjection only when God the inspirer of all takes it up in hand.

31-7-1930

कुटुंब तजि शरण राम ! तेरी आयो

O Rama, he (Bibhishana) left family, fort Lanka, palaces and temples and hearing Thy name rushed to Thee for protection. Seated in his full court Ravana kicked him and the foolish one would not listen though he was warned again and again. Thou embracedst this Bibhishana as soon as he came to Thee and crowned him King of Lanka. As soon as he met Thee the insults of ages were wiped out. O Raghunath, friend of the friendless, Thou owned him knowing him to be helpless. Tulsidas says: He received the boon of the protection from and devotion to the Lord of the Raghus.

1-8-1930

भज मन रामचरन सुखदाई

O my mind, worship the beneficent feet of Rama. From these feet issued forth the Ganga and was caught by Siva in his ample lock of hair. It was therefore named Jatashankari; it came for the good of the three worlds. Bharata treasured as a token of love the sandals bearing the imprints of these feet. The Bhil chief would not steer Rama's boat without being allowed to wash those feet. Saintly persons always worship these beneficent feet. The wife of the sage Gautama obtained salvation by the touch of those feet. Rama hallowed (with his feet) the Dandak forest and removed the distress of the *rishis*. (Yet strange to relate) this very Rama the lord of the three worlds ran after the golden deer. He gave the palm of victory to the monkey Sugriva,

who was afflicted by the fear of his brother. Bibhishana, the brother of the enemy (Ravana), got the crown of Lanka through the touch of those feet. Siva, Sanak, Brahma, etc., also the thousand-mouthed serpent sing his praises but, says Tulsidas, his lips utter the praise of Hanuman the monkey.

2-8-1930

94

अब लौं नसानी अब न नसैहों

I have spoiled everything hitherto but will do so no longer. By the grace of God the night is past, I am awake and shall no more go to sleep. I have the talisman in the shape of God's name; it shall not vanish from my heart. The beautiful and holy face of God is the testing stone. The gold of my heart shall be tested on it. My sense organs finding me without control have mocked me. I have now acquired self-control, they shall no more deride me. Tulsi says: My mind like the bee on the lotus shall lean on the lotus feet of Rama.

3-8-1930

95

मन पछितै है अवसर बीते ।

O my mind, what is the use of repentance after the occasion is gone? Having attained the difficult human status, devote thyself body, speech and heart to the feet of Hari. Sahasrarjuna, Ravana and others could not save themselves from the claws of all-powerful death. Thou triest to protect wealth and possessions saying this is mine, this is mine, but at last thou hast to go empty-handed. Know that wife, children, etc., constitute bonds of the flesh; do not be entrapped by them. O miser, they will all leave thee when thou diest, why not then be detached now? Be devoted to the Lord, O foolish one, and give up all false hope with all thy heart. Tulsi says: The fire of passion will never be quenched by the oil of indulgence.

4-8-1930

96

माधव ! मो समान जग माही ।

O Madhav! there is none on this earth in every way so low, corrupt, beggarly and steeped in vice like me and I am in distress having left Thee, God, so merciful without cause, so friendly to the afflicted; why dost Thou not show mercy to me? It is not Thy fault, I know it is all of my doing. O Lord, thou gavest me a body through which I could know Thee but notwithstanding that I did not know

Thee, The bamboo and the *karil* vainly blame the sandal and the spring (the one for want of scent and the other for want of leaves), being unworthy and unfortunate how could the one have scent and the other leaves? I am convinced that I am hard of heart in every way and Thou, O Lord, art tender. Tulsidas says: God! my bondage can be broken only by Thy mercy.

97

कलि नाम कामतरु राम को

In the Kaliyuga Ramanama is the all-yielding tree. It is the destroyer of scorching miseries caused by bad times, pauperism, etc. Repeating the name purifies the mind and banishes misfortune. Valmiki and Shanker sing the virtues of taking the name whether correctly or with the letters transposed. It is well here and hereafter with those who are armed with the beautiful power (of the name). Tulsi says: I am able to live in the world peacefully by the power of the name, I have no anxiety whether I live or die.

5-8-1930

98

जय राम रमारमणं समनम्

Hail to Thee, O Rama, the Lord of Sita and deliverer from the feverish wheel of birth and death, protect Thy servant who is stricken with fear. O Ruler of Avadh, God of gods, Lord of Sita, O God, Thy ward seeks Thy protection; Thou destroyer of Ravana with his ten heads and twenty arms, hast ridden this big earth of its great maladies. The crowd of devils who stalk abroad during the night are like so many fire-flies. The scorching splendour of the fire of Thy arrows has burnt them to ashes. Thou art the excellent ornament of this earthly system. Thou art the shining sun to dispel the deep darkness of the night of arrogance, infatuation and immense egotism. Cupid is hunting down the helpless people who will not give up greed and lust and who have lost the true path in the midst of self-gratification. O Lord, save them. People are afflicted with diseases and bereavement. This is the result of want of devotion to Thy blessed feet. Those who are not attached to Thy lotus feet have to go through the eternal wheel of life and death. Those who are not so devoted are ever helpless, sorrowful and miserable. Those who delight in Thy praise and who always like the company of wise and holy men have neither passion nor greed nor pride nor arrogance; prosperity or adversity are the same to them. It is for this reason that sages leaving aside dependence on yoga rejoice in becoming Thy servants. The

holy people take vows, offer eternal devotion to Thee, with true hearts serve Thy lotus feet, regard alike insults or honours and thus contented roam about the earth. Thou art like the bee to the lotus hearts of the sages. O Thou steadfast and unconquerable warrior, I take Thy name, I bow to Thee Lord. Thou art the enemy of the misery of death and life cycle, infatuation and arrogance. Thou art the treasure house of virtues, Thou art the great seat of mercy; I always bow to Thee O Lord of Sita. O Son of Raghu remove this darkness of the pairs of opposites. O Lord of the earth, look at Thy helpless servants. O Lord of Lakshmi, I repeatedly ask of thee this boon: grant me everlasting devotion to Thy lotus feet and the company of holy men always.

6-8-1930

99

तुलसी बोध-मौक्तिक

There is no religion like the service of others, and O brother, there is no sin like doing evil to others. Since the Puranas and the Vedas proclaim that good and evil are to be found in our hearts, there is happiness where there is good and misery for certain where there is evil. Blessed is the king who walks along the right path, blessed is the Brahmin who will not swerve from the faith, blessed is the moment when one is in the company of the holy ones, blessed is the life that is devoted to the unbroken worship of God.

Lives of holy men are beautiful like cotton; though tasteless the fruit is white and durable. Those who bear the hardships of others and relieve them attain fame on this earth and are adorable.

There is no doubt that one gets what one's heart is truly set upon. Nothing on this earth is difficult for him whose mind is saturated with the thought of serving others.

It is the tradition of the Raghu clan handed down from time immemorial that they would stake their life rather than break the plighted word. Sins mountain-high cannot be heavier than untruth, can crores of चणोटी¹ outweigh a mountain?

The sages proclaim and the Vedas and the Puranas witness that all good deeds depend for their merit on truth.

¹ Coral bead

There is no one so helpless as I and there is none so merciful to them as Thou; therefore Thou jewel of the Raghu race, deliver me from this intolerable cycle of birth and death.

7-8- 1930

100

चरन-कमल बन्दौ हरि राई ।

I bow to the lotus feet of the great Hari. Surdas says: I bow again and again to the feet of that merciful God whose mercy enables the lame to ascend mountains, the blind to see everything, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak and the pauper to have people holding umbrella over him.

8-8-1930

101

जैसे राखहु वैसे हि रहौं

O Lord, keep me as Thou wilt. Thou knowest the happiness and the sorrows of the people; what need can there be for me to relate them. O God of mercy, sometimes I get enough to eat, other times I have to suffer pangs of hunger; sometimes I ride horses or stately elephants, other times I myself carry loads; Surdas says: O Lotus-eyed one, Ghanashyam, lovable God, may I be ever Thy servant, devoted to Thy feet.

9-8-1930

102

दीनन दुख-हरन देव संतन हितकारी ।

O God, Thou removest the woes of the afflicted and comforteth the holy ones. Take Ajamil, the Vulture, the Hunter, which of them was a sadhu? Simply because the Prostitute taught a parrot Thy name Thou savedst her. Thou gavest a kingdom to Dhruva, Thou savedst Prahlad, for the sake of Thy devotees Thou built a bridge and reduced Lanka to ashes. A handful of raw rice pleased Thee, Thou wast satisfied with mere vegetable leaves. Thou thoughtst nothing of berries if they were half bitten or unripe or sour. When the alligator seized the elephant and Dushasana began to strip Draupadi naked and [she] called out Krishna, Krishna, Thou respondedst and (savedst the elephant) and multiplied Draupadi's clothing. Surdas the blind beggar knocks at the door, O Lord.

10-8-1930

सुने री मैंने निर्बल के बल राम ।

I have heard that Rama is the help of the helpless. I can produce the evidence of those saintly people who were helped by him in their adversity. So long as the elephant relied upon his own strength, his case was hopeless, but when in his helplessness he invoked the assistance of Rama, he responded when hardly his name was half pronounced. When Draupadi felt helpless, He felt the call in his seat and God having multiplied her clothing Dushasana grew tired of hopelessly trying to strip her naked. Man relies on his own strength or his austerities or the strength of his arms or fourthly his wealth. Surdas says that when a man has exhausted all his resources and invokes the name of God, His grace descends upon him.

11-8-1930

हम भक्तन के भक्त हमारे

I belong to my devotees—and they to me. O Arjuna, hear my promise, it can never be recalled; taking heed of my devotees' necessities, I rush to their assistance barefoot. I deliver my devotees whenever they are in difficulty. He who is against my devotees is against me. Having well considered your welfare, I am driving your chariot. My devotees' victory is my victory, their defeat is my defeat. Surdas says: God destroys with his Sudarshana those who come in the way of devotees.

अबकी टेक हमारी । लाज राखे गिरिधारी ।

Now it is my fixed resolve; keep Thou my honour, O Lord! Even as during the Bharat war Thou keptst Arjuna's honour by wearing Thy Sudarshana Chakra and driving Arjuna's chariot, Thou didst not let Thy devotee's honour be sullied or even as Thou keptst Draupadi's honour and didst not let her be stripped naked though Dushasana made repeated attempts till he was tired out, Thou didst multiply her saris; keep Thou Surdas's honour, he has no other protector; O Thou Lord of Lakshmi and Radha the daughter [of] Brihbbhan, he seeks Thy protection.

मो सम कौन कुठिल खल कामी ।

Who can be so crooked, bad or dissolute as I? I am so faithless that I have forgotten the very God who gave me this body. Even like the village dog I have been fattening myself and running after pleasures. I have given up the company of God's people and day and night slave for those who revile Him. Who can be a greater sinner than I, I am the chief among them. Surdas says: O God, listen, where is the resting place for a sinner like me?

12-8-1930

प्रभु मोरे अवगुन चित न धरो ।

O God, do not lay to heart my faults. Thou art called equi-minded towards all. Thou canst save me if Thou wilt. One volume of water is called a river, another which contains dirt is called a drain but when they meet and become one they are called the Ganga. One piece of iron is used for worship, another in the hands of a thief for stealing, the *paras*¹ makes no distinction and turns by its touch either to gold. Surdas says: this is all called the *maya* of Brahm[an]. Now,

O Lord, save me and let not Thy promise go in vain.

13-8-1930

अखियाँ हरिदरसनकी प्यासी

I am pining to see God as the divine child (Krishna). I would love to see the lotus-eyed One and not being able to do so I feel miserable day and night. O Uddhav ! This child of Brindaban with the

¹ Philosopher's stone

saffron mark on his forehead and a pearl necklace round his neck—he conquered our love and then forsook us. What do the people understand of the pangs of the forsaken ones, they will only laugh. Surdas says: O God, without seeing Thy face there is nothing left for me but to go to Kashi and seek deliverance by death.

14-8-1930

109

सबसे ऊँची प्रेम सगाई ।

The best tie is the tie of love. God partook of Vidura's leaves and left Duryodhana's dainties. He ate with relish the berries tasted by Sabari. His love prompted [Him] to serve the king for when Yudhishtira performed the royal sacrifice He served as a menial. Not minding His high status, He drove Arjuna's chariot. His love was so great for Brindaban that He danced with the Gopis. Surdas says: I am a wretch unworthy of such love; how much shall I praise Thee, O Lord?

15-8-1930

110

सब मैं नाच्यो बहुत गोपाल

O Gopal, I have danced away my life in self-indulgence. Desire and anger were my garment, passions were my garland, infatuation was my ankle-bells, backbiting was the sweet sounding tune, poisoned mind was the tabor, evil company was the step, insatiableness was¹ the accompanying measure of various kind, *maya* was the waist-band, ambition was the mark on my forehead and I showed much cunning. So much so that I forgot all about time or place. Surdas says: O Nandalal, remove all this ignorance of mine.

16-8-1930

¹ The source has "is".

111

अब तरे प्रगट भई जग जानी ।

Now is the thing known all over. Eternal devotion to God cannot be kept secret from anyone. That beautiful face is ever before my eyes. Try what I will that face is unforgettable. I am filled with that love. It is inseparable even as milk and water are. Surdas says: God who knows the hearts of us all knew those of the gopis.

17-8-1930

112

लज्जा मोरी राखो श्याम हरी ।

O God, guard me against insult. Dushasana has held me by my hair and is molesting me and in the presence of the assembly wicked Duryodhana is intent upon stripping me naked. The five Pandavas are powerless to help me. Bhishma, Drona and Vidura are dumbfounded and silent. Now I have neither mother nor father nor son nor brother, Thou art my all. Merciful God then made her sari endless and the whole host of Duryodhana was defeated. Surdas says: When God appears as protector what need for his lambs to fear?

18-8-1930

113

दे पूतना विष र अमृत पायो

Although Putna administered poison (to Krishna) she attained salvation; the Vedas have sung in vain that man reaps as he sows. King Bali performed a hundred sacrifices and yet was tied up and sent to the nether world. King Nriga donated one lac cows and yet he was turned into a serpent. Friend Sudama was born a pauper and suddenly found himself in a golden palace. Surdas says: O God, strange are Thy ways, well have the Vedas said, 'not this, not this'.

19-8-1930

114

अबके नाथ मोहि उधारि ।

O Lord, save me now. O Fount of mercy, there is no pathway in this ocean of the universe. *Maya* is its deep waters, ambition are the waves. Passion like the alligator is dragging me in deeper waters. The senses bite like fishes and there is a load of sin on the head. In my

infatuation the feet are unsteady and get entangled in the seaweed. Animal passion, anger, desire like the winds toss me to and fro. Wife and children do not let me think of Thy name as my sheet-anchor. O Thou seat of Mercy, I am fatigued, powerless and distressed in this mid-ocean. O Lord, take me by the arm and pull me up to the shore.

20-8-1930

115

रे मन ! मूरख जनम गँवायो ।

O my foolish soul, thy life has been wasted; in thy pride thou hast dissipated thy life and forgotten the Giver of life. Having thought this earthly life beautiful like the *semar* flower thou hast forgotten thy true self. But as thou wast about to taste it, it was not, thou foundest nothing. What is the use now of thinking of the lost past? Thou didst not do thy duty whilst there was time. Surdas says: Thou didst not serve God and hadst to repent.

21-8-1930

116

नाथ मोहिं अबकी बेर उबारो

O Lord, save me this once; Thou art Lord of lords, Thou art named the Giver, and I am without luck, blind from birth, who can be more unworthy than I? Thou art the protector of the three worlds, I am Thy slave; Thou hast saved people both worthy and unworthy; be Thou gracious unto me. I am the chief among the fallen, *sardar* among the sinners, thousands of sinners put together hardly equal me, Ajamil is nothing compared to me. God Yama, having heard of me had the gates of hell even locked. There is now no room for me anywhere; remember Thou Thy promise (to such like me). O Lord of Lakshmi, Thou hast saved many a sinner, do not withhold Thy grace. Surdas will count Thee true when Thou hast saved him.

22-8-1930

117

घूँघटका पट खोल रे तोको पीव मिलेंगे ।

Open thy face, thou wilt see thy beloved. He is in everyone; therefore say nothing bitter of anyone. Do not brag about thy riches or youth; this case made of five elements will play false to thee (one

day). Light up thy dark heart and do not move from thy purpose. Wake up in this temple for thou hast got the priceless treasure thy Lord. Kabir says: Let there be rejoicing for the Lord's voice is heard within.

23-8-1930

118

सादो सजह समाधि भली ।

O good man, natural meditation (lekh/k) is best. Ever since its manifestation by the grace of God, it has waxed. Wherever I wander, it is a circuit (round a temple), whatever I do is for service, whenever I lie down, it is my prostration (before God). I worship to other god but God. Whatever I utter, it is God's name, whatever I hear is a remembrance of God. My eating and drinking re *puja* (worship), whether a home is established or it is destroyed is the same thing to me; I do not allow any other feeling to possess me. I do not shut my eyes nor stuff my ears, I do not torture the body. I open my eyes and delight to see God and contemplate His beauty. My mind is ever intent on Him; all corrupt thought has left me. I am so much engrossed in the thought of Him that I think of Him whatever I am doing. Kabir says: This is the excellent life and I have sung of it; there is a state beyond misery and happiness, my mind is fixed on it.

24-8-1930

119

मन मस्त हुआ तब क्यों बोले ।

When the soul is saturated with the Holy Spirit there is no need for speech. When a man finds a diamond he puts it in a safe and does not open it now and again to look at it. When there is doubt about the weight of a thing it is weighed but how should a thing in itself weighty need weighing? One who is intoxicated with love drinks it not in drops weighed in scales. When the swan reaches the divine lake, he does not wander about in search of lakelets. Thy Lord is within thee, why strain thy eyes to see Him outside? Kabir says: Hear O good people, I have found the Lord for the search.

25-8-1930

रहना नहिं देस बिराना है ।

We are not to stay here long, it is a foreign land (for us). The world is like a paper parcel which is reduced to pulp on a little water being poured on it or it is like a hedge of thorns in which we get entangled and die or it is like a meadow full of shrubs and grass which a fire destroys (in no time). Kabir says: Listen all ye good people, the only safety lies in seeking the protection of God.

26-8-1930

मन लागो मेरी यार फकीरी में ।

O friend, my mind is fixed on a fakir's life. The happiness which one derives from meditation on God is not to be found in indulgence. Bear whatever befalls thee—good and evil; live in poverty. Let us live a life of loving service. It will be well to cultivate patience. When one goes about with a mere begging bowl and a staff, one has the whole world as one's kingdom. What is the use of pride when one realizes that the body is soon to be reduced to ashes? Kabir says: Listen O ye all good men, contentment is the pathway to self-realization.

सूमझ देख मन मीत पियारे आशिक होकर सोना क्या रे ।

O my soul, my dear friend, knowest thou not that one who is in love has no sleep; when thy bread of sorrow is butterless and dry, what need to judge whether it is tasty or tasteless? If thou hast tasted love, give it, O friend, having received thou canst not lose it. He for whom sleep has become irresistible does not think of a pillow or a mattress. Kabir says: Listen O good men, there is no wailing after complete self-surrender.

27-8-1930

तू तो राम सुमर जग लड़वा दे

Be thou absorbed in God, let the world go its way. There is paper and there is black ink, let those who wish write or read. The elephant does not abandon its gait despite the barking of dogs. Kabir says: Listen O ye good men, those who are intent upon evil will go their way.

28-8-1930

मत कर मोह तू हरि-भजन को मान रे ।

Do not give way to self-deception but sing the praises of God; for eyes are given to see God, ears to hear words of wisdom, the mouth to sing His praises, hands to give in His name. Kabir says: Hear O ye good one, gold is (also) produced in mines (not merely dust and pebble)

28-8-1930

गुरु बिन कौन बतावे बाट ?

Without the master, who can show the path? The way is terribly difficult. Doubt crosses the path like rivers gliding through mountainous regions and there is egotism like big boulders in the rivers. There are too passion and anger like two huge mountains on either side; ambition dogs the footsteps like a thief. And pride and vanity descend like rain from overhanging clouds; self-deception violently tosses one like the winds. Kabir says: Listen O ye good men, how can one traverse the path (without a master as guide)?

29-8-1930

नहिं छोड़ूँ रे बाबा [राम] नाम

O Father, I will not give up Ramanama. I have nothing to do with the other lessons. The King sent Prahlad to school and he had many companions. He said: "Why do you teach me nonsense? Write on my slate Shri Gopal." This Shandamara duly reported and the King immediately sent for Prahlad to whom he said, "Leave thou the name of Rama. If thou wilt do what I tell thee I will set thee free." Prahlad replied, "Why vex me again and again. God made the ocean, the earth, the sky and the mountain. I swear by my guru that I will not give up Ramanama, you may burn me, you may bury me alive, you may kill me anyway you choose." On this the King was enraged, drew his sword and challenged Prahlad to show his deliverer. God in His might rose from the pillar of fire and with His paws killed the King. O Great One, God of gods, Thou becamest Narasinha for the sake of Thy devotee. Kabir says: I can fill pages with the stories of how He delivered Prahlad from many a danger.

30-8-1930

झीनी झीनी बिनी चदरिया ।

This sheet (called body) is finely woven. What is its warp and woof? Of what is the thread made? *Ida* and *Pingala* (nerves invisible recognized by Hinduism) are respectively warp and woof. The sheet is woven with the *Sushumna* thread (one of the invisible nerves)—The eight-petaled lotus (at the navel) is the wheel. The sheet contains the five elements (earth, etc.) and the three qualities (*sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*). The Maker takes ten months to weave this sheet and the thread is well packed. Gods, men, even sages have to wear this sheet and it becomes dirty as soon as it is worn. The servant Kabir says: Although we wear this sheet with ever so much care, it has to be given up even as it is.¹

31-8-1930

इस तन धनकी कौन बड़ाई

What is the use of taking pride either in this body or wealth? They vanish in the twinkling of an eye. A man builds a palace for himself and is often obliged to take refuge in the woods. On death, the bones will burn like faggots and hair like grass. Kabir says: O virtuous people, listen, when man dies, all his airy castles crumble to pieces.

1-9-1930

भजो रे भैया राम गोविन्द हरी ।

O Brother, sing the praises of Rama, Govind, Hari. The effort requires no *jap*, *tap* or the like, nor does it involve any expense. Children, wealth, etc., promoting as they do a feeling of satiety, often lead one astray. Kabir says: He on whose lips is not the name of God has lived in vain.

2-9-1930

¹ Note by Gandhiji: Kaka says the only possible meaning is: "Kabir says that he on the other hand wore it with such care that he was able to discard it without defiling it."

मन! तोहे केहि विध कर समझाऊँ ।

O my soul, how shall I reason with thee? If thou wert gold I would melt thee to a liquid. If thou wert a horse I would bridle thee, put a saddle on thy back, ride thee and whip thee to action. If thou wert an elephant I would chain thy feet, ride thee and goad thee with the hook. If thou wert iron, I should secure an anvil and hammer thee and turn thee into wire. Kabir says: If thou wert wise I should give thee wisdom and lead thee onto the straight path and send thee to the abode of the immortals.

3-9-1930

पायो सतनाम गरेके हरवा

I have obtained the name of God as garland for my neck. My abode is in a little cot and there are five weak cot-bearers. The guru has given me the lock and key so as to enable me to open the door when I choose. Love is the garment which I wear and dance when I like in the city Kabir says: Listen O good men, there will be no return to this city again.

4-9-1930

शूर संग्राम को देख भागै नहीं

With fight in front a brave person will never flee and he will not be considered brave who flees in the face of danger. In the field of battle the fight has begun in right earnest and passion, anger, pride and ambition are the foes to be fought. Restraint, piety and contentment are one's companions and the sword in the shape of Ramanama is flourishing freely. Kabir says: True warriors will fight bravely, cowards will be conspicuous by their absence.

5-9-1930

133

ठाकुर तुम शरणाई आया ।

O God, I seek refuge in Thee. On seeing Thee, all my doubts have disappeared. Without my mentioning it Thou hast known my trouble. Thou hast made me remember Thee. My misery is gone and I am all happiness. Joyfully do I sing Thy praise. Thou hast taken me by the arm and pulled me safe out of the dark well of *maya*. Nanak says: The Lord has removed my bondage and brought me back though I had strayed away.

6-9-1930

134

साधो मनका मान त्यागो ।

O good man, give up thy pride. Flee away from passion, anger, evil company. He to whom happiness and unhappiness, praise and blame are the same thing, who is neither elated nor depressed, knows the secret of life. Nanak says: O man, it is a difficult thing to be unaffected by praise or blame and to be intent only upon the true path; a few only know this through a true teacher.

7-9-1930

135

बिसर गई सब तात पराई ।

O God, ever since I have had the companionship of the good, the distinction between mine and thine has disappeared. I deem no one as enemy or stranger. I am on friendly terms with everyone. From the good I have learnt to consider as good whatever comes from God. Nanak takes delight in finding that one God resides in all.

8-9-1930

136

रे मना राम सों कर प्रीत

O my soul, dedicate thyself to God. Listen to His praises and sing them. Cultivate the company of the good and ever think of God; thus wilt thou be purified of sin. Remember, O friend, that time is biding its opportunity like a serpent with its mouth wide open to swallow thee. Nanak says: Time is fleeting, remember therefore thy God.

9-9-1930

काहे रे बन खोजन जाई ।

Why dost thou search for Him in the jungle? He is in thee always though unaffected by thee. Even as the fragrance abides in the flower or the likeness in the mirror so is God everywhere, always. O brother, look for Him within thyself. The guru teaches us that He is both within and without. Nanak says: O man, without knowing thyself the darkness of illusion cannot be dispelled.

10-9-1930

सुमरन कर ले मेरे मना ।

O my soul, remember thy God, thy years are rolling by without His sacred name—man without Harinama is even like a well without water or a cow without milk or a temple without light or a fruit tree without fruit or body without eyes or night without the moon, or the earth without rain or a pundit without a knowledge of the Vedas. O good man watch thy desire, anger, pride and ambition and give them up. Nanakshah says: O God there is no one to befriend save Thee.

11-9-1930

नाम जपन क्यों छोड़ दिया ?

Why hast thou given up Ramanama? Thou hast not given up anger nor falsehood, why hast thou given up truthful speech? Being immersed in this false show why hast thou abandoned the original home? Thou hast treasured a cowrie, why hast thou neglected the ruby? Why hast thou given up remembering that which is the source of all happiness? Khalus says: Why wilt thou not trust God and leave body, mind and wealth?

12-9-1930

All intentions came to naught. Neither was God worshipped nor more holy places visited. Time has thee in his grip. Wife, friends, children, chariot, wealth, kingdom of earth filled with riches and riyots and the like are useless; the one thing needful is the worship of God. Thou wanderedst much and wast defeated although thou reachedst man's estate. Nanak says: Why wilt thou not remember thy Maker even though it is time to appear in His presence?

13-9-1930

पायो जी मैंने रामरत्न धन पायो ।

I have obtained a jewel in the shape of Ramanama. The true guru gave me this priceless jewel and showed his great favour to me. I have obtained wealth for eternity, what though I have lost everything of this earth? This jewel cannot be used up by use nor can it be stolen by thieves. It increases greatly from day to day. In the vessel called truth with the true guru as the captain I have been able to cross the ocean of birth and death. Mira says: I have sung the praise of the Lord in great glee.

14-9-1930

नहिं ऐसो जन्म बारंबार ।

Such a birth does not come often. What do I know of the merit that has given me the human state ! This body appears to be growing moment by moment but it is also at the same time waning, and it takes no time to perish altogether even as the leaves of a tree do which once they are torn from their branch cannot be reattached. This ocean of birth and death is mighty and has strong terrible currents. But if a man would take meditation on God for a raft he can cross the ocean. The sages and great men have loudly proclaimed as they have gone, says Mira the servant of God, that man has but a few days on earth.

15-9-1930

मन रे परस हरिके चरन

O my soul, touch the feet of Hari; they bring fortune, they are cool to the touch, soft as lotus and the touch removes the threefold affliction. The touch of these feet enabled Prahlad to attain Indra's status, gave Dhruva permanent stability, enabled Vishnu to rule the whole universe, gave the wife of Gautama her salvation, enabled Krishna to show his powers among the shepherd lads and to capture the Kali snake and to lift the mount Govardhana and thus humble the pride of Indra. The servant Mira says that the touch of those feet enables a man to cross the great ocean.

16-9-1930

मेरे तो गिरधर गोपाल

For me there is none else but Giridhar Gopal, let the whole world be witness. I have given up brothers, friends, and other relatives. In disregard of popular talk I sit in the midst of sadhus. I rejoice to see God's devotees and weep to see worldly people. I have reared the creeper of love with my tears. I have churned the curds, extracted from them the butter and thrown away the rest. The King sent me a poison cup which I drank with pleasure. Now does everybody know the story about me. Mira says: Come what may, I am intent upon God and God alone.

17-9-1930

माई मैंने गोविंद लीनो मोल ।

O mother, I have bought Govind. Some say He is cheap, some say He is dear. I have weighed Him. Some say He is to be found in the house, some say in the jungle, and some others say He is sporting with Radha. Mira's Lord is to be found in the cradle of love.

मेरे राणाजी, मैं गोविंद गुण गाना ।

O my Ranaji, I must sing the praises of Govind. If the King is angry he is welcome to his capital but if God is angry where is one to flee? Rana sent a poison cup, I drank it as if it was nectar ; he sent a black snake in a box, I took it for God Saligram. Mirabai the love-stricken says: I want Krishna as my Lord and Master.

मोरी लागी लटक गुरु चरननकी

My mind is fixed on the guru's feet. I am ill at ease without those feet. Everything else is like a mirage, a dream. The ocean of birth and death has dried down and I have no anxiety about crossing it. Mira says: O my God, now is my inner sight opened.

हरि ! तुम हरौ जनकी भीर ।

O God, Thou deliverest. Thy servants from difficulties. Thou savedst. Draupadi's honour by extending her garment infinitely For They devotee Thou becamest man. Thou destroyedst Hiranyakashipu; didst not tolerate him. Thou savedst the sinking elephant and pulled him out of the water. Says Mira the servant and beloved of Giridhar: Where there is grief there is the cry of distress (sent to heaven).

म्हाँने चाकर राखो जी

O God, make me Thy slave. I shall be Thy gardener and every day feast my eyes with the sight of Thee, I shall sing about the deeds of Govind in the groves and lanes of Brindaban. For service I shall have daily *darshan* and shall have as pocket money the memory of Thee; I shall get as estate intense devotion to Thee; thus will I have the three excellent things. My Lord has worn a peacock feather crown and a yellow dhoti; He has worn a garland of *vaijanti* flowers. He grazes cows in Brindaban and plays upon his pipe. I shall build me a lofty palace and have windows in it; through them I shall look at my Lord with my *kusumbi* (red) sari on. Among the inhabitants of Brindaban are to be found yogis doing yoga, sanniyasis doing *tapas*, sadhus singing *bhajans*. Mira's Lord is deep and mysterious; keep thou thy patience—He appears to His devotees even at midnight on the banks of the Jamuna.

17-9-1930

निन्दक बाबा वीर हमारा

One who speaks ill of me is a hero for me. He works without pay. He is instrumental in enabling me to wash off my old sins. He renders me service without reward. He sinks and saves others. He is such a beloved fellow. O Rama, I pray for his long life. Dadu says: The vilifier is a benefactor in disguise.

18-9-1930

अजहुँ न निकसै प्राण कठोर ।

Still does cruel life cling obstinately to the body. O my beloved God, I have been long separated from Thee. Four periods are like four cycles, the night is gone, the day has broken. O Thou Thief of my heart, where art Thou, though the promised time is past?

O Thief I am looking out for Thee on the way but do not see Thee. Dadu says: Pangs of separation from one's beloved are like the pangs of the fabled *chakor* bird separated from the moon.

19-9-1930

152

प्रभुजी ! तुम चंदन, हम पानी ।

O God, Thou art sandal, I am as water, Thy sweet scent pervades everything; Thou art the cloud, I am the peacock of the forest looking for rain like the *chakor* bird for the moon; Thou art the lamp burning day and night, I am the wick; Thou art the pearl, I am the string, and we unite as does gold with *सुरोखार*¹.

Raidas the devotee says: Thou art the Lord, I am the slave.

20-9-1930

153

नरहरि, चंचल है मति मेरी, कैसे भगति करूँ मैं तेरी ?

O God, my mind is distracted, how shall I worship Thee? Thou seest me, I should see Thee, that were a sign of mutual love. Thou seest me but I do not see Thee, this is a state of a lost mind. Though Thou art in all always, yet have I not learnt to know Thee ! Thou art full of virtue, I am full of vice, I have not even acknowledged the debt owing to Thee. I am floundering between I and Thou, Thine and mine, how can I be saved? Raidas says: O God of mercy, hail to Thee, the only stay of the universe.

21-9-1930

154

क्यों सोना गफलतका मारा, जाग रे न जाग रे ।

O dullard, why dost thou carelessly sleep away thy time, awake O man, awake. The yogis or voluptuaries or thieves keep vigil; likewise do beloved saints who are intent upon God. O brother, keep vigil like Prahlad and Dhruva and Dhruva got a permanent seat of honour, Prahlad got a kingdom. The soul is the traveller, the body is the hotel. How long shalt thou be attached to it? Thou hast but a night's stay in the hotel, on the day breaking thou hast to go, seek the company of the good, serve thy Master and thou shalt be

¹ The original Hindi *bhajan* has "*suhaga*" meaning 'borax', a substance used to purify gold. Gandhiji has used the Gujarati word '*surokhar*'.

happy. Nitinand says: O proud man, worship Rama; only those who are fortunate know how to keep vigil.

22-9-1930

155

अकल कला खेलत नर ज्ञानी !

A knowing man uses his knowledge at will. Just as a vessel moving in all directions is always guided by the polar star, even so does the knowing one although moving about on earth has his gaze fixed on the heavens; and just as the ice melts in water so does he attain his independence by merging himself in the divine. The condition is indescribable of him whose abode is where the beginning is unknown and the end never is and where neither the mind nor the speech can reach. This divine play is wonderful and incomparable. He who has known it from ancient times speaks as it were from the heavens. Akha says: Only a rare knowing one recognizes it.

23-9-1930

156

जग जीव सुमरण कर हरिको

O brother, the morning has broken. Wake up and remember thy Maker. What the true guru says comes after full deliberation; therefore beware, O brother. There is no one to befriend thee. There is no sister, no brother; for who will deliver thee when the god of death pronounces thy doom? Father, mother and others are relatives only for self. Apart from the remembrance of God there will be no company, thou wilt be alone. I seek refuge in the feet of Murari the cleanser from sin and deliverer from bondage. Sahajram says: Worship Rama, he will remove evil and grant happiness.

24-9-1930

157

नंद भवनको भूखन माई

That ornament of Nanda's home, Yashoda's darling, Haladhar's brother, Radha's beloved is the giver of supreme happiness. He is all in all to the good people, He is the wealth of Siva and the Vedas and Puranas have sung of His greatness, He is greater than Indra, He is God of gods, He is Brahm[an] to Brahma, greater than the greatest. He is death to death, Lord among lords. He is beyond measure. Giridhari is the life of Nandadas and the darling prince to the villagers of Gokul.

25-9-1930

अब हौं कासौं बैर करौं ?

To whom shall I bear ill will? God himself proclaims: “I am in everything and everyone and regard all equally, only I fear most my devotees”. Shri Haridas says: By the grace of God I wander about daily fearlessly.

26-9-1930

कोई बन्दो कोई निन्दो कोई कैसे कहो रे

Let those who will, praise and those who will, blame, let them say what they like; I love Rama, come what may.

. . .¹ had a bundle and the water was deep. But Ramachandra became a tortoise and carried her on his shell. Even as He endows the sun and the moon with light, sustains the sky without pillars, makes stones to float on the sea, why will He not save His servants? Siva, Sanak, sages like Narad and others worship Him. Jasvant is the servant of Rama—his Lord from birth to birth.

27-9-1930

संत परम हितकारी, जगत माँहीं ।

In the world the saints do the greatest good. They lead us manifestly towards God and dispel our ignorance. They are kind to all and like God Himself assist us in our troubles. They are above the three moods and have no thought of physical comforts. They are different from the worldly men. Brahmanand says: The company of saintly people enables us to know God.

28-9-1930

¹ Gandhiji has left the words “कमल म्याने मोट बाँधी” untranslated. *Vide also* “Letter to Premabehn Kantak”, 28-9-1930.

161

प्राणि! तू हरिस्सों हर रें । तू कयों रहा निडर रे ?

O man, fear God, how canst thou be indifferent? Do not be careless, be on thy guard whilst there is yet time and have the fear of God in thee—Do thy allotted task quickly, know that death is hovering about thee, do not pride thyself on thy beauty, for thy body will be reduced to ashes. Messengers of Yama will catch thee by the throat and make thee smart there. O man, worship thy Maker. Braj Kishore says: Cling to the feet of Hari and save thyself.

29-9-1930

162

हे जगन्नाता, विश्व-विधाता

O Thou Protector of the universe, Ruler of its destiny, Abode of happiness and peace, Ocean of mercy, Friend of the poor, Destroyer of the pangs of pauperism, Everlasting, Whole, Unending, Beginningless, Perfect Brahma, Ancient of days, Refuge of the people, their Lord, Adored of then, Matchless, Indescribable, Beloved of the heart, Guardian of the three worlds, Mainstay of life.

30-9-1930

163

वर्णमणि मीन मर्यादमणि रामचन्द्र

Among fishes the Fish incarnation is the best; among self-restrained persons Ramachandra is the best; among lovers Krishna is the best; among the powerful Narahari; in hardness the Tortoise incarnation; in strength Varaha, the Boar; in elusiveness Vamana who put on a big body; among mountains the Golden Mount (Meru); among waters the Ocean; among lakes the Mansarovar; among rivers the Ganges; among birds the *Garuda*; among trees the Tree of fulfilment of desires; among monkeys Hanuman; among cities Ayodhya; among warriors Parashurama; among instruments the discus Sudarshana; among feminine strength Parvati the beloved of Shankara; among devotees prahlad; in love Radhika is the best. Thus has Kanhar made a garland of jewels for his neck.

1-10-1930

बिसर न जाओ मेरे मीत, यह वर माँगूँ मैं नीत

O God, my friend, I ask of Thee this boon: do not forget me. I am dull-witted, know nothing, nor do I show any love for Thee. Thou never forsakest those whom Thou hast taken under Thy shelter; Thou wilt give me victory over Thee. I know that I have no merit to commend itself to Thee, on the contrary, I have terrifying shortcomings and O my Life, if Thou, knowing my shortcomings, wouldst give me up, I shall be undone. But I have a certain faith in me that Thou wouldst not forsake me. It is Thy habit of old that Thou ignorest Thy devotee's blemishes. Thou art the friend of the poor, Thou art gentle of nature. I adore Thee. Premsakhi says: I do not know Thy mysteries, only I believe in Thee.

2-10-1930

हो रसिया मैं तो शरण तिहारी

O Beloved, I seek refuge in Thee. I have neither means nor strength, nor wisdom. My sole faith is in the touch of Thy feet, O Lord. I am like the bitter fruit of low-lying ground, but Thou, Ocean of mercy, hast raised me high. I am but a poor child seeking Thy protection. O Lord do not forget me who am so helpless. O Beloved, keep Thou me believing me to be Thy slave. Premsakhi says: I ever stake my all on Thee.

3-10-1930

दरसन देना प्रान्त पियारे

O Star of my eyes, darling of Nanda, show Thy dear self to me. O Thou Friend of the distressed, Fount of mercy, Representative of all virtue, full of youth and of handsome appearance, I can no longer restrain myself. I am intent on seeing Thee face to face. Rasik says: In the hope of that happy meeting day and night I meditate on Thee alone.

4-10-1930

चेतन ! अब मोहिं दर्शन दीजे ।

O Divine Spirit, let me have a sight of Thee. By it I shall attain supreme bliss; by it shall the endless chain of birth and death be broken. For Thee I have resorted to austerities, penance and many ceremonies; how long am I to continue? Without Thee all these are useless, for the heart does not melt; some foolish ones hug action, others knowledge. The joy and the value of union with Thee neither of them knows. Thou art above them. Thou art and art not in all. In Thy perfection Thou art unique. Thy action is a mystery; Thou art both master and disciple. Though formless and indescribable, yet Thou art all forms. Thou alone knowest Thyself. The Vedas declare Thee to be unknowable. Thy servants sing Thy praises.

5-10-1930

अब हम अमर भये न मरेंगे

I have now become immortal, I shall not die. Why should I have to put on a new body when I have given up self-deception which is its cause. Desire and anger bind one in the world. These I shall destroy. From time immemorial, man has died, now I shall destroy time itself. Body is mortal; soul is immortal, it would revert to its original state. I shall do away with the mortal and become an inmate of the abode of the immortal. I shall cleanse myself and be pure. I have died many times because of my ignorance; now I shall be [free] from the pair of happiness and unhappiness. Anandghan says: Those who will not take shelter under the two-lettered name that is so near everyone will surely die.

6-10-1930

राम कहो रहमान कहो कोऊ, कान्ह कहो महादेव री ।

All is Brahm[an]. Call it Rama or Rahman, Kanha or Mahadev, Parasnath or Brahma; pots are different but as earth they are one. Even so do we make imaginary differentiations; in essence Truth is one and indivisible. He who is restraint incarnate is Rama, he who is mercy incarnate is Rahim, he who puts an end to all work (by renouncing fruits) is Kanha, he who attains Nirvana is Mahadev, he

who touches reality is Parasnath, he who knows himself is Brahm[an]. Thus, says Anandghan, I am spirit (not body) and am still.

7-10-1930

170

बंधन काट मुरारी हमरे बंधन काट मुरारी

O God, break my bondage. The alligator and the elephant fought in the lake, the latter was dragged deep down and when the elephant's cry of distress reached Thee, Thou left Thy pleasures to help him. For the sake of Draupadi Thou madest haste to reach her Thy help when the tyrant was pulling her garment in the midst of the assembly. The wife of Gautama Rishi attained salvation by the touch of Thy feet. The prostitute and Sabari too reached the same state (by the same devotion to Thee). O people, listen to the acts of the saints and praise God. Vidhuband who is pining for the sight of Thee says: O God accept me.

8-10-1930

171

मैं तो बिरद भरोसे बहुनामा

My reliance is on the celebrated promise of God. O God, my Master, I know nothing of service or Ramanama. Thou hast saved the elephant, the [vulture]¹, the prostitute and the sinner Ajamil. I have sought Thy protection on the strength of this evidence of Thy mercy. Premanand says: O all-powerful and all-knowing Lord, save me or kill me.

9-10-1930

172

अगर है शौक मिलनेका, तो हरदम लौ लगाता जा ।

If Thou wouldst see Him with each breath think of Him. Burn thy pride and smear thy body with its ashes; take up the broom of love and with it wipe out the distinctions of me and thee; reduce the notion of duality to dust and sprinkle it on thy prayer carpet; leave the carpet, break up the rosary, throw the sacred books in the river, seek the help of angels and be their servant; do not fast nor keep *ramzan*, do not go to the mosque nor make obeisances; break to pieces the water jar for prayer cleansing and drink the wine of the joy of union; eat and drink but never be off thy guard; enjoy thy intoxication

¹ The source here is indistinct.

continuously; burn thy egotism. Be neither Mulla nor Brahmin; leave duality and worship Him alone. Shah Kalandar has proclaimed: say, 'I am He'. Mad Mansur says: My heart has known truth, that is the wine shop of the intoxicated, make that the object of thy visit.

10-10-1930

173

है बहारे बाग दुनिया चंद रोज !

Life in this world called beautiful garden is only for a short while; you will enjoy the spectacle for a few days only. O traveller, prepare for the march; residence on earth is short. When the great hakim Lukman was asked, "How long will you live?"—rubbing his hands in despair he replied: "Only a few days.,' After burial the angel of death said in the grave: you will sleep here only for a few days. O friends, you and I will have to separate in a few days. O tyrants, why do you oppress innocent people, your days are numbered. Nazir says: Remember the day of death; you cannot rely upon life but for a short while.

11-10-1930

174

बस अब मेरे दिलमें बसा एक तू है

Yes, now Thou art the only King of my heart, Thou art my only Beloved. O Creator, now my meditation is solely upon Thy sacred feet day and night. My heart receives consolation only from Thee, Thy love possesses me. People generally consider me to be mad; everywhere Thy name is on my tongue. I have nothing to do with the pleasures of the world, Thy love is the only thing to please me, my heart's case I shall paint with Thy love; knowledge has united me to Thee; the prayer of Thy servant is that I may have nothing to do with Satan.

12-10-1930

175

अजब तेरा कानून देखा, खुदा या !

O God, Thy law is mysterious. Wherever the heart is set, there Thou art to be seen; with Thee there is neither temple nor mosque. Thou lookest only for a true heart in Thy seeker. Thou exhibitest the splendour of Thy love to him who has surrendered himself heart and soul to Thee. He who becomes

enamoured of Thy divine qualities, takes all his colouring from Thee. He in whom there is still egotism left is like one who has lost his way and he is united to Thee who has lost his egotism. He who believes in Thee sees Thee face to face. It is like a beggar finding a priceless pearl.

13-10-1930

176

नैया मेरी तनकसी बोझी पाथर भार

My boat is tiny and is laden with stones; eddies are tossing it from all sides and the helmsman is drunk and the boat is in midstream; there is whirlwind and on the top of it all rain is pouring in torrents. Giridhar poet says: O Lord be Thou the helmsman; let Thy mercy be the oar and let the boat reach the shore safe.

14-10-1930

177

कर ले सिंगार चतुर अलबेली

O good woman, put on thy best garments. Thou art to go to thy Lord. There the shroud will be of earth, the bed will be of earth and thou wilt be united to earth. . . . Wash, bathe, dress thy hair; there is no returning from there.

14-10-1930

178

वैष्णव जन तो तेने कहिए जे पीड पराई जाणे रे

He is a Vaishnava who identifies himself with others' sorrows and in so doing has no pride about him. Such a one respects every one and speaks ill of none. He controls his speech, his passions and his thoughts. May his mother be blessed. He is equidispensed towards all, has no desires, regards another's wife as his mother, always speaks the truth and does not touch other people's property. He labours neither under infatuation nor delusion and withdraws his mind from worldly things; he is intent on Ramanama; his body is his sacred shrine for pilgrimage; he is no miser and is free from cunning and he has conquered passions and anger. Narasaiyo says: His presence purifies his surroundings.

15-10-1930

जे का रंजले गांजले, ल्नांसि इहीं जो आपुले ।

Know him to be a true man who takes to his bosom those who are in distress. Know that God resides in the heart of such a one. His heart is saturated with gentleness through and through. He receives as his only those who are forsaken. He bestows on his man servants and maid servants the same affection he shows to his children. Tukaram says: What need is there to describe him further? He is the very incarnation of divinity.

देव जवळी अंतरी, भेटी नाही जन्म वेरा ।

God is near indeed. He is within us. Yet we did not see Him in our lifetime. He pervades the three worlds, yet the world knew Him not. Fortunately saintly men appeared and we saw God. Ramdas says: Through that happy event we began to see God within ourselves.

तें मन निष्ठुर कां केलें

O God, Thou Who art known to be an ocean of mercy, why hast Thou hardened Thy heart? For on the elephant's scream of prayer Thou ranst to his assistance; for the devotion of Prahlad Thou roaredst in the fiery pillar; for the piteous appeal of Draupadi Thy heart melted. Eknath says: By the grace of guru Janardana my mind is intent upon the feet of God.

15-10-1930

पापाची वासना नको दावूं डोळां

O God, let me not be witness to desire for sin, better make me blind; let me not hear ill of anyone, better make me deaf; let not a sinful word escape my lips, better make me dumb; let me not lust after another's wife, better that I disappear from this earth. Tuka says: I am tired of everything worldly, Thee alone I like, O Gopal.

16-10-1930

स्मरतां नित्य हरि, मग ती माया काय करी ?

What can *maya* do to one who always remembers God? By listening to God's word, by laying it to heart and by meditating on man's oneness with God, death ceases to frighten one. The great God Who is a fount of mercy and giver of boons blesses such a one. Amrit says: I therefore drink in nectar by always contemplating Oddhav's¹ feet.

17-10-1930

संतपदाची जोड, दे रे हरि ।

O God, grant me love of companionship of the good. It brings forth lovely sprouts of internal bliss. O God by fully granting man's lawful desires Thou satisfiest his heart's craving. Amrit says: O God, Thou sweetenst the end of Thy devotees.

17-10-1930

भाव धरा रे, अपुलासा देव करा रे ।

Give thyself to devotion and merge thyself in God. Let people say what they like for this, thou shouldst store up overwhelming love. Be indifferent to praise or blame, leave off 'me and thee' give up all desire and devote thyself to desireless worship, abandon all vain imaginings and doubts; old age has crept over thee. Man's estate is difficult to reach, it will not come again for ages. Having understood this, seek out a teacher. Shivdini has no other determination; he has given himself body and soul to his teacher Kesarinath; for him the world has ceased to exist. Worship now God the friend of his devotees.

18-10-1930

¹ Note by Gandhiji: "Oddhav was Amrit's teacher"

अशाश्वत संग्रह कोण करी ?

Who will lay by stores that are bound to perish? Why should one build houses, verandahs and storeys? The humble cottage is good enough; covering made of tattered rags is also good enough. I should eat with relish whatever it pleases God to give me from day to day. Amrit says: What is filled in the beggar's bowl gives all the relish one wants; it is such a joy.

19-10-1930

हरिभजनावीण काळ धालवूं नको रे ।

Do not let thy time pass without the praise of God. Thou fearest the wheel of life as one fears a rope for a snake and thus preventest union between soul and the Maker. Do not put out the lamp of knowledge within. Weigh thy word so that it will be evidence of steady balanced judgment. Do not plough the sand and waste time by parading thy opinion. Having informed thy mind properly know the reality through the companionship of the good. Never commit thyself to anything till thou hast had experience. Sohira says: There is no alternation of night and day where there is the lamp of knowledge; without it thou maystn't even move the eyelid.

20-10-1930

पवित्र तें कुल पावन तो देश

Blessed is that family and that country where servants of God take birth. God becomes their work and their religion. The three worlds become holy through them. Tell me who have become purified through pride of birth? The Puranas have testified like bards without reserve that those called untouchables have attained salvation through devotion to God. Tuladhar, the Vaishya, Gora, the potter, Rohidas, a tanner, Kabir, a Momin, Latif, a Muslim, Sena, a barber, and Vishnudas, Kanhopatra, Dadu, a carder, all become one at the feet of God in the company of hymn singers. Chokhamela and Banka, both Mahars by birth, became one with God. Oh, how great was the devotion of Jani the servant girl of Namdev! Pandharinath (God) dined with her. Meral Janak's family no one knows, yet who can do justice to his greatness? For the servant of God there is no caste, no varna, so say the Vedic sages. Tuka says: I cannot count the degraded

and the forsaken saved through God's grace. You may consult the sacred books if you would know them all.

21-10-1930

189

नियम पाळावे, जरि म्हणशिल योगी व्हावें ।

If thou wouldst be a yogi, thou must attend to the necessary observances. Know that he who is slave to his tongue and sold himself to the goddess of sleep will never practise yoga. The candidate for yoga should be moderate in sleep and food and must not indulge in vain disputations. Make up thy mind thus to regulate thy food and all thy movements; practise internal concentration and then thou wouldst have internal peace. When thy mind is taken off external objects it will easily turn inward and be fixed even as a light protected from winds becomes steady and fixed.

190

जेथें जातो तेथें तूं माझा सांगाती

Wherever I go, Thou art my companion. Having taken me by the hand Thou movest me. I go alone depending solely on Thee. Thou bearest too my burdens. If I am likely to say anything foolish, Thou makest it right. Thou hast removed my bashfulness and madest me self-confident, O Lord. All the people have become my guards, relatives and bosom friends. Tuka says: I now conduct myself without any care. I have attained divine peace within and without.

22-10-1930

191

न कळतां काय करावा उपाय

When one does not know, what is one to do so as to have devotion to Thy sacred feet? When will it so happen that Thou wilt come and settle in my heart? O God, when wilt Thou so ordain that I may meditate on Thee with a true heart? Remove Thou my untruth and, O Truth, come and dwell Thou in my heart. Tuka says: O Panduranga, do Thou protect by Thy power sinners like me.

मुक्ति-पांग नहीं विष्णूचिया दासां

To the servants of Vishnu there is no yearning even for salvation; they do not want to know what the wheel of birth and death is like.; Govind sits steadily settled in their hearts; for them the beginning and the end are the same. They make over happiness and misery to God and themselves remain untouched by them, the auspicious songs sing of them; their strength and their intellect are dedicated to benevolent uses; their hearts contain gentleness; they are full of mercy even like God; they know no distinction between theirs and others'. Tuka says: They are even like unto God and Vaikuntha is where they live.

23-10-1930

काय वाणूँ आतां न पुरे हे वाणी

How now shall I describe (the praises of the good); my speech is not enough (for the purpose). I therefore put my head at their feet. The magnet leaves its greatness and does not know that it may not touch iron. Even so good men's powers are for the benefit of the world. They afflict the body for the service of others. Mercy towards all is the stock-in-trade of the good. They have no attachment for their own bodies. Tuka says: Others' happiness is their happiness; nectar drops from their lips.

नाहीं संतपण मिळत तें हाटीं

Saintliness is not to be purchased in shops nor is it to be had for wandering nor in cupboards nor in deserts nor in forests. It is not obtainable for a heap of riches. It is not in the heavens above nor in the entrails of the earth below. Tuka says: It is a life's bargain and if you will not give your life to possess it better be silent.

24-10-1930

भक्त ऐसे जाण जे देहीं उदास

He is a devotee who is indifferent about body, who has killed all desire, whose one object in life is (to find) Narayana, whom wealth or company or even parents will not distract, for whom whether in front or behind there is only God in difficulty, who will not allow any

difficulty to cross his purpose. Tuka says: Truth guides such men in all their doings.

196

वेद अनंत बोलिला

The essence of the endless Vedas is this: Seek the shelter of God and repeat His name with all thy heart. The result of the cogitations of all the Shastras is also the same; Tuka says: The burden of the eighteen Puranas is also identical.

25-10-1930

197

आणीक दुसरें मज नाहीं आतां

This heart of mine is determined that for me now there is nothing else; I meditate on Panduranga, I think of Panduranga, I see Panduranga whether awake or dreaming. All the organs are so attuned that I have no other desire left. Tuka says: My eyes have recognized that image standing on that brick transfixed in meditation unmoved by anything.

198

न मिळो खावया, न वाढो संतान

What though I get nothing to eat and have no progeny? It is enough for me that Narayana's grace descends upon me. My speech gives me that advice and says likewise to the other people —Let the body suffer, let adversity befall one, enough that Narayana is enthroned in my heart. Tuka says: All the above things are fleeting; my welfare consists in always remembering Gopal.

26-10-1930

199

महारासी शिवे, कोपे ब्राह्मण तो नव्हे ।

He who becomes enraged at the touch of a Mahar is no Brahmin. There is no penance for him even by giving his life. There is the taint of untouchability in him who will not touch a Chandali. Tuka says: A man becomes what he is continually thinking of.

200

देह जावो अथवा राहो

Let the body persist or perish, my heart must be fixed on Panduranga. I swear by Thee O Pandharinath that I shall never let go the hold of Thy feet. On my lips must be Thy name, in my heart everlasting devotion to Thee. Namdev says: O Keshav such is my vow but it is for Thee to make it good.

27-10-1930

201

पुण्य पर-उपकार पाप ते परपीड़ा

Merit consists in doing good to others, sin in doing harm to others. There is no other pair comparable to this. Truth is the only religion (or freedom); untruth is bondage, there is no secret like this. God's name on one's lips is itself salvation, disregard (of the name) know to be perdition. Companionship of the good is the only heaven, studious indifference is hell. Tuka says: It is thus clear what is good and what is injurious, let people choose what they will.

202

शेवटींची विनवणी

This is my last prayer, O saintly people listen to it: O God, do not forget me; now what more need I say, Your holy feet know everything. Tuka says: I prostrate myself before Your feet, let the shadow of Your grace descend upon me.

203

हेंचि दान दे गा देवा

O God, grant only this boon. I may never forget Thee; and I shall prize it dearly. I desire neither salvation nor riches nor prosperity; give me always company of the good. Tuka says: On that condition Thou mayest send me to the earth again and again.

28-10-1930

204

BENGALI

अंतर मम विकसित करो अन्तरतर हे !

O Thou Dweller in my heart, open it out, purify it, make it bright and beautiful, awaken it, prepare it, make it fearless, make it a blessing to others, rid it of laziness, free it from doubt, unite it with all, destroy its bondage, let Thy peaceful music pervade all its works;

make my heart fixed on Thy holy lotus feet and make it full of joy,
full of joy, full of joy.

205

वहे निरन्तर अनन्त आनन्दधारा ।

Endless stream of joy flows eternally, ancient music sounds in the boundless sky, innumerable suns, moons and stars rise. That matchless King of kings shines in all his glory in the whole universe. A crore hearts of devotees astonished, motionless, speechless bow their heads before the feet of the Almighty.

29-10-1930

206

तुमि बंधु, तुमि नाथ

Thou art Brother, Thou art Lord, day and night Thou art mine, Thou art my happiness, Thou my peace, Thou the way immortal, Thou art the Abode of joy, unite me to Thee, remove sorrow, the touch of Thy feet quenches all agony, O Thou boundless shelter of the distressed!

[30-10-1930]¹

207

एकटि नमस्कारे प्रभु एकटि नमस्कारे

In one prostration O Lord, Thou givest rest to all Thy creatures in Thy world.²

[30-10-1930]

208

GUJARATI CONTINUED

भूतळ भक्ति पदारथ मोटुं, ब्रह्मलोकमां नाहि रे

On this globe worship of God is the greatest thing, there is nothing like it even in the heavenly world. By acquiring merit one reaches only paradise from there to come again to earth in the end. But men of God ask not for salvation; they desire to be born again for everlasting service, praise and singing and to meet God face to face. Blessed are the parents of him who being born on India's earth has

¹ The source does not bear any date, but presumably this and the following *bhajan* belong to this date.

² Note by Gandhiji: "These Bengali verses of the Poet have been authoritatively translated and so the renderings so far made here should be corrected and replaced by the authoritative versions."

praised God for he has fulfilled the purpose of his birth. Blessed be Brindaban and the deeds performed therein, blessed be the inhabitants of Vraj for all the eight great *siddhis* are at their disposal and they can have salvation for the asking. The relish of that joy is known to Shankar or to the Yogi Shukadevji as also somewhat to the maids of Vraj, says Narsaiyo, who enjoys himself in the sunshine of His presence.

31-10-1930

209

नारायणनुं नाम ज लेतां, वारे तेने तजीए रे

We should forsake him who dissuades us from taking God's name; we should worship God with all our mind, speech and deed. For doing this we should (if necessary) leave caste, family, mother, father, sister, son, wife, even as the snake discards his skin. Prahlad left his father but would not give up God's name, Bharata and Shatrughna gave up their mother but never Rama. *Rishis'* wives gave up their husbands for the sake of God. Thereby they not only lost nothing but gained all the four ends. Narsaiyo says: The women of Vraj gave up their all for the sake of Vitthal and sported with the Lord.

1-11-1930

210

समरने श्रीहरि, मेल ममता परी

O Good man, remember God and give up thy egotism, think of the source from which thou hast come. What art thou and what dost thou cling to? Without understanding (the root of things) thou sayst 'this is mine, that is mine' but if thou wilt use thy judgment thou wilt observe that the body is not thine for try what thou wilt, thou canst not keep it (for ever), it is bound to perish. When this body perishes there will be many more new ones and thy wife, children and others will deceive thee. Thou thinkest always of wealth and that is the greatest stumbling block in thy way. Thy lord is near thee and thou dost not know Him, thou hast lost thy chance and wasted thy time. Thou art in deep sleep and suffocated; why wilt thou not listen to the words of the sages and wake up? Narsaiyo says: It is a matter of shame thou wilt not wake up, if thou only wilt, thy age-long desires will abate.

2-11-1930

211

अखिल ब्रह्मांडमां एक तुं श्रीहरि

Throughout the whole universe Thou alone art; Thou appearest

as many, taking diverse forms. Thou art the informing Being in the material body. Thou art the essence of light, Thou art the word of the Vedas in the void, Thou art the air, water, earth. O Lord, Thou spreadest out high up in the trees, similarly having created a multitude of forms and a variety of tastes from One Being Thou hast become many. The Vedas declare and the other Shastras bear witness that there is no distinction between a nugget of gold and a gold earring; when it undergoes shapes, it wears different appearances and different names but in reality it is all gold. Thou art the seed in the tree and Thou art the tree from the seed and from this phenomenon one sees change in form. Narsaiyo says: This is all a matter of the mind but if I worship Thee in true faith Thou wilt appear as Thou art.

3-11-1930

212

ज्यां लगी आतमा-तत्त्व चीन्यो नहि

As long as the secret of the soul is not known, all practices are useless; thy life as a human being has passed away uselessly like the rains out of season. What though thou bathest daily and performest worship and dost service in the temples, what though thou givest alms staying in thy own house, what though thou adoptest long hair, smearest thy body with the sacred ashes. What though thou hast removed thy hair, performest austerities and visitest holy places, what though thou takest the rosary and takest His name; what though thou markest the sacred mark on the forehead and keepest the *tulsi*¹ leaf, what though thou drinkest the Ganges water; what though thou canst recite the Vedas and knowest the grammar and pronounce correctly; what though thou knowest the tunes and their effect; what though thou knowest the six systems and the permutations and combinations of letters. All these are devices for finding the wherewithal for one's support if thou hast not known the soul of souls. Narsaiyo says: Thou hast wasted the priceless human heritage if thou hast not known the secret of the universe.

4-11-1930

¹ Basil

जे गमे जगतगुरु देव जगदीशने

It is useless to sorrow over what God ordains. Without His will we cannot move a blade of grass. If we do fuss about things, what is left over is a legacy of sorrows. It is ignorance that prompts one to say 'I have done this', even as a dog under a cart fancies himself shouldering the weight of the cart. A few yogis only know that the whole universe depends upon Him. If a man could dispose things, he would root out all enemies and have only friends, he would have no kings and no beggars, he would plant on every house flags betokening (limitless possession of wealth). Even as a creeper gives in its season leaves, fruit and flowers so does man receive what is his due in due time; a foolish man only will therefore resort to vain cogitations. Often does man write much and fails to say the right thing. People worship what they like and they seem to believe whole-heartedly that theirs is the only true belief. But Narsaiyo says with folded hands: Consider wordly happiness to be vain; everything is nothing without Krishna; I want my God from birth to birth.

5-11-1930

जागीने जोरुं तो जगत दीसे नहि

As I awake I see no world, the world was a conglomeration of enjoyments perceived in the dream-land. The joys are all transformations of mind and its sports are identical. Life is but the sport of Brahm[an]. The five elements spring from Parabrahm[an] and they cohere (through His will). The flowers and the fruit are of and from the tree, the branch is not separate from the stem. The Vedas declare and the other Shastras bear witness that¹ . . . Life springs from Siva's will. He has devised the fourteen worlds. Narsaiyo says: Many a saint has found salvation through realizing 'Thou art That'.

6-11-1930

ध्यान धर हरि तणुं अल्पमति आळसु

O lazy man of poor wit, contemplate God so that the miseries of life may be alleviated. By engaging in any other pursuit, thou wilt gain nothing. God of Death will fool thee by leading thee into snares.

¹ Note by Gandhiji: "For this verse see 107 of which this is an exact repetition."

All the good flows from dedication to the feet of Shrikrishna; there is immeasurable bliss in seeking that shelter. Regard all other things as useless and treasure Krishna's name in thy heart. Put away infatuation at a safe distance and rest before the feet of Hari. Do not turn away when the real thing is brought to thy notice. O fool, thou hast built castles in the air; know that they are without any foundation. The world praises those who weave into their acts the qualities of the Deity. Poor Narsaiyo dedicated himself to God; he considers nothing comparable to the praise of God.

7-11-1930

216

जूनुं तो थयुं रे देवळ जूनुं तो थयुं

This temple is worn out and the dweller is yet young. This body, O dweller, is tottering, the teeth are gone, only the gums are left. Thou art attached to the body but thou hast flown and the body remains. Mira says: O God (this being the condition), may I love Thee and drink in Thy love.

8-11-1930

217

नहीं रे विसारुं हरि अंतरमांथी नहीं रे विसारुं हरि

I will not forget Hari who is in my heart. I had gone to the Jamuna to fetch water and on the way I found that priceless Lord. In passing through Brindaban I fell at Thy feet. Thou hadst worn saffron-colour dhoti and embroidered frock, Thou hadst saffron mark painted on the forehead; Thou hadst a peacock-feathered crown and rings in Thy ears; Thou wast playing on the flute. Mira says: What need is there to describe Him further? I have surrendered my all to Him who is my Lord and Master.

9-11-1930

218

बोल मा बोल मा बोल मा रे राधाकृष्ण बिना बीजुं बोल मा ।

Do not utter anything else than Radhakrishna. Do not take the bitter leaf when thou hast sugar-cane in front of thee; do not take shelter under the light of the firefly when thou hast the sun and the moon before thee; do not take lead in the place of jewels like diamonds and rubies. Mira says: I have given my all against Giridhar (God).

10-11-1930

मुखडानी माया लागी रे ।

O dear Lord, I love Thy face; as soon as I saw Thy face, the world became useless to me and my mind became detached from it. The happiness that the world gives is like a mirage, one should move about deeming it of no account. Mirabai says: Blessed Lord, my only hope is in Thee and I consider myself fortunate (in that I have seen thee face to face).

11-11-1930

वैष्णव नथी थयो तुं रे, शीद गुमानमां घूमे

Thou hast not yet become a devotee of God; what is thy pride based on? Thy heart does not swell with joy to see men of God, it does not melt to sing God's praises. Thy desires have not abated, thy eyes are red with anger, thou wilt be a true Vaishnava if thou canst draw another towards thee, thou art nothing so long as thy contact does not influence one for the better, thou art not pained to see others in pain, thou dost not hesitate to speak ill of others, thou hast no true love for Vitthal (God), thou art not ashamed of repeating 'I, I'. Thou hast no liking for serving others, thou canst not give up selfishness, thy acts don't accord with thy speech, when challenged thou deniest thy speech(?); thou hast no relish for prayer, thou hast no faith in Hari (God), so long as thou hankerest after the world, the world is thy master and thou its slave; if thou wilt master thyself thou wilt find, the true thing Daya says: Whether thou likest it or not, I must say what is true.

12-11-1930

हरि, जेवो तेवो हुं दास तमारो

O God, such as I am, I am Thy servant. O Ocean of Mercy, take me by the hand, Thou art companion in distress, Thou art protector of the fallen, Thou dost not dismiss from thy presence the wretch who seeks Thy protection no matter how much sunk he may be in sin. O Thou deliverer, Thou shielded Thy devotees who may be tempted to do wrong, Thou givest fortune to the unfortunate and O Giver of boons, Thou givest capacity and satisfaction, O good Lord, Thou makest crooked straight even when human endeavour has failed. O God who deliverest from misery, Thou wasthest the sins of

the undeserving sinner, Thou protectest Thy devotees without their asking, Thou reckonest their faults as merit, Thou removest the difficulties of those who invoke Thy aid, Thou dost not distinguish between the great and the small, Thou art the help of the helpless, Thou knowest the aches of men's hearts, Thou art the friend of the afflicted, Thou sufferest, Thou takest away fear from men and Thou overlookest blemishes, Thou art the Lord of all, the Soul of souls, Thou alone art independent, Thou art the beloved of Pritam, Thou art the guardian of Thy servants, Thou art my Rock.

13-11-1930

222

महाकष्ट पाय्या विना कृष्ण कोने मळ्या

You may call to mind the sages of all the four *yugas* and you will find that no one saw God without much pain and tribulation. Brave men have great regard therefore for the devotees of Vishnu, only the cruel-hearted are against devotion. Dhruva, Prahlad, Bhishma, Bali, Bibhishana, Vidura, Kunti's sons, Vasudeva, Devaki, Nand, Siva, the devotees of Vraj, all these pillars of devotion had to suffer tribulation. Again Nala, Damayanti, Harishchandra, Taramati, Rukmangada, Ambarish, Narasinha Mehta, Jayadeva, Mira, all these seekers had to go through purgatory before they tasted real happiness, Vyasa had his troubles both mental and physical, so had Tulsi and Madhav. The world carps at the asceticism of Siva; Sita, who was like mother of the universe had to undergo the fiery ordeal. The world bows to her for she suffered though sinless. Even those saints who have burnt all the past, present and future acts have the fear of suffering. It is God's mystery inexplicable. One can only say such is His will. After all virtue and vice are products of man's imagination; the world dances to the tune of Krishna. Dayaram says: Without the will of the Beloved not a blade moves but the weak mind is under hallucination of 'I did it'.

14-11-1930

223

भटकतां भवमां रे गया काळ कोटी वही

Returning again and again to the world, aeons have passed away. O God, now the limit is reached, take Thou me by the hand, scorched by the three agonies I have flown to Thee for protection, cool down the fevers. I entreat Thee, O Thou Fount of Mercy, let Thy blessed feet be my abode of refuge, let Thy merciful glance burn up my sins. If Thou wilt look at my sins, Thou wilt cease to be paramount Lord.

How [can] a ruby be compared to चणोटी, I am a slave, Thou art Master, Thou wilt therefore be generousto me Thy slave? Full of hope I have come before Thee, eternal God, knowing Thee to be all-powerful. O Thou upholder of dharma how can I leave Thy door in disappointment? Make me Thine own, don't say nay to me. O Thou Deliverer, listen the prayer of one so helpless as I am. Look at me but once and fulfil my yearning, speak to me with Thy divine smile and say 'Daya, thou art mine'.

15-11-1930

224

हरिनो मारग छे शूरानो, नहि कायरनुं काम जोने

Godward way is for the brave not for the cowardly. Before one can treasure the sacred name in the heart, it is necessary to be ready to lay down one's life. He only gets that divine joy who surrenders children, wife, wealth and his own head. Those who would find pearls risk their lives in going in deep waters. Such people face death bravely and have no doubts lurking in their minds. But those who watch these brave deeds from a safe distance shiver even to think of the risks. The way of love is a fiery ordeal, cowards flee before it. Those who are in it enjoy rare happiness, the spectators are scorched. Love is a bargain of life not to be easily had. Those who have attained the heights have passed through the fire of self-purification. Those who have drunk deep of the nectar of Ramanama are an object of envy. But those only who know what divine love is recognize them when they see them. They witness the divine sport of Pritam's Lord.

16-11-1930

225

जननी जीवो रे गोपीचन्दनी

Blessed be Gopichand's mother who planted in her own son the seed of *vairag*¹. Her preaching resulted in the world appearing like a furnace to Gopichand. Blessed be Dhruva's mother who said bitter things to her son Dhruva so that he left a kingdom to seek the shelter of the forest. Sage Bajand when he saw his camel in a prostrate condition was shocked and learnt from the event the lesson that the world was a fleeting show and left it. Great was the self-denial of Bhatrihari who left 1,600 queens, left his palaces and went into the wilderness. I dote on all these who forsook this vain show. There have

¹ Note by Gandhiji: " 'Asceticism' is an approach to the meaning."

been others, worldly men good and bad too numerous to count. Where is Ravana with his brood? Where are the eight thousand children of Sagar king? Where is the fortune of Nand? All has passed away like a dream. Dwellers in palaces have gone and so have kings from their kingdoms. The Gods, the demons, the *munis* and ordinary folk all have vanished like dreams. O men, it were good then if you would deliberately leave this empty show; for the God of Death will surely compel you to do so one day. Nishkulanand says: I take my oath upon it that that fate awaits every one of us.

17-11-1930

226

त्याग न टके रे वैराग बिना

No matter what one does, self-denial will not last unless it is based on dislike for the thing given up. If there is deep down the desire for it, it will not be relinquished. A man may wear the garb of a sannyasi but that will bring him no nearer the goal if the garb only hides the desire that has its full possession of the wearer. So long as desire, anger, greed and passion are not rooted out, the thing will come to the surface the moment there is an opportunity; the very sannyasa may become an additional source of self-indulgence. Just as the seed does not sprout during the dry hot season but does so as soon as the rains come, so is it with man's desires; they await the due season. Just as iron moves in front of a magnet so do the senses move when they are face to face with their objects. They are still for want of opportunity but they run riot as soon as the opportunity comes. Therefore mere external renunciation will not answer if there is no corresponding response within. Such external renunciation will mean licence even from the restraints of Varnashrama (the four divisions) and is likely to result in harm. Such a man becomes useless like milk gone bad. It won't yield ghee or butter and is unfit to drink. Nishkulanand says: A man's renunciation is wrong when he hovers between self-denial and self-indulgence, household affairs and their relinquishment.

18-11-1930

जंगल वसाव्युं रे जोगीए

The yogi has migrated to the forest. He has given up all love of the body. He cares not to talk about the world, he has become indifferent about its comforts. He who had richly upholstered cots and lived in palaces has not even straw to lie on, lives in the shade of trees. He who had rich shawls and embroidered robes now sports a ragged blanket and bears heat and cold. He who had a variety of tasty foods now lives upon pieces of chapati thrown in the begging bowl. He at whose call thousands answered and who was followed by large armies is now wandering alone and unshod. O king, if you would stop I would prepare food for you; I would prepare rice puddings in no time and it will be put in your begging bowl. (The king answers:) He who waits for food, expects to have a dish, is no yogi, he is a householder desirous of enjoyment. He is doomed. He who gives up his kingdom and adopts sannyasa may not fix his mind on wealth and family, he considers all indulgence as a malady. Nishkulanand says: Blessed be he who gives up all desire for physical comforts and adopts sannyasa, he has left his family, it is true, but he has gained an imperishable family.

19-11-1930

जडभरतनी जातना जोगी

Those yogis who are like Jada Bharata have full control like a powerful foe over the senses including the mind. They remain immovable like a rock in the face of temptations. They will perish rather than be weak in faith or patience. During the whole day they never allow themselves with the body. He is the true man who will not indulge the body. They move about in obedience to God's will and serve mankind. He who comes across such yogis is on the way to obtaining salvation. Such a man when he comes in contact with such yogis whether by design or accident is, Nishkulanand says, surely purified.

20-11-1930

धीर धुरंधरा शूर साचा खरा

They are patient and brave and true warriors who have shed all fear of death. Even if there are crores against one they will regard them as straw. They have to face the determined enemy called temptation, but they will not flinch even though they should die. Poets, noted pundits, are very intellectual but they would not [*sic*] such an enemy—for in that army desire, anger, vanity, ambition are chief warriors, for them (the learned) there is no standing against this army. Wandering yogis, ascetics and the like fight under the shelter of God. Against such an army true warriors alone fight. Yogis know through the mouths of their teachers the art of fighting. Muktanand says: After having defeated this army of temptations they enjoy immortal bliss.

21-11-1930

टेक न मेले रे ते मरद खरा जगमांही

Those [who] will not break their plighted word are real heroes. They will not be moved from their purpose by any of the three fevers. They will act with decision and patience. They would never harbour doubt about their action or its timeliness. We have to die some day without fail, some sooner, some later, let us not flinch for the sake of worldly enjoyment. He who understands things clearly through the heart and then acts in the teeth of all danger is a hero. He will not entertain suspicions about others. He will never forget Brahmanand's God.

22-11-1930

रे शिर साटे नटवरने वरीए

We must risk life itself but realize God, we may never recede from the attempt. I looked within, did not chip [*sic*] wisdom and placed my head at the feet of Hari. One may not move without knowing the wisdom of the step but having moved forward there should be no looking back; in the field of strife we must fight unto death. With what face can one return who bravely goes forward and then at the critical moment beats a hasty retreat? It is wise to make calculations beforehand; it is no use going out to battle in bravado.

But having once gone, there should be no retreat even though one may be cut to pieces. We must sing of Hari with zest and may not step back when the call comes. Brahmanand says: We should rather die than accept defeat.

23-11-1930

232

सद्गुरु शरण विना अज्ञानतिमिर टळशे नहि रे

Without the help of a true guru this dark ignorance cannot be dispelled nor can the seed that generates life and death be burnt. Not without listening to the nectar-like speech of a loving teacher, nor without acquiring the capacity for distinguishing between truth and untruth, nor without knowledge based on experience will the knots of the heart be undone. Even though one may read the Shastras daily and keep the mind and the ears under control, true happiness will be unattainable without true thought. There is no gain in harping on 'mine and thine'. A wise man distinguishes between right and wrong. Nothing is to be gained from concentration on wife, children and domestics. Keshav says: We will never meet good men who can show us the way to perfect bliss without serving God and without diligent search.

24-11-1930

233

मारी नाड तमारे हाथ हरि संभाळजो रे

My pulse is in Thy hands, O God. Take care of me, regarding me as Thine keep Thy prestige. I do not know what is good for me and what is not, misery always stares me in the face. O God, look at me, what is happening to me? Thou art the true physician from time immemorial; Thou knowest all the remedies, my time is near, do Thou be punctual. O God, why art Thou waiting? Why dost Thou give me up whilst there is yet hope? O God, do Thou remove my great misery. Keshav says: What will happen to me? I am undone if the whole battle is lost, be Thou warned. O my Protector, Thy prestige will be lost (if anything happens to Thy servant).

25-11-1930

234

दीनानाथ दयाळ नटवर, हाथ मारो मूकशो मा

O Lord of the afflicted, do not desert me. In this great ocean of birth and death I am tossed about, do not let the occasion of saving me slip by. Thou art my only refuge, I do not know the means, O Keeper of my life, do not give me up because I am so worthless. Thou art Mother, Father, Family, all in all. O Ocean of Mercy, do not dry up for Thy slave's sake. Keshavlal has Thy protection, O Lord of the Universe, desert me not on any account.

26-11-1930

235

भक्ति वडे वश थाय रमापति भक्ति वडे

God comes to us through devotion. If He did not come, we should not be free from the bondage of birth and death. Devotion is a means of attaining true bliss and makes birth on this earth worthwhile. Even the Vedas testify that God comes to His devotees. He who is prowess personified allows Himself to be tied up as if He was helpless. He appears wherever His servants are in distress. He, the Lord of the Universe, Fountain of Mercy is unattainable without devotion. Meditations, austerities, vows and the like are useless without devotion. Without it, wealth, youth, strength, intellect, cunning all these put together are useless (if there is no devotion). Colour, beauty, family, caste cannot help (where devotion is absent). Ajamil, Narad, Sabari, the prostitute, the elephant—these declare the virtue of devotion. Keshav says: No one person is able to recite all the power of devotion.

27-11-1930

236

कोई सहाय नथी, बिना हरि सहाय नथी

There is no help for thee but God. Thou art the least in strength and yet in thy egotism owing to possession of house, land and riches thou sleepest in peace; instead thou shouldst worship God with devotion and with due observance of self-restraint. Why wilt thou needlessly slave for others? Think deeply and realize that terrible time is fleeting. Keshav says: Thou canst do what thou wishest with this priceless body.

28-11-1930

रामबाण वाग्यां होय ते जाणे

He only knows what it is who is smitten by love of Rama. Dhruva had that experience and so had Prahlad and they found their goal. The Shastras say that Shukadevji was smitten even while he was in the embryo. God came to King Mordhwaj and dominated his mind. He went to Kashi and submitted to being sawn by his wife and son. Rana came upon Mirabai in anger with a drawn sword in his hand and presented her with a poison cup. God turned it to nectar. He accepted Narasinha Mehta's draft and helped him in the nick of time. Devotee Dhano says: He has thus saved thousands of His servants.

29-11-1930

जेने राम राखे रे, तेने कुण मारी शके

Who can destroy him whom God would keep? I see no one else besides God. At His pleasure he makes a rich man poor and a poor man king; He makes a lake of a desert and a desert of a lake. He reduces a mountain to a straw and a straw He converts into a mountain. He saved manjari's¹ young ones from a furnace. He saved the eggs of a lizard². Such is His power. O God, Thou helpest Thy servants in the nick of time. The hunter has his bow strung, [a falcon]³ is about to dart but a snake bites the hunter and [the falcon] has a wound in his head. The eagle has fallen and the happy birds have flown. He the mighty Tailor sits with his yardstick and scissors, adjusts everything and takes care of all. The Lord of Dhiro is the sole personification of Truth.

[1-12-1930]⁴

¹ Cat's

² The Gujarati text of the *bhajan* has “येदोडी”, which means a sandpiper.

³ The source has “_”. Gandhiji has left the word untranslated.

⁴ Note by Gandhiji: “This is marked as on 30-11-1930 but done in the early morning of 1st December,”

तरणा ओथे डुंगर रे डुंगर कोई देखे नहीं

The mountain is in the straw but no one sees it in it even as none would notice a lion hidden among a flock of sheep. But he can discover himself by his roar, as the musk deer among the ordinary flock. The Absolute is hidden in the phenomenal as oil in the seed, fire in the wood, ghee in milk. Who will listen and to whom shall I talk of the Illimitable and the Unknowable? Speech does not reach it. There is an abode which is beyond the intellect. Though the mind is swift like the wind it cannot overtake it. This Immortal, Indivisible essence pervades everything movable and immovable. It has made this universe, there is not an atom where It is not. But by the grace of a true guru It is attainable. Why go in search of It here and there when It is in you? Servant Dhiro says: Thou art wherever I look.

1-12-1930

खबरदार मन सुबाती

Beware O my mind, you have to walk on the edge of a sword; with courage you have to fight for truth; time is the enemy, the year is the lord, the twelve months are the generals, each month has thirty days which are the under-officers and then there is the day and the night and so in the year seven hundred and twenty. The hundred years of a lifetime are the besiegers of the body fort; these have to be defeated. There are five senses after you and then there are anger, desire, greed, infatuation, illusion, egotism—these are all first-class warriors tyrannical. You have to fight a very powerful foe. You have love, knowledge, true teacher, purity, contentment, forgiveness, hymns, faith. With these on your side you have to give battle. Meditation and yoga practices and the like will, Dhiro says, enable you to stand the heat of the battle.

2-12-1930

दुनिया तो दीवानी रे ब्रह्मांड पाखंड पूजे

The world is mad, it respects humbug. The fool does not know the Maker though He is nearest him. He worships lifeless stocks and stones as Siva. How dark are people who ignore life? Under the sun's blaze one does not see the philosophers' stone. Put a stone vessel in the sea and try ever so hard, it is bound to sink. How can you press oil from sand or milk a metal cow? What avails a daily clean bath to a man who is unclean within? What is the use of destroying the snake-hole after the snake has bitten you? Knowers alone know how love is wounded. God is not far, He is near; only look within, clean thy heart and see the Lord within—the powerful Lord of Dhiro is everywhere in the world.

3-12-1930

निश्चे करो रामनुं नाम नथी जोगी थईने जावुं

Resolve upon enthroning Ramanama in thy heart. Yoga is no use, nor is the saffron-coloured robe nor mixing up all thy food. Whether thou wearest *bhagava* or white garments is of little consequence, the thing to do is not to hurt any creature and to wish it well. Put the worldly men on one side, the yogis on the other and then show me the yogi who has seen God face to face. Because they served God, Narasinha Mehta, Mira, Prahlad, Sena barber, Dhano, Peepo, Rohidas, Koobo, Potter Goro, Rajput Bodano, Gangabai saw God face to face. Poor good people, good-hearted butchers, worshipped God and found peace; show me the yogi who did likewise. Rama is not to be attained by smearing oneself with ashes or by hanging head downward nor by leaving wife and retiring to the forest. God can be attained only by diligent search. Rama is for him who can be happy in the jungle and who regards palaces as jungle, who regards bitter as sweet and sweet like bitter. Even as oil is hid in the seed, ghee in milk, so is God hid everywhere, says Narbho.

4-12-1930

हरिजन होय तेणे हेत घणुं राखवुं ।

Men of God should have abundant love for all; they should shed all egotism. Through God's name they should banish the threefold afflictions, leave off sinning and take Ramanama. They should consider all to be good and themselves to be unworthy. They should in perfect humility distribute alms. They should devote themselves to their faith body, mind and speech and regard God as the giver and the enjoyer. They should not weaken in their decisions; they should speak sparingly. They should entrust secrets only to the trustworthy and their speech should be humble and [they should] be serious in giving opinions; they must not talk big before those who know how to discriminate, they should take the name of the limitless God and attain salvation and help others to do likewise, their devotion should be as of poor people. Bhojo a humble servant says: By the grace of God the three afflictions do not go near such people.

5-12-1930

भक्ति शूरवीरनी साची रे

Devotion is for the brave, they do not turn back after having once begun. Having made up their minds, they go forward in full faith. They have killed desire, anger, arrogance and greed. When the temptations swelled and when the heat commenced, the cowards trembled and fled. The true men stood their ground and fought with God as their Help and Guide. They outdistanced many and then began to have a glimpse of Brahm[an]. They destroyed the effect of past action and met God face to face. They would not wish for the various gifts. To such salvation is easy. Bhojo Bhakta says: Those who have given up themselves body and mind and all and are ever equi-minded are the true devotees and they have heaven as their abode.

6-12-1930

गुरुजी तमे कहो छो रे ब्रह्म तारी पासे वस्यो

O teacher, you say Brahm[an] is in me but I see Him not; tell me what distinguishes Him. Is the head He or is the head in Him, is He in the eyes or are the eyes themselves Brahm[an] ? Is He in the nose or in the mouth ? I am puzzled. Pray help me out of my doubt and delusion. Is He in the feet or in the hands, in the heart or the chest? If He is in the feet—where is He? O teacher, teach me. When the pupil was rested, the teacher spoke: O pupil, listen, today the ignorance must be dispelled. He the loved one is not in any particular limb, let me warn you betimes; He eludes one unless one enquires within. He is as near as you are intent upon Him. Therefore when one is absorbed in Him, one sees Him though He has neither form nor colour. Bapu says: Yet you will see Him in many forms.

7-12-1930

जीभलडी रे तने हरिगुण गातां आवडुं आळस क्यांथी रे

O tongue, why dost thou tire of singing God's praises? Thou hast not enough time for gossip which is ever on thy lips. Thou art expert in talking ill of others. Thou art ever ready for tasty things; thou art ready also for quarrelling but when it comes to the matter of praising the Lord, thou art too busy. At the time of death no one is of any use, the dear ones are like so many foes. . . .¹ You will then rub your eyes. When the time approaches sesame is sent for and so is *tulsi* leaf, Ramanama is also taken but when you were young you carried yourself with a high head. What is the use of Ramanama on death-bed? Is it any use digging a well after a house has caught fire? Of what use is a light brought after the thieves have stolen things? You are intoxicated with your own infatuation; wake up and look around. What is the use of weeping when time knocks at the door? It costs nothing to sing Hari's praises, not a hair is touched. The weary way will not be passed without effort but the whole can be easily covered by reliance upon God.

8-12-1930

¹ Here Gandhiji has left untranslated the words: “वजन धरीने सर्वस्व लेखे”

भगवत भजजो रामनाम रणुंकार

Worship God, take Ramanama which is the talisman. This body is a vessel, have true faith in thy heart; the world ocean contains unfathomable waters in the shape of endless desires. The earthly body chains thee; thou art filled with egotism. By the aid of a true guru thou canst cross the ocean. This human body is unattainable even by the gods. Being in it cultivate the companionship of the good and gain the inestimable end. If thou wilt not, thou wouldst repent. Time is fleeting. From the little insect to Brahma all embodied ones have the fear of death hovering over their heads. This body is a momentary thing, a mere morsel for the God of Death. Why all this arrogance about so momentary a thing? Thou hast been born again and again and carried the load of egotism, delusion and infatuation, thou hast not known God and hast therefore suffered. Gavaribai says: Have faith in the true guru, sing the Lord's praise and attain bliss; accept this advice of mine; if thou wilt not thou art doomed.

9-12-1930

संतकृपाथी छूटे माया काया निर्मळ थाय जोने

By the grace of the good, delusion disappears and the body becomes pure. By thinking of God at every breath the five sins are washed away. Even as a herd of elephants flees on hearing the roar of a lion even so does a man attain freedom if he has the courage (of a lion) ; white ants do not affect fire, the fabled gem is not affected by dirt; so does a knowing man remain unaffected in the midst of this limitless ocean of turmoil. The son of a magician knows all his tricks; even so do men of God know the tricks of God and remain untouched thereby; one acquires merit by cultivating the companionship of the good and he reaches his goal. Pritam says by worshipping the Lord the worshipper attains the eternal kingdom.

10-12-1930

हरिने भजतां हजी कोईनी लाज जंती नथी जाणी रे

Those who trust in God have never yet been known to have suffered discredit. The Vedas testify that it is ever well with those who are intent upon God. He saved (His devotee) Prahlad and destroyed Hiranyaksha. He gave the kingdom to Bibhishana and destroyed Ravana. He gave a necklace to Narasinha Mehta. He gave an eternal kingdom to Dhruva and made him His own. He turned in to nectar the poison given to Mirabai. He clothed Draupadi and stood by the side of the Pandavas. Premaldas says: God will remove the misery of those devotees who would thus worship Him.

11-12-1930

अनुभव एवो रे अंतर जेने उदे थयो

The works of him who has an inner experience do not bind him for he has known God. He is the knowing one who has broken all ties. He is beyond everything and is a mere witness of everything; he is independent of all the six worlds. Being above these he stands alone. Of millions the fewest only realize this. One who has the inner experience knows the Nameless One. He has attained salvation for he is past the dual state, without striving for the One indivisible, he perceives It as if naturally. The truth is that all created things have to perish and so this endless ocean of life and death continues to roll on. The last stage is beyond the waking, dreaming, sleeping and the state beyond these three. It is beyond the physical and ethereal. That which is above even the first cause is described by the Vedas as 'not this, not this'. I dote on the mother of him who has dedicated himself to common good, who is goodness personified and who is like the true guru. Nirant says: He who is eternal though nameless has many names.

12-12-1930

दिलमां दीवो करो रे दीवो करो

Light thy heart and sweep out from there evil thoughts and anger. Let mercy be oil and love the oil tray, let meditation on God be the wick and let knowledge of Brahm[an] be the light. When the heart is thus truly lighted all darkness will vanish and then thou shalt recognize *Brahmaloka* (God's abode). O men, recognize this light that dispels darkness. Ranchhod says: I have entered the home, have found the key and opened the lock and there is light on earth.

13-12-1930

अपूर्व अवसर एवो क्यारे आवशे

When will the matchless time come so that I would be rid of all knots external and internal? When will I give up all the subtlest ties and go the way the great sages have gone? Would that I was indifferent to all the moods and that the body was used merely for self-restraint, that there was nothing to bind me for any cause imaginable and that I had no illusions about the body. Would that I should gain knowledge that comes from removal of obstruction in the path of perception, that I regarded body as separate from the soul and that I had recognition only of the soul. Would that obstruction to right conduct too was removed and there was concentration on pure self. Would that there was steadfastness of the three *yugas* (?) running practically to the time of death and that steadfastness was incapable of being shaken by sufferings however great. Would that even the yoga was only for attaining greater restraint over self and that there was implicit obedience to the precepts of the Jina for the sake of the soul. Would that even that activity also perceptibly decreased and I was absorbed in self-realization. Would that there were neither likes nor dislikes in matters received through the senses and that I was unaffected by their play. Would that I engaged in activities that came to me in due course and was not enslaved by time, place or circumstance. Would that I was angered against anger and that against respect paid to me I had humility enough not to be affected by it.

Would that in respect of *maya* I was but a witness to its blandishments and against ambition I had ambition to thwart it, I had no anger against even the extreme wrongdoer and had no pride if an emperor paid respects to me, that I was unmoved even if the body perished and had no desire even for the greatest gifts. That I was the same to friend and foe alike as towards praise or insult, that there was [in-]difference in me whether I lived or died, that even regarding the cycles of birth and death or salvation I had only the simple natural state that I had crossed the alluring ocean of different temptations and was intent upon the state where all the passions are¹ quenched, that at the time [of] death I would shed all desire and had perfect knowledge, that all the four kinds of activities were to me like a burnt hope— mere ashes, that I was living out only this life and that after that there was no more birth. That I had no desire for even an atom, that I was sinless, immovable and intent upon self-realization, that I was absorbed in the spotless, eternal everloving, neither small nor big, formless self-acting Being, that owing to past actions I was fit for the abode of the released—where [there is] eternal bliss, perfect perception and perfect experience. This is the state which the all-knowing Jina realized but could not describe. How can any other person describe it? It is capable only of being experienced. I have set my heart upon that state though it may be at present beyond my capacity. Nevertheless Rajchand is determined that God willing he will attain that state.

14-12-1930

253

मारां नयणांनी आळस रे न नीरख्या हरिने जरी

How neglect[ful] must my eyes be that they never saw Hari. They never set their gaze upon Him, they would not be calm enough even to have a glimpse of Him. They have been immersed in sorrows or enjoyments, have burnt themselves with their heat. They have not devoted themselves to having God's *darshan* (sight) and yet God is everywhere, He fills His creation. Among the movable and the immovable objects there is not an atom but has His presence in it. He is like the heavens pervading all. He is like the air inhabiting my heart. If I would but look at Him, He is there staring me in the face. Brahma

¹ The source has "were".

and His creation cannot be separated even for a moment. But we of the earth earthy have no inkling of that vital principle. An owl may live for a hundred years and still will not know what the day is like. The Lord is like the ocean—too big for the eyes to scan. The tongue gets fatigued to tell of Him and so simply says He is vast. O God, when will the spiritual sight be opened? When will this deep darkness be dispelled? O God, listen to my petition and lift this dead curtain. O my eyes, look deep and there is Hari. O eyes, get rid of the laziness and calmly see Him. Just set the gaze upon Him and look at Him to heart's content.

15-12-1930

END

From a photostat: C.W. 4903. Courtesy: Mirabehn

459. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

SATURDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 13/16, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet at 12 noon on Wednesday. I got a copy of the booklet *Gitabodh*¹. I take it that those who make notes about the work they do as *yajna* do so in their dairy. If you remind people often enough about this, they will be careful. See that everyone is soon able to use the instruments for weighing yarn and testing its strength. I have replied to Mahadev's questions in my letter to Durga, and to questions about my health in my letter to Kakasaheb. Therefore read both the letters.

Afternoon

There was a letter from Jayaprakash saying that Prabhavati would go over there. She may have even arrived there before you get this letter. If she comes, look after her very carefully. She gets fainting fits and these should stop immediately in the Ashram. You may buy any fruits which may be necessary for her. Consult a doctor if necessary. You may write to me about her whenever you wish to.

¹ Gandhiji's discourses on the *Bhagavad Gita*, given in letters to Narandas Gandhi; *vide*, 1st footnote of "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", October 30/November, 4, 1930. For the text of these discourses, *vide* "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

Night, December 15, 1930

I got Manilal's letter. I felt relieved. Let him observe as many restriction as he chooses, but not at the cost of his health. 110-115 lb. is certainly low weight. Manilal should maintain his weight between 120 and 125; if, however, he has kept up his strength, he will regain that level after he is released. He should guard against any disease insidiously attacking him. The reading which he has done is quite good, but in order to derive the fullest benefit from his work he should carry out my suggestions as far as possible. Really speaking, however, when he has the benefit of the company of a person like Nanabhai¹, and will now have the benefit of Mahadev's company, there should hardly be any need for me to guide him. The reading he is doing at present is good indeed. There is little in it, however, to be remembered and digested. The reading which I have suggested will, while developing his memory and power of thinking, also beinteresting to him. *Jivanshodhan*² can be understood only if it is read carefully twice or thrice. He is doing right in reading it once again. One reason why my writings are easy to follow is that these days I write with the sole aim of making myself easily understood by all the inmates of the Ashram. Formerly too I wrote with the general public in view, and not for men of learning. It is natural, therefore, that my writings should be easy to understand. Let him write to me again. He should write as often as he gets time and is permitted to do so.

I have had no reply to my inquiry about Devdas's letter. I have even suggested that he should write again. If the Bombay air suits Jamna, do not insist on her returning to the Ashram. Do you still make bread there? If you do, of what quality are you able to make it, and who actually makes it? If it is of good quality and if anyone is coming on a visit here, send a sample. You had described the process of making it, but it did not succeed here. I have not been able to discover where the error lay.

I can say that, up to this evening, the *bhakhari* of *jowar* and *bajra* seems to have done me no harm. I eat very little in bulk but can keep up my strength all right. No one should worry on my account. I will not be obstinate and cling to the experiment.

¹ Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt 1

² By Kishorelal Mashruwala, a Navajivan publication

I did not find Hariyomalji's and Gijubhai's letters. I wonder if Gijubhai was written in place of Haribhai. I did not find the latter's name in Radha's note.

Blessings from

BAPU¹

Tuesday Morning, December 16, 1930

Pranayama (control of breath) and *asanas* (yogic postures) are referred to appreciatively in this chapter, but we should remember that at the same time the Lord has stressed the need for *brahmacharya*, i.e., keeping the observances calculated to take us nearer and nearer to God. It should be clearly understood that the mere practice of *asanas* and the like can never take us to the goal of even-mindedness. *Asanas* and *pranayama* may be of some slight help in steadying the mind and making it single-purposed, provided that they are practised to that end. Otherwise they are no better than other methods of physical training. They are very useful indeed as physical exercise and I believe that this type of exercise is good for the soul, and may be performed from a bodily standpoint. But I have observed that these practices do only harm when indulged in for the acquisition of supernormal powers (*siddhi*) and the performance of miracles. This chapter should be studied as a summary of the teaching in the preceding three chapters. It cheers us up in our spiritual struggle. We should never be down-hearted and give up the endeavour to reach evenness of temper.

BAPU

[PS.]

There are 71 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

¹ For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VI) which followed, vide "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932

460. LETTER TO SANKERJI ¹

YERAVDA,
December 16, 1930

MY DEAR SANKERJI,

I was glad to hear from you of your progress. Can you give me the figures of khadi production in Malabar, or at least in Cochin? Do you know where Ramachandran is? Do please write to me from time to time.

Yours,
BAPU

The Hindu, 29-12-1930

461. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 16, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

Please send me four pounds of cotton. Kakasaheb's place is now taken by Pyarelal. He spins faster and, therefore, a greater quantity of cotton will be consumed than formerly. Kindly inform the people you buy the cotton from, that it is full of particles and seeds. As a result, we have to spend much time in cleaning it and some of the cotton is wasted.

I hope I do not give you too much trouble. I do believe that, if you store cotton for my sake, you will also be able to use it for other purposes.

I hope all your sisters are quite well.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4817. Courtesy : Premlila Thackersey

¹ Of "Swaraj Bhawan", Ernakulam (Cochin State), Kerala

462. LETTER TO MANSHANKAR J. TRIVEDI

December 16, 1930

CHI. MANU,

I got your letter. Though you are so near the Ashram, I do not send this letter along with the other post for the Ashram, and delay its reaching you by some days. Instead, I am taking the risk and writing it directly to you. I believe you will get it. Why do you give way to despair? One who believes in God can never feel despair. Since you are very eager to work, you earn merit as if you had been actually working. Why, then, do you feel impatient? Who knows for what service God has destined you? Or how can we say that your aspirations in themselves are not sufficient for His work? You do perform the daily *yajna* of spinning; what else is it, if not service? Start repeating Ramanama and rouse yourself. Shake off despair. Banish the very thoughts of weakness and disease. If you take interest in the *Gita* and the *Ramayana*, go on repeating to yourself verses from them. Write to me direct. And write often.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. MANU

C/O PROF. TRIVEDI

TILAK ROAD, POONA CITY

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7773

463. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. Even if I agree to see you I am afraid the permission will not be granted. Therefore for the time being, we must be content with letters alone. By speculation I did not mean that no forward transactions should be entered into. Speculation means gambling. With the expectation that market prices will go up I buy 1,000 bales of cotton. I do not need any cotton, I do not even store it in any warehouse. Only a book transaction is made. Now I await a rise in price. I sell the cotton when it rises; this I consider gambling. The nation or, rather, the world has lost a great deal through such

transactions. This was what I meant in my letter¹. Yes, I expect much more than this, but, at present, you will not be up to that. Without at all depending upon future market prices, to sell the commodities at a little more than the cost price is what I consider unsullied trade. Today it might be difficult to conduct such business, but ultimately, it might bear fruit. You might remember this is what I visualize for khadi. But I know this is a tall order. I shall be very happy and content if you brothers can give up speculation. However, do only what is intelligently acceptable and within your power. I would not at all wish that you should act upon the suggestion simply because it happens to be mine and that, too, sent from jail. Faith should not have a place where reasoning is applicable.

Jayaprakash informs me that, although you are not recruiting any new people just now, he will be absorbed somewhere because of my recommendation². I certainly hold that Jayaprakash is a worthy young man but I do not wish that a post be created where none exists today.

I was a little worried to read of Malaviyaji's fever in the newspapers. I am relieved now. I hope he will emerge from the jail in good health. I am glad about your health too. I am again experimenting with a milkless diet. This time constipation was responsible for it. Now I am taking chapatis prepared from millet for the prisoners, vegetables, three *tolas* of almonds and dates. I am trying to give up dates. Constipation has disappeared. I shall revert to milk if I lose strength. It is nearly a month since I gave up milk.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi : C.W. 6191. Courtesy : G.D. Birla

464. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 17, 1930

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

Your letter. I have in general given the literal translation of *Bhajanavali*³. Now it is up to Mirabehn. I do not consider the translation worth publishing. It cannot even be published while I am

¹ *Vide* "Letter to G.d. Birla", 3-12-1930.

² *ibid*

³ *Ashram Bhajanavali*.

in jail. How can I choose from the *bhajans*? Different *bhajans* appeal on different occasions. We might say that all are well liked. But I do wish to drop a few in the new edition. In “Who is not devoted to Rama and Vaidehi”¹ I take Rama to mean *Daridranarayana* and it is our duty to forsake the company of one who does not serve *Daridranarayana*. Non-co-operation emanates from that.

Thanks for making a start in Gujarati. Considering all this connection with Gujarat, it is good to learn the language too. As a matter of fact, the more Indian languages one knows the better.

I do not use the enema regularly. I regard it efficacious to use only when the need arises. To use it daily is not good. It can also prove harmful.

My blessings to the children. I hope the ear-trinkets taken off have not been replaced. My hope is that now the children would have become simpler than ever before.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 4218

465. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 18, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

A person without art is like a beast. But how will you define art? Art is “skill in work”. The yoga of the third chapter of the *Gita* is perfect art. And this is also true about the activities generally known as art. Any activity in which the masses cannot participate is not art, but a kind of self-indulgence, whether it concerns the voice or clothes or stone. Large numbers singing *Ramdhun* in unison is art, which ought to be cultivated. Many temples have art, and their art is something which can be appreciated by the masses. The daily worship and readings from holy books which take place in temples, if kept within measure and done with genuine faith, are the best form of art. Thus, there is art wherever harmony prevails as regards the time, the place and the occasion. I do not like films. I have never gone to a cinema.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5267

¹ A verse from *Vinaya Patrika* by Tulsidas

466. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

December 18, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your letter. I understand what you say about the children. They ought to gain strength. If their present diet is kept up and they get regular exercise, they certainly will. You may write and make whatever suggestions you think necessary regarding them to the people at Calcutta and then stop worrying about the matter. For you cannot do more than that at present.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6807

467. LETTER TO BHAWANIDUTT JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 18, 1930

BHAI BHAWANIDUTT,

I was glad to have your letter. God grants an opportunity to those devoted to service. Much work can be accomplished through Prabhudas's charkha when you have gained mastery over it.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi : G.N. 104.

468. LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 18, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I had fully and promptly answered the letter you wrote me from your home. Have you not received it yet ? I am happy to learn that you have improved health. I know you see the letters I write to Kanta, so there is little need to write to you. Yes, I have great hopes of Kanta. Let us see what happens. Her health causes some worry.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

469. *LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI*

Y. M.,
December 19, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

Before you can throw off tenderness you will have to realize that it is bad. I am quite clear that you should not take Rs. 25 for clearing the debt to Father-in-law. There is no hurry about paying it off. It is good for you to nurse the feeling that you should pay. As you become hardy, you might save something out of Rs. 75. But you may not deny yourself necessities. You will have an opportunity later of being able to repay the debt.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

470. *LETTER TO RADHABAI OAK*

December 19, 1930

DEAR, SISTER,

You must have got my message. I was happy to learn that you are working hard in the field of public service. But it seems you fight shy of khadi saris. How can you serve the poor if you feel averse to the sacred products of their labour? Think over this.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SMT. RADHABAI OAK

C/O SUSHILA

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6726

471. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

December 19, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

The letter to Radhabai is enclosed. Why do you write *vancha vish'*? Why did you split the word? And why *vish*? It should be *veesh*. The dictionary² published by the Gujarat Vidyapith contains rules for spelling; acquaint yourself with them. Tara is bound to know about this. Is not language also included in our love for things Indian? We ought not to murder a language.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat the Gujarati : G.N. 4780.

472. LETTER TO BALBHADRA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 19, 1930

CHI. BALBHADRA,

I have your letter. You seem to be rendering good service. And simultaneously you have been improving your weight. That is indeed creditable. Explain what you mean when you say that you eat everything. Do not overstep the limits of propriety. Do not beg from anyone. Be content with what you get.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9215

473. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 19, 1930

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

Since you have been doing your duty with sincere devotion, you should feel no other desires. What path should I suggest to you? We daily recite the verse *Prajahati yada kaman*³. You should burn up

¹ Meaning 'I shall give to read'

² *Jodanikosh*; vide "Jodanikosh", 7-4-1929.

³ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 55

every personal desire. You will then yourself discover the path. Reflect over the verses describing the qualities of the *sthitaprajna*¹ and know that they are for persons of your character. Think which of those verses you are not able to follow in conduct, and why. If you do this, all your mental problems will disappear. Write to me from time to time. My respectful greetings to the elders, and blessings to Jamnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 901. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

474. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 19, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

I got your letter. Is Kripalani all right? Kanti and others will meet me in a few days. Pyarelal tells me that his books about the rules governing *sandhi* and *samas* in Sanskrit are with you, or that you know where they are. Send them here. He requires them for a systematic study of the *Gita*. Both of us keep good health. So far, *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra* seem to have agreed with me.

I give detailed news about my health in the letter meant for all, and so I do not write about it separately in each letter.

You can send letters to Pyarelal through Trivedi².

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1814

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 55

² Jayashankar Trivedi of Poona

475. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

Y. M.,

December 19, 1930

MY DEAR VIDYA,

I am sorry you have not got my letter. I have forgotten your question. You must repeat it, if you want the answer. I trust you are keeping well. Are you taking enough daily exercise? You should set apart at least a few minutes daily for Hindi.

Love.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Hindi. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

476. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

YERAVDA MANDIR,

4.30 p.m., December 20, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter betrays about my health an anxiety which is wholly unnecessary. The weight which was taken on Thursday showed an increase of 1½ lb., a very good increase in seven days. Nor do I feel any weakness. I do my two hours' spinning on the *takli* standing as a rule without feeling any appreciable fatigue. I have just now sat down to write this after finishing the *takli*. All the mistakes made last time are being avoided. Stools are well formed. Pyarelal tells me there is no smell worth noticing. The food is all well cooked, i.e., vegetables and chapati. The letter is rebaked when I receive it. Last time, you should remember, it was all raw food including cereals and pulses.¹ As a matter of fact, I am now taking practically what I was taking before starting the raw cereals. The only difference is taking *bajri* or *jwari* in the place of wheat. Perhaps it is a change for the better. I am taking once boiling water, lemon and salt. In spite of all this apparent improve [ment] if I find any irregularity about the stools or weakness (persistent) or a continuing decrease in weight, in any one of the three things happening, I shall go back to milk. But just now with the good feel about the health I must not deprive myself of the joy of avoiding milk and taking the *bajri* or *jwari* chapati. And what is more, I like the

¹ In *Bapu's Letter to Mira*, Mirabehn explains; "I had reminded Bapu in a letter of the severe attack of dysentery he had had at the end of a previous food experiment he had carried out in Sabarmati Ashram.

taste of these chapatis. This detailed explanation and description ought to give you and other friends full satisfaction and free you from all worry as to the future.

In my opinion, while it is necessary, so far as you are concerned, to keep a watch on your menu, your chief trouble is mental. Any pressure on the mind reacts immediately on your body. This anxiety complex, you should try to throw off. "Be careful for no-thing." "Look at the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin and yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." I do not know whether I have quoted correctly. Anyhow the lilies only seem neither to toil nor to spin. They do both but so naturally that we do not notice their toilsome spin. If they did not toil, they would wither. Only they have not the egotism and hence attachments, likes and dislikes that we have. But when we toil like them detachedly, our toil will not be noticed and therefore will not adversely affect the body.

7.30 p.m.

You and I and all of us have to make a conscious and deliberate effort to realize this blessed state. Or else, our reading of the *Gita* is vain.

You will take care not to burn yourself with the primus. You know how Gujarati women have burnt themselves over the use of the primus. The loose saris lend themselves to the wick especially at the time of lighting it. As it is kept on the floor, they have to bend and the rising flame easily catches a fold or a loose end of the sari. It may be wise for you, therefore, to keep it on a metal-mounted stool. Then too there is precious little room in your little dormitory. Anyway, you have my warning. You will now take what precautions you may think right.

In my seclusion, the idea of your bringing out a paper does not at all commend itself to me. That ties you down and I should like you to remain free for what comes to your lot. And then the paper will absorb the labour of several others. I dread the idea. But my opinion has no value. You and the other workers are the best judges.

Yes, I have just finished the first part of the introduction to my translation of the *Gita*¹. I hope to do at least a paragraph every day. If I succeed, the introduction cannot take long.

The new Gandiv² has almost all the improvements I had contemplated. It has two springs for the two *mals*. It is working like a

¹ *Anasaktiyoga*

² A new type of spinning-wheel

musical instrument and requires very little attention. For the execution of these improvement I am thankful to the Superintendent and an English co-prisoner, who is a clever mechanic and who takes a serious interest in the work. He has applied the spring to the holder in an original way. The idea is incredibly simple and equally effective. But I must not keep you over this any longer.

I am glad you have taken Surendra in hand. It is criminal how he neglects his body. Even St. Francis, though he called his body an ass, took some care of it. And after all the ass is a most useful and patient animal. The brother ass can be equally useful if properly treated and neither pampered nor neglected.

And now here is the first verse of the morning prayer :

“Early in the morning, I call to mind that Being which is felt in the heart, which is *sat* (the eternal), *chit* (knowledge), *sukham* (blis), which is the state reached by perfect men and which is the super-state. I am that immaculate Brahman which ever notes the states of dream, wakefulness and deep sleep, not this body, the compound made of the elements (earth, water, space, light and air).” You will be interested to know that the first verse was commended on 6th May last.¹

I am sorry that the very first verse needed correcting. The more I think, the more clearly I see the meaning. And then I don’t mind how often I cut about the translation. Formerly I used to shudder to utter this verse thinking that the claim made therein was arrogant. But when I saw the meaning more clearly, I perceived at once that it was the very best thought with which to commence the day. It is a solemn declaration that we are not the changeful bodies which require sleep, etc., but deep down, we are the Being, the witness pervading the countless bodies. The first part is the recalling to mind the presence of the vital principle and the second part is the affirmation that we are that vital principle. The description of the Being, the Brahman, is also quite apposite. It *is*, nothing else *is* (*sat*), it is all knowledge or light (*chit*), and naturally, therefore, it is all bliss (*sukham*) or the word generally used is *anand*. The rest is simple. You will compare this translation with what you have already, translated by Valjibhai. If there is a material difference, let me have his translation. In scholarship I should yield the palm to him. So now God willing, you may expect a present of this character every week. And here goes the

¹ Vide “*Ashram Bhajanavali*”, 15-12-1930.

bugle telling me it will presently be 9 p.m.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat : C.W. 9284. Courtesy : Mirabehn

477. LETTER TO MAHALAKSHMI MADHAVJI THAKKAR

December 20, 1930

CHI. MAHALAKSHMI,

I got your detailed letter, which was fully worthy of your name. Its enthusiasm pleased me. But, according to our principle, I cannot give any decision about the work being done there. Nor should you rely upon the opinion of a prisoner. I have already explained the proper relations between a leader and the volunteers working under him or her. You should discuss with Mithubehn herself your differences with her. This is the attitude I have adopted from the beginning and I do not wish to go further than this. You are free to follow what seems to you your dharma. We observe the rules and regulations in order that we may know this dharma. The inner voice does not speak in every person. It speaks only in one in whom it is awake.

May God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6808

478. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

December 21, 1930

CHI. MAHAVIR,

You may ask me any question that may arise in your mind. I have plenty of time here to reply to people's questions. If we cannot overcome all our shortcomings at a time, we may first overcome those which we can easily remove. If we proceed thus, we shall gradually be able to overcome all of them. Your handwriting cannot be described as bad, but you can improve it and make it better still.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6222

479. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 21, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

Is it possible that I should go on writing to you even if you never drop me so much as a line? Have you forgotten your promise that you would be writing to me? But better late than never. Realize the importance of keeping promises. Give me an account of your jail experiences. Did you keep good health? What food did you take?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 75

480. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,
December 21, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

There is again no letter from you.¹ How is that? You should not put off writing till the last day. You should write early. From Narandas's letter I thought that your letter would be enclosed but it was not. This is your third lapse. Do not commit it a fourth time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

¹This sentence is in Hindi.

481. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

December 21, 1930

CHI. MRIDULA,

So you came away before time, did you? How was your health? Write to me your experiences. Tell Khurshedbehn to write. What was your diet while you were in the nursing home? How did you spend your time?

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11110. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

482. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

December 21, 1930

CHI. NIMU,

I got your letter. Are you not pleased that Ramdas has once again been honoured?¹ Or, do you repent having married him? If not, you too, should be ready. How many teeth has Sumitra got now? What all has she started eating now? Does she suffer from constipation?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

483. FRAGMENT OF LETTER TO SHANTILAL J. MEHTA

[December 22, 1930]²

CHI. SHANTI,

You did well in writing to me. I hope you are quite well. I will do nothing on my own responsibility. Manilal himself will do what seems best to him. I am afraid he will not be able to leave India just now. At a time like this . . .³

19 FIRST AVENUE, DURBAN

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./XXII

¹ Presumably by courting imprisonment

² From the Gandhi Sangrahalaya Records

³ The rest of the letter is not available.

484. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

December 22, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

It no doubt puts a very heavy responsibility on us when parents of grown-up girls entrust them to us. God will help us to bear it. When, however, you feel in a particular case that the responsibility will be beyond your strength, plainly refuse to accept it. Send away any girl who refuses to submit to your discipline. Explain the position clearly to the parents and the girl before you accept her. If we do not take such steps of practical wisdom, God will not help us. He never helps the timid, the lethargic and those who are not vigilant.

Have any facilities you require, but safeguard your health. If you think that tea and coffee are essential for it, take either without the slightest hesitation or without feeling ashamed about doing so. Giving up tea or coffee is not at present the purpose of your *sadhana*; that purpose is the service of those among the inmates of the Ashram who suffer.

I cannot think of one single remedy which will help Madhu and all others in the Ashram who suffer from constipation. I will tell you how I overcame it in my case. For three or four days, I ate only cooked greens like *tanka*. That completely restored my bowel movement. Then I added almonds to the diet. You do not need them for the people there. Perhaps you will not get even greens. But you can certainly get onions. If those who suffer from constipation eat boiled onions, that, too, will probably help them. If you can get tomatoes, you may mix them with onions. If simple boiled onions do not taste well, even with the addition of salt, and if tomatoes are not available, they may use *kokum*.

The persons may try *shirshasan*. It has helped people to overcome constipation from which they had suffered many years. The *asana* should be done only on an empty stomach. It is quite easy to do. The skirt should be tucked up behind and one should stand on one's head, supporting the body against a wall. After some practice the support of the wall will not be necessary. The head should be supported by the palms joined together.

I suppose you know that these days I eat the *rotlas* of *jowar* and *bajra*, and vegetables, served to prisoners in jail. The vegetables for me have to be cooked separately, because those cooked

for other prisoners contain spices. I continue to eat dates. In place of milk I take four *tolas* of almonds. I keep fairly good health. If I do not keep it up, I will resume milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 8768. Courtesy : Gangabehn Vaidya

485. *LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter full of information. Both the meanings of *nij-anamagrahi*¹ are good. The meaning suggested by Narandas may suit Gujarati better, but the one suggested by you is not altogether inappropriate. I imagine that you yourself are a little girl and reply to your question about prayer. Just as we have parents who gave birth to us, so they had their parents who brought them into the world. If we go further and further back like this, He whom we can conceive as the Father of all is God. It is because He is that that we also call Him the Creator. As our parents often come to know what we want without our telling them, so does God know our wishes. If our human parents have this power to know what we want, the Creator of all must have infinitely greater power to know our heart. That is why we also think of God as *Antaryami*, the Dweller within. It is not necessary that we should be able to see Him. We have never seen a good many of our relations. Somebody's parents may have gone away to a foreign country or died while he or she was a child, but such a man or woman trusts other people and believes that the parents live or lived. Similarly, we should trust the testimony of saints about the existence of God and believe that the *Antaryami* does exist. If that is so, it is easy to understand why we should sing *bhajans* to Him and pray to Him. If we are good children, we bow to our parents, prostrating ourselves before them, the first thing in the morning after leaving bed and the last thing at night when going to bed. We should do the same to God. And as we tell our parents what we desire, so we should tell God. This should be enough for today. If you do not understand anything in this, do not hesitate to question me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10247

¹ One who clings to the Name, which is his very self

486. LETTER TO PREMLILA THACKERSEY

December 22, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I got the two boxes of dates and the cotton send by you. Need I thank you for them? Write to Vithaldas and tell him that the dates were excellent. This does not mean, of course, that he should send me such dates more often. My request was that he should communicate the price to the Superintendent here and supply the dates as and when required, provided his brother orders enough quantity to spare some and sell it. I got your letter too. I will write to you when I require more cotton.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4818. Courtesy : Premlila Thackersey

487. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 22, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

You are being really tested. See that you do not fail in the test. One preserves one's self-respect better by giving up the very desire for being respected. You will not get another Gangabehn who will look after you like a mother as she does. She has an overbearing temper. Endure it. Understand and appreciate her zeal for service and her sympathy for all. Anyone who wishes to serve must learn to act as a member of an organization. To do this means to obey somebody's authority. One's superior has his or her superior too. Think over the verses of Chapter XII of the *Gita*. One of them says that a devotee and lover of God is equally indifferent to respect and disrespect, to praise and censure, and holds friend and foe in equal regard. Let this be true about you. Do not feel it a burden to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9318

488. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 22, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. From your postcard received yesterday, I thought I would receive a letter today, but I did not get one. From Jayaprakash's letter it would seem you have now gone to the Ashram. But it is not clear from your letters whether you have. I should like you to go to the Ashram as soon as possible. I do not like your continuing to get the fainting fits. I must now get a report of your talks with Father. Incidentally, that will give me news about his health too. I am quite well. So far, I have been able to digest *jowar* and *bajra*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3385

489. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Thursday Morning, December 18/23, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your packet yesterday evening. The letters to the Ashram which I handed in this time, that is, on Tuesday last, should reach you on Thursday, that is, today. I suggested to the official here to post them immediately, if possible, and he told me afterwards that this week's letters were posted on Tuesday itself.

I welcome your long letters, but I shall not be happy if you take special trouble to make them long. I can understand what a burden you are carrying. I did not want an explanation in regard to Keshu. But I can understand your having given it so that you could pour out your heart and satisfy yourself.

I had a postcard from Surajbhan, in which he says that he would be happy if Yashodadevi was called to the Ashram. She lives with the family of Lala Dunichand, a lawyer, in Ambala. Write to him.

The Ratilal episode is both happy and painful. His foolishness is painful, but the display of humanity by the merchant, who returned the diamond, and by Gopi, who returned the money, makes one

happy. In my eyes, their subsequent conduct wipes out their initial guilt. Champa, of course, has always been foolish. She listens to no persuasion and re-mains fond of diamonds and other jewels, and loses money in consequence. Ratilal must have returned. Even if he has not returned, that will not worry me. God always saves him. But this is what life is. We pass our time in undoing the consequences of one another's error. For those who can remain unattached while doing this, their labour is not wasted. To them it is a spiritual striving and they realize God through it. I had an experience of this yesterday when I saw God in a worm and a weevil. You are wrong if you think that you know Pyarelal fully. Being a poet, he is bound to be dreaming always. I asked him to remove a worm from the dates. He should have put it in a safe corner, but, instead of thinking about his duty, he was thinking of something else, God knows what, and he put the worm in the wash-basin. The weevil, too, was dropped into the same. If now I washed my hands or face in the basin, I would be the cause of the death of both. I therefore, decided not to wash in it. But when, after I had finished my work, I got ready to wash my hands, I did not see the worm and the weevil in the basin. They had slowly moved away. I look upon this experience as seeing God in the two worms. An atheist or a rationalist would describe the incident as mere accident. It was an accident, no doubt, but seeing God is also an accident. If we but understand the truth, we would see Him every day; otherwise our whole life would pass without our seeing Him. But I will not dwell further on this. I wanted to note this incident in the diary yesterday, but, in my preoccupation with other work I wrote in it only about the daily sacrificial work and forgot to note this. While writing about the merchant and Gopi, I remembered this holy experience and have shared it with you. I learnt much else, too, from it yesterday. God alone knows whether I shall be able to digest all that. I will now answer your question here. As we reflect deeper and remain peaceful, the meaning of ahimsa and truth becomes clearer. I even realize the supreme utility of these two. I believe we realize God in the degree to which we practise them. I am getting more convinced than ever in my view that seeing God except through truth and ahimsa is an impossibility. How can members of a group practise ahimsa towards one another? They can do so by displaying generosity towards co-workers and their faults and everyone regarding his own faults with strictness. Anyone who observes the faults of others believes, whether he is conscious of the fact or not, that he does not have the same

faults. This gives rise to pride. The true rule is that one should oneself observe all rules strictly and tolerate others who seem slack in observing them. This is not kindness but strict justice. Do we really know what effort is made by a person in observing a rule even as slackly as he does? If our seeming strictness in observing rules comes naturally to us, what is the value of that strictness? Is it any cause for wonder if a man like Bhima can lift a weight of four pounds with the utmost ease? A girl, however, might slip down while trying to lift one pound; what would we think of that Bhima if he laughed at her then? Really speaking, the effort of that girl to lift one pound is of much greater value than Bhima's lifting the weight of four pounds. If Bhima had not lifted that weight, somebody else as strong would have lifted it; but by her effort to lift one pound that girl taught the world a lesson in doing one's duty and earned God's grace. Our dharma therefore does not lie in criticizing others and thereby committing violence; it lies in becoming more vigilant ourselves. If a strong bullock is yoked with one seemingly or really weak, the former's duty is to do more work and make up for the deficiency of the latter. The driver goads it to labour harder. If the strong bullock does not do the work expected of it, it is looked upon as a shirker; it is selfish and has no pity on the other one. Let us never be shirkers. Let us always do our duty. God will judge us and our co-workers. He can see into the hearts of all. We scarcely can see into our own. We easily learn this if we strive sincerely to cultivate ahimsa.

Through the pursuit of truth, we know the measure of purity in our motives. It increases our vigilance in regard to the smallest social duties and to our daily work. If we strive for truth, we would not be content merely to attend prayers but would try to concentrate our attention on them. We would try to follow the songs and the discourses, be punctual in attending the prayers and respond to them as to a fresh experience every day. The freshness does not consist in the variety of *bhajans* or other recitations, but should result from the increasing purity of our heart. We should grow daily more contented and feel greater peace of mind. If we do not have this experience, the fault will lie not with the quality of the prayers but with the element of untruth-fulness in us. If we attend the prayers with sincere devotion to truth, we would experience nothing but peace. The faithful who visit temples do not observe the lack of cleanliness in them, or pay attention to the hypocrisy of the priest. They do not see the image as a stone. They experience peace in the midst of noise and return from

the temples purified in heart. A person like me who feels suffocated by the noise there and sees the image only as a piece of stone should never visit a temple. God appears to us in the form in which we worship Him. For He is not outside of us. He is in the hearts of us all. If we understand this truth, our simplest and smallest actions would shed lustre on us and help us to see God. In order that we may learn this, prayers, spinning, and other daily duties are like a spiritual lighthouse to us or a right angle which is the standard of measurement.

Saturday Morning

If Giriraj remains quiet, that problem will then be over. I see that it will not be possible now to get the children to the Ashram. He has entrusted them [to somebody else]. Trust them to their fate now. I am going on quite well at present. I have gained a pound or a pound and a half in weight this week. I cannot say that I have at last succeeded in giving up dates and raisins. Only a few days ago, Jamnabehn and Vithaldas sent some dates and I ate them for two or three days. And now again I have stopped eating them. I am thus observing the effect of eating them and not eating them. I do want to give them up if I can. At present, therefore, my diet includes a little quantity of greens or cabbage or beetroot or turnip or pumpkin, *bhakhari* of *bajra* or *jowar*, four *tolas* of almonds, and lemon. If God keeps me fit with these, so far so good; otherwise I will humbly resume milk or curds. I cannot say yet that I am able to live on this diet. I will not say, either, that I shall not be able to do so. I had never expected that I would be able to digest *jowar* and *bajra*. At present, however, I seem to have no difficulty in doing so.

I have noted what you say about yourself. Your selection of the items and their quantities is correct. I see that you have given up ground-nuts; there is nothing wrong in that. The fact that you are losing weight will do you no harm at all. You should not lose strength, however. If you find it necessary, increase the quantity of milk or curds. It will perhaps help you if you add just one *tola* of almonds to your diet. Solve the problem of Parnerkar firmly. It seems to have turned out a painful chapter. I got the chapters of *Gitabodh*. So far I have not received the piece of leather.

You may extract from any of my letters what I say about the *yajna* of spinning and publish it. There is no harm in publishing similar other material of public interest. The more the people do *yajna* for self-purification, the better. A mass *yajna* has an altogether

miraculous effect. If you can, keep up with what you have started. The spinning-wheels and all other things must be in perfect condition. These things produce an effect on our minds and make a difference to the speed. Your speed has increased well enough. I have not been able to go beyond 200 on the spinning-wheel and 60 on the *talki*. But I do hope to do so. I do not know if there is something wrong with my fingers. If the nerves running through them are weak, it is possible that they may not be active enough. Just as you go to bed early, it will also be good if you make it a rule not to rise earlier than a fixed hour. You should do what you can between 4 and 9 and then stop. If you have more things to do than you can finish during that time, you may omit those which you safely can. You should entrust to others the things which they can attend to. It is really not necessary to give you advice in this matter, but I have said something all the same in order that you may be more careful. One test of non-attachment is that a person who is non-attached always feels as if he had no work, though he is never inactive even for a single moment. At present, however, that state of mind "is a wish beyond our reach". All the same, we should grasp with our intellect the meaning of that verse and, having done so, strive to reach that state. The condition of a non-attached person should never seem pitiable. He should never have an expression on his face which might make anybody feel sorry for him and think that he was carrying an excessive burden of work. Think what "burden" of work God has to carry. Nevertheless He is the king of those who do not work. He is an object of pity to no one. On the contrary, we hunger for His mercy. We should never be satisfied with a state a whit inferior to His, though He may carry the burden of the entire universe and we that of something smaller than even a particle of dust. Just as He ever feels light, though carrying the burden of the universe, so should we do though carrying the burden of a mere fraction of a particle of dust. We can easily attain such a state of mind if we reduce ourselves to a cipher. Mirabeau finds it impossible to become non-attached, but she is a good woman and, therefore, will one day approach that state. From here I think she would do well not to undertake the responsibility of a new paper. I had understood about Sitla Sahay even without a letter from him, and that is why I wished to get one from him.

I do not like to give to anyone the impression of my palm. Apart from that, it would be against jail rules to do so. I have, therefore, no choice in the matter. Kakasaheb could not even give his signature on his photograph. And I think that it is a good rule too. I

have written a letter¹ to Purushottam; read it. Kanu, too, seems to have been upset a bit.

Sunday Morning

It was not at all satisfied by . . . 's² letter. I take it that you will see him personally, or probably you have already seen him. Discuss the matter with him and convey to me the impression you form. This case, too seems like . . . 's³. The latter would not admit anything more than what had come out and produced an impression on Surendra, Chhaganlal and others that nothing wrong had happened. He did not succeed in producing that impression on me, and ultimately confessed having been guilty of a serious lapse. I would not be surprised if a similar thing should happen in . . . 's⁴ case. His language gives the impression of a guilty person attacking an innocent. Look into this.

Kusum has referred in her letter to the problem that has arisen about the offer of a job to her in Porbandar. Read my reply to her and guide her as you think best. My compliments to Jaya for having gone to the rest-house⁵. Has she any relation there to whom I can write? If Kakasaheb has not been able to win over the others, I think it would be best to let the *Gita* recitation go on as at present. The suggestion to complete the whole recitation in seven days by reciting some verses in the morning and some in the evening has not appealed to me. I will congratulate ourselves if we can improve upon the present practice. I have noted that you took two and three-quarter hours to write your letter to me. The time taken in dispatching the letters must have been in addition to this. It is fine indeed if you can get all this time. If you can reduce it a little, however, you should certainly do so.

I see that I made an amusing mistake about Vidyabehn⁶. I will be more careful in future when several persons claim the same name.

I think you did right in detaining Bhagwanjibhai's⁷ Manibehn. She will be welcome to the Ashram when the two reach a level so that they feel as brother and sister to each other. At present it is best that they remain away from each other.

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Purushottam Gandhi", 19-12-1930.

² The names have been omitted.

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ Prison

⁶ There were two women of this name : one, the wife of Anand Hingorani, and another, the daughter of Raojibhai Manibhai.

⁷ Bhagwanji P. Pandya

Bhansali has been testing you a good deal. I got two Godrej boxes. I have written to the dealers to inquire for more. You may use the donation by Soniramji for any cause that you think good. Inform him to what account you credit the sum. Take Nayan to a doctor, if necessary. She must be helped to get rid of her fever. Your solution concerning Kashinath seems all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

The responsibility for Amina's Urdu education rests on us. Giriraj used to teach her. He should start doing so again, or some other arrangement should be made.

December 21, 1930

If you have kept a copy of my letter to Hari-ichchha, show it to Radha. Read my letters to Kaka and to Mirabehn. Did you show Shanti's letter to Manilal? If you did not and if you remember its contents, acquaint Manilal with them. Read my letter to Shanti. I have gone through *Gita* again. I have not been able to read your letter, though. If you do not follow any point or if my explanation is incomplete, write to me about it.

BAPU¹

[PS.]

There are 72 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

490. LETTER TO HORACE G. ALEXANDER

YERAVDA CENTRAL PRISON,

December 23, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I was glad to hear from you. If the R.T.C. results in doing something worthy of the great sacrifice of the nation and therefore of acceptance, I should be delighted. But as I have told you, having been filled with distrust nothing but an accomplished result will reassure me.

¹ For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VII) dated December 23 which followed, vide "Letters on the *Gita*", 21-2-1932.

The question of debts is incredibly simple. The Lahore resolution has an explicit condition about reference to an impartial tribunal.¹ But you have my assurance that no Congressman has ever enunciated the doctrine of total repudiation. What Congressmen, including myself, demand is that the nation's representatives should have the right of having any portion of the so-called national debt, concessions and the like, being referred to an independent tribunal whose decision should be final and binding on both the parties. I feel I am quite safe in saying this even for Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Not to adopt the course above indicated would be disloyal to the nation as total repudiation without just cause would undoubtedly be dishonourable.

Whatever Maulana Mohamed Ali may think of me, I have nothing but kindly feelings about him. And I feel sure that time will remove misunderstandings. Having no feeling either against Islam or Mussalmans, I feel absolutely at ease.

My love to Reginald. I know Charlie Andrews is not now with you.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

HORACE ALEXANDER
144 OAKTREE LANE
SEELY OAK
BIRMINGHAM

From a photostat: G.N. 1409

491. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 24, 1930

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I have your letter. I have not however received the proofs of the book. I am making inquiries. I will go through them when I get them.

Your being my namesake has at least this advantage for me, that I am saved from a good deal of correspondence.²

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 7

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C. —II", 1-1-1930.

² Part of Gandhiji mail used to be misdelivered to the addressee.

492. *LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 27, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have heard from you after a long time. I did not get your detailed letter which you mention. It will be better, therefore, if you write again. I have not been able to read the book sent by you. The better part of the day is spent in spinning and carding, and the remaining time is taken up by correspondence. I can, therefore, do very little reading.

I am very glad indeed that you have gone to live at Juhu. Grandmother will enjoy peace of mind there.

Does Sumati keep well?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 4720. Courtesy : Shantikumar Morarjee

493. *LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 27, 1930

CHI. MANI (PATEL),

At last I have a letter from you. You have somewhat made up for previous neglect. Do build up your health at any rate. You had a great deal of work¹ on your hands, so there was no need to read any books. You did well to put up a fight².

I am now all right. Due to constipation I had stomachache one day; therefore I had my bowels flushed and took only vegetable soup the next day; this cured my constipation. Since that day I have not taken milk. I take one *roti* made of local *jowar* or *bajra* and vegetable with a few almonds. There is no reason for anxiety on my score.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4 : Manibehn Patelne, pp. 75-6

¹ That of looking after numerous fellow-prisoners

² On the question of women prisoners' right to wear bangles

494. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

December 27, 1930

CHI. VANAMALA,

You have written your letter in a beautiful handwriting. It is not enough that your speed on the *takli* is the same as mine. Can an old man and a child have equal capacity? Have you heard with what speed they spin in Wardha? Even a girl of your age spins 80-85 rounds in half an hour.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5757

495. LETTER TO RAMACHANDRA KHARE

December 27, 1930

CHI. RAMBHAU,

A resolution is as good as a vow if we regard it as such. You are in the sacred land of the Himalayas. Shake off your laziness, etc., to which you confess. Remember that you have gone there to serve Prabhubhai¹ and to become a good boy. Therefore, spin regularly on the Magan spinning-wheel. Follow Prabhubhai's advice and get rid of the last trace of laziness.

Your handwriting is not too bad nor the mistakes too many.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 287. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

496. LETTER TO MATHURI KHARE

December 27, 1930

CHI. MATHURI,

Is not this coloured paper lovely? It is a very good thing that you no more doze off during prayers. With effort handwriting can become as beautiful as pearls.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 258-a. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

¹ Presumably Prabhudas Gandhi who was in Almora

497. *LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH*

December 28, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

I have your letter. I invariably write to you. But if I fail to do so, you too do not write to me. I agree to this condition, though children should not insist on this. You have each to write one letter to me and I have to write one letter to each; but I have thousands or lakhs of children. So I write as many as I can. But everyone who writes to me expects me to write to them myself. What is to happen then?

You should get rid of your cough.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : C.W. 9896. Courtesy : Shardabehn Chokhawala

498. *LETTER TO KALAVATI TRIVEDI*

December 28, 1930

CHI. KALAVATI,

Your letter. The handwriting is better than before. It shall certainly improve through effort. You must regularly write something in a clear hand, be it only for ten minutes. Keep a model before you. Be engrossed in service.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N. 5269

499. *LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT*

December 28, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

Does the doctor say that your ear-drum has been damaged, and that, if it cannot be cured, it would be advisable to remove it? If that is so, you should get it removed even at the risk of certain deafness which might result from its removal, and save yourself from the present pain. Is there a continual discharge from the ear? You should not ignore this disease. I am still able to carry on without milk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9297

500. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

December 28, 1930

CHI. MADHAVJI,

It is not unlikely that you will get this letter. It is the same to us whether we are in jail or outside. Even self-purification is a form of service, and we must strive for it wherever we are whether in jail or outside. Even if we devote ourselves to service, we must make our hearts pure.

Surendra himself is responsible for his bad health.

I am acting with proper caution. If, none the less, I do make mistakes, how can that be helped? I would rather that I made mistakes in dealing with the body than in matters concerning the soul.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6809

501. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 28, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I do not want you to bind yourself with a promise. I am satisfied with your assurance. Do not shout so loudly as to harm your throat. Did the fast have any beneficial effect on it? I should like somebody to go through the letters which the children write to me from the point of view of both language and handwriting.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 10248

502. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 28, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have not wasted your time in shortening your long letter. This practice will ultimately make your thinking clear. And as our thinking becomes clearer we are able to express in a few words whatever we have to say. Quest for exploring the soul is nothing but our detecting, in the process, attachment, hatred, etc., lurking in our

heart. This is similar to the exploring of the Himalayas which involves facing a number of difficulties and cliffs.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 332. Courtesy : Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

503. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

December 28, 1930

CHI. KANTA,

I got both your letters together. You have done well to return to the Ashram. Go back only when you have fully recovered. If you drink hot water with salt, it will relieve the cough. Take deep breaths. You must breathe only through the nose. Though you do not like onions, can you not eat them as medicine? Onions boiled in water should not smell. Do not eat oily foods. *Rotlo* and salt will be enough. Drink plenty of boiled water with it. You may take milk and ghee whenever offered. You should keep soda handy and use it when you are offered buttermilk.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

504. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

December 29, 1930

CHI. KUSUM (SENIOR),

It would be very good if Shanta spends some time with you. If I know what you wish in regard to punishment, I can consider and suggest something. A fast may contain an element of violence in it. If it is likely to take the form of blackmail, it should be avoided. I do not remember if you had asked this question before.

Has not Shankarbhai's passing away increased your responsibility? Has the widow any children? Is she educated? Apart from that, was there any other responsibility on Shankarbhai? If the

widow desires to remarry, I assume that you will help her to do so. Give me all the facts.

My weight has again reached 101.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 1815

505. *LETTER TO N. M. KHARE*

December 29, 1930

CHI. PANDITJI,

Cannot we lead children playing in streets in “singing processions”? They will acquire, in the process, some education in letters too. But I need not write about this, since you are already discussing the matter with Kaka. It is very necessary to keep the people and children occupied in useful activities.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : C.W. 214. Courtesy : Lakshmibehn Khare

506. *LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI*

December 29, 1930

MADAM TEACHER,

You say that everything is all right. Excellent! To say that all is well after finishing me!¹ I hope you will be satisfied with this lesson for today. I will not follow the frog in the story simply because you praise me much. I am quite aware how fine my Urdu is, but I am not ashamed of it. Words of love need no more ornament than love itself does, no matter how foolish they are or how like the mere prattle of a child. You are quite right in comparing with music an operation by skilled doctors. Let us be thankful that the gentlemen spared your nose although they made away with all the bones. We must now think of some punishment for Father. All of you should help me in that. How could youths with white beard go to a hospital? What sort of a

¹ These sentences are in Urdu.

make-believe is that? I hope he is now as strong as an Arab horse.

To Mother, *vandemataram*; to Father, *bhur-r-r-r*; to you,

Blessings and many good wishes from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : S.N. 9625

507. *LETTER TO JUGATRAM DAVE*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

December 29, 1930

BHAI JUGATRAM,

I have been expecting a letter from you every day. You have piled up a fairly big heap of facts before me. It requires a special art to deal with Mithubehn¹. Use all the art you have. I have received complaints against her from the women too. In any case, Time is the friend of all. He sets everything right. Probably that is why in English they call Him Father Time. We believe Him to be God Himself. If He destroys the worlds, He does that too for their good.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2690

508. *LETTER TO KUNVARJI MEHTA*

December 29, 1930

BHAI KUNVARJI,

Your letters contain useful information. If we do not forsake truth and non-violence, even our misfortunes will help us. Hence follow them scrupulously and persuade other also to do the same. Write to Pragji and tell him that he should not become impatient.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am still able to carry on without milk.

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 2691

¹ Mithubehn Petit

509. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI AND NANIBEHN JHAVERI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 29, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN AND NANIBEHN,

I got your full letter. I cannot guide you from here in detail. Is it not our principle that a prisoner should not take interest in problems outside nor guide anyone? I have merely drawn your attention to the principle which we have accepted. Think over it and then unhesitatingly follow what seems to you your dharma. If you cannot decide where your dharma lies, you may consult Pannalal or Narandas. Now Kakasaheb also is there. Discuss the matter with him and then do what you conscience tells you. Write to me from time to time. Both of you, take care of your health. Has Pannalal completely recovered now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3109

510. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

December 29, 1930

CHI. KASHINATH,

I got your letter. I fully approve of what you did about Shanta's husband. It is enough if Shanta keeps up her courage. Whatever happens, Shanta should refuse to go to him. Let him, if he wishes, come again to attack her. She should resist if he comes to carry her away by force. She should not be alone at any time. You need not take the trouble to find out where the man has gone. It is enough that you have written about it to his people at home. Be vigilant lest he come stealthily and attack her again. If Mother is of the same mind as you in this matter, you will meet with no difficulty in following the course which you have adopted.

I have already replied to the question regarding marriage. I see that it is not enough, and also that it is. I have only pointed out the Vedic ideal modified to suit modern times. If one is unable to follow it, one may modify it further as much as necessary. It is not for me to take measure of anyone's inability in this regard.

I don't mind your having written about Gangabehn. She is not intentionally partial to anyone. She may act in that manner through haste and lack of understanding. However, she is the fittest to be the women's leader. For Kalavati and others, therefore, service lies in doing as she says, and they ought to be satisfied with that. They should not lose heart if people give no co-operation in the work regarding cleanliness, khadi, etc. In the long run people are bound to yield to love and their daily experience of other people's conduct. Their presence by itself is enough in such places, provided they spend the whole day in work. And they must carry the *takli* and the spinning-wheel with them. They should also clean people's latrines, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 5289

511. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

December 29, 1930

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. If you regarded the world as unreal, i.e., transitory, does it in any way go contrary to reason? Whatever is transitory is unreal because it does not endure for ever. And there is no question of being attached to what is transient. After all you will seldom find reason being exercised in matters of faith. If it could be grasped by reason it ceases to be a matter of faith. Faith might indeed one day lead to experience.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 333. Courtesy : Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

512. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Saturday Morning, December 27/30, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS,

This time I got your packet only yesterday (Friday) after 2 o'clock. Because of Christmas there seems to have been some confusion in the post office. Here the officials seem quite careful

about my post. That is why you got my packet on Thursday.

I got the piece of leather for sandals. I see Mahadev's name in your list, but I did not find his letter. Perhaps there was a letter by Durga, but I do not find even that. I did feel that Ratilal would return. Where had he gone on his pleasure trip? Send with a visitor some time a sample of the bread which you make there. We do not know when Giriraj will see reason. Go on doing your best. His heart is pure and he is filled with the spirit of self-sacrifice. One day, therefore, he is bound to see reason. "No one seeking to do good ever comes to harm."¹

I understand everyone being nervous about my experience in diet, for I have not fully succeeded in it. But perhaps you may tell people that you know that I wake up in time and make necessary changes, and that my body responds to them. How can I give up a dharma which has come to me unsought? I was weighed yesterday and again seemed to have gained a pound and a half. I advisedly say "seemed" because on the previous occasion I was weighed after I had passed stool and this time before I had done so. The weight of the stool is not real gain in weight, but an unnecessary load. We may therefore count half a pound less; even then there has been a gain of one pound. But more important than the weight is the energy which I feel in my body. I feel no sign of weakness yet. I eat without difficulty one *bhakhari* of the size which they make here, half a piece at one meal. The quantity of almonds which I eat comes to nearly two ounces. At present at any rate I feel that, if I can continue to digest this amount of food, I shall be able to keep up my strength. There is, therefore, no reason at all for worry. I am taking the utmost care, and, after all, even in this matter one needs to practise non-attachment. Who can say when that thing, more fragile than glass, will slip from one's hand and break?

I suppose you remember that you sent to Kantu² a diary made of handmade paper. He has now sent it for my autograph. The binding is very bad. Not only that there is no neatness about it, but he has so bound it that one cannot turn the pages at all. The art of binding books is easy to learn. It can be learnt in a very short time. Someone from among us should learn it. Or we should get our binding done outside. I intend to get the diary re-bound in the press here. This is just by the way. I have mentioned the matter for future

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

² Kantilal Gajiwala; vide "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 5/9-9-1930.

guidance. “Yoga is skill in work.”¹ This should be illustrated even in our least important activities. “Skill in work” lies also in not attempting what we cannot do. That is a case of action in inaction. Even refraining from something is a form of action. There is a saying in English borrowed from Persian. “He who knows that he knows not is wise.” I am prompted to say all this from my own unhappy experience. I observe that my spinning displays too much evidence of lack of skill and slackness despite all the care that I take. There may be a knot in the thread which I observe, but I let it go. At times the yarn is much too loose, but I let it remain. I have acquired no proficiency at all in joining broken thread. But I go on, all the same. What kind of *yajna* is this? Whether you call it carelessness, laxity or indifference, I observe every day this weakness in me in regard to this great *yajna* of spinning. I try every day to improve myself, and fail. But I keep hoping that one day I shall do well in my *yajna*. Even if I do not, I derive consolation from the verse : “After man lives, the enlightened one attains Me”². It is a dangerous verse. One may use it to remain content with one’s lethargy. If a person pays attention to the meaning of every word in it, he will not fall, otherwise the verse can be the cause of much harm to one. I hear the bugle sounded every day at 5.30. It is now time for me to pace up and down.

7.30, Tuesday

If you send your packet by unregistered parcel, it may perhaps be delayed. Make inquiries, however, and do what you think best. This time I have been hard pressed for time to cope with the work. Ordinarily, I should be spinning at this hour. I get letters from Prabhavati from time to time. She should arrive in the Ashram any day now. Drop me a postcard as soon as she arrives. Most probably I shall get it. Read my letters to Kaka and Mirabehn. Today I stop here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Did you read the account about Amidas? If you have not read it, get a copy from Harivallabhdas. He seems to have preserved one.³

[PPS.]

There are 82 letters.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U./I

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 50

² *ibid*

³ For the text of the *Gita* discourse (Ch. VIII) which followed, *vide* “Letters on the *Gita*”, 21-2-1932.

513. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

December 29/30, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter. This time I must be very brief as the post came two days late. I start therefore with the translation of the 2nd verse¹: “In the early morning I worship Him who is beyond the reach of thought and speech yet by whose grace all speech is possible. I worship Him whom the Vedas describe as *neti, neti* (not this). Him they (the sages) have called God of gods, the unborn, the unfallen, the source of all.”

I do not think that this calls for any explanation. The translation of the preface² is proceeding apace. And as there was no Ashram post till Friday, I devoted the spare time to translating more paras. The result is that now there are only 10 more left. It will be time then to consider whether I can translate the *Gita* notes I am writing for the Ashram inmates. Just now the 100 rounds on the *takli* take up much time. But I am now showing an increase in speed. The speed on the Gandiv today was for me quite a record, i.e., 169 rounds in 40 minutes. This means 255 in 60 minutes. The improvements are primarily responsible for this speed. If I continue to show improvement, I may have some more time for writing work. For I do not want to be greedy just now in the way of increase in the output. I shall stick to 300 on the wheel and 100 on the *takli* till I show a permanently marked increase in speed.

I was quite sure you would get your foreign mail.

Of my health which is excellent more in the general letter.

Of your journalistic venture my opinion remains unaltered and is reinforced by the recent ordinance. But, as I have said, my opinion ought not to count one way or the other.

Love.

BAPU

From the original : C.W. 5425. Courtesy : Mirabehn; also G.N. 9659

¹ Of *Ashram Bhajanvali*; vide “Ashram Bhajanvali”, 15-12-1930.

² To *Anasaktiyoga*; vide “Anasaktiyoga”, 27-6-1929

514. LETTER TO SHANTA S. PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 30, 1930

CHI. SHANTA (SHANKARBHAI),

I have your letter. Let me give my blessings just now for the new year. If you take a vow, do so after full deliberation and, having taken one be firm in keeping it. There is no need at all to undertake a seven days' fast. It is likely to prove too much for you. It is enough if you fast on the birthday. Write to Shankarbhai and to me and tell us what vow you take. Take the vow in the presence of the girl friends living there. If possible, spend that day with Kusumbehn. It would be good before taking your vow to consult her. The difficulty which you point out about eating food without spices is only an excuse. One who is determined to eat unspiced food will certainly find out what to eat. Surely, there are no chillies in *rotla*, rice and buttermilk. [Is it not so?] One should be satisfied with a *rotla*, buttermilk and salt. Just as we eat and drink every day, we should also write the diary every day. Everything can be done if one has the will. Kamu has not acknowledge my letter. Ask her whether she got it. What will her husband do at Ahmedabad?

How can anyone say that there is no sin in killing bugs and fleas? Even in cutting up vegetables there is sin. However, we do commit some sins which we regard as unavoidable. When we smoke a place to protect ourselves against fleas, countless fleas are killed, but we feel helpless and do that all the same. However, we realize through such necessities that it is everyone's duty to seek deliverance from bodily life.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4057

515. LETTER TO HARILAL DESAI

December 30, 1930

CHI. HARILAL (DESAI),

I am hard pressed for time just now and will not, therefore, write a long letter. You did well in giving me all the details. I do not wish

Valji to know my opinion for the present. He may be told about it after he is released. I am confirmed in my opinion after reading Hari-ichchha's letter. But what happened has happened. I have written to Hari-ichchha and explained to her how she can now make the best of an unfortunate event.¹ She will probably show you that letter if you have not seen it already. Ask her to show it to you.

Your duty now is to cling to the job which you have accepted. You may think of something else to do only when circumstances arise in which you on your own leave it—for I have already observed your unsettled state of mind. I have faith in you despite that, for you belong to Valji's family and are sincere at heart. Such persons often become steady all at once. What has Dudhibehn² decided to do?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 6626

516. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got four letters from you together. You should not forget that after all I am a prisoner. I get the letters when the Superintendent visits [me]. However, I continue my efforts to see that I get my letters immediately. When will you now go to the Ashram? I should like you to do so without delay. Your weakness must disappear. Don't be eager to start working as soon as you reach the Ashram. Take milk, curds and fruits in sufficient quantities. And you of course know the benefits of open air. May God protect you in every way. Don't worry about me. I had given up eating fresh fruits during the [Dandi] march itself. Nor do I feel any need for them. I seem to be able to digest four or five *tolas* of almonds and that keeps up my strength.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3386

¹ She was married to a widower.

² Valji Govindji Desai's wife

517. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

For want of time, only this much now. I have understood your problem with the *takli*. Do you have that problem with the bamboo one or the iron *takli*? Your faith will produce the right means even in material things for you. Hence, be patient. For the present, keep a watch on how much yarn the Magan spinning-wheel, in its existing form, gives. You should not have any problem when a devotee of the Magan spinning-wheel, i.e. Dhuru, is with you. If the *takli* has started giving 330 rounds of yarn per hour, why cannot the Magan-wheel give 3330 rounds per hour? Do not be alarmed by it. Initially, the *takli* gave only 30 rounds, now it easily gives ten times more. It is not impossible to produce on Magan wheel ten times more than the *takli*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original S.N. 32964

518. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

December 31, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. But I put off writing to you thinking that you will soon be in the Ashram. The more you stay on there, the more I feel worried. Why don't you go away immediately and leave matters to take care of themselves? If Jayaprakash cannot go immediately, cannot he ask Harasubabu? I see that the longer you delay in going to the Ashram, the weaker you are becoming. What further can I now write even to Jayaprakash?

What is your diet in your present condition of health? Who watches over you when you are in a swoon? What did Father tell you when you met him? I feel afraid even to ask you questions, for it may be a burden on your mind to think and reply to them. I dismiss my worries in the faith that God has been protecting you and will continue to do so. I am quite well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 3387

519. A LETTER

YERAVDA MANDIR,
December 31, 1930

CHI.,

It is possible that, from an academic standpoint, my interpretation of the phrase “*सृजं जन्म मृगस्य च*” is of no value. But I think it is possible to interpret it to refer both to the self and the body. The self unclouded by ignorance knows neither birth nor death. However, one who believes that it dies must believe also that it is born again. For, nothing in this world suffers total destruction, not even physical body. It ceases to exist in one form and takes another. It goes on ever changing its form. After the body has been reduced to ashes it will not remain unchanged for ever in the form of atoms, for the atoms will change too. “When turned into ornaments, gold acquires different names and forms but it, ever remains gold.” Does this appeal to your reason in any way? As Vinoba’s style is very lively, he wins our interest. However, I have come to the conclusion that it is possible to put more than one interpretation on the words of the *Gita* and that all of them may be right. The central meaning would remain the same, and consistent with it there may be as many interpretations as one may wish, which together, like the numerous instruments in an orchestra, produce a beautiful symphony. As regards “is seated,” “sits” and “walks,” it is possible to draw out three distinct meaning. But the *Gita* is not a technical or scientific work composed with such precision. It abounds in repetitions, and there is looseness of expression too. This is not a defect, but it is there.

These days I have been spinning on the *takli* at least 100 rounds a day. I have given up the iron *takli*, after having tried very hard to spin well on it, and now I am back to the bamboo *takli*. I feel a little better with it. The speed has risen to 75 per hour. It will go up still. After I have mastered the bamboo *takli* fully, I will return to the iron one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati : C.W. 9317. Courtesy : Narandas Gandhi

520. LETTER TO BHAGWANJI P. PANDYA

[December 1930]¹

CHI. BHAGWANJI,

You have construed the answers to your questions all right. Even then I will add a little here.

There is no end to conflicts of loyalties and to miseries. True desire for knowledge arises from this.

The body can be said to be an abode of *punya*² in spite of its origin in *papa*³ in so far as it is a means to realization of the *atman*.

Knowledge means the realization of the self. One who has fully realized truth and non-violence is a perfect *jnani* in spite of being unlettered. This includes the answer to the question why we should obtain, etc.

Non-attachment means absence of attachment. Attachment means the desire for a certain fruit. Attachment is implicit in wanting to climb the Himalayas. Climbing the Himalayas when it falls to one's lot is doing it free of attachment.

Yoga : Action performed without attachment. You write books but you do not crave for honour on that account, nor money nor praise from anyone. And since it has been your lot to render service through writing what you do is yoga.

Generally I do not forbid asking questions. But the better and correct way is to solve such problems by oneself and to consult others in case of doubt. Unless we did it our discrimination will not develop.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : C.W. 331. Courtesy : Bhagwanji Purushottam Pandya

521. LETTER TO GANGABEHN JHAVERI

[1930]⁴

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Neither you nor Nanibehn⁵ should worry. For now I will not part with those of you who have remained behind. I shall see the result

¹ As supplied by the addressee

² Merit

³ Sin

⁴ From the contents; *vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 26-4-1930.

⁵ Wife of the addressee's stepson, Pannalal Jhaveri.

of the step I have taken. You and Nanibehn should try to teach Mahalakshmi what she finds difficult. Tell Ba that I shall most probably reach there tonight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G. N. 3129

522. *LETTER TO DURGA GIRI*

[1930]

CHI. DURGA²

I have your beautiful letter, Go ahead. Work well. Never forget to get up early. Be fully awake during the morning prayers.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 30

523. *LETTER TO SATYADEVI GIRI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
Silence Day [1930]

CHI. SATYADEVI³,

There will be no end to my troubles if you girls or other people start thinking that I have forgotten those to whom do not write. Can anyone write to each member of such a large family? But you all can certainly write.

Your handwriting is good, and the sketch of a flower-pot with flowers standing upright is so good that the flowers seem to emit fragrance. Are you doing everything carefully? Is Dharma³ still naughty?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 33

¹ According to the source, this was written from Yeravda Central Prison; also, this and the two following items were originally written in Gujarati.

² *ibid*

³ Addressee's brother.

524. LETTER TO DHARMAKUMAR GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR
Silence Day [1930]

CHI. DHARMAKUMAR,

Your letter. You must form the habit of writing in ink and produce print-like alphabet. You indulge in mischief, don't you?

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, p. 35

525. LETTER TO SHANTA

January 1¹, 1931

CHI. SHANTA,

Your letter. Be brave and remain firm. You are facing an intricate problem.² Ponder well over the verses recited during the prayers in the women's section. Understand their meaning.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5274

526. LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS GANDHI

January 1, 1931

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got the pages of your booklet. I have gone through them. You have collected some useful statistics. But the title of the booklet is certainly not appropriate. It gives more and more reliable information about mill-cloth than about handloom cloth. After reading it, I felt that its title "How to Compete with Foreign Cloth" was too ambitious for the contents. You have not attempted a careful and detailed examination of hand-spinning. If you have realized that the master-key for the solution of the problem is hand-spinning, you should put

¹ In the source '1' appears to have been corrected to '7', presumably the date on which the letter was posted.

² *Vide* "Letter to Kashinath Trivedi". 29-12-1930.

the truth in your own manner. If you are not convinced that it is so, you should not give it a place in your scheme yielding to the present atmosphere. I am becoming more and more convinced that, without hand-spinning, permanent boycott of foreign cloth will be impossible and that even hand-weaving cannot survive without it. If you share this view, you should explain it convincingly.

Despite my partiality for hand-spinning, I don't think that Talchekar's contention is supported by facts. I have even had correspondence with him on the matter. His claim that handspun yarn is superior is not borne out by experience. By carefully co-ordinating a variety of factors, it may be possible to produce hand-spun yarn which would be stronger than mill-yarn, but the ordinary hand-spun yarn will always be weaker than mill-yarn. But what does it matter? As compared to hand-made *bhakhari*, the biscuit produced in a factory with the help of dies will always be perfectly round in shape, smooth and attractive in appearance, and still the former will continue to be preferred to it. You have tried to convince the readers that mill-cloth and handloom cloth can supplement each other. It may be possible for some time to regulate things in that manner, but not permanently. The division of the booklet into sections is not accurate. Go through it again. I have nothing more to add.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8

527. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 1, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

This week's post, too, seems to have been delayed. Meanwhile I have started writing my letters.

When the mind is occupied with nothing else, it starts thinking about the boys and girls. Probably the children don't know why the 23rd of December is the shortest day. In trying to explain this, you will automatically explain to them some facts of geography and astronomy. Will you not try this? While explaining the reason for the 23rd being the shortest day, speak about the longest day and about the dates on which the day and the night are equal. Simultaneously, you may explain the change of seasons. While doing so tell them what Christmas means. In such discussions, both the parties should feel interested. This is also true about the indigenous tables and methods

of oral calculation. These things, too, can be taught to children in an entertaining way. From this, I am generally led to think about botany. I can a complete ignoramus in this field. You, perhaps, know something of the subject. If you do not, you can pick up some general knowledge without much trouble and impart it to children, and to me through letters. You can teach as you learn. But you should not feel this as a burden on your mind. It will be a boon to the children and to me if you make some such effort.

I constantly feel that we don't give to children all that we ought to. We should, therefore, give that at any rate which we can without much trouble to ourselves. Discuss this matter with Narandas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10249

528. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS

[Before *January 2, 1931*]

MY DEAR KRISHNADAS,

Your letter of 16th instant does not acknowledge my letter in reply to your previous letter. Did you not receive it? In it I expressed my joy at hearing from you and asked you to tell me about Guruji, etc.

I have now received the pieces of khadi which, of course, I shall use with great pleasure and share with Pyarelal if and when he needs any clothing. Please thank all the co-workers for these beautiful pieces.¹ There need be no apology for coarseness or unevenness. Beauty lies in the gentleness and evenness of the heart behind the work. I am using only coarse and uneven khadi, and by reason of this habit, thin and glossy stuff will feel probably unpleasant.

Do write to me all about you. How are your parents? Where is Guruji now? Do you ever go to see Hemprabha Devi? If not, do go now. How are you keeping? Tell me also all about Panditji. We are both keeping fit and well.

Love.

BAPU

The Hindustan Times, 2-1-1931

¹ Six pieces of khadi, woven from yarn spun by political prisoners in Dum-Dum jail on October 2, were sent to Gandhiji..

529. *LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI*

January 2, 1931

DEAR ANAND,

I am glad you got all my letters. The problem you present is incredibly simple. With all your faults and limitations, you should unreservedly offer your and Vidya's services to Father whenever he can accept them. only you must not interpose yourself between Father and Mother. If he wishes to retire for a while or longer you need not grieve. It is a natural and proper thing. It would be better if he took some social or humanitarian service. There need be no question of his approaching you or you him. Let him know that you are his for ever. The rest will be easy.

As for your distraction the greater your faith in God and your losing yourself in your task, the greater will be the inner peace.

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a microfilm. Courtesy: National Archives of India and Anand T. Hingorani

530. *LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL*

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 2, 1931

CHI. SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. I had also got your letter describing your difficulties at Pij, and replied to it. I hope you received my reply.

You have done well in confessing everything. In my opinion, you should certainly not have physical relations with your wife. You should make some arrangement for her education so that her intellect may develop. If you are firm in your decision to have no physical relations with her, you should plainly tell her about that so that she may not remain discontented and may not go on hoping. You should also let her marry again if she wishes to do so. You should not do that if deep in your heart you crave for physical gratification. In any case, you should make it clear to her that you cannot satisfy her as long as the present movement lasts. Since she is poor, you should bear the burden of maintaining her. You should ask her to go and live in the Ashram. The remedy against attacks of lustful thoughts is to devote

oneself to work. How can a person who is always absorbed in work ever get time for such thoughts?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9503

531. LETTER TO MAITRI GIRI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 2, 1931

CHI. MAITRI,

You certainly are careless in writing to me. I should be happy if you change. Why do not all of you who are there immediately give water to Dheds and Bhangis? And you can also plead with the people who give their left-overs to the latter to eat. Do you tell Gangabehn about all this? I don't mind your growing fat, but you should take care to make your body firm and as strong as steel. The only way to do this is hard physical work.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6223

532. LETTER TO RAMABEHN JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 2, 1931

CHI. RAMABEHN,

I understand your enthusiasm. But the *Gita* tells us that, even if *paradharma* looks more attractive, *swadharma* is better for us.¹ We may die while doing *swadharma*. Somebody else's work is fraught with danger. *Swadharma* means one's own work. Your work is what Mithubehn may assign to you. You and others who support you should reason with Mithubehn. Till she is won over, you should keep patience. You yourself say that you get something to learn every day. Why then should you be impatient? In any case, a prisoner has no right to say what work she will do and what work she will not do. My

¹ III. 35

blessings to all who have returned from jails. I should know why Joshi has returned with ten pounds less.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5329

533. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

January 3, 1931

CHI. MIRA,

I have read the two renderings you have sent me of the first verse of the morning prayer. For use and perhaps conveying the meaning, I prefer my rendering. If you find any obscurity anywhere, please tell me. The second I sent you by the last mail.¹ Here is the third.

“In the early morning I bow to Him who is beyond darkness, who is like the sun, who is perfect, ancient, called Purushottam (the best among men) and in whom (through the veil of darkness) we fancy the whole universe as appearing even as (in darkness) we imagine a rope to be a snake.”²

The idea is that the universe is not real in the sense of being permanent, it is neither a thing to be hankered after nor feared because it is supposed to be God’s creation. As a matter of fact, it is a creation of our imagination even as the snake in the rope is. The real universe like the real rope is there. We perceive either when the veil is lifted and darkness is gone—compare. “And with the morn, those angel faces smile which I have loved long since and lost awhile.” The three verses go together and I think are Shankar’s composition. You do know of Shankar, do you not? Five more days and I shall have finished the translation of the preface. My suggestion is that I continue to send you the verses and the *bhajans* with such comments as then occur to me. You should for your own satisfaction, with the help of whoever comes your way, translate the weekly notes on the *Gita*. The plan I am now following is well thought out, i.e., that of looking through the translation of the whole *Gita* in the light of my rendering and translating the notes. The attempt may lead to

¹ *Vide* “Letter to Mirabehn”, 29/30-12-1930

² *Vide Ashram Bhajanavali*, 15-12-1930.

something good of which we have no knowledge today. If I begin the translation of the weekly notes, the above plan may fall through altogether. It would not be right. Of my food experiment, you will learn everything from Narandas. The assurance, that the moment I find it necessary I shall revert to milk, should remove all cause for anxiety.

By the travelling wheel I suppose, you mean the box wheel of the Pratishtan type. Whatever it is, your speed is certainly quite good. Let the Gandiv disappear from your mind unless Kaka has something to show. . . .¹

I was sorry to learn about Romain Rolland's health. Do please send him my love and tell him I often think of him and pray that he may be long spared in the service of humanity. . . .²

Love.

BAPU

Bapu's Letters to Mira, pp. 146-7

534. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

January 3, 1931

BHAI TYAGJI,

I have your letter. Why does not Balbir write to me? He should let me know his wishes. He could certainly go to the Ashram if he really wants to. Who is now the Principal of Prem Mahavidyalaya? Why has Devasharmaji³ been transferred to Kanpur [jail]? Write out your ideas on fasting and other subjects. We shall see about their publication later on.

Give in detail your daily routine.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3267

¹ Omissions as in the source

² *ibid*

³ Also known as Acharya Abhaydev

535. LETTER TO MOTIBEHN MATHURADAS

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 3, 1931

CHI. MOTI,

If you wish to continue to be Moti¹ of Vijayanagar and not Motibehn in Vijayanagar, you must learn to make your hand-writing as beautiful as pearls. The handwriting in your letter was quite good, but you should improve it a little every day. It is one of the virtues of a person devoted to dharma that he or she is exact in every matter, small or big. Will no one in Cochin agree to keep Shantu exclusively on fruit? Write to them and see. One should not be lazy in such matters. If pus continues to issue from a child's gums, we ought not to remain indifferent. If we do, the child will not live long. It is easy to cure such diseases in childhood. The alternative is for you to keep Shantu with you and bring him up yourself. I am glad that you have taken up the task of keeping children clean.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3750

536. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 3, 1931

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I just read the news of your having been released. Is it true that you lost ten pounds of weight in jail? How did that happen? Describe to me your experiences in jail.

I will certainly expect your weekly letter now. What a pleasant surprise it was to learn that Dhiru had stuck to the Ashram, though left alone! But there have been no end of such pleasant surprises. You are bound to hear everything about me and Pyarelal.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5497

¹ Literally, 'pearl'.

537. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 3, 1931

CHI. MANI,

I have your letter.

If you meet Father, tell him that I envy his lot, for he is both in and out of the house of rest and is able to visit the doctor every day.¹ He never received such delicate attention so long as he was a free man. And I hope that in this way he will get rid for good of the trouble in the teeth and in the nose.

Will he be my neighbour this time too?

If you meet Rajendrababu, ask him to write to me. Did he get my reply to his letter?

Keep on giving me all the news as long as you are not arrested.

Dahyabhai seems to have taken a vow never to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, pp. 47-8

538. LETTER TO TARAMATI MATHURADAS

TRIKUMJI

January 4, 1931

I was very happy that all of you got an opportunity to visit the Ashram. I would have been happier still if you could have spent a few days there. I get news about Mathuradas from time to time. I am sure his days will pass peacefully. This is a good experience he is getting. Pyarelal is quite well. My love to children.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 103

¹ The source explains: "The Sardar was then in Arthur Road Prison and was taken every day for a month under police escort to Dr. D.M. Desai's dental clinic in Whiteaway Laidlaw Building, Fort, Bombay."

539. LETTER TO MAHAVIR GIRI

January 4, 1931

CHI. MAHAVIR,

I got your letter. It seems you are getting daily new experiences. Wherever you go, live with the utmost self-restraint. If the experiment of starching yarn succeeds, that will undoubtedly help us very much.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6224

540. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

YERAVDA MANDIR,

Sunday Morning, January 4, 1931

CHI. VASUMATI,

I am writing this immediately after morning prayers. Taste ultimately is a matter of the palate and the mind. Our vow is that we will not gratify the craving of the palate. The latter will always feel and recognize the taste of every food. But to gratify the craving of the palate means to eat food which it likes and avoid food which it dislikes. We may certainly eat whatever food the body requires, but only at the time when and in the quantity which the body requires, and it does not matter then if it gives us pleasure. When Mahavir has conquered the palate, he will gladly accept what is for his good. Ordinarily, a man does not care for his spiritual good and does what will give him pleasure for the time being even if that is likely to harm him spiritually. Hence the attitude, that one should accept whatever is offered to one at any time, is not the right one for a spiritual seeker. We do not know from experience how a person who has attained perfection acts, and need not concern ourselves with the question. Let us wait till we have attained perfection. The question then will not arise at all. If this does not answer all your question, ask me again.

It is a good sign that we notice even our small defects. We ought to know whether we are striving to overcome them. If I see that I have pride in me and if I am a spiritual seeker, I am bound to make an effort to get rid of it. I shall not feel easy in mind till I have got rid of it. If there is a snake in the house, we shall not feel easy in mind till we have caught and removed it. If asked, we can certainly say whether

we are trying to remove it. This is also true about snakes and other such poisonous creatures in our hearts. I am glad that your ear is now all right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N.9316.

541. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

January 4, 1931

MAD. RAIHANA,

A girl whose brother is mad is hardly likely to be wise ! I have written a letter to Dahyabhai.¹

I am glad that you are improving, but do you think you will improve so much that you can shoulder the burden of leadership of the Kadi division? If you do indeed, we shall have to present an address to the doctor sister. A person with a grey beard, I am afraid, cannot escape suffering. A white beard is bound to have some effect at any rate. But all's well that ends well. I am not surprised to hear about Father's exploits. Isn't he also a branch of the same tree?

*Khuda Hafiz.*²

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9626

542. LETTER TO KASHINATH TRIVEDI

January 4, 1931

CHI. KASHINATH,

Your long letters are no trouble to me to read. Narandas has also written to me about you. He says that you refused to show him your diary. If this is true, your action was not right. Narandas is an extremely straightforward man and always does what he thinks right. You can tell him everything. Have a quiet talk with him and, if there has been any misunderstanding, remove it. If you wish to live in the Ashram and are not opposed to any of its rules, Narandas on his part will certainly take you back. He has even written to me to say so.

Whether or not you live in the Ashram, you can keep up

¹ These two sentences are in Urdu.

² A farewell greeting, meaning: 'May God protect you.'

connection with it for other purposes. You can ask for papers relating to your work. Difference of opinion should not mean personal enmity.

If you think it necessary to engage a lawyer to defend your brother-in-law, you may do so. If you have sufficient courage, however, do without a lawyer. Your actions seem all right. I did not understand your reason for refusing to sign the summons. But that is a minor matter. I have written to Shanta, Kalavati, Raghavdas and Banarsidas. Read those letters. You had asked the same, or a similar, question about art in your previous letter. I have already replied to it.¹ Did you get that letter? I got the booklet on vows. I did not see any letter from Ramnarayan. There was one from Haribhau², and I have replied to him. Convey my blessings to all.

Mother should take only so much of milk as leaves her hungry. If, however, she cannot remain hungry and begs repeatedly for something to eat, you may give her a *khakhara*³. If she can continue milk and light diet for some time longer still, she will become all right. You should do everything with the utmost patience. Don't feel unhappy about anything. "What God, World Teacher and Master has willed for the day, it is futile to grieve over. Without His will we cannot move a blade of grass. If we do fuss about things, what is left over is a legacy of sorrows."⁴

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5270

543. LETTER TO DURGA DESAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 4, 1931

CHI. DURGA,

It is 7 o'clock on Sunday morning just now. It is extremely cold. The hands shake, but I cannot give myself a holiday from writing. After I have finished this letter. I will start the spinning *yajna*. You have done well in starting the experiment of eating oranges. While it continues, write to me regularly. Tell me in detail the effect

¹ Vide "Letter to Kashinath Trivedi", 18-12-1930.

² Haribhau Upadhyaya

³ Crisp chapati

⁴ From a poem by Narasinh Mehta

which it has. Weigh yourself from time to time. Enemas will also have to be continued. I suppose you take sun-baths too. If you have enough strength, you should slowly walk about a little.

Now for Mahadev :

I don't hope at all to leave this place with any new discovery about the spinning-wheel. Along with enthusiasm, one must have knowledge of the craft, too, which I don't possess. I shall be satisfied if I can make sufficient changes which will enable me to increase my speed. I do feel that one can acquire good speed despite one's age. If, however, the nerves of my hands have become weak, the speed will not increase. But I do make changes from time to time to see if they help me to increase my speed. I see that I displayed great wisdom in not going to England despite Sastri's view that I should go. Really speaking, it required no wisdom to come to that decision. My heart simply did not consent, however much I tried to persuade myself. The reins are held by that Master of the Play. Why, then, need we worry at all? On the contrary, we should daily leave the reins more and more in His hands and strengthen His hands.

If any trace of fissure is noticed, [he] should immediately take steps to cure it. And [he] should not give up milk or ghee. It is our duty to obtain whatever facilities we can get and which are essential for our health. If we clearly see that we hold the body as a trust, that it is not our own, we shall think no more about the problem. It is good that Devdas has been working at Sanskrit to increase his proficiency in it. Mahadev will be able to help him in that. My blessings to all prisoners. Pyarelal spins daily 375 rounds on the spinning-wheel and 100 on the *takli*, and the work takes up the whole of the morning and an hour and a half in the afternoon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 16900

544. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Y. M.,

January 4, 1931

CHI. KANTA,

Your Gujarati letter is excellent. There are only minor errors. Your handwriting is good. Write to me anything you want to, important or unimportant. You need feel no embarrassment.

It is good that Mother has come. Shower her with love. While remaining firm in your resolve, do not forget patience and courtesy. Go to Bochasan only after you have fully recovered. I see no harm if you have occasionally taken tea as medicine. I do not even remember Brother's questions. He had written a fairly long letter. If the questions are repeated, I can reply again

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

545. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 4, 1931

CHI. RAMDAS,

While your case is pending, should not I write to you? What is Surendra's diet? I have heard that he has gone down in health. Give me particulars of your daily routine. What is your diet there? Do they let you spin?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

546. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 4, 1931

CHI. HEMPRABHA,

It is surprising that there is no letter from you for the last two weeks. This must not happen. Even if there is nothing worth writing it will do if you send a few words about your welfare. How are Charu and Arun? When are Satisbabu and Kshitishbabu to be released?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N.1680

547. *LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
*January 4, [1931]*¹

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

There is no reason to be so despondent. One who recognizes his weakness and desires to remove it is already half-way to success. The resolve to devote the rest of your life to service is all to the good. Derive greater strength from the calamity that has befallen you.² So much in the line of service lies before you. It is gratifying to learn that the baby is doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2523

548. *LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ*

YERAVDA MANDIR,
January 4, 1931

CHI. RADHAKRISHNA,

Keep on sending me letters. They contain the news I look forward to. When Janakibehn arrives, tell her to write to me. They may certainly arrest Vinoba if they wish. Is there any news of Chhotelal? How is his health?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3036

¹ Gandhiji had written '1930', which is obviously a slip. The letter (G. N. 2524) under reply was dated December 24, 1930.

² The addressee's wife had died in September 1930 leaving behind a newborn child.

549. LETTER TO S. D. SATAVALEKAR

YERAVDA MANDIR,

January 5, 1931

BHAI SATAVALEKARJI,

I am grateful for your promptitude in sending me *Gitashlokardhasoochi* and other books. Are handmade slives strong enough to yield 19,000 yards of yarn in eight hours ? What is the count? Will this charkha be entered in the prize-winning charkha competition? If possible, send me the pocket-size charkha.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: C.W. 4761. Courtesy: S. D. Satavalekar

550. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

January 5, 1931

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters. Generally they are quite regular now. But I have not been very regular n writing to you thinking that you will now be leaving for the Ashram any day. Of course I think of you every day. I don't at all like your remaining there. If Jayaprakash cannot leave just now, and if he wishes, someone from the Ashram will come to fetch you. Since Kamala¹ has gone to the rest-house, will you have to go to Prayag now? I have not received the letter which Jayaprakash was to write to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3402

¹ Kamala Nehru

551. LETTER TO VANAMALA PARIKH

January 5, 1931

CHI. VANAMALA,

I get your letters. Your speed on the spinning-wheel can be described as good, but you should increase it still further. Can a mistake committed through carelessness be forgiven? After writing a letter, you should go through it once.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I saw your slip after writing this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5758

552. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

January 5, 1931

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I will now find some time and read about the carding-bow. This time I got the post two days late. You have got a good band of workers with you. You should only think about the work and not feel worried about it. Never doubt that you are doing God's work, provided, of course, you do it in the spirit of *yajna*. I have read what you have written about carding. It is good. When you gain further experience, you will be able to make more definite statements.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3751

553. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

January 5, 1931

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. In my opinion, the view of Vivekananda and Dhurandhar is one-sided. One should feel in the heart what one says. Surdas, Tulsidas and other *bhaktas* have described themselves as cunnings, lustful, etc. In doing so, they were not merely using the

language of modesty, but speaking from the heart. The truth is that we feel both ways. In an enlightened state, we know ourselves to be Brahman, but in the ignorant state we feel meek and humble before that Merciful One. He who does not feel so but knows himself as the perfect Brahman may not sing *bhajans* praying for God's mercy. You will not come across one such person in millions. To realize one's smallness is the beginning of being great. The drop of sea-water which has become separated from the sea would dry up if it thought that it was still the sea. If it admitted to itself that it was no more than a drop, it would flow towards the sea, merge in it and become one with it.

“Culture” means refinement of feelings and “education” means knowledge of literature. Education is a means and culture is the end. The latter is possible even without education. For instance, if a child is brought up in a truly cultured family, it will unconsciously imbibe culture from its environment. In our country at any rate, present-day education and culture have no connection with each other. If the educated still retain some culture, that is in spite of their education. This fact shows that the roots of our culture are deep.

My blessings and compliments to Prasannabehn. I should like her to draw her husband also to the Ashram.

You seem to be running a competition in the opposite direction with Narandas with regard to weight. It is good. You can afford to put on some more weight, and Narandas to lose some.

I like the translation of *Gitabodh* which Dhurandhar is making.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10250

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

VICEROY'S LETTER TO SIR T. B. SAPRU¹

VICEREGAL LODGE,
SIMLA,
August 28, 1930

DEAR SIR TEJ BAHADUR,

I have to thank you for informing me of the results of the conversations held by Mr. Jayakar and yourself with the Congress leaders now in prison and for sending me copies of their joint letter of the 15th August and of your reply thereto. I should wish you and Mr. Jayakar both to know how great has been my appreciation of the spirit in which you have pursued your self-imposed public-spirited task of endeavouring to assist in the restoration of normal conditions in India. It is worth recalling the conditions under which you entered upon your undertaking. In my letter of 16th July I assured you that it was the earnest desire of myself, my Government and I had no doubt also of His Majesty's Government, to do everything we could to assist the people of India to obtain as large degree of management of their own affairs as could be shown to be consistent with the making of provision for those matters in regard to which they were not at present in a position to assume responsibility. It would be among the functions of the Conference to examine in the light of all the material available what those matters might be and what provision might be made for them. I had previously made two other points plain in my speech to the Legislature on the 9th July. The first is that those attending the Conference would have the unfettered right of examining the whole constitutional problem in all its bearing. Secondly, that any agreement at which the Conference was able to arrive would form the basis of the proposals which His Majesty's Government would later submit to Parliament. I fear as you will no doubt recognize that the task you had voluntarily undertaken has not been assisted by the letter you have received from the Congress leaders. In view both of the general tone by which that letter is inspired and of its contents, as also of its blank refusal to recognize the grave injury to which the country has been subjected by the Congress policy, not the least in the economic field, I do not think any useful purpose would be served by my attempting to deal in detail with the suggestions there made and I must frankly say I regard discussion on the basis of the proposals contained in the letter as impossible. I hope if you desire to see the Congress leaders again you will make this plain.

There is one further comment I must make upon the last paragraph of your reply to them dated 16th August. When we discussed these matters, I said if the Civil

¹ *Vide* "Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 5-9-1930

Disobedience Movement was in fact abandoned, I should not desire to continue the Ordinances (apart from those connected with the Lahore Conspiracy Case and Chittagong) necessitated by the situation which EX-HYPOTHESIS would no longer exist. But I was careful to make it plain that I was unable to give any assurance, if and when the Civil Disobedience Movement ceases, that local Governments would find it possible to release all persons convicted or under trial for offences in connection with the movement not involving violence, and that while I should wish to see a generous policy pursued in the matter, the utmost that I could promise would be to [ask] all the local Governments to consider with sympathy all the cases individually on their merits.

Upon the point of your reference to the representation of the Congress at the Conference in the event of their abandoning the Civil Disobedience Movement and desiring to attend, my recollection is you explained that the demand of the Congress was not for predominant, in the sense of majority, representation at the Conference and that I expressed the view that I should anticipate little difficulty in recommending to His Majesty's Government to secure that the Congress should be adequately represented. I added that if events so developed, I should be ready to receive a panel of names from the leaders of the Congress Party of those whom they would regard as suitable representatives. I feel that you and Mr. Jayakar would desire to be clearly informed of the position of myself and my Government as it may be desirable that the letters should be published at an early date in order that the public may be fully informed of the circumstances, in which your efforts have failed to produce the result you hoped and they so certainly deserved.

Yours sincerely,
IRWIN

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

APPENDIX II

NOTES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH VICEROY¹

(a) On the constitutional question, the position would be as stated in the four fundamental points in para 2 of the Viceroy's letter to us of 28th August.

(b) With reference to the question whether Mr. Gandhi would be allowed to raise at the Round Table Conference the question of India's right to secede from the Empire at will, the position was as follows: "As the Viceroy has stated in his said letter to us, the Conference was a free conference. Therefore, anyone could raise any points he liked, but the Viceroy thought it would be very unwise for Mr. Gandhi to raise this question now. If, however, he faced the Government of India with such a question, the Viceroy would say the Government were not prepared to treat it as an

¹ Held at Simla with Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and M. R. Jayakar between August 21 and 28. *Vide* also 1st footnote of "Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 5-9-1930

open question. If, in spite of this, Mr. Gandhi desired to raise the question, the Government would inform the Secretary of State of his intention to do so at the Round Table Conference.”

(c) As regards the right to raise the question at the Round Table Conference of India's liability to certain financial burdens and to get them examined by an independent Tribunal, the position was that the Viceroy could not entertain any proposition amounting to total repudiation of all debts, but it would be open to anyone to raise, at the Round Table Conference, any question as to any financial liability of India and to call for its examination.

(d) As regards the granting of relief against the Salt Act, the position of the Viceroy was that (1) the Salt Tax was going to be provincialized if the recommendation of the Simon Commission in that behalf was accepted, and (2) there has been already great loss of revenue and therefore the Government would not like to forgo this source, but if the Legislature was persuaded to repeal the Salt Act and if any proposal was put forward to make good the loss of revenue occasioned by such repeal, the Viceroy and his Government would consider the question on its merits. It was not, however, possible for the Viceroy to condone open breaches of the Salt Act so long as it was law. When goodwill and peace were restored and, if Indian leaders desired to discuss with H. E. the Viceroy and his Government how best economic relief could be given to the poorer classes on his behalf, the Viceroy would be glad to call a small conference of Indian leaders.

(e) With reference to picketing, the position was that if picketing amounted to nuisance to any class of people or was coupled with molestation or intimidation or the use of force, the Viceroy reserved to the Government the right of taking such action as the law allowed or taking of such legal powers as might be necessary to meet any emergency that might arise. Subject to the above when peace was established the Ordinance against picketing would be withdrawn.

(f) With regard to the re-employment of the officers who resigned or had been dismissed during the Civil Disobedience campaign, the position was that this matter was primarily a question for the discretion of local Governments. Subject however to there being vacancies and as long as it did not involve dismissing men who had proved loyal, the local Government would be expected to re-employ men who had thrown up their appointments in a fit of excitement or who had been swept off their feet.

(g) As for the restoration of printing presses confiscated under the Press Ordinance, there would be no difficulty.

(h) As regards the restoration of fines and properties confiscated under the Revenue Law, that required closer definition. As to the properties confiscated or sold

under such law, there might be the rights of third parties involved. As to refunding fines, there were difficulties. In short, all that the Viceroy could say was that the local Government would exercise their discretion with justice and take all the circumstances into consideration and try to be as accommodating as they could.

(i) As to the release of prisoners, the Viceroy had already explained his views in his letter to us dated July 28th.

The Hindu, 5-9-1930

APPENDIX III

NOTE FROM NEHRUS¹

NAINI CENTRAL PRISON,
August 31, 1930

We have had further interviews with Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru yesterday and today, and have had the advantage of long talks with them. They have given us a copy of the letter, dated August 23, addressed to them by His Excellency Lord Irwin. In this letter, it is stated clearly that Lord Irwin regards discussion on the basis of the proposals contained in our joint letter of August 15 to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar as impossible, and under the circumstances, he rightly concludes their efforts have failed to produce any result. This joint letter, as you know, was written after a full consideration by the signatories to it, and represented the utmost they were prepared to go in their individual capacities. We stated there that no solution would be satisfactory unless it fulfilled certain vital conditions, and that a satisfactory declaration to that effect was made by the British Government. If such a declaration was made, we would be prepared to recommend to the Working Committee the advisability of calling off Civil Disobedience, provided simultaneously certain steps indicated in our letter were taken by the British Government in India.

It was only after a satisfactory settlement of all these preliminaries, that the question of the composition of the proposed London Conference and of the Congress being represented at it could be decided. Lord Irwin, in his letter, considers even a discussion on the basis of these proposals as impossible. Under the circumstances, there is or can be no common ground between us. Quite apart from the contents, the tone of the letter and the recent activities of the British Government in India clearly indicate that the Government has no desire for peace. The proclamation of the Working Committee as an illegal body in the Delhi Province soon after a meeting of it was announced to be held there, and the subsequent arrest of most of its members can have that meaning and no other. We have no complaint against these or other arrests or other activities of the Government, 'uncivilized' and 'barbarous' as we

¹ *Vide* 1st footnote of "Statement to T. B. Sapru and M. R. Jayakar", 5-9-1930

consider some of these to be. We welcome them. But, we feel, we are justified in pointing out that a desire for peace and an aggressive attack on the very body, which is capable of giving peace and with which it is sought to treat, do not go well together. The proscription of the Working Committee all over India and the attempt to prevent its meetings must necessarily mean that the national struggle must go on, whatever the consequences, and that there will be no possibility of peace, for those who may have some authority to represent the people of India will be spread out in British prisons all over India.

Lord Irwin's letter and the action taken by the British Government make it plain that the efforts of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar have been in vain. Indeed, the letter and some of the explanations that had been given to us take us back, in some respects, even from the position that was previously taken. In view of the great HIATUS that exists between our position and Lord Irwin's, it is hardly necessary to go into details, but we should like to point out to you certain aspects of his letter. The first part of the letter is practically a repetition of his speech to the Legislative Assembly and of the phrases used in his letter dated July 16, addressed to Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. As we pointed out in our joint letter, this phraseology is too vague for us to assess its value. It may be made to mean anything or nothing. In our joint letter, we have made it clear that a complete National Government responsible to the people of India, including control over the Defence Forces and economic control, must be recognized as India's immediate demand. There is no question of what are usually called safeguards or any delay. Adjustments there necessarily must be for the transference of power and in regard to these we stated that they were to be determined by India's chosen representatives.

As regards India's right of secession at will from the British Empire and her right to refer British claims and concessions to an independent tribunal all that we are told is that the Conference will be a free conference and any point can be raised there. This is no advance on the previous statement made. We are further told, however, that if the British Government in India were definitely faced with the possibility of the former question being raised, Lord Irwin would say they were not to treat it as an open question. All they could do was to inform the Secretary of State of our intention to raise the question at the Conference.

As regards the other proposition, we are told that Lord Irwin could only entertain the idea of a few individual financial transactions being subjected for scrutiny. While such scrutiny may take place in individual cases, its scope will have to extend to the whole field of British claims including, as we have stated, the so-called Public Debt of India. We consider both these questions as of vital importance and previous agreement in our joint letter seems to us essential.

Lord Irwin's reference to the release of prisoners is very restricted and unsatisfactory. He is unable to give an assurance that all of the non-violent civil disobedience prisoners even will be discharged. All he proposes to do is to leave the matter in the hands of the Local Governments. We are not prepared to trust in such a

matter to the generosity or sympathy of Local Governments or local officials but, apart from this, there is no reference in Lord Irwin's letter to other non-violent prisoners. There are a large number of Congressmen and others who were sent to prison for political offences prior to the Civil Disobedience Movement. We might mention in this connection the Meerut Case prisoners who have already spent a year and a half as under-trials. We have made it clear in our joint letter that all these persons should be released.

Regarding the Bengal and the Lahore Case Ordinances we feel no exception should be made in their favour as suggested by Lord Irwin. We have not claimed release for those political prisoners who may have been guilty of violence not because we would not welcome their release but because we felt that as our movement was strictly non-violent, we would not confuse the issue. But, the least we can do is to press for ordinary trial for these fellow-countrymen of ours and not by an extraordinary court constituted by an Ordinance which denies them the right of appeal and the ordinary privilege of accused.

Amazing events including the brutal assaults that have occurred even in open court during the so-called trial make it imperative that the ordinary procedure should be followed. We understand that some of the accused in protest against the treatment accorded to them have been on hunger-strike for a long period and are now at death's door. The Bengal Ordinance, we understand, has been replaced by an Act of the Bengal Council. We consider this Ordinance and any Act passed on it most objectionable, and the fact that an unrepresentative body like the present Bengal Council has passed it does not make it any the better.

As regards the further picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, we are told, Lord Irwin is agreeable to the withdrawal of the Picketing Ordinance, but he states that if he thinks it necessary, he will take fresh legal powers to combat picketing. Thus, he informs us that he might re-enact the Ordinance or do something in Simla to it whenever he considers it necessary. The reply regarding the Salt Act and certain other matters referred to in our joint letter is also wholly unsatisfactory. We need not deal with it at any length here as you are an acknowledged expert on salt. We would only say we see no reason to modify our previous position as regards these matters.

Thus Lord Irwin has declined to agree to all the major propositions and many of the minor ones laid down in our joint letter. The difference in his outlook and ours is very great, indeed fundamental. We hope you will show this note to Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel, Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram and in consultation with them give your reply to Mr. Jayakar and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. We feel that the publication of the correspondence must no longer be delayed, and we are not justified in keeping

the public in the dark. Even apart from the question of publication, we are requesting Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jayakar to send copies of all correspondence and relevant papers to Chaudhri Khaliq Usman, the Acting President of the Indian National Congress. We feel we ought to take no steps without immediate information being sent to the Working Committee, which happens to be functioning.

MOTILAL
SYED MAHMUD
JAWAHARLAL

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