

## 1. WHAT COMPRISES FOREIGN GOODS?

A gentleman asks: "Should we boycott all foreign goods or only some select ones?"

This question has been asked many times and I have answered it many times. And the question does not come from only one person. I face it at many places even during my tour.

In my view, the only thing to be boycotted thoroughly and despite all hardships is foreign cloth, and that can and should be done through khadi alone.

Boycott of all foreign things is neither possible nor proper. The difference between swadeshi and foreign cannot hold for all time, cannot hold even now in regard to all things. Even the swadeshi character of khadi is due to circumstances. Suppose there is flood in India and only one island remains on which a few persons alone survive and not a single tree stands; at such a time the swadeshi dharma of the marooned would be to wear what clothes are provided and eat what food is sent by generous people across the sea. This of course is an extreme instance.

So it is for us to consider what our swadeshi dharma is. Today many things which we need for our sustenance and which are not imposed upon us come from abroad. As for example, some of the foreign medicines, pens, needles, useful tools, etc., etc.

But those who wear khadi and consider it an honour or are not ashamed to have all other things of foreign make fail to understand the significance of khadi. The significance of khadi is that it is our dharma to use those things which can be or are easily made in our country and on which depends the livelihood of poor people; the boycott of such things and deliberate preference of foreign things is *adharma*.

A person who loves his country and has concern for the poor would pass in review the foreign things he uses and would use indigenous articles in place of those foreign articles which he liked more and had been using so far for his pleasure.

On this tour itself I have observed that people place before me cakes of foreign soap, and never a single one produced in Madras, Mysore, Bombay and Bengal. Those who do this are all khadi-weavers. These days wherever I go for propagating khadi, I ask for a khadi-

clad barber. It is with some effort that such a barber is found. Much of his equipment is foreign-made: razor, brush, soap and mirror, and they are arranged in a foreign-made box. So I pay the barber his wages and explain to him the swadeshi dharma. I can recount many such experience. At present ink, fountain-pens, etc., are manufactured in our country. The thoughtful should be on the look out for such things and as far as possible use only those articles which are produced in the country. If it is argued that not all the things made in the country are good, that of course is true. But there are difficulties in the observance of dharma as such. What is the value of practising something which offers no trouble? Wise people can help remove the inconveniences if they use swadeshi things of their own will even putting up with hardships. If I use indigenous soap, notice its shortcomings and draw the makers' attention to them, they may perhaps try to remove them. It is only thus that things have improved in quality and design and are still being improved.

At this stage we have to consider one thing more. Do foreign goods mean only British goods or anything made outside India? I know there is a difference of opinion about this. I do not wish to discuss the problem from the point of view of non-violence but to put it before you from the practical point of view. We shall merely exhibit our weakness if we threaten to do something which we cannot do and will never be able to do. It is my belief that we use many British things even against our will. Those who are familiar with the figures of India's imports know that the Government itself imports British goods worth crores of rupees and we use them; e.g., the rails for the track and a lot of other equipment for railways. We use English books of our own will. Another objection from the practical point of view is that, while differentiating between British and other foreign goods, there is a danger of our using British goods under the label of other foreign goods. This has happened in the past and may happen in future. Who can prevent a British manufacturer of fountain-pens from writing on his products 'Made in Australia'? Some traitors among cloth merchants have torn off the British labels on British dhotis and have sold them as swadeshi dhotis. Who can prevent British cloth from coming in *via* Japan as Japanese cloth? We are not going to benefit in the least by importing articles other than British. Then we shall have to make a second attempt to boycott this other foreign cloth and it may be difficult to do so.

Our aim is swaraj, independence. We do not want other people's

domination after getting rid of British rule. Considered from all angles and from the practical point of view, we can take but one decision.

Pure khadi is pure swadeshi and one who realizes this will satisfy even his other needs by means of things produced in the country, giving up the use of those superfluous things that are not manufactured here.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 12-5-1929

## 2. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

NELLORE,  
*May 13, 1929*

CHI. MIRA,

I do hope you got the detailed programme that was sent to you. There is no letter from you today. I hope you have plenty of congenial work at the Vidyapith.

I want your criticism on my article in reply[to] de Ligt's second open letter which has been published in *Young India*.<sup>1</sup> I have made a change in my diet which I do not describe as we shall soon meet. The change has been made purely by way of experiment as I like it and as I have met a man who knows all about it. Of course there is nothing to worry about in this. If it does not agree with me, I shall give it up.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5375. Courtesy: Mirabehn

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "A Complex Problem", 9-5-1929

### 3. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NELLORE,

*Silence Day, May 13, 1929*

SISTERS,

There are only a few days to go before we meet again. It is getting hotter here every day, as it must be there. I don't feel the heat much. Your firmness in keeping up with the prayer classes, the infant-school and the kitchen is, I think, a good gesture. All the three are imperfect, and will remain so for ever. It will be enough if we remain vigilant and keep improving them. Even if we try to keep them going, some improvement will take place automatically. All of you should learn the verses which make up the women's prayers and understand their meaning correctly.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3698

### 4. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

*Silence Day, May 13, 1929*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Three letters from you of the 6th, the 8th and the 9th have piled up. It is all right if you have changed the time for prayers and meals; you have done nothing wrong in that.

You must have sent an acknowledgment to Lady Ramanathan.

Has not the sum been sent to Tiruchengodu? Has it not been acknowledged in *Young India*?

The money which we receive from France is not from a gentleman but from a lady. It is the same Mirbel, who had once stayed in the Ashram for about a month.

Shivabhai must have recovered.

You need not insist on the students memorizing the verses of the *Gita*. They themselves should insist on doing that. All of us, of course, should know how to recite them correctly.

My having given up breakfast is not an act of sacrifice; it was

rendered necessary by my travels. I feel helpless at not being able to go for morning and evening walks. When I teach the *Gita*, I don't set aside a special time for it; my enthusiasm shows me the way. When I was there, I used the time allotted to spinning in discussions with inmates of the Ashram. Here I give the first half hour to Prabhavati, and the half hour in the afternoon to the workers. Since, instead of everyone joining in the recitation at the time of the prayer, a different person recited the verses every day, we could correct the pronunciation of the person who was doing his turn. In this way we could effect much improvement. People still commit mistakes, but they are getting fewer. This does not impose the slightest burden on my mind or my time; on the contrary, it gives me more peace of mind. The person who learns in this manner likes doing so. He does not feel that it is a task.

It is only after I arrive there that I think I shall be able to write about the money received from Rangoon.

Do you examine the cash book every day? Do you sign it daily? Do you inspect the vouchers every day? If you do not, start doing it. Follow the rule no matter who is in charge of the work.

Sitla Sahai seems to be busy all right. I was to reach Bombay on the morning of the 23rd; instead I shall reach on the evening of the 22nd. I expect to return to the Ashram before the 28th.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5417

## 5. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

NELLORE,

*Silence Day, May 13, 1929*

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You should not hesitate to write to me even if you misspell words. You have no reason to be ashamed of your spelling mistakes. If one were to devote plenty of time just for this task it also can be mastered. But it would not be right to devote so much time to it. Do therefore what you can. We value a letter for its ideas, not its grammar.

Do settle the matter relating to Kaku's father.<sup>1</sup> At the same time improve your health too. Maitreyi too will benefit.

I do believe that girls too should have education. We shall talk about this. Our separation will end soon.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 18.*

## 6. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

*May 13, 1929*

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. If my health permits, I will keep the date. Be assured of that. Mirabehn will certainly be with me. Have I written that ? Will there be difficulty if there are more persons? Are there good facilities for staying, etc.? Are there places cheap enough for persons to stay on their own? Write to me if you want minimum number of persons to accompany me.

What Kishorelal writes about Chhaganlal is surprising<sup>2</sup>. There is nothing wrong in your letter. You have not been hasty. Even the letter I have sent, is not meant as criticism of Chhaganlal. I do not know that Narandas has interpreted it that way. Narandas has said that Chhaganlal left because of his weakness. I suggested to him to stay here on rent. So, he decided to call back his luggage which had been sent to the station and stayed on. I do not know anything about Jamnadas. But do not worry. I do not see much difficulty if Chhaganlal comes there. The article in *Navajivan*<sup>3</sup> had not been written when I had raised a strong objection. After its publication, Chhaganlal is free to go and stay wherever he likes. Now we have to reckon the value of that article. Many persons at fault have been protected by that. I will talk to Kishorelalbhair when I meet him in Bombay. Send him this letter if you want to. I keep writing to

<sup>1</sup> Damodar Saraiya, addressee's son-in-law

<sup>2</sup> For Gandhiji's letter to Kishorelal on the same subject, dated "About May 18, 1929" vide "The Agrievances of the Abritish Indians"

<sup>3</sup> The reference presumably is to the article titled "My Shame and Sorrow" published in *Navajivan*, dated April 7, 1929; vide "My Shame and Sorrow", 8-4-1929

Chhaganlal as well as to Kashi. I worry about them and will keep on worrying about them and so, you may give up worrying about them. If you want to make any suggestions, certainly do so.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I find from the letter I am just reading that Dadabhai's grand-daughter Khurshedbehn will also be with me. Do not involve anyone in unnecessary expenses for my sake. For toilet there is no need for a western commode. A hole can be made in one of the boxes and a bucket kept underneath. For food, eggs and fruits you get there would be sufficient.

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32965

### 7. *FRAGMENT OF A LETTER*<sup>1</sup>

NELLORE,  
*May 13, 1929*

I shall reach Bombay on the 22nd evening according to the revised programme. There is not much difference between this and the original programme.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6782

### 8. *LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI*

[About *May 13, 1929*]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter of the 8th inst. Can all the persons accompanying me be accommodated in the Prema Vidyalaya?

<sup>1</sup> The addressee is not known.

<sup>2</sup> As noted by the addressee. Also *vide* the preceding item.

As far as I can see today, the following at least will be accompanying me: Mirabehn, Khurshedbehn, Kusumbehn Desai, Ba, Pyarelal, Subbiah, Jamnadas, Purshottam and Prithuraj. This is but a rough guess. It may perhaps be too much of a burden to take all of them with me wherever I go. My own inclination is to bring as few as possible. But I will see what can be done.

What were the points left unanswered in your previous letter? Itore it up. It will, of course, be good if you can tempt Devdas to go to Rajkot. You should go on writing to Chhaganlal that he should go to the Ashram.

You need to have self-confidence, that is, confidence in the rightness of what you have decided to do. Even if the whole world were to tell you that the letter you wrote was improper, you should cling to your own view. That does not mean that you should cling to an error even when you have recognised it as such. If your elders think that what you did was not right, you should certainly consider their opinion and respect it. But then, we should not hastily form an opinion that if even one elder disapproves of it, it deserves to be condemned. Unless you acquire such firmness, you will make no progress.

You are not right in assuming that I will leave exactly on the 10th. What I meant was that I will enter the whole region connoted by 'Almora' on the 15th. Now I will try to leave earlier. But would not it do if I tell you the exact date after returning to the Ashram?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarat original: S.N. 33026

## 9. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

*May 14, 1929*

CHI. MAHADEV,

I write this on Tuesday at 3.30 before prayers. We must set out at 6 and I don't know about the postal arrangements where we are going to camp.

A gist of your article about Unai (regarding khadi activities and drinking) ought to appear in *Young India*. You must have noticed, haven't you, that nowadays there is no co-ordination between *Young*



*India and Navajivan?* The reason obviously is that you and I are away from each other and are both busy.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11434

### 10. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

*May 14, 1929*

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter of 10th. I did receive all your letters but too late to enable me to send any letters to Jeradai. I began the Sadaquat Ashram address on your wire. I hope you have all the letters sent there.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5376. Courtesy: Mirabehn

### 11. IN ANDHRA DESHA [-V]

The following itinerary will give the reader an idea of the places and the amount collected during the last week.

Total collections already acknowledged in *Young India*, Rs. 1,54,961-15-0\_.

East Godavari District:

2-5-1929—Tuni, Rs. 2,095-10-11.

3-5-1929—Kirlampudi, Rs. 145-1-9; Kodavali, 7-12-0; Chitrada, 122-0-0; Pithapuram, 1,488-3-6; Cocanada, 4,409-10-6 (Rs. 138-1-0 Lalaji Fund); Peddapur, 1,406-12-7\_; Samalkot and Biccavole, 381-14-0; Narsapurampeta, 113-0-0; Pedabrahmadevam, 58-0-0; Medapadu, 406-12-0;

4-5-1929—Valangi, Rs. 1,772-0-9; Ramachandrapuram, 2,331-6-0; Vella, 216-0-0; Aryavattam, 536-0-0; Draksharam, 321-0-0; Gollapalem and Mutukuwalli, 313-4-9.

5-5-1929—Chodavaram, Rs. 316-0-0; Mandapeta, 316-0-0; Alamuru, 2,100-0-0; Pulletikurru, 356-8-0; Palivela, 1,117-0-3; Mukkamala, 314-0-0; Ambajipeta, 115-8-3; Gangalakurru, 166-6-9; Pedapudi,

90-14-0; Amalapuram, 5,036-12-9; Bodasakurru, 191-0-0; Nagaram, 163-0-0; Mogalikuduru, 101-3-6.

6-5-1929—Rajele, Rs. 2,500-3-3; Tatipaka, 1,281-6-9; Mungonda, 116-0-0; Ravulapalem, 175-0-0 (Rs. 25 Lalaji Fund); Ryali, 913-15-6; Utchili, 100-0-0; Vaddiparru, 100-0-0; Peravaram, 148-8-9; West Godavari (subsequent collections), 116-0-0.

7-5-1929—Dosakayalapalli, Rs. 968-0-0; Rajahmundry, 5,802-10-4; (Rs. 120 Lalaji Fund); estimated value of jewels of East Godavari Dt. 2,500-0-0.

8-5-1929—Kateru, 308-8-0; Rajahmundry, 116-0-0; Korukonda, 50-0-0; Chodavaram, 184-0-0; Muggulla, 346-5-0; Rahitapuram, 333-7-0; Vedullapalli, 110-0-0; Inugantivaripeta, 500-0-0; Rajampeta, 115-0-0; Katavaram, 13-7-0; Sitanagaram and Kondipudi, 2,116-9-10.

9-5-1929—Polavaram, Rs. 663-13-9; Singavaram and Vangalapudi, 793-1-9. Total Rs. 2,01,792,-14-3.

Events are so crowded in one upon another that it is difficult to write about them all or to make a selection. I must therefore be satisfied with giving only an outline of some of the most important ones.

#### UNTOUCHABILITY

This deadly snake of untouchability is scotched but not destroyed. It shows its poisonous fangs even when you may least expect to see them. I was certainly not prepared for the following letter:

I regret very much to bring to your kind notice, the following fact which occurred soon after the ladies' meeting held at Tanuku on the 22nd instant. At about 5 p.m. there were present three to four hundred ladies in the meeting. It was whispered by some in the meeting that the young lady who was sitting by you was a *Panchama* girl.

As soon as the meeting was over, all the ladies who attended the meeting directly went to the canal and took a plunge in the water to purify themselves from the unpardonable sin of touching her. I saw with my own eyes even small children, nay more, suckling babies too, were sprinkled with holy water to save them also from this sin. We are deceiving you and honouring you. It is a pious ancient fraud with us. . . .

People are steeped in ignorance and superstition. These combined with the pride of higher caste are ruining us and seem to be more powerful even than the present Government.

As it so happens the young lady sitting by me was no other than Shrimati Prabhavati Devi, the daughter of Brijkishore Babu, the well-known leader of Bihar. She has been with me in the Ashram for some time and has been travelling with me during the Andhra tour. By the vast majority of the people she has been taken to be my daughter, by some to be daughter-in-law, but it was reserved for the Tanuku ladies to confound her with Lakshmi, the *Antyaja* girl, whom I have adopted as my daughter in my own manner. And so being polluted by the touch transmitted through me of the imaginary *Antyaja* girl the good ladies purified themselves and their children by a holy bath or a mere sprinkling. This tragic comedy has a lesson for us. Superstitious themselves, men having neglected the women folk, have allowed the latter to remain in darker superstition. After I got the letter, I became circumspect and began an examination of the composition of subsequent audiences. I found that at most meetings the untouchables were intermingled with the touchables. I asked the audience point-blank whether they had any objection. And they said they had none. At one of the villages near Rajahmundry I saw, at a well-arranged meeting, volunteers pointing with pride to the touchables, untouchables and women in their respective wards. I set a trap for them. "I suppose you have specially arranged in order to isolate the untouchables?" The poor volunteer who answered my question readily fell into the trap and said, "Yes, sir". I discovered afterwards that he knew very little English and had not understood my question. For I straightway asked the audience whether they had any objection to untouchables sitting in their midst. They showed by a chorus of hands that they had none. I was still not satisfied and therefore asked whether they would have me send the untouchables in their midst. They again raised their hands signifying assent. I asked them to signify the same with their voice. And they did so, at first softly. I asked for a loud-voiced declaration. And all sung out at the top of their voices, "*saray, saray*". Then I invited the untouchables to sit in their midst which they did without any hesitation and without any fear. Then I based my speech to the meeting on untouchability telling them that they had done a meritorious act by letting the untouchable brethren sit in their midst and that it was a sin to regard any human being as an untouchable. If, in spite of this ocular demonstration enforced by the explanation that I gave, the women or anybody had a purificatory bath, it will be a question for a psycho-analyst to dissect and consider. Let me finish this story by adding that the women also

had taken part in signifying their assent to the untouchables intermingling, and as a matter of fact the so-called untouchables sat with caste men and women touching both without my noticing any movement on the part of anybody to avoid them. In a village near by, a school is being conducted where both touchable and untouchable boys associate in large numbers without any friction. And so while I deplore occurrences such as happened at Tanuku, the fact cannot be gainsaid that untouchability is fast dying of exhaustion.

#### A GREAT INSTITUTION

The visit to the little village was preliminary to our entry into the area covered by the activities of the Gautami Sataygraha Ashram founded by Dr. B. Subrahmanyam in 1924. He left his lucrative practice in Rajahmundry for dedicating himself to national service. He saw at once that he could not render that service unless he himself lived in the midst of villagers and put himself in direct contact with them. Hence he established himself in Sitanagaram lying 14 miles from Rajahmundry; for, it was in a cluster of villages surrounding Sitanagaram that the people had put up a brave fight with the Government in the heyday of non-co-operation. Many were the village officers who had given up their jobs. For their effrontery they were subjected to a punitive tax of nearly Rs. 5,000.

The Ashram occupies about 10 acres of ground. Khadi is its central activity and corollary activities are: rendering of free medical aid, Hindi *prachar*, library development, publication of a Telugu journal, service of depressed classes and general Congress work. According to the statement lying before me "spinning has been organized in all the surrounding villages within a radius of 5 miles from the Ashram, so as to be within, the reach of a single worker to carry on his regular weekly visits from house to house". Six carders are kept permanently at work to produce slivers at the rate of 5 annas per 3 lb. Professional spinners on the register of the Ashram number 193. Carders have up to now earned Rs. 795, the spinners Rs. 2,036. It is estimated that a spinner turns out from 6 to 9 lb of yarn per month enabling her to earn from Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2-4-0. The count of the yarn ranges from 8 to 15 counts. The wage to turn out 3 lb of slivers into yarn ranges between 12 annas to 14 annas. 13 weavers belonging to the locality weave this yarn into towels, loin-cloths, dhotis, shirtings, etc. The average monthly earnings of a weaver are Rs. 15. Some very fine special work is also done in the

Ashram weavery. The weavers have earned from this work Rs. 8,114. Bleaching and dyeing has absorbed Rs. 1,217. Altogether Rs. 12,164 have been distributed amongst 235 men, women and boys in this *firka*. The Ashram has a branch at Pithapur where 450 wheels and 12 looms are controlled and their survey shows that 800 more wheels are awaiting work if capital can be found. The cloth produced in this centre won a gold medal at the Bangalore Exhibition of 1927 for the best plain cloth. The Ashram has also sale centres. There are 4 hawkers who regularly hawk khadi in the neighbourhood. The princess amongst the hawkers is the old mother of Dr. Subrahmanyam. She is the most zealous amongst them and with her tireless energy commands the largest custom. Ashram sells khadi at half price to deserving *Panchamas*. The report says:

A word about general khadi possibilities in the *firka* will not be out of place here. A close survey into its 22 villages will not fail to reveal the fact that the process of cotton industry up till a decade was in its full swing; that cotton was grown in every village and stocked in every house, and that an undertaking of work in the direction of developing home-spinning is necessary and can be carried on with encouraging results. As it is, the worker going on his rounds for spinning will observe that not a few families stock cotton and spin for their own use; in the Sitanagaram village alone, yarn sufficient for 400 yards of cloth was spun by 9 families last year for their own use.

I was taken to several places where self-spinning was being done by families that were doing it for pleasure and not for any economic reason. I saw two widows amongst them whose sole occupation was the spinning-wheel. Dr. Subrahmanyam as he introduced me to one of these young widows could not suppress his tears as he was describing her love of charkha to me.

The Ashram library has been replenished with the gift of the whole of his collection by the late Andhra Ratna Gopalakrishnayya of Cherala Perala fame. It has a reading room attached to it, which is well stocked with journals from all over India.

The Hindi *prachar* work is a special feature. Pandit P. V. Subbarao is at the head of this work. From September 1925 to the end of last year as many as 145 have learnt Hindi, and there is a regular class conducted at the Ashram for those who were willing to learn Hindi. Rs. 1,528 have been spent on this work including Rs. 1,495 as

salary of the Pandit.

The work amongst the depressed classes admits development. The Ashram is running a free night school for them. There is also a school where both touchables and untouchables receive instruction. *Bhajan* parties are organized amongst them.

There are 3 free dispensaries under the Ashram and there is a neatly-built indoor hospital to accommodate about 5 patients. Outdoor patients have up to now numbered 62,498, the indoor patients 300.

The *firka* registered 716 Congress members including 9 Mohammedans, one Christian of these 61 are females, 51 are untouchables.

A Telugu weekly called *Congress* is published at the Ashram, and is now regarded to be practically self-supporting. Its editor Sjt. M. Annapurniah had the honour of being arrested and imprisoned for sedition. The paper however was not allowed to die. His place was taken up by Sjt. K. Ramchandra Rao who was also arrested in his turn. Do Subrahmanyam himself stepped into the place and continued to edit the paper till Sjt. Annapurniah was released and resumed editorship. The paper began its career as a foolscap sheet printed on a cyclostyle which has now 14 pages of royal size and takes in selected advertisements, eschewing those for foreign cloth, liquor and British goods. And 'it stands for complete independence as against Dominion Status', so the report before me proudly says. The publication of a Hindi lesson in Telugu character is its regular feature. The Ashram had received up to the end of last year in donations Rs. 32,491 in cash, Rs. 3,747 in grain, Rs. 1,256 as voluntary gifts from patients; and Rs. 4,000 in the shape of timber. It has substantial buildings in which the inmates are accommodated. Rs. 10,535 have been spent on their maintenance. There are 12 members in the Ashram. The allowance is Rs. 20 for a single man, Rs. 30 for a family of two and Rs. 5 for every additional member. This includes clothing allowance. The charges per head of inmates with their families numbering 31 amount to Rs. 7 per month.

This bald statement of facts hardly gives an adequate idea of this great undertaking. Nowhere during this extensive tour have I seen so much life as in this group of villages. Though living their own lives, they have become part of the villagers and have therefore acquired great influence over them. The collections in this group of comparatively poor villages amounted to Rs. 5,000, a collection that

beats all record in Andhra. 5 acres of land were donated at the meeting addressed by me, a marked evidence of the popularity of the Ashram amongst the villagers. The Ashram furnishes an object-lesson in village reconstruction. Living in the midst of the villagers they are bound to respond to their wants and aspirations and they are bound to expand their activities in time to the measure of their ability and self-confidence. I observed that Dr. Subrahmanyam goes about his work cautiously. He says: "We live an ordinary *grihastha* life and we have not renounced any private property for the Ashram, though the inmates possess very little of their own. There is no provision in the Ashram for the marriages or other domestic ceremonies. We have not insured the lives of members. We feel that we are quite ordinary national workers." All honour to them for being ordinary workers. Why should it be considered extraordinary for an educated Indian to live in the villages of India? The extraordinary thing is the education that is foisted upon us makes us unfit for the village life and village work.

#### POLICE ATTENTION

From the Ashram we were to go to Polavaram,<sup>1</sup> a village about 6 miles from Sitanagaram on the other side of the river. We could therefore only cross by a ferry. Polavaram is situated in an Agency area. Agency means, I learnt, non-regulation. The police here I was told succeeded in frightening the ferry man away from the workers and he refused to carry us. This was an embarrassing situation. To be thus thwarted by the police appeared to me to be humiliating. A crowded programme had preceded the morning of the visit and a crowded programme was in front of me. And instead of having to give one hour if I was to visit the village as meant I had to give four hours and a half; but the time seemed to me to be of no consequence, the going to the village became a duty. The workers could get another launch to take us directly from Sitanagaram to Polavaram instead of our going by car in front of the village and then crossing the river. I accepted the offer. To go to the launch meant also some additional strain and time; but we successfully negotiated the visit. And I was glad that the arrogant purpose of men was frustrated by the Almighty Maker who humbles the pride and arrogance of the proud and the arrogant.

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Speech at Public Meeting, Polavaram", 9-5-1929

In Polavaram there is a little Ashram conducted by Sjt. P. Kothandaramayya and A. Venkatramayya. They are bringing up some boys of the aborigines amongst whom they are working and it was they who had planned this visit. It is apposite here to mention that throughout the tour we have been followed by a party of police. They have been coming as reporters and what not. As a rule I have not found them to be troublesome. They have even been courteous to me personally at least. Once when the car in which I was travelling had broken down, they gave the use of their car. So much to their credit. But they have also been found ready to show their brief authority and they have not hesitated to encroach upon the party. At Sitanagaram, but for the stubborn resistance of workers they would have occupied the little launch that carried us from Sitanagaram to Polavaram. The reader of course must not therefore think that it was the same police that interfered with the ferry man. I simply mention the fact of the police attention to show that if a man like me who, I presume, is not regarded as a suspect so far as violent intentions are concerned, needs to have his footsteps thus dogged, what must be the fate of those who are under a shadow of suspicion and who are too sensitive to accommodate themselves to the police attention. Throughout my life it has been part of my creed not to avoid the police but to assist them in prying into all my work for I have always abhorred secrecy and it has made my life and work easy because of my indifference to this kind of surveillance. This indifference and invariable courtesy shown to the police result in the silent conversion of several amongst them. My indifference, however, is one thing and personal to me. As a system the police surveillance cannot but be described as a despicable thing unworthy of a good Government. It is a useless burden upon an already overburdened taxpayer. For, the whole of this extraordinary expenditure, it must be remembered, comes from the pockets of the toiling millions.

*Young India*, 16-5-1929

## 12. INDIANS IN SOUTH AFRICA

The office of the Agent of the Government of India in South Africa is certainly not a bed of roses. Sir K. V. Reddi, I see from the mail letter received from South Africa, is having his hands full. The greatest cause of anxiety so far as I can see is in connection with trade



licences in the area known as the Gold Area in the Transvaal. The largest number of Indian traders in the Transvaal are to be found in this area and these trade licences are a matter of life and death for them. They have built up large business in the hope of being able to have their licences renewed from year to year. Having survived the danger in the Krugerregime of their businesses being summarily closed at any time, they have rightly or wrongly come to believe that their licences will be perpetually renewed so long as they carry on an honest trade. I have certainly thought that the settlement of 1914 covered all these traders and their successors. If these were not vested rights, I do not know what vested rights could be in the Transvaal for them. But now I understand that municipalities are refusing to issue these licences, taking cover under a section of the Gold Law. Legally speaking, perhaps the Gold Law would prohibit Asiatics' trading. But that law was in existence even during the Kruger regime. It was in existence in 1914 when this settlement was arrived at. Therefore Sir K. V. Reddi should have no difficulty in securing protection for these traders. The agreement which was brought about by the Habibullah deputation contemplates leveling up of the British Indian position in South Africa. Levelling up will be a meaningless term for these traders if the only means up will be a meaningless term for these traders if the only means of earning their bread and butter is taken away from them. It is necessary therefore for public opinion here to strengthen the hands of the Agent in South Africa and the hands of the Government of India in prosecuting the claim for the protection of these traders. The matter is not free from difficulty I know. There is the general election pending in South Africa. The Union Ministers left to themselves will probably grant the protection that is so desirable. And that should be considered as obligatory if there is to be an honourable fulfilment of the Cape pact. But the electoral conditions in South Africa are not very different from these conditions in other parts of the world. But however difficult the situation may be, these traders must be protected. There is a proper, legitimate, easy way out of the difficulty apart from fresh legislation. Law 3 of 188 of the Transvaal is still in existence. The Gold Law does not supersede that law. Therefore the Gold law has got to be read in conjunction with the law 3 of 1885. Now that law enables the Government to declare wards, streets and locations as proper for Indian habitation and trade. It is open therefore to the Union Government by administrative action to declare such areas where Indians are

now trading to be proper places for Indian trade and residence.

There are other matters equally delicate but I need not refer to them at this stage as the danger in connection with them is not imminent and as it is necessary for public opinion to be crystallized and to concentrate over this single imminent danger.

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### 13. 'ALCOHOLISM OF THOUGHT'

An esteemed European friend approving of my decision in postponing the European visit that was contemplated last year makes among other things the following pregnant observations on the condition to which the European Press is reduced at the present moment:<sup>1</sup>

You know that the first act of a modern State, when at war, is to ruin her adversary in the opinion of the rest of the world; and for that she stifles its voice, and fills the world with her own. You know that the British Empire is a past master in that art, and that she is preparing by every means to blockade India, to isolate her from other nations, and to inundate those nations with her own propaganda. It has already begun! Last month the events in Bombay were a pretext for giving to the world the impression that India was in a state of fire and bloodshed. . . .

Now, I have too much experience of the frightful intellectual passiveness to which the people of Europe are at present prone. Since the first days of the War of 1914 their unhappy brains have been subjected to such a journalistic intoxication by the whole European Press that they have become incapable of refinding themselves. It is another alcoholism, alcoholism of thought, which causes no less ravages than the other. One can practically say that there no longer exists, in the Occident, a single free newspaper. . . .

Notwithstanding the terrible handicap which this campaign of misrepresentation puts upon us, if we are strong in action, we may afford to disregard them and feel confident that our action, if it is true, will survive the calumny that is being spread in Europe and even in America and make itself felt.

*Young India*, 16-5-1929

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

#### 14. THE WAY TO DO IT

In one of the addresses received by me in Andhra Desha there occurs this passage:

We are grieved to admit that we can show nothing to our credit in the way of removal of untouchability, temperance propaganda and Hindi *prachar*. We request your help and guidance in suggesting to us ways and means of securing the necessary capital and selfless workers for the above objects.

This is an admission of helplessness which it would be difficult to understand perhaps in any other part of the world. For I am asked not merely to show how to secure the necessary capital, but also selfless workers. The address comes from those who describe themselves “your most trusted, most humble followers, members of the Town Congress Committee”. If I have any followers who are “trusted and humble”. I expect them above all to be selfless. Members of Congress Committees are unworthy to sit in a Congress Committee if they are not selfless. Of course I know that at the present moment there is an unseemly rivalry even in Congress Committees for offices. Yet every Congressman would admit that a Congress representative is nothing if he is not selfless. And if the ‘salt loses its savour wherewith shall it be salted’? If my followers and these Congress Committee members are not selfless, where shall I find selfless workers for such people? The only way therefore I can show to my questioners about finding selfless workers is, ‘be such workers yourselves, and then I promise that the necessary capital will follow’. Shadow invariably follows the Sun. It is men who make money. Money has never been known to make men. It may give us hirelings, but hirelings will never be able to remove untouchability and do temperance propaganda and even real Hindi *prachar*. Hirelings have no doubt a place in the world economy, but they come in after reform, they have never been able to initiate reform. Congressmen have therefor to carry out the triple reform. When untouchability has become a thing of the past, when temperance propaganda has become a popular thing and when everybody wants to learn Hindi, there will be no dearth of men who would give their services on hire and carry out the work that involves no risks.

What unfortunately I notice throughout my wanderings is that many Congressmen do not care so much for constructive work as forexcitement and work that will bring them into prominence without

costing them much labour, if any at all. This mentality has to be changed before we can have a steady supply of workers. Everywhere I am surrounded by healthy-looking intelligent volunteers who spare no pains to make me comfortable and who under the impulse of service do not mind working day and night. If they could but be induced to transfer this devotion to a person who really does not need all that volume of service and who is more often than not embarrassed by such attention, to the cause which he represents, the problem is solved. Everywhere I am holding meetings of workers and I have found them to be enough for the work to be done if they will only apply themselves to it. But it is these very workers who compose addresses of the type I have mentioned and who even at these quiet meetings ask me to produce money and men. I therefore suggest to every Congress Committee to become business-like and find out true workers, fix the scale of payment for them and set the constructive machinery going. For this, Congress Sub-Committees need not look for guidance to provincial bodies or to the central body. Provincial bodies may have their provincial service or may not. They may be too heavily encumbered to attempt any such thing. Not so Taluka or Village Congress Committees. They are absolutely autonomous. There is nothing to prevent them from making collections and initiating any reform they choose. Indeed during the interesting tour in Andhra, I have noticed that in some places efficient Committees have been doing work which other Committees have grossly neglected.

Let Congressmen not think of 1930. The first of January 1930 is not going to witness a miracle. It would be an exact resultant of national activities during this year of grace and probation. No sudden change will come over the nation on the first of January 1930. Let individual Congressmen therefore do their little best. It is then possible for them to awaken the nation. Let them not think that one individual can make no impression upon the nation or a cause. After all causes are handled by an aggregate of individuals. Someone has to make the beginning. Let everyone therefore who understands the secret of success in any undertaking do his won duty unmindful of what the others do or do not do.

Let there be no shame about accepting remuneration. A labourer is worthy of his hire. And he is no less selfless because he accepts remuneration. As a matter of fact, a most selfless man has to give his all to the nation—body, mind and soul. And he has still to feed himself. The nation gladly feeds such men and women and

yet regards them as selfless. The difference between a voluntary worker and a hireling lies in the fact that whereas a hireling gives his service to whosoever pays the price, a national voluntary worker gives his service only to the nation for the cause he believes in and he serves it even though he might have to starve.

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## 15. NOTES

### PANDIT SUNDERLAL'S BOOK

The U.P. Government is not satisfied with the outrageous confiscation of the copies of Pandit Sunderlal's book *History of English Rule*, but it is now persecuting everyone suspected of having received a copy before the ban was declared. Whether egged on by the U.P. Government or of its own motion, the C.P. Government has copied the U.P. Government and proclaimed the ban on the book. The question a correspondent now puts is: what are the poor people to do who have got these books? In my opinion it is no part of the possessor of these volumes to surrender them to the police. There is no moral breach in possessing the volume. And those who believe that this confiscation is a wicked act of robbery are not only not bound to assist the process of confiscation but by every legitimate means to thwart the authorities in their nefarious attempt to take possession of the books that have gone out of the publisher's hands. If I were a possessor of such a copy and I did not want to run the risk of a prosecution, I should burn the copy. If I wanted to invite prosecution I would inform the police of possession of a copy and challenge them to arrest me. If I did not wish to invite prosecution, but did not mind it if it came, I should still retain possession leaving the police to their own resources to trace the copy in my possession.

I understand that the C. P. Notification says that even the publication of extracts from the book would be considered a crime. I hope this information is not true. But if it is, it enables newspapers to show tangible sympathy for the author and the publisher as also to defeat the purpose of the Governments concerned by publishing extracts which can be sent by those who are in possession of the volume. The Central Government and local Governments are providing us with opportunities for offering mild civil disobedience which those who believe in it should not hesitate to take advantage of.

Terribly debilitating though the atmosphere is at the present moment, those who have not yet lost their nerve need not be affected by it, but they should seek every legitimate opportunity of giving hope and courage to the workers by challenging the Government to do its worst.

#### ABHAY ASHRAM

The readers of *Young India* are not unaware of this important national institution. Its report of activities for the year 1928 has just been received. It is a record of all-round progress. Its khadi department is its largest activity. Here is the record of its progressively increasing sales:

1924 Rs. 21,822	1926 Rs. 1,42,960
1925 Rs. 70,620	1927 Rs. 1,42,820
	1928 Rs. 1,88,091

The total wages distributed were Rs. 70,525 as under:

Weavers	Rs. 29,492	Spinners	Rs. 30,453
Tailors	Rs. 7,081	Washermen	Rs. 3,494

The work is done through its 23 khadi centres which support 61 whole-time workers controlled by an annually elected board. The capital invested in this activity is Rs. 1,21,000, of which Rs. 55,000 is a loan from the All-India Spinners' Association. It has to pay to the banks from which it has the balance of the loan a high rate of interest which amounts to Rs. 5,000 per year. It is therefore up to the public to either pay this interest or to give loans free of interest but on the same terms as the banks advance them.

The Ashram is making experiments in dyeing and it claims now to be able "to dye fast colours of uniform shade without the use of any machine." The report proceeds, "Our khaki which has been fast to sunlight, bleaching and perspiration, we specially recommend to our buyers."

The other activity of the Ashram is national education. It controls 31 primary schools of which 17 are in the district of Dacca, 9 in Tippera and 5 in Bankura, serving 1,058 pupils. It has three schools for secondary education, serving 199 students. The total amount spent on education is Rs. 4,702-9-6. It has also a medical department with an outdoor dispensary, a hospital, a medical school and a seva samiti. The dispensary served 3,157 patients, of which 721 were females. The largest number of cases were naturally of malaria. Next comes worms 277 cases and third kalazar. The hospital has 20 beds. 215 patients

were admitted during the year under review. The expenses of the dispensary and hospital amounted respectively to Rs. 1,574 and 4,400. The medical school is training 20 students. The main function of the Sevasadan is house to house collection of rice for the maintenance of poor patients in the hospital. The Ashram is not a believer in untouchability or hereditary caste distinctions. It does a little bit of agriculture and produced 200 maunds of paddy in 18 bighas of lands and it grew vegetables enough to last 6 months for the 50 inmates of the Ashram. It has 6 milch cows and 10 buffaloes. An attempt is being made to have a model dairy farm at Dacca. It has libraries at several of its centres. The Ashram collected Rs. 37,000 for its different activities from the public. Altogether it has received donations of one lakh and a half of rupees during the five years of its existence. Its requirements for the next year are Rs. 50,000 for the khadi department and Rs. 50,000 for the other departments. An institution like this should have no difficulty in obtaining necessary funds from a discerning public.

#### FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

The following<sup>1</sup> from a precis of information published by the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee should stimulate the other municipalities and local boards to action.

#### COARSE KHADI

The foreign-cloth boycott movement has naturally sent up the khadi sale and production barometers. But if production of khadi is to be limitless the quality of khadi must suffer for a time. By patient effort and instruction, A.I.S.A. has been able to show a progressive rise in the fineness and texture of khadi. But when workers go out to raw spinners and ask them for yarn they may not dictate terms. The raw spinners will not be able all of a sudden to spin fine and even yarn. The public, therefore, if they will help the khadi movement and therethrough the starving millions, should at every new wave and new opening for khadi be satisfied with comparatively coarser stuff during the temporary period. To use coarse khadi is not too great a price to pay for achieving boycott of foreign cloth or for helping India's paupers.

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here

## A.I.S.A. MEMBERSHIP

The reader will have seen a notice of the A.I.S.A. in last week's issue of *Young India* announcing that it had decided to discontinue the 'B' class membership. I think that this is a step in the right direction. 'B' class membership was introduced only in order to conciliate somewho professed their inability to send 1,000 yards permonth of hand-spun yarn. Experience however has shown that not over many have taken advantage of 'B' class membership which meant spinning only 2,000 yards per year. And when a limited power of voting for the election of members to the Council was announced, the absurdity of 'B' class membership became patent. 'A' class members repeatedly applied for being classed as 'B' class members in order not to forfeit the right of voting. The Council did not want to go back upon the rules that were framed for voting. So the original list remained undisturbed. But for all future occasions it was decided to have only 'A' class members. And as the policy of the Spinners' Association has been from the very commencement to have those only as members who have the fullest faith in the message of the spinning-wheel, it was considered desirable to have only one class of members with stricter qualification. This would no doubt considerably reduce the members of the Association. But the Council has no hesitation in running the risk. It does not show much faith in the message of the spinning-wheel if members are not willing to devote even half an hour to spinning from day to day.

*Apropos* of this the Technical Department of the A.I.S.A. has written to the several agencies that the yarn which is sent to them as subscriptions for membership is not uniformly good. It is packed anyhow and it is sent often without considering the cost of posting. The note says:

In some cases to postal charges exceeded the price of the yarn sent. In one agency alone the postal charges for all the yarn received amounted to Rs. 55, namely, 60 per cent of the price of the total yarn. The suggestion therefore made is that the yarn should be sent from one place in each province and it should be by goods train.

In some cases the yarn sent was so uneven and rough that it was useless. I have repeatedly said that where the yarn is useless, it really should not be accepted as subscription. Yarn subscription means yarn that is weavable just as monetary subscription means money that would



be accepted in the market and not counterfeit coins. The subscribing spinners should really know all the details about spinning and packing and this work is essentially one that the agencies should attend to.

*Young India*, 16-5-1929

## 16. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

*May 16, 1929*

CHI. MIRA,

I have one letter of 11th. Of course you write as often as you like and make use of the distance-destroying conveniences. I simply pointed out that we might not disturb our peace when and if they were withdrawn.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I am going away from the Calcutta route now. So I may not write at all now. For we meet at Bombay on 22nd, God willing.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5377. Courtesy: Mirabehn

## 17. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

*[May 16, 1929]*<sup>1</sup>

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have to visit such obscure places these days that I do not get the post regularly, and with the slightest change in programme the arrangements get upset. I, therefore, get the mail later than I ordinarily would. But not many days remain now. Today is Thursday. I expect to reach Bombay on Wednesday evening.

So far I have kept good health. I think there is little likelihood now of its becoming bad. Even in this *Dattamandal* the heat is not as

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji was to reach Bombay on Wednesday, May 22. The letter was obviously written on preceding Thursday which was May 16.

great as I had thought it would be. The people of Andhra call the “ceded tracts”<sup>1</sup> *Dattamandal*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Sankaran has arrived here. He says he will come to the Ashram after about three months. I have sent Subbiah to Rajaji. He will probably return by the time I arrive in Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p.107*

## 18. LETTER TO MOHANLAL BHATT

*May 16, 1929*

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

I am sending as much matter for *Young India* as I have got ready. Today Subbiah is not here; so I am sending it as it is. You must get this on Monday. I fail to understand why you do not get on Mondays what should reach you on Mondays, in spite of the great care we take about it.

I went through Mahadev’s articles in *Navajivan*. Owing to negligence grammatical errors have gone undetected. *Navajivan* is something to be preserved. Through it we wish to present correct language and correct spelling. The language and spelling should therefore conform to our rules. Our proofs ought to be thoroughly examined even if we have to appoint the experts needed for this. What I say will be clearer if you go through Mahadev’s articles. Let Mahadev read this letter.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[Encl.]

Prohibition

Andhra Notes

Need of the Hour

Liberate the Woman<sup>2</sup>

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11756

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji uses the English phrase.

<sup>2</sup> The source has these lines in English.

## 19. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter of the 14th only today. Others will overtake me by and by. I am glad that Ranchhodbhai has come.

I had completely forgotten that Maganlal's death anniversary was approaching. Had I not been writing the diary, I would not remember even the date and the day of the week. I, however, observe Maganlal's death anniversary every day. I am not, therefore, sorry that I did not remember the conventional day. It was the duty of you all to remember it, and you seem to have performed that duty well.

I too believe that it is not wise to encourage the practice of continuous spinning on special occasions. But I also approve of one wheel being kept going continuously on such a day.

It would be better if the sanitary work done on that day was kept up. Our lavatories and urinals are certainly not as clean as they should be.

Mahadev's letter is worthy of him. The despair it contains does not touch me. I have full faith that everyone is doing his best. We have not fallen. We should, of course, be vigilant and, therefore, to a certain degree self-criticism is necessary.

We are now counting the days before we reach Bombay. Today is Friday. Sunday and Monday will be spent in Kurnool. We intend to catch the Fast Passenger at Adoni on Tuesday night. On Wednesday night, we arrive in Bombay.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I send with this a letter from Mirabehn about the spindle for those of you to read who may be interested in the subject. It is worth reading.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5418

## 20. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

May 18, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I got your letter. I think it wrong to try to run the affairs of the Ashram from a distance. But that is what I have had to do all my life. It was so even during Maganlal's time. It is true that as he came to know my nature better, my burden became less and there was less need for him to consult me. But he certainly asked me whenever necessary. After I return this time, however, we shall make some other arrangement if possible. I am certainly not longing to control the Ashram affairs. I tore up your letter after reading it.

If anyone in the Ashram speaks ill of Chhaganlal, we should bear with that. If people speak ill of him, they have praised him too.

All the letters which I received were expressions of love. Do you not think that Chhaganlal should continue to stay in the Ashram as a measure of atonement, if for no other reason ? If he cannot do so, that is a different matter. Dharma requires that he should. You do not seem to have understood my meaning when I said that he should become a cipher and remain. A cipher means not a person who does not work but one who is free from egoism. Chhaganlal has always harboured the egoistic sense of being someone. That is way he was tempted by sin. All that I meant was that this egoism should disappear. If Chhaganlal cannot live according to the ideals of the Ashram and cannot be a member of the common kitchen, he may live in the same manner as you will be doing. Even by doing that he will overcome his egoism. But we shall talk more about this. I don't wish to insist on my view in this matter either.

I desire the good of Chhaganlal and Kashi and am ready to do anything which will promote it.

We shall talk about Purushottam when we meet. He must build up his health.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I have written this in the midst of a crowd of people coming and going.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine*—Part I, pp. 53-4

## 21. LETTER TO K. NARASAM

[May 18, 1929]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. If a separate room does not end the struggle, you should live in separate houses or even villages.

All passion would be burnt by merging oneself in God.

If one would identify oneself with the villagers the wearing of khaddar is a religious duty.

Non-violence is the keystone of life.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. K. NARASAM

TANUKU

From a photostat: G.N. 8809

## 22. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[About May 18, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Received your letter. The expression “reducing oneself to zero” has also been curiously interpreted. I hope Chhaganlal Gandhi has not taken it in that sense. I talk about reducing oneself to zero everywhere. Chhaganlal was proud of it all—he still is—and so I stressed that point on that occasion. I think Chhaganlal had

<sup>1</sup> From the contents this letter appears to have been written at the same time as the one to Narandas Gandhi dated May 18, 1929; *vide* “Letter to Naranadas Gandhi”, 18-5-1929

understood it. With regard to Kashi<sup>1</sup>, I explained what our duty was. Even before Kashi and he himself confessed to the incident it had been suggested that Kashi should stay in the women's section. But I had said that she might stay in the Ashram any way she wanted. She was too ashamed to stay. I continue to have correspondence with her and I take it that she is engaged in some useful work. Jamnadas<sup>2</sup> appears to have a tendency to exaggerate. Even if what he says is true, it applies only to the initial stage. Time settles everything. I can find work for Chhaganlal right now if he is willing. Otherwise, I should like to go on feeding him even if he does nothing. I have also suggested that he should live in solitude if he goes to Wardha. But Chhaganlal's pain has not yet subsided.

He himself will convey to you my view about Ramniklal<sup>3</sup>.

How can you be cured of your asthma? When will you set a limit to the amount of work you should do?

Even your hasty scribble is better than my deliberate hand. It is never difficult to decipher.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10721. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

### 23. A POSER<sup>4</sup>

A young man who is an employee in a mill writes:

I am employed in the engineering department of a mill but I am sick of this business. I have over half a dozen relations dependent upon me for support. But not having been trained to any other profession I do not know how else I can eke out the necessary means to provide bread to them all. My monthly requirement comes to one hundred rupees. When I see the injustice that is daily perpetrated on the mill-hands and the utter selfishness and heartlessness of the mill-owners I begin to feel that service in a mill is even worse than Government service. What would you advise me to do in the

<sup>1</sup> Kashi Gandhi, wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>2</sup> Jamnadas Gandhi

<sup>3</sup> Ramniklal Modi

<sup>4</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 19-5-1929. The translation is by Pyarelal.

circumstances? I am 26 years of age and have studied up to matriculation.

As an old English adage says you cannot eat your cake and have it. Similarly you cannot leave off service in a mill and yet have your one hundred *per mensem*. A close scrutiny of all highly remunerative professions in India will reveal the fact that they are almost all of them essentially products of British rule in India, and as such as serve in a more or less degree to sustain that rule. A country where the average daily income per head is seven pice cannot afford to pay high salaries, for the simple reason, that it would mean so much additional burden upon the toiling millions of the land who are already well-nigh crushed by their poverty. It follows therefore that the only course for a person, who wants to escape from the system of exploitation which the mills represent, would be drastically to reduce his family budget. This can be done in two ways: by a radical simplification of one's life and by reducing the number of dependants that one has to support. Every grown-up, able-bodied member of a family ought to be made to contribute his or her quota towards the upkeep of the family by honest industry. We have a number of domestic crafts that can be easily learnt and practised at home without the investment of any large capital. If he is not prepared to do any of these two things, he had better stick to the job in which he is engaged and do whatever service he can. Let him, if he is employed in a mill, try to make a close and sympathetic study of the hardships and miseries that are a mill-labourer's lot and do whatever is possible in the circumstances to alleviate them. Let him cultivate an exemplary purity, honesty and uprightness of conduct, and infect his fellow-employees with his ideals. If the subordinate employees are all upright in their conduct, they will thereby create a pure atmosphere which is bound to tell on their masters in the end and enable them to obtain justice from them for the mill-labourers.

All action in this world has some drawback about it. It is man's duty and privilege to reduce it, and while living in the midst of it, to remain untouched by it as much as it is possible for him to do so. To take an extreme instance, there can perhaps be no greater contradiction in terms than a compassionate butcher. And yet it is possible even for a butcher if he has any pity in him. In fact I have actually known butchers with gentleness that one would hardly expect from them. The celebrated episode of Kaushik the butcher in the *Mahabharata* is an instance in point. It is an episode for all young men placed in a similar situation to this correspondent to carefully ponder over and digest.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

## 24. A MISCONCEPTION

A friend from Bombay writes:<sup>1</sup>

I had heard this argument even before. No physician has yet been able to provide a remedy for misconception. Hence I have little hope that my arguments will make those caught in the love of B.A. or LL.B. to give it up. For the benefit of those who may still have doubts, I present one or two facts.

The number of lawyers is negligible. How many out of them serve the country? Of those who do, how many make use of the law examination?

Gokhale was not a lawyer and yet no one has heard of anything lacking in his service. Sir Dinshaw Wacha is not a lawyer; Dadabhai was not one, nor was Hume.

The lawyers who are in the field of public service shine not because they are lawyers, but because of some other capacity in them.

We shall find the names of only a few lawyers among the world's great servants so far.

A country cannot be liberated through the intricacies of law. That will require a sword made of either steel or satyagraha. Rana Pratap, Shivaji, Nelson, Wellington, Kruger and others were not lawyers; Amanullah Khan is not a lawyer; Lenin was not a lawyer. All of them had valour, selflessness, courage and such other qualities by reason of which they were able to serve their country.

It is not my purpose to disparage lawyers or their profession. They have a province of their own. Their contribution to the recent history of India is valuable. My object here is merely to point out that in order to serve it is not necessary to be a lawyer and that in the service rendered by lawyers their legal practice played a minor part.

Moreover, to be a lawyer and to acquire a working knowledge of law are two different things. If he so desires, every worker can acquire such knowledge of law as is necessary. Certificates are a means of earning money, never of rendering service.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that a friend of his, studying in the senior B.A. class, though eager to serve the country, intended to take the LL.B. degree before taking up national work, believing that knowledge of law was essential for it. How could this misconception be removed?



Finally, we need workers in thousands. The lawyers are far too few. The field of service is infinite. Service is needed today; hence he who longs to serve will not engage himself even for a single moment in becoming a lawyer or taking some other degree. He will easily gain the knowledge which he may need in the course of service.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 19-5-1929

## 25. DR. DALAL

Dr. Dalal's death cannot but cause the deepest sorrow to those who had benefited from his surgery. He was more or less unrivalled in surgery. I have only sweet memories of him. Since I first met him in 1918, he had captured my heart by his self-confidence, his sense of humour and his skill. His fee was supposed to be very high. When I once criticized him for it, he asked in reply how, if he did not charge high fees from those who could afford to pay them, he could serve people like me. Many years passed since this criticism was made and I, in the mean while, secured his services for a number of patients. These included men like Deenabandhu Andrews and Acharya Gidwani. He never hesitated to treat them all. Conveying the news of his death, Mahadev writes:

A week before his death, Dr. Dalal had told Jamnalalji that in accordance with his wishes he would start a sanatorium at Nasik and be in attendance there. He had no more desire for money. He hoped to recover in two months. Gujarat has suffered a big loss in the death of one of its best surgeons.

May God give peace to the family of Dr. Dalal. Their sense of sorrow ought to be lightened by the knowledge that there are many patients and friends who share their grief.

Such deaths should be a warning to us. Knowing that even big doctors and hakims have to pass away suddenly, we common people should be patient and recognize the limits of medicine. Out of false expectations we wander about in search of cures and waste time and money. Knowing that we may be called away any time, we should not put off to some future date whatever good deed or act of service we mean to do, but should do it here and now.

[Form Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 19-5-1929

## 26. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

May 19, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just received your letter. I have not followed the office controversy. I shall form no hasty decision. My formula is what I had framed at Sabarmati.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

SJT. S. SATYAMURTI, M.L.C.  
SINGARACHARI STREET  
TRIPPLICANE  
MADRAS

From the original: S. Satyamurti Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

## 27. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

May 19, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters regularly though I find them rather dry. But the grievance that both of you have is justified, since I do not write regularly, whether interestingly or otherwise. But during this touring I cannot keep count of the dates. I think I have not been able to attend to your correspondence during my tours of Burma and Andhra. I shall be more careful now that the pace of my tours will slow down.

I had learnt from Nanabhai that you did not like the name Sita. And you have mentioned the reason in your latest letter. I appreciate your reason. It may be all right for Sushila to have Sita as her ideal but the child should have someone revolutionary. I cannot at the moment recollect any girl mentioned in the classics who would fulfil all these requirements. You should have acquainted me with your sentiments earlier. I shall now think of some other name. In our society as also among the English a person may have two or three names. Let Sita have two or three. In this way I wish to justify the name Sita. Sita is the last word in wifehood as much as it is in maidenhood. Moreover it is my ideal to make a person lead a life of independence and purity in spite of being married. Sita, Parvati and others have fully attained both these ideals. According to the accounts in the *Ramayana* and other

works they were free from passion. Sita experienced no difficulty when she was separated from Ramachandra. She was so free from passion that the lascivious Ravana could not touch her. A woman should pray for freedom from passion although her name may be Sita. That is why Sita is one of the seven *satis*<sup>1</sup>. *Sati* does not merely mean one faithful to her husband. *Sati* signifies freedom from passion. Sita had two children. This need not be regarded as wrong on her part, because it is mentioned in this context that Rama and Sita came together out of a desire for progeny. It is not so today. Now children are born as a result of passion; a person like me therefore regards begetting children as forbidden. I am, of course, talking about the belief in regard to Sita and others; Sita should not be regarded as a historical person but as our ideal woman. We do not worship the historical Rama and Sita. The Rama of history is no more now. But the Rama to whom we attribute perfect divinity, who is God directly perceived, lives to this day. Reciting the name of this Rama would save us; the Rama of history, who is qualified by attributes, good or bad, would not have the strength to save. If you do not follow all this you should, by all means, discuss it with me. In all my reading I have come across no ideal loftier than Sita. This name therefore is extremely dear to me. Again, it is sweet to utter, short, and the two syllables too are easy. It has no compound syllable. And the name is by itself musical, ending as it does with a long *a*. But I do not insist that you call the child by this name. There is nothing wrong if you give a name of your own choice. You may give her a name indicative of the qualities that you wish her to have. Find it in some religious books or novels. On my part I shall certainly search for another.

Well, you have come to know the regrettable episode involving Chhaganlal. It has created a great commotion in the Udyoga Mandir. Now I shall know more about it when I reach there in a few days. Devdas is still there. Nimu has returned to Bardoli. Rami's address at Morvi: Kunvarji Khetshi's House, Tribhuvan Parekh's Sheri, Morvi.

My health is all right. Ba too is fine. Imam Saheb is not wholly all right, but there is nothing special about him.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4746

<sup>1</sup> Heroic and chaste women, namely, Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita, Tara (wife of Vali), Mandodari, Kunti and Arundhati

## 28. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

May 19, 1929

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You have evinced keen interest in your work. I hope it will last. Chi. Kusum writes to me that you two are coming closer; I wish you will. When those like you who understand things become one in heart, then alone can you render service to the new women who are not trained. I have been suggesting the same thing to Vasumati also. You and Vasumati know each other well. If your association develops you can accomplish a lot. If only a couple of women get on well together, it might give rise to selfishness. But when all of you get along together, it can strengthen your spirit of service. What I would expect from you therefore is that you should all merge in one another. For this the first step is that those who know one another well should start mixing [with the others].

It is very good that no one was scared in spite of the burglar's visit. Let the burglar repeat his visits. If in spite of all possible precautions on our part thieves come, let them. I think, though, that they do not come to do us bodily harm. They are familiar with the place and may come to mock at us.

Whatever has gone wrong with Dahibehn Patel?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3096

## 29. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

May 19, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter of the 12th after it had wandered about a good deal; that is, it reached me after the letter of the 14th. Balkrishna does not know the middle path at all. But he will come round in the end. Those who can may observe his difficult conditions. I shall not write about the subject to anyone just now. We shall discuss the matter after I arrive there.

I tried hard to dissuade Jaykrishna<sup>1</sup> from taking the vow, but he did. How could I prevent him forcibly? We should certainly encourage anyone who attempts to do something good. What does it matter if he fails despite all his efforts?

Are there any signs by which we can recognize a man's fitness? Where could we find a fitter man than Chhaganlal? The history of the Ashram shows that it is the men of recognized fitness who have fallen. We need not be surprised or pained by this. There are limits to the application of the idea of fitness, etc. I have countless instances of persons who could not be recognized as fit but who have proved their worth. We should be as vigilant as we can and try to become better. We can achieve nothing in this world without taking risks. In the supreme endeavour to attain *moksha* we may accept any risk.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

After I had finished this letter, I saw Mirabehn's. This, too, throws light to the problem of judging a man's fitness. God knows whether that crazy person will ultimately prove his worth. How are we to know? What is the extent of our knowledge? Who can see into the future? I think Mirabehn's letter will be useful to you in other ways too. I send it to you.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5419

### *30. REMARKS ON THE ORPHANAGE ASSOCIATION, NELLORE<sup>2</sup>*

*May 19, 1929*

I hope that these orphans no longer feel that they are orphans.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 3230

<sup>1</sup> Bhansali; the source has Jaykaran, evidently a slip.

<sup>2</sup> Reproduced in a folder issued by the Association

### 31. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

[About May 19, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

I have been unhappy at your going away. Unhappy because I have founded the Ashram for self-realization; service is its outer manifestation, while the observance of vows is the inner one. The basic purpose of the Ashram is the realization of God. I cannot understand why in these circumstances you went away elsewhere to seek God.

[From Hindi]

*Bapuna Patro—7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 110*

### 32. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

[Before May 20, 1929]<sup>2</sup>

CHI. KUSUM,

Indeed you were embarrassed. Nevertheless you were asked to do what you pleased. Prabhavati is exhausted and is now sound asleep near me. Throughout the night the din in the train continued. One may say the Mahatma too has sometimes to suffer the congestion in the third class. It is to be seen if Prabhavati can maintain her health.

Whatever happens I shall take you along on my next tour. We shall see how you stand it .

I hope Sulochanabehn is all right.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1791

<sup>1</sup> From a reference to the addressee in "Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi", 19-5-1929, it would appear that this was written around that time.

<sup>2</sup> *Bapuna Patro—3 : Kusumbehn Desaine, p.28, mentions that this was written while Gandhiji was on the Andhra tour which he completed on May 21, 1929.*

### 33. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

KURNOOL,  
*Silence Day, May 20, 1929*

SISTERS,

I expect this to be the last letter during the present tour. Monday next, instead of writing a letter I myself shall be leaving Bombay to return to the Mandir.

The people of this city have allowed me a quiet time such as I have rarely known in the past. Even outside there are no crowds standing for my *darshan*. So far I have not been able to escape crowds even on Mondays. They have hung up *khas* screens on the two doors so that, despite a hot wind outside, it is very cool within. If, after experiencing all this love and attention, I complain about the hardships of touring, I would be the most ungrateful of men.

How to explain to the women here, who wear six or seven earrings, three nose-rings and a ring on each finger and toe, that there is no adornment in this at all?

We see even some educated women wearing those rings. Whenever I see women with such decorations I think of you all. What trouble have you not escaped?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3699

### 34. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

*Silence Day, [May 20, 1929]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. VASUMATI,

Your letters are scarce these days. Is it to spare me or is it due to laziness or because nothing comes to your mind? It seems I shall have the reply only in person now. I shall no doubt reach before the 28th. Four days in Bombay would be hard. But it appears that much time would be needed.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : S. N. 9313

### 35. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

*Silence Day, May 20, 1929*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I got the *Ashram Samachar* too. Some more letters must still be on their way, redirected from place to place.

The question of swadeshi is under discussion at present and, as I am today writing a reply to a student for publication in *Navajivan*, I feel like cautioning the inmates of the Mandir too. We may leave aside the question of what people do in their private affairs; but we must take care to use swadeshi articles whenever we write anything in connection with Mandir work. The string, the tape, etc., used by us should be made of handspun yarn. Do you know that Maganlal had made even sewingthread from hand-spun yarn ? The pencils, ink, nibs, etc., which we use should be swadeshi. The ink in my pen is swadeshi. We should thus take care about everything we use. It is necessary that there should be no avoidable inconsistency in our lives. We need not feel ashamed to accept any foreign article which is essential, but its necessity must be demonstrated.

You may now remind me about Lady Ramanathan when I arrive

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Gandhiji's visit to Bombay for four days before the 28th; in 1929 he reached Bombay on May 22 and was there till the 25th. It appears that the letter was written on the Monday (silence day) prior to his visit to Bombay.



there. I will write something then. I shall write for the next issue of *Young India* in Bombay on Monday, the 27th . I don't know what I will do if I don't reach Bombay before that.

I would not like to dissuade Bhansali from buying land. Though his ideals are different from ours, the direction is the same. They, too, give the first place to self-control. But this is a controversial subject. We shall discuss the matter.

I had thought that after my return I myself would tell the people there about my experiment in eating uncooked grain, and that no one would write about it from here. Yes, it is ten days now since I gave up bread. I am fine. I weighed myself today. The weight today is the same as it was there. If the scale is accurate, it may even be a little more. That is, it is 95\_. I am proceeding with my experiment with great caution. I had started it at the age of 20 and then gave it up. I started it again in 1893 and again gave it up. I enjoy making the same experiment now at the age of 60, for I see big results for myself and my co-workers from the success of my experiment. I cannot say as yet how far the experiment is a success. In 1893 I had carried on the experiment for 15 days before giving it up. I ate uncooked fruit and nuts for many years. This experiment, however, stands in a class by itself. More about it when we meet. No one there should be frightened. I have taken no vow. I will not go on with the experiment at the cost of my health. In any case, I will have my meals in the common kitchen.

Since Chimanlal and others have moved out of the houses on the upper side, those houses will fall into disrepair if not used. I think they may be occupied even by persons without families.

Let Balkrishna carry on with the *Gita* in the manner he thinks best.

Panditji<sup>1</sup> has been roped in all right. It did not occur to me that he would have to shoulder the burden of looking after the cash too. But this is real music. True music is produced only when there is harmony in the different tunes of life. Among those who have given the other music, there have been many immoral men too.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5420

<sup>1</sup> Narayan Moreswar Khare, the musician

### 36. LETTER TO KASHI GANDHI

[May 20, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. KASHI,

Today is my silence-day. It is 6.45 in the morning. I am pained that there is no letter either from you or from Chhaganlal. From you, at any rate. I expect to have letters at regular intervals at the present time. How is your mental condition, how do you keep, what do you do there? I wish to know all about how Chhaganlal behaves—whether he is at peace, whether he eats properly and how he spends his time, etc. I wait for a letter from you every day and the day passes without a letter from you. I will reach Bombay on May 23; Ashram on the 28th. I should like to see both of you then.

Ba thinks of you from time to time.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati Original: S.N. 33095

### 37. LETTER TO MRS. SOHANLAL SHARMA<sup>2</sup>

May 21, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. If the account related to me is true to the letter I see no objection to your marrying the young man who is prepared to give you protection.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat: G. N. 2824

<sup>1</sup> Gandhi wrote the letter on a silence-day, i.e., Monday. The Monday preceding May 23, 1929, on which Gandhiji here says he would reach Bombay, fell on May 20.

<sup>2</sup> The letter was written obviously before the addressee's marriage.

### 38. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

May 22, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I am writing this in reply to your letter of February 28 in a running train. You have suggested in the letter that the spinner should be made to card and weave too. I see a fault in the suggestion. A spinner gets a quarter of an anna per hour and spins for eight hours in a day. If she cards or weaves for eight hours she will get at least one anna per hour. Those who object to hand-spinning say that spinning should be this argument. Your suggestion may be good, but then a handloom cannot be set up in every house and no single person can handle it. Helpers will be needed. So weaving is a whole-time occupation. Spinning is a part-time occupation. Carding should be included in spinning because it is an inseparable part of spinning. Think over this. Write to me again.

I have your letter about Utkal. I am not taking any further action in the matter for the present.

Keep me posted with information.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 9845. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

### 39. IN ANDHRA DESHA [—VI]

The following is the last but one itinerary I shall be able to give of what has been to me a most instructive and interesting tour:

9-5-1929—East Godavari District: Korukonda, Rs. 50-0-0; Sitanagaram (subsequent collections), 31-2-3; Raghavapuram (subsequent collections), 64-3-0; Collections on the way, etc., 153-0-0; Vizagapatam District (subsequent collections), 37-0-0; East Krishna (subsequent collections), 20-0-0; West Godavari (subsequent collections), 13-0-0; Guntur District (subsequent collections), 617-11-6.

10-5-1929—Nellore District: Buchireddipalem, Rs. 4,506-0-5 (Rs. 570 Lalaji Fund); Vangellu, 126-0-0; Annareddipalem, 146-0-0; Pallepalli

Isakapalem, 348-0-0; Rebale, 386-0-0; Maktapuram, 75-0-0; Minagallu, 56-0-0; Damaramadugu, 10-0-0; Penuballi, 15-0-0; Kalayakagallu, 250-0-0; Vavveru, 116-0-0; Kotte Vangellu, 116-0-0; Yellayypalem, 1,246-0-0 (Rs. 116 Lalaji Fund); Rajupalem, 116-0-0; Gandavaram, 300-0-0; Pedaputtedu, 208-0-0; Kovur Co-operative Union Society, 116-0-0; Parlepalli, 296-6-3; Vidvaluru, 400-0-0; Vutukuru, 1,127-14-6; Moporu, 1,136-0-0; Alluru, 1,296-8-0; Kavali and other villages, 1,706-9-8 (Re. 1 Lalaji Fund).

11-5-1929—Ulavapadu, Rs. 558-0-0; Kandukuru 1,343-2-3; Botalaguduru and Pamuru, 717-0-6; Sitarampuram, 15-12-0; Yelamaru, 1-0-0

12-5-1929—Peramana, Rs. 116-0-0; Sangam, 776-0-0; Pallepadi, 731-14-9; (Rs. 5 Lalaji Fund); Gangapatnam, 640-0-1; Mypadu, 752-3-9.

12-5-1929—Venkanapalem, Rs. 30-0-0; Koduru, 50-0-0; Koruturu, 47-0-0; Indukurupeta, 176-2-0; Kottavuru Y.M.C.A., 5-0-0; Nellore, 5,178-12-6 (Rs. 20 Lalaji Fund); Pottapalem, 1,016-0-0; Potlapudi, 70-0-0; Guduru, 734-0-0; Tumburu, 50-0-0.

14-5-1929—Nayudupeta, Rs. 655-6-8; Attavaram, 116-0-0; Nidumusili, 50-0-0; Chittoor District: Kalahasti, 1,116-0-0; Bell Metal Co., 316-0-0.

15-5-1929—Tirupati, Rs. 1099-7-0; Renigunta, 67-0-0; Unaccounted. 60-0-0; Papanayanipeta, 12-0-1; Puttur, 806-0-0; Tiruttani, 115-12-0; Chittoor, 511-0-0; Palmaneru, 138-12-0 Punganuru, 536-15-11.

16-5-1929—Madanapalli, Rs. 2,475-14-0; Anantapur District: Nagireddipalli, 116-0-0; Kadiri, 1,300-8-11; Kutagulla, 116-0-0; Mudigubba, 116-0-0; Dampetla, 116-0-0; Dharmavaram, 1,148-8-0; Anantapur, 1,247-4-0; Tadipatri, 1,160-5-3.

Total up to date Rs. 2,43,283-3-6.

The tour has been no doubt exacting, the heat equally so. Nevertheless it has been for me a matter of great joy to find the villagers responding in a most wonderful manner. The rigour of the tour has been softened by the willing and unremitting attention of the volunteers, chief among whom has been Subbaramiah who gave up Government service and has ever since remained in Congress service. But the one man who has been most responsible for my well-being is Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya. He has been taken to task for bringing me to Andhra at this time of the year and then making a heavy programme. He is not wholly responsible for either. The

programmehad to cover the whole of Andhra Desha. He could not within the time allotted to him devise a less heavy programme. The Andhra leaders did not want me to go in February. And I was bound to give March to Burma. It was therefore April and May for Andhra or postponement of the tour this year. Postponements there have been many. Any further postponement was impossible. But no man could have made the tour less exacting than Deshabhakta. He has worn himself out in trying to keep times, avoid noises and secure comfortable lodgings. He is one of the gentlest of men it has been my privilege to be associated with. But he assumed during the tour a severe and decisive tone, so unnatural for him, that the co-workers beside him treated his severity as a huge joke, and his assumed rage over things going wrong, as they will do sometimes under all climes and in spite of the best of management, has broken for me the monotony of continuous motoring often along wretched roads. I would repeat tours like this a hundred times under the supervision of a superintendent like Deshabhakta and amid a people like the Andhras.

#### UNIVERSAL PROVIDER

Whilst writing of Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya I may not omit Deshoddharaka Nageshvarrao. I have always chaffed him about making money out of a patent ointment with a sweet name. And he has always smilingly retorted, 'Yes, it is bad, what can I do? I try to serve my country with the money I get from it. And it is an inoffensive ointment.' I have attended to the explanation with the same indifference with which I have joked about the patent ointment. I was therefore not prepared for the agreeable discovery I have made during the tour that his depot has enabled him to become the universal provider for the many public activities of Andhra. Never has a deserving beggar been turned away from his hospitable door. Wherever I have gone the addresses have made mention of his charities. If it is the Anand Ashram for the untouchables Nageshvarrao builds the substantial block of buildings for it; if it is a school that has needed assistance Nageshvarrao has been the helper; if it is Dr. Subrahmanian who wants a printery for his Ashram, it is again Nageshvarrao who comes to the rescue. He is never so happy as when he is giving. And so far as I have been able to understand, his left hand knoweth not what his right giveth. I do not wonder that a public worker remarked during the tour, in answer to my joke about the 'patent loot', "I wish he would be able to loot much more than he

does. It will then all be used to help public activities.” I have been secretly criticizing the Andhra lavishness of titles on national workers. But this Deshodharaka has reconciled me to the title he had deservedly earned. But I must pass on.

#### A REMARKABLE ADDRESS

I must leave several important matters for the next issue. I propose to close these hurried notes, written against post time, with the mention of a remarkable address received at Ullavapadu in Nellore district. It was in Telugu and Hindi, both written on ordinary thick paper with an ornamental border by a local artist such as could be produced in a little village. The language of the Hindi address was what I should call standard Hindi without any attempt at Sanskritizing or Persianizing it. It was written in the language one hears spoken in the U.P. by those who have not developed anti-Hindi or anti-Muslim prejudices. The opening paragraph has mere courteous reference to my visit but contains no rhetoric or flowery adjectives. Here is a translation of the body of the address:<sup>1</sup>

In accordance with your instructions in *Young India* we beg to lay before you as fully as we can the information asked for by you, in the hope that after perusing it you will vouchsafe to us such guidance as may be warranted by the peculiar circumstances of our village. . . .

. . . The greatest hardship that the people here have to suffer is from scarcity of drinking water. This village has got a temple of Vishnu as also a dharmshala. At the latter free meals are given to sadhus and Brahmins.

There are 897 members of the ‘depressed classes’ in this village. They dwell outside the village in a special location and are divided into two sections. Those two sections, while not observing untouchability as among themselves, do not inter-dine. Nor will one section allow the other the use of its wells. . . . They eat carrion even when animals have died of infectious disease with the result that leprosy is very prevalent among them, particularly in the Malang caste. They are also very much addicted to the liquor habit. . . . There is no Congress Committee in this village.

There is no branch of the A.I.S.A. here. There are 52 spinning-wheels in this village of which 22 are working. They are worked mostly in spare time. The monthly aggregate outturn of yarn from these wheels is 10 seers. The average monthly earnings per head come to Rs. 2. The count of yarn spun is from 20 to 25.

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

There are 65 looms in this village. Twenty-six of these are ordinary pit looms. 12 of these use both mill yarn and hand-spun yarn, 14 use mill yarn only. The rest are fly-shuttle looms. None of these use hand-spun yarn.

. . . There is in this village a library and reading-room. It was established by the youth of this village. It contains 1,230 books and issues on an average 3 books every day. It receives Hindi as also Telugu journals. For the last two years Government aid to this library has been stopped as the organizers could not conform to certain restrictions sought to be imposed upon them by the authorities.

If the village was an advanced Congress village, it could not have presented a more exhaustive study of its life. The surprise is that this village has no Congress Committee, no worker of the A.I.S.A. The visit to this village was early in the morning. Through no fault of the villagers I had no advance copy. And not knowing the rich contents of the address, I was unable to give the guidance the framer had asked for. But I may give it now.

(1) The village elders should hasten to form a Congress Committee and make it a point of having on their roll every adult villager whether male or female.

(2) They should befriend the so-called untouchables, wean them from carrion and drink and draw them closer to them. To this end they should invite district leaders to visit their quarters.

(3) The village elders should meet together and enlist the help of some philanthropic engineer of the district and devise a scheme for a better supply of water.

(4) They should systematically introduce hand-spinning in every home and aim at producing at least all their khadi.

(5) They should deem the disaffiliation of their library as a blessing in disguise and make it thoroughly national in character and a center for spreading adult education.

*Young India*, 23-5-1929

#### 40. PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN

The Working be the duty of the forthcoming A.I.C.C. meeting to investigate the causes of the break-down of the organization and the remedies for its effective and efficient reorganization.

*Young India*, 23-5-1929

#### 41. THE NEED OF THE HOUR

The Nellore District Congress Committee presented me during my tour in that district with the following illuminating statement<sup>1</sup> about its conditions:

What is true of Nellore is, I am sorry to have to say, true of most Committees with which I have come in touch. I share the opinion expressed by the Nellore Committee that the entry of Congressmen into the so-called elective bodies has disorganized and demoralized the Congress. It is difficult however to discover the remedy for the evil unless Congressmen can be persuaded to revert to the boycott of 1921. There seems to be no room for dyarchy in the Congress as elsewhere. Somehow or other constructive work and Councils do not seem to go together. Those who are in the Councils and local boards have little taste or aptitude for constructive work, and those who are doing the latter have little or no taste for the elective bodies. Both however profess faith in the constructive programme if their votes and their speeches are proof of that faith. A device therefore should be possible whereby the Congress machinery may be worked at full speed and efficiently. The A.I.C.C. should really tackle that problem to the exclusion of everything else if such exclusion becomes necessary. I hear a great deal about the treasure chests of local committees being empty. Those who speak thus do not realize that the constitution has provided automatic machinery for Congress finance. If it becomes really a people's institution, it need never be in want. Nellore district alone had ten thousand members in 1921. No provincial Committee should have fewer than thirty thousand members. That means a steady annual income of Rs. 7,500 enough for smoothly running a provincial organization. And an organization that commands such membership should always be able to raise contributions for special purposes. An honestly worked Congress organization should surely have on its roll

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here



more than six millions which in round figures is the total strength of the electoral roll for elections to the legislatures. The need of the hour therefore is a complete reorganization and stabilization of the Congress. Would that the forthcoming meeting of the A.I.C.C. will realize its obvious duty.

*Young India*, 23-5-1929

#### 42. *LIBERATE THE WOMAN*

Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi, the well-known social worker of Madras, has written a long letter based on one of my Andhra speeches from which I take the following interesting extract:<sup>1</sup>

Your observations on the urgent need for reforms and for a healthy change in the daily habits of our people, during your journey from Bezwada to Guntur, have appealed to me very much indeed.

I may humbly submit that I as a medical woman fully concur with you. But will you kindly permit me to say that if education is really going to bring in its train social reforms, better sanitation, and improved public health, it is going to achieve this result only through the education of our women?

Under the present social system, don't you think that very few women are given sufficient opportunities for education, full development of body and mind, and self-expression?

If the members of the Congress believe that freedom is the birth-right of every nation and individual, and if they are determined to achieve that at any cost, should they not first liberate their women from the evil customs and conventions that restrict their all-round healthy growth, which remedy lies in their own hands?

Our poets, saints and sages have sung in the same tune. Swami Vivekananda has said, 'That country and that nation, which do not respect women, have never become great, nor will ever be in future. The principal reason why your race is so much degraded is that you had no respect for these living images of *Shakti*. If you do not raise the women who are the living embodiments of the Divine Mother, don't think that you have any other way to rise'.

The late Subrahmanya Bharati, the gifted Tamil poet, has echoed the same idea.

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

So, would you kindly in your tour advise our men to follow the right and the surest way to attain freedom?

Dr. Muthulakshmi has a perfect right to expect Congressmen to shoulder this responsibility. Many Congressmen are doing great work in this direction individually as also corporately. The root of the evil however lies far deeper than would appear on superficial observation. It is not the education merely of women that is at fault. It is the whole of our educational system that is rotten. Again it is not this custom or that which needs condemnation, it is the inertia which refuses to move even in the face of an admitted evil that needs to be removed. And lastly the condemnation is true only of the middle class, the town-dwellers, i.e., barely 15 per cent of the vast millions of India. The masses living in the villages have no child-marriage, no prohibition against widow-remarriage. It is true that they have other evils which impede their growth. Inertia is common to both. What is however necessary is to overhaul the educational system and to devise one in terms of the masses. , amelioration of the economic condition of the masses and the like resolve themselves into penetration into the villages, reconstruction or rather reformation of the village life.

*Young India*, 23-5-1929

#### 43. TELEGRAM TO SITLA SAHAI

BOMBAY  
May 23, 1929

SITLA SAHAI  
ASHRAM  
SABARMATI

JAWAHARLAL      AND      I      AGREE      YOU      SHOULD      REPUDIATE  
LIABILITY      SAYING      YOU      ARE      LEGALLY      ADVISED      YOU  
ARE      NOT      LIABLE      AND      IF      LIABLE      YOU      HAVE      NO  
PROPERTY.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15394

#### 44. INTERVIEW TO "THE BOMBAY CHRONICLE"

May 24, 1929

Had a time not come when the boycott would be made more effective by devising a definite plan of vigorous action?

Mahatmaji said everything that was possible was being done by the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee and all that he could suggest at the present moment was that the people who believed in this movement and wanted to assist it should strengthen the hands of the Committee by carrying out its instructions from time to time.

Our representative suggested the formation of special boycott committees in which the Congress workers and also the mill-owners could work together on the basis of co-operation.

He did not think he could carry things further at the present stage.

Would the boycott not be materially advanced if the F.C.B. Committee were to co-operate with other agencies which were also working for the boycott in their own ways?

Replying to this question Mahatmaji gave an assurance on behalf of the F.C.B. Committee that whatever assistance could be secured from other sources was being applied for and would be applied for in future.

Would a pledge embodying a solemn vow that the signatory would use swadeshi articles alone in any way accelerate the progress of the boycott movement?

He did not think, he said, that any pledge was necessary for popularizing the boycott movement. He added that the question of pledge was considered by the F.C.B. Committee. It was not pledge, he said, that was wanted but actual and immediate actions.

Asked whether bonfires should be restarted on a larger scale and in an organized manner, Mahatmaji replied that it was much better for the time being to carry on this propaganda in the way it was being carried on by the F.C.B. Committee.

Since our eyes are fixed on the coming battle that we are to begin in January next and since the problem of creating effective sanctions behind our national demand is staring us in the face, is it a wise policy that our energies should be frittered away over minor issues such as the acceptance of offices by Congressmen?

Mahatmaji's prompt reply to this question was his usual diplomatic laughter followed by a still more diplomatic remark that it was a question which he was incompetent to answer.

Was it not a fact that he was acting as a mediator to bring about a reconciliation between the divergent views that had made themselves manifest within the Congress camp? A loud laughter again came as a reply.

You have had enough. You are now trying to pump out something from me which I am not prepared to give.

*The Bombay Chronicle, 25-5-1929*

#### 45. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

May 25, 1929

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. It may not be wrong to go hawking Khadi among the Gondal subjects. I have however just spoken in favour of emphasizing the production of Khadi. If all take to sacrificial spinning khadi can be produced without difficulty. Our present need is to improve the quality of our yarn. In Kathiawar it would be produced in bulk only through sacrificial spinning, provided of course you could create the atmosphere. About the prize-winning wheel we shall decide when I reach the Ashram.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5696

#### 46. SPEECH AND RESOLUTION AT A.I.C.C. MEETING

BOMBAY,

May 25, 1929

In view of the campaign of repression which the British Government is carrying on all over the country, as evidenced by the conviction of Sjt. Sambamoorthi, member of the Working Committee, and many other national workers, the wholesale arrests and barbarous treatment of the members of the All-India Congress Committee and the labour leaders and workers now awaiting trial at Meerut, the unwarranted house-searches and wanton confiscation of Pandit Sunderlal's *History of British Rule*, the All-India Congress Committee is of opinion that the nation should be prepared for efficient resistance to such methods; and as it is clear that no nation-wide resistance is possible unless the whole Congress organization is reconstructed on a satisfactory basis, this Committee, therefore, calls upon the provincial organizations to reorganize their respective provinces so as to fulfil the following requirements:

The Provincial Congress organization shall have not less than \_ per cent of the total population of their province as original members, and not less than 50 per cent of the districts represented by it.

The district organization shall have not less than one per cent<sup>1</sup> of its population as original members and not less than 50 per cent of tahsils represented by it.

The tahsil organization shall have not less than \_ per cent of its population as original members, and not less than 10 per cent of the villages within the tahsil represented by it.

The village organization shall have not less than 3 per cent<sup>2</sup> of its population as original members.

For the Provinces of Bombay and Delhi, the original members shall not be less than 3 per cent of their respective populations.<sup>3</sup>

For the Province of Burma<sup>4</sup> the Working Committee shall issue such instructions as may appear to it reasonable after consultation with the workers in that Province.<sup>5</sup> No provincial organization will be recognized by the Committee that does not satisfy the foregoing test within<sup>6</sup> 31st August next.

It will be open to the Working Committee to disaffiliate any<sup>7</sup> organization that does not carry out the instructions issued from time to time by the All-India Congress Committee or the Working Committee.

In moving the resolution, Gandhiji spoke in Hindi and then in English. He said it was a summary procedure which he was adopting when he asked the Committee to adopt the resolution without having circulated copies, and without giving time to consider. But the situation demanded the summary procedure. He would ask the Committee to eschew from its mind the preamble, because the preamble claimed to be exhaustive. The principal part was the operative part. The Congress had appointed three Committees to organize boycott of foreign cloth, khaddar production and prohibition. The resolution before the Committee now related to the internal organization of the Congress. If the Congress were to be an irresistible force whose authority would be respected, it must be a strong organization with complete co-

<sup>1</sup> This was amended to read: “\_ per cent”.

<sup>2</sup> Amended to read : “one per cent”

<sup>3</sup> Amended to read: “For the Province of Bombay the original members shall not be less than 1\_ per cent of its population.”

<sup>4</sup> Amended to read: “For the Frontier Province and the Province of Burma”

<sup>5</sup> Amended to read: “Provinces”. The following sentence was added: “Populations of Indian States and of Agencies analogous to Non-Regulation tracts may be excluded from the computation of members.”

<sup>6</sup> Amended to read: “by”

<sup>7</sup> Amended to read: “an”

ordination between its component parts. There was no such co-ordination at present.

The proposal might seem to be radical, but the emergent situation demanded radical remedies. In fact originally the Working Committee had agreed to a more radical proposition, namely, that Provincial Committees should be abolished and that the District Committees should establish direct relations with the Central Committee. But when the necessary changes had to be made in the constitution difficulties were experienced. Pandit Jawaharlal was also of opinion that the Committee might regret it, but he had no misgivings. The resolution put forward radical proposals. The Committee should take the responsibility of the Congress if in its opinion the situation in the country demanded it. If the resolution was carried into effect, it would not then be feasible for the Viceroy to insult the country by extending the legislature or to insult the President of the Assembly.<sup>1</sup>

*The Bombay Chronicle, 27-5-1929*

#### 47. "GORAKSHAKALPATARU"

Shri Rameshwardas has sent me Rs. 25 in memory of the death of his uncle's daughter with a desire that the above book may be sent to suitable places with the addressees being asked to bear the postage. The book will be sent, as far as the money lasts, to those managers of goshalas or others who serve the cow in some other way if they send a stamp of Re. 0-1-3 together with their names and addresses. Correspondence in this matter should be addressed to the Secretary, Goseva Sangh, Udyoga Mandir, Sabarmati.

I give below the gist of what Shri Rameshwardas writes in Hindi in the same letter since it deserves to be pondered over:

There is also this reason why I make the above donation. Nowadays we make *go-dan*<sup>2</sup> in honour of the dead. But I believe the cow is not at all served thereby. There are no pastures nowadays; hence Brahmins are not able to maintain cows to the last and in the end they are delivered into the hands of the butcher. Therefore today true *go-dan* consists in promoting service of the cow. One way of doing so is to distribute widely books like *Gorakshakalpataru*. I do hope that Hindu society will understand this, and will order this book, read it, think over it and take the measures proposed in it.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan, 26-5-1929*

<sup>1</sup> The resolution was seconded by Srinivasa Iyengar and later passed with amendments.

<sup>2</sup> Gift of a cow

#### 48. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

May 26, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got three letters from you at Bombay. I am reaching Sabarmati tow days earlier.

I got all the details of your career which I wanted to have.

One remedy for your temper is that you should live with me for some time. It is also my wish. During July and August I shall be at the Ashram. Now I shall be here till the 10th of June.

Almonds would certainly not be the cause of the cough attack you got. It might be the butter. It is all right if you gave it up. It doesnot matter if you soak the almonds. Peel them and grind them into a paste.

Do you have an oven for making bread? It is not convenient to prepare a small quantity. I wish you would not bother about making any and would rather take fruit, etc.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6784

#### 49. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,

May 27, 1929

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

EVERGREEN

MATHERAN

RADHA RUKHI<sup>1</sup> MAY GO SINHGADH IF THEY WILL.  
OTHERWISE LET THEM RETURN IMMEDIATELY. RUKHI  
MAY STAY ALONE IF SHE CHOOSES.

BAPU

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

<sup>1</sup> Rukmini Gandhi

## 50. LETTER TO D.

May 27, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am extremely dissatisfied with your letters. You are hysterical, easily excited, unstable and revengeful. You should cease to think about the girl. It would be improper for you to advertise the connection to the world. It must be enough for you to plead your suit before the girl's father. After all, you should recognize your own limitations. Would a father willingly give his daughter to a cripple? The girl has a perfect right to choose you as her partner if she wishes. But a girl who does so must be far above the average, and if this girl is, she will overcome her fears and all other difficulties. She is in no need of your protection. It is you who stand in need of protection from her. You are forgetting your limitations and denying your philosophy.

From the original: C.W. 6169. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

## 51. LETTER TO K. J. PETIGARE

[After May 27, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SIR,

I beg to acknowledge your letter. I regret to have to inform you that I am unable to comply with your request. It is true that I have Pt. Sunderlalji's *History of British Rule in India* in my possession. But I regard the action of the U.P. Government as high-handed and tyrannical.<sup>2</sup> I regard the action in making house searches for the book all over India as highly insulting, objectionable and vindictive. I have never been able to understand the house searches. The books have surely by this time been already read by the receivers. I may add too that I have read the book myself and many friends have done

<sup>1</sup> Presumably this letter was drafted by Gandhiji for Jamnalal Bajaj in reply to the letter dated May 27, 1929 from the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bombay, demanding the surrender of *History of British Rule in India*; vide "Notes" sub-title Sheth Jamnalalji's Action

<sup>2</sup> Vide also "Notes" sub-title Daylight aRobbery", "Notes" sub-title Pandit Suanderlal's Book and "Speech and Resolution at A.I.C.a.C. Meeting", 25-5-1929



likewise. It is our deliberate opinion that the book is wholly unobjectionable and is a praiseworthy endeavour to inculcate the lesson of non-violence. In the circumstances and as an humble protest against the action referred to by me I must refuse to deliver the volumes to you.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary: S.N. 32577/50

## 52. LETTER TO V. G. DESAI

May 28, 1929

BHAISHRI VALJI,

I have your postcard.

When I wrote I had you in mind. Let me state what I expect from you if your health permits:

(1) visiting every goshala and its management in India and carrying our message to them;

(2) a general idea about dairies and tanneries to carry out this work;

(3) a rough account in Gujarati of the dairies, etc., in Denmark and other countries which are models in this respect;

(4) an article of practical value on this subject every week in *Navajivan* and *Young India*;

(5) visiting slaughter-houses and giving harrowing descriptions of them.

This is all I can think of at the moment.

On reaching there I shall give further thought to the question of accepting the yarn spun by me in lieu of subscription.

You may write in *Navajivan* about the sale of our milk.

We may take up the responsibility of managing the Vinchhiya Pinjrapole if we have someone who can take care of it and if we are allowed complete freedom.

I am surprised to learn about the jacket for *Jodanikosh*.

Now on I shall write in *Navajivan* about Rameshwardas's money.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7401. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

### 53. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

May 28, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have both your letters. I too have received many letters from D. . . . I have written to him today and I enclose a copy for you. I am sorry I gave you so much trouble about such a man. My acquaintance with him was slight. I had met him only once or twice. He seemed to be a good man. He still does. But you cannot employ such people. Or possibly I am doing you an injustice in believing this. You have an altruistic instinct but it is probably too big a responsibility to collect such people around you. He now fears that he may not be able to stay on there and has written that he may be called to the Ashram. Tell me what I should do.

My article was in no way connected with what appeared in *Forward*. I am quite sure that the punishment meted out to *Forward* is cruel and inhuman. I have no doubt that *Forward* has shown courage.

The raw cereals experiment is continuing. I shall leave Sabarmati on June 11.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6169. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### 54. FROM AND ABOUT SAROJINI DEVI

The latest letter from India's non-official ambassador in the West reads:<sup>1</sup>

I have had since I last wrote to you one month of strenuous and continual travelling across many thousand miles of country from Chicago to Los Angeles and back through the wheat, copper, oil, cattle and cotton countries, a vast area that bears testimony to the triumph of man over Nature, of his courage, enterprise, endurance, resource, industry and vision that could coax or compel such rich results in such a short period. And yet, all the power of man becomes no more than a feather or a ball of thistle puff in the presence of Nature in the Grand Canyon of the Arizona Desert where time itself has sculptured magnificent temples to the unknown God out of rocks that are dyed

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

in all the colours of jewels and flowers. Song itself is transmuted into silence and silence is translated into worship in the midst of such awe-inspiring beauty and splendour.

The Arizona Desert is the home of many Red Indian tribes, who live their own picturesque and primitive lives, so strangely aloof and alone in the land that was once their ancestral heritage. They are more akin to us than to the foreign Western peoples who have taken away that heritage. There is a freemasonry that binds all primitive world races in a common bond, for the folk spirit, whether in India, Roumania, Zululand or the Arizona Desert expresses itself very much in the same symbols and reveals very much the same primal virtues through the folk music, folklore and folk dance. Valour, I think, is one of the primal keyvirtues and nowhere does it find more stirring expression than in the dances I saw of the Hopi tribe on the edge of the Grand Canyon, the Eagle Dance, the Dance of the Buffalo Hunt and the Victory Dance. You will be very much interested in what a proud young representative of an Indian tribe said to me at the conclusion of an address I gave in San Francisco. He was obviously well educated and may have been a graduate of one of the Universities. 'Thank you for your inspiring talk about your country. This country once belonged to me and my people. We are dying out, but *they may kill us, they can never conquer us.*' Yes, these desert children are children of the Eagle and the Wind and Thunder. Who can conquer their spirit? I felt the truth of the proud boast when I went to Arizona.

California I loved, every flowering rood and foam-kissed acre of that lovely land. But one sorrow made a cloud for me in that horizon of dazzlingsunshine—the unhappy plight of the Indian settlers who after twenty or thirty years of prosperous labours on their own farm lands have by the recent immigration laws been deprived of all right to land and citizenship. . . . I have come to the conclusion after my visits to Africa and America that the status of Indian settlers can never be satisfactory anywhere till the status of India is definitely assured among the free nations of the world.

You are aware of my inveterate habit of studying the human document in all its phases and there is no record, plain or cryptic, that does not interest me and which I do not try to interpret and understand. In the course of my travel, I sample not only every kind of climate and scenery but also every type of humanity. . . .

This week I received belated reports of all events and incidents, I was almost going to say accidents, of the great National week in Calcutta. Padmaja's little word pictures were more vivid and illuminating than all the journalistic descriptions. She writes, 'The little Wizard has lost none of his

ancient magic.' But the supreme, the final, magic still awaits expression and fulfilment in a true and fruitful formula for Hindu-Muslim friendship and unity of vision and action which alone can redeem India from her intricate sevenfold bondage.

Hearken to the entreaty of a Wandering Singer, O little Wizard. Find the formula, work the magic and help to ensure the realization of the wondrous dream of a liberated India. Good bye.

This letter is dated at Kansas city, 11th Feb., and would have been before the reader earlier but for my Andhra tour. I have removed from previous letters all personal references. But I dare not remove the reference in this letter. It demonstrates Sarojinidevi's passion for Hindu-Muslim union. How I wish I could realize her hope. But the wizard has lost his wand. He feels helpless though his passion for heart union is no less than hers and though his faith in the midst of 'the encircling gloom' is brighter than ever. It seems however that Satan's spell is not yet broken and mad fury must for a while take its own course before exhaustion overtakes it and it is self-destroyed.

Turning however from this self-musing, and returning to the songstress, it gives me joy to quote the following from Dinabandhu Andrews's letter:<sup>1</sup>

Sarojini Naidu's visit has been amazing. She has won all hearts, and I have been hearing nothing but praise about her visit everywhere I have gone, both in Canada and in the United States. . . . She must certainly come back again and again. For she has won the heart of the West, and they will never forget her. Friendship such as she has won must never be lost. Those who know Quebec best tell me that the next time she comes she will have a much warmer reception (if that were possible!) even than that which was given her on her present visit. For she will start with a strong group of earnest friends eager to help her in every part of the country.

*Young India*, 30-5-1929

## 55. APATHY OF MERCHANTS

Here is an extract from an argued address received during the Andhra tour. Speaking of khadi it says:

If we had been able to enlist the unstinted support of the merchant

<sup>1</sup> Only extracts are reproduced here.

community, we would have been able to put the constructive programme about khadi in full swing and set an example for the rest of our district to follow. But sad to say it was otherwise. A spirit of apathy has permeated the major portion of this district.

The remark made in the address is unfortunately true of almost every place in India. Indeed when the mercantile community is converted to the national cause, we shall not be long attaining our goal. As I have so often remarked it is the merchants who lost India to a foreign Government and it is they who can regain it. They are after all the largest co-operators with the Government. And amongst these, piecegoods merchants take the foremost place. It is really therefore a matter for every village Congress Committee to tackle this problem. If these committees would enlist the co-operation of these merchants, they must reason with them, show to them the folly of trading in foreign cloth. I have no doubt that in many places success would attend such effort. The work has to be of a twofold character, to persuade the foreigncloth trader as also the customer. What I however find is absence of originality amongst Congress workers. They are satisfied with enrolling a few members and going to sleep. Even in canvassing original members, they, as a rule, go to those who can read and write or those who belong to the same caste or class, instead of taking the Congress message to every grown-up man and woman. For instance, I have now made it a rule instead of doing my own shave to send for a khadi-clad barber. It has meant peaceful propaganda. Congressmen stare at me and are at their wit's end to know where to find a khadi-clad barber. They do not even realize that to procure a khadi-clad barber is the easiest thing in the world especially in villages. He would willingly wear khadi, if it is supplied to him cheap or even gratis. He requires nothing but a small dhoti. Happily he had never worn trousers, jackets, long turbans, etc. His usual costume is a small dhoti. And if Congressmen were to insist upon having a khadi-clad barber for service, barbers will immediately realize that a class of customers has come into being which requires them to wear khadi and they will not make any ado about wearing it. Add to this little bit of fellow-feeling and therefore a lesson to the barber on what khadi means, and you have a convert to khadi.

Among my audience in Andhra villages it is difficult to distinguish between khadi-clad men and men wearing foreign cloth, for the simple reason that both wear coarse cloth and when their

simple dhotis have seen a fair amount of wear and tear, from a distance khadi is indistinguishable from foreign cloth. There is therefore no difficulty that one finds with townspeople about fine khadi. All that is necessary in the villages is honest propaganda and proper organization for khadi production. And it is the villages after all that absorb crores worth of foreign cloth. Therefore when the double propaganda amongst the merchants and amongst the customers is carried on systematically, persistently and honestly, there should be no difficulty in achieving boycott of foreign cloth and replacing it with khadi, which can be manufactured almost in every village.

*Young India*, 30-5-1929

## 56. NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

For the assistance of Congressmen I quote the working resolution<sup>1</sup> of the A.I.C.C. in full:

The substance of this resolution is that before the end of August next there should be on the Congress register at least 7\_ lakhs of men and women who have received the message of the Congress and who have accepted the Congress creed and that they should be from all the parts of India including villages. This is one-eighth of what I had originally intended. It is also one-eighth of the number of electors registered as qualified to vote for members for the legislatures. Moreover Indian States, non-regulation tracts, Burma and Frontier provinces are excluded. Every amendment in the shape of making the burden light was accepted. The resolution was enthusiastically passed. If the members were earnest the resolution ought to be carried out long before the time-limit is reached. If it is honestly worked, we should have as in 1921 an actively working organization responding to the demands that may be made upon it from time to time. This necessary if the special committees regarding three boycotts, i.e., Foreign Cloth, Liquor and Untouchability, are to be well organized.

The question of the khadi franchise was raised. Strictly, khadi is no part of the franchise. Any person of age signing the Congress creed and tendering 4 annas can demand to be enrolled as a

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here; for the text *vide* "Speech and Resolution at A.I.C.C. Meeting", 25-5-1929

Congress member. Many including Government spies have thus found themselves on the Congress register. But at the time of voting at Congress meetings these have to be habitual wearers of khadi. This clause may be a hindrance to the proper running of the Congress machinery but not to setting it up. Whether the clause should or should not be removed from the constitution is a question which may be specially re-examined by the Congress and debated on merits. If even at this hour Congressmen do not believe in khadi, the clause should certainly be removed. If believing in khadi they do not want it in the constitution, it should also go. If it is retained, for the good name of the Congress it should be strictly enforced. If the 7\_ lakhs of members are honestly canvassed, the workers would naturally talk to the men and women whom they may invite to enroll themselves on the work being done and expected of them by the Congress. If I were a canvasser I would use the occasion for selling khadi and for carrying on anti-liquor and anti-untouchability propaganda. If the persons approached are at all politically inclined, I should talk to them about the Nehru constitution and tell them that if it is not accepted by the Govt. on or before 31st December next, the Congress will be expected to scrap the constitution and declare for complete independence. I should finally tell them that in the event of such declaration, the Congress would expect them to join any campaign of non-co-operation or civil disobedience that may be ordained by it. I know that if we have a *bona fide* organization fulfilling the minimum requirements and submitting to discipline we should have little difficulty in working out civil resistance if it becomes necessary next year as it is highly likely to be.

*Young India*, 30-5-1929

### 57. *PROGRESS OF F.C.B*<sup>1</sup>.

The F.C.B. Committee presented the A.I.C.C. at its meeting last week with a report of its work which, I hope, everyone interested in the movement will secure from the Secretary, Congress House, Bombay. I would advise correspondents to send oneanna stamp for postage. The report covers only two months ending 30th April. Satisfactory as the

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Cloth Boycott

progress may be considered, it would have been far more so, if we had a responsive Congress organization working full speed. Municipalities and local bodies are slowly moving in reply to Sjt. Jairamdas's appeal. Not more than thirty have as yet sent in their replies. Every local body that has been captured by the Congress should surely carry out the boycott resolution. Meagre as the response from organized public bodies has been, the movement has already made itself felt. From the many extracts quoted in the report I take the following from a speech of Mr. J.C. Roberts, president of the Delhi Piecegoods Association:

Another disturbing factor which was causing no little anxiety to the commercial community was the present unstable political situation in the country and its *off-shoot in the shape of the threatened movement for the boycott of foreign cloth*. Manufacturing centres were also not free from the effect of the present depression in India and by reports from home it was seen that *about one-third of the total textile mills in Great Britain had to be closed down on account of absence of demand from India and the failure of the Indian buyer to take forward contracts....Matters were going from bad to worse and the future looked rather gloomy and uncertain*.

The propaganda has produced a marked effect on the sales of khadi which show a rise upon last year for the same period of 50%.

But says Tattersall regarding Calcutta:

There have been indications of more demand in piecegoods. . . . *With regard to India there are more signs of Calcutta being in need of bigger supplies especially in dhotis and rather freer buying taken place*.

Upon this the report says:

Calcutta imported last year 2,821 lakhs of rupees worth of foreign cloth out of a total of Rs. 6,516 lakhs for the whole country. Its share came to 43 per cent. It is thus the chief port of entry of foreign cloth. This fact only increases the significance of the above comment.

Let Calcutta Congressmen take note of the warning.

Many people seem to fear that presently there will be no khadi on the market and that then we shall be as before at the mercy of the indigenous mills with the danger of being once more bamboozled and fooled into taking foreign cloth in the guise of Indian mill-made cloth or at least paying exorbitant prices. The danger is real if we will not devote our time to producing khadi in all the ways open to us. The ways are:

1. Spinning for self,



2. Spinning for hire, and
3. Spinning for sacrifice.

The first is the most important, universal and never failing once it is organized. Time for effective propaganda in this direction has only just been reached. Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan has realized this and is organizing it on a large scale. It is the cheapest method of khadi production, for it does away with the bother of having to find a market for the production. The second is spinning for hire for which there is great scope. But this needs capital for stocking cotton and organizing sales. But of course it also taxes out business capacity, makes us resourceful and enables us to build up a vast organization and find honourable employment for the middle class people. The third method is noble but can be taken up only by a select class. If the nation realized the necessity of sacrifice, it could be a means of producing an unlimited quantity of yarn. All the schools conducted by municipalities can give us yarn to clothe lakhs of people. City-dwellers giving half an hour per day to the wheel can give at least 100 yards of good yarn. Let no one thoughtlessly retort that they can better employ their half hour than by merely spinning yarn. A banker finding himself stranded in a waterless desert cannot better employ his hours than by collecting fresh water. An India bent upon achieving boycott of foreign cloth during this year cannot better employ the time of even the best of her inhabitants than in spinning yarn till that boycott is achieved. We do not see this simple obvious truth because we do not *feel* the necessity of this boycott. At any rate all the three methods are being tried and there is no danger of khadi famine if all of us would work at them to the best of our ability.

*Young India*, 30-5-1929

## 58. NOTES

### ALMORA TOUR

I hope to leave Sabarmati for Almora on 11th June. It is hardly necessary to remind the workers that

1. There should be no show, no decorations causing expense,
2. No more than the absolutely required number of local

volunteers should accompany me during the tour,

3. There will be subscriptions called for, for *Daridranarayana*,

4. Nothing but simplest food should be provided for the party accompanying me,

5. I should have at least six hours during the day given to me for attending to editorial and correspondence work excluding the hours of feeding, etc.,

6. If expenses of reception are to be deducted from the purses that may be collected, audited accounts should be submitted to me, and

7. My party will travel at its own expense, the reception committee kindly providing for transport facilities.

As this tour has been devised by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for both rest and work, I am taking with me some who will not be required for the tour but who will accompany me for health's sake. They should in no way be a burden on the reception committee.

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### 59. IN ANDHRA DESHA [–VII]

The heading this week is a misnomer. I am writing these notes at the Udyoga Mandir and not in Andhra. Nevertheless I am still surrounded by Andhra atmosphere and Andhra friends including the head jailor Konda Venkatappayya. I am still busy with the Andhra work and am now conferring with these friends and the members of the A.I.S.A. Council as to how to make the best use of the funds collected. Well then, here is the last list of the collections.

Estimated value of jewels in Nellore Dt. 200-0-0.

17-5-1929—Tadipatri (subsequent collections) 100-0-0; Cuddapah Dt.,

Dattapuram, 116-0-0; Muddanum, 342-0-0; Chilmakuru, 166-5-9;

Niduvuvvi, 116-0-0; Yerraguntla, 1,146-5-1.

18-5-1929—Proddutur, Rs. 1,835-12-0; Gudipadu, 116-0-0; Suddepalli, 500-0-0; Peddamudiam, 116-0-0; Jangalapalli, 116-0-0; Kurnool

Dt., Chagallumarru, 342-11-0; Nallagutla, 136-10-3; Sirvel, 116-0-0; Allagadda, 241-0-0; Uygavada, 84-0-0.

19-5-1929—Nandyal, 1,177-6-0; Ayalur, 116-0-0; Panyam, 116-0-0; Kurnool, 1,705-10-10; Konidedu, 116-0-0; Estimated value of jewels in Anantapur, Cuddapah and Kurnool Dts., 100-0-0.

21-5-1929—Nagalepuram, 20-1-7; Pelakurti, 116-0-0; Kodumuru, 114-0-0;  
Devanakonda, 143-1-0; Pattikonda, 1,269-0-3; Anantapur Dt.,  
Guntakal, 416-0-0; East Godavary (subsequent collections), 30-3-6;  
Hyderabad (subsequent collections), 10-0-0; Bellary Dt., Adoni, 1,591-  
2-9; Guntur Dt. (subsequent collections), 156-0-0.  
25-5-1929—Cuddapah Dt. (subsequent collections), 8-14-0.  
Grand total Rs. 2,56,279-7-6.

As I said at my farewell speech at Adoni, of all my many tours, this has been the longest and the most intensive I have yet had in any single province, and the subscriptions too, so far as I recollect, the largest yet collected in any single province save of course during the year 1921. I entered Andhra Desha on 6th April and left it on 21st May making exactly 45 days. In that period 319 villages were actually traversed, Guntur and East Krishna leading with 52 each and East Godavari 50, West Godavari 48. I hope next week to publish a consolidated statement that is being prepared for me by the Deshabhakta and Sjt. Narayanmurti who has indeed been preparing the weekly lists.

#### ITS LESSON

The tour has been a perfect study for me. Andhra has limitless possibilities for khadi production. It can be easily organized for other Congress work. There are workers but they need to be drilled, they need strong and yet sympathetic leadership. There is the spirit of sacrifice. But the workers do not know what to do and how to do it. Dissensions divide them. Different and often conflicting programmes and policies confound them. Khadi is slowly but surely binding them and putting them under discipline. I am hoping much from the conference I am having with the workers who have followed me to Sabarmati.

#### A TIP TO ORGANIZERS

I may draw the attention of workers to the moving platform which I may claim to have discovered. It is not a discovery of intelligence but of necessity, which is the mother of most inventions and discoveries. I have a weak body which objects strongly to rise and sit to dictation. To get off cars and push, through admiring and shouting crowds, mount platforms sometimes threatening to give way and at times making good the threat, to dismount, push again through more pressing crowds and with difficulty to remount the car and finally to sink in the seat to be again called upon fifteen minutes after

to go through the same ceremony is more than my body would now undertake. I therefore suggested to my head gaoler that the car should be brought to the centre and should serve as platform. I should sit on the edge of the back of the car and address meetings therefrom. He readily agreed. The contrivance saved time, energy, space and money. No platform, no chairs, no decorations, save the decorated hearts of the people. The arrangement proved to be perfect. And where many meetings have to be addressed, I suggest it for adoption by organizers.

#### KHADI-CLAD BARBER

Generally I do my own shaving. This time I discarded the safety set given by a friend and returned to an old Bihari razor left by Maganlal Gandhi. It is a first-class instrument, if it is kept properly. I have not yet mastered the art of using the stone and the strop which our barbers use with ease and native skill. I therefore sent for a khadi-clad barber at an early stage of the tour. It is the easiest thing in Andhra to procure a khadi-clad barber; it is difficult in , say, Bombay. I gave him my tackle and had a luxurious shave. I saw that thus to secure a khadi-clad barber was good khadi propaganda for the chairman of the Foreign Cloth Boycott Committee. It gave me an opportunity of preaching the message of *Daridranarayana* to a class than whom one cannot imagine better propaganda agents. But I saw that if I got the barber to use my tackle, I could not carry the message of full swadeshi to him nor give him a lesson in sanitary hygiene. Next time therefore I allowed the barber to use his own instruments, which had to be first washed and cleaned. At one place a khadi-clad barber was produced with the latest razor from the West, a Western shaving soapstick, a Western brush, a Western-looking glass, etc., nicely packed in a Western box. I have suspicions that all this belonged to my khadi-clad generous host. I realized the falsity of the situation. I had now to see that the instruments the barber brought were swadeshi so far as possible.

Here then is another tip for workers. Let them carry the message of swadeshi to their barbers, washermen and others with whom they come in daily contact. Let us not treat them as illiterate dependents unworthy of our notice. Let us treat them as fellow-citizens whose services are as necessary for the advancement of the nation as those of the tallest among us.

There was another lesson this barber incident brought home to

me. We often think that we have carried out the full message of swadeshi when we have adopted khadi. We treat it as a passport for the use of everything else from non-Indian sources and for the introduction of the latest fashions from Paris. This is a travesty of swadeshi and a denial of the message of khadi. Whilst khadi is an obligation for all time in India, surely it is equally an obligation to use India-made things wherever we can get them even though they may be inferior to foreign articles. There are several swadeshi things on the market which are in danger of disappearance of want of patronage. They may not be up to the mark. It is for us to use them and require the makers to improve them wherever improvement is possible. Rule of the best and the cheapest is not always true. Just as we do not give up our country for one with a better climate but endeavour to improve our own, so also may we not discard swadeshi for better or cheaper foreign things. Even as a husband who being dissatisfied with his simple-looking wife goes in search of a better-looking woman is disloyal to his partner, so is a man disloyal to his country who prefers foreign-made things though better to country-made things. The law of each country's progress demands on the part of its inhabitants preference for their own products and manufactures.

*Young India*, 30-5-1929

#### *60. TRIALS OF PUNJAB*

It seems as if the Punjab Government is trying to thwart the Congress preparations in the Punjab in every way open to it. The use of the central site chosen by the P.C.C. has been refused. Now workers are being arrested, their houses searched and in other ways molested. Even the Secretary, Dr. Satyapal, has not been left free. It is however a happy sign that the Punjabis are undaunted and are prosecuting their preparations with unabated zeal. I hope that the Punjabis will make a resolute effort to ensure the success of the forthcoming Congress and show the Government that repression will only refine instead of crushing their spirit.

*Young India*, 30-5-1929

## 61. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM GANDHI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
May 30, 1929

CHI. PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. Narandas will of course write to you. If the vaid so advises you should try his treatment at Almora. Perhaps this is better. In that case it would be better for you to stick to one place instead of running around with me. I will stay at Almora. And in the mean while you would be somewhere near me. Ratilal and Champabehn too wish for some cool air. They too can be sent away provided there is some escort. If it would not embarrass you I would hire a bungalow for them and you too should stay with them because someone has to go with them. You need not accept this suggestion if you do not like it. The suggestion to go over to Almora is independent of this and it had occurred before I thought of Ratilal.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 897. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

## 62. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,  
May 31, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I am glad to learn that your health is slightly better. I too wish that we should be together for a while but God alone knows when the opportunity will occur. If you can live in peace at the Ashram it is my earnest desire that you should come and spend some time with me. I plan to stay here in July and August. I shall leave for the Almora tour on June 11. I shall return in the beginning of July.

I hope your study of the *Ramayana* goes on.

My health is good.

*Blessing from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1664

63. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,

*May 31, 1929*

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. There is no doubt that D. committed suicide. I had sent him a telegram,<sup>1</sup> and that too a harsh one certainly. I had several telegrams and letters from him. To him the whole world had become poisoned. People no doubt were a little unjust to him. But some injustice there always is. D. was a learned man. He had read Lecky's<sup>2</sup> praise of suicide. He appears to have acted on it. You no doubt gave him support. If you can find out, will you let me know whether he died before or after he got my telegram? Send me any other details you come across.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6170. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> This telegram is not available.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. H. Lecky (1838-1903), author of *History of European Morals from Augustus to Charlemagne*

## 64. PACE OF BOYCOTT

The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee has been conducting its work in accordance with its regulations. Since I am its President, I certainly cannot take credit for its regularity. All the credit for it goes to its enthusiastic and dutiful Secretary. Ever since he accepted that office, Shri Jairamdas<sup>1</sup> has forgotten all other things. No one in the world has been able to do justice to any secretaryship without such concentration. If this Committee receives full assistance, it will experience no difficulty and take no time to make the boycott an established fact, because the main thing to do in this matter is to organize. If the Congress principle becomes a living thing and workers are actuated by true faith, there is no reason at all to doubt that the people are ready for boycott. It is necessary to explain their duty to them and to prove to them that even prominent persons have given up foreign cloth and begun to wear khadi exclusively. But the thing we lack is sincerity among these prominent people themselves. Some of them pretend to wear khadi, some wear it only on occasions, etc., and some others flatly refuse to wear it and yet remain in the Congress. Misusing their high positions they do not abide by any rules and hence there is not as much impact on the people as there should be. The mass of people are not foolish but intelligent. They understand some things by a mere hint. This is one of the reasons why the pace of khadi, that is, of boycott, is slow.

But whether we call the pace slow or fast, we can see from the two months' report which the Boycott Committee has published that it is certainly beginning to have its impact on England at any rate. Mr. Roberts, President of the Cloth Dealers' Association of Delhi, has said in his speech that even Manchester has begun to feel acutely the effect of the boycott. He says that almost a third of the cotton-textile mills in England have closed down. But since our enthusiasm lasts a short while and cools off, such impact does not last for ever. In order that it should do so, we should be honest and make constant endeavours. The pace has increased so much at present that many fear that khadi will be in short supply. But if we have digested the *mantra* of khadi, there is no reason why supplies of khadi should run out. If anyone were to complain that there was a shortage of *rotlis* in spite of the

<sup>1</sup> Jairamdas Doulatram



availability of wheat flour and be struck with fear, there would be no justification for that fear; in like manner there will be no fear of a shortage of khadi as long as there is cotton in India. If we now entertain such fear, it is because we have forgotten the power of khadi and have even lost our faith in it. It is as easy to spin yarn and weave khadi as it is to bake *rotlis* in every home. Khadi depends on supplies of yarn. Even now, we come across weavers almost anywhere. But we do not get male or female spinners so easily.

There are three ways of producing hand-spun yarn: the first is the way of self-reliance, the second is doing it for wages and the third is that of sacrificial spinning. The first can be the most extensive and it should be considered the easiest. It is that the agriculturists should themselves spin yarn for their requirements of cloth and get it woven, whereby khadi so made will be cheaper for them than mill-cloth. And in this way one can save oneself the trouble of finding buyers for one's khadi. City-dwellers and those who are not agriculturists should get ready-made khadi. The second way is for them, i.e., to pay and get yarn spun. This method is most prevalent today because the khadi movement was started and was possible only that way. It started with the middle classes, the educated class of people. They were not in a position to produce khadi on their own and wear it. In India, there is one class tormented by hunger, which will be able to ward off its misery if it gets a few pice a day. Thus yarn began to be spun for wages. There is a great advantage in this too. That is, it has increased the organizing capacity of the middle classes, has given rise to a great agency of service, has brought into existence a class of people selling khadi for the benefit of others and has opened up a major new source of honourable income for the middle classes. This is no ordinary gain. The third way is to produce yarn by sacrificial spinning. This has been going on very slowly on account of lack of proper environment. If an atmosphere of sacrifice can be created, crores of yards of yarn can be produced by this method. In municipal schools where thousands of boys and girls study, yarn can be produced every day by means of the *takli* with the greatest ease. That will involve very little expenditure and the work can become enduring. The yarn produced can be immediately sent to a weaver and got woven, and thereby confidence can be created in the people. This work can be easily organized. Thus, if all the three ways are fully used, there will not be the slightest difficulty in India producing as much yarn as is required, that is to say, to produce khadi in the quantity needed.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-6-1929

## 65. COMMITTEE FOR REMOVAL OF UNTOUCHABILITY

The Congress Working Committee has set up a separate committee for the removal of untouchability, of which Bharat Bhushan Pandit Malaviya is the President. Its Secretary is Shri Jamnalalji. Its office is at 395, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. The main objects of the committee are:

1. to get public temples thrown open to the *Antyajas*;
2. to secure for the *Antyajas* the use of public wells;
3. removal of the restrictions which face *Antyaja* children in public schools;
4. to improve their condition in respect of cleanliness; and
5. to induce them to give up their habit of eating carrion and taking liquor.

The committee expects every Hindu to help in educating public opinion for this work. Those who are willing to assist in this task should correspond with Shri Jamnalalji at the above address.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-6-1929

## 66. GUJARAT'S CONTRIBUTION

The All-India Congress Committee has decided that by the end of August, every province should enrol 1 per cent of its population, excluding that of the Princely States and the Excluded Areas, and that at least half the number of districts and half the number of talukas in them and ten villages in each taluk should be covered. This proportion is certainly not too high. If a province cannot enlist even this percentage, it ought not to have the right to send a representative to the Congress.

If the Congress is at all ready to carry out the constructive work decided upon by itself and if it cannot influence one man in every four hundred, it will have no value. The programme of constructive work is such that everyone can take part in it. It is not like that of the legislature in which only a few people whose number can be counted on one's fingers can participate. If we can find volunteers, we can get work from crores of people. Khadi work is such that the boycott

cannot at all be an accomplished fact without the enthusiasm and help of crores of people. The removal of untouchability means the consent of 23 crore Hindus. Prohibition implies the effect of true self-purification on lakhs of Hindus and Muslims. These things can be done only if the Congress organization is alive, alert and pervasive. And if the Congress cannot even do this work, the job which we hope to accomplish by January 1 of the coming year will never get done. Hence I hope that even in this work, Gujarat will, as in the past, make a bigger contribution than its share, and well before the end of August. And if we want to do that, we must take a map of Gujarat and decide how many men must join the Congress from every part, that is, from every taluk, and the work must then be distributed accordingly.

We easily recall, while considering this subject, that the Congress constitution has in it the stipulation regarding yarn. A number of people wish to get exemption from that clause in many ways. I presume that the workers of Gujarat do not have such persons in their midst. But, perchance, if there is any such, I must state for his benefit that the condition is not applicable at the time of enrolling himself in the Congress. He who accepts the Congress objectives and gives four annas or 2,000 yards of yarn can compel a worker to register his name in the Congress office. The obligation to wear khadi applies to a man who wishes to exercise his voting right. It is necessary to understand this distinction. It is also meaningful. A man joining the Congress may be a lover of foreign cloth and even revile khadi, but we hope that, after coming into contact with us, after being served by us and experiencing our love, his fascination for foreign cloth will disappear and he will begin to use khadi. Perhaps, he may be moved to wear khadi if only out of a desire to earn the franchise. And despite all this, if he will not wear khadi, he will forfeit his voting right at least for that time. This is how the Congress had understood the utility and necessity of khadi. I have very often written that it is our duty to remove the condition regarding khadi if a number of people hold that that restriction retards the work of the Congress and that it must be done away with. But I have no doubt whatever in my mind that, as long as that condition stands, it must be implemented honestly.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-6-1929

## 67. KARACHI KHADI BHANDAR

I had paid a visit to the Bhandar when I was in Karachi, but I was not able to pay much attention to it. Moreover, as I had heard complaints about its high prices, I had kept silent on that subject. The manager of the Bhandar, Bhai Dayaram Topandas, complained against my silence. I gave him the reason therefore. Thereupon, he produced before me proofs of the fairness of his transactions, which included testimonials from Sadhu Vaswani<sup>1</sup>, Acharya Gidwani<sup>2</sup> and others. Bhai Chandrashankar Buch, after a special investigation, writes:<sup>3</sup>

In addition, Bhai Dayaram Topandas had asked that the Charkha Sangha audit and publish the Bhandar accounts at its own expense and had stated that, if anyone else were ready to undertake to run it in a better manner, he was willing to hand it over to him. There is no doubt left in my mind about the rates and transactions. It is true that there is no loss in that shop; this is not a shortcoming but a merit; it suggests that he knows how to run the Bhandar. No one who has run a khadi bhandar with circumspection has suffered a loss. There may not be much profit in it, but there is no reason why there should be a loss.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-6-1929

## 68. IDEAL PRIMARY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN

The subject of child education, which ought to be the simplest, appears to have become difficult or to have been made so. Experience teaches us that, whether we wish it or not, children do receive some education, good or bad. To many readers, this sentence may sound strange, but if we consider whom we can call a child, what education means and who can impart child education, perhaps we shall find

<sup>1</sup> T.L. Vaswani

<sup>2</sup> A.T. Gidwani

<sup>3</sup> The letter is not translated here. Buch had stated that a nominal marginal profit was added to the selling price and the general expenditure was quite reasonable. Four persons worked in the store and each one drew about Rs. 25 a month. He had suggested that, if only two managed the work, each of them could live respectably on Rs. 50 a month, the other two seeking jobs elsewhere.

nothing novel in the above sentence. A child means a boy or girl under the age of ten or anyone who appears to be of that age.

Education does not mean a knowledge of the alphabet. This type of knowledge is only a means to education. Education implies a child's learning how to put his mind and all his senses to good use. That is to say, he really learns how to use his hands, feet and other organs of action and his nose, ear and other organs of sense. A child who has acquired the knowledge that he should not use his hands for stealing or for killing flies, nor for beating up his companions or younger brothers and sisters, has already begun his education. He has started it, we can say, when he understands the necessity of keeping his body, his teeth, tongue, ears, head, nails, etc., clean and keeps them clean. That child has made good progress in education who does not indulge in mischief while eating and drinking, eats and drinks alone or in society in a proper manner, sits properly and chooses pure foodstuffs knowing the difference between pure and impure foodstuffs, does not eat like a glutton, does not clamour for whatever he sees and remains calm even if he does not get what he wants. Even that child has advanced on the road to education whose pronunciation is correct, who can recount to us the history and geography of the country surrounding him without knowing those terms and who understands what his country means. That child has made very good progress in his education who can understand the difference between truth and untruth, worth and worthlessness and chooses the good and the true, while rejecting the bad and the untrue. There is no need now to dilate on this point. The reader can supply other attributes himself. Only one thing needs to be made clear. In all this, one sees no need of a knowledge of the alphabet or of any script. To engage children in learning the script is tantamount to putting a burden on their mind and other organs and is like putting their eyes and hands to bad use. A child who has received true education easily picks up a knowledge of the alphabet at the appropriate time and in an interesting way. Today, knowledge becomes a sort of burden to children, their best time for development is spent uselessly, and in the end, instead of writing a beautiful hand and reading in a beautiful way, their handwriting is like the housefly's legs, and they read mostly what should not be read and even what they do read, they read wrongly. To call this education is blasphemy, or sacrilege. Before a child receives a knowledge of the alphabet, it should have received primary education.

If this is done, one can be spared in this poor land the expenditure on many series of readers and primers and a lot of nonsense. If there must be a primer, it ought to be only for the teachers, and never for the children described by me. If we are not being carried away in the prevailing current, this matter ought to appear as clear as a lamp.

A child can receive the education outlined above even in the home and that too from the mother herself. Hence children receive elementary education from their mothers. If our homes are broken up and divided today, if the parents have forgotten their duty to their children, the children should, as far as possible, be educated under conditions providing a family-like environment. Only a mother can discharge this duty; hence child education should be placed in charge of women alone. A man has not generally till now been able to show the love and patience that a woman can. If all of this is true, the moment we tackle the question of child education, that of the education of women naturally stares us in the face. And until we have mothers capable of imparting education to children, I have no hesitation in saying that children will remain without education despite their attending hundreds of schools.

Now I shall give a sketch of child education. Let us suppose that five children have been placed in charge of woman in the role of a mother. These children do not know how to talk or walk and they have running noses, they clean their nasal mucus with their hands and wipe it on their legs or their clothes. There is rheum in their eyes, there is wax in their ears and dirt in their nails. Even when asked to sit down properly they sit awkwardly, spreading out their legs, saliva drips when they speak, they say 'hun' for 'shun' and use the first person plural for the first person singular. They have no idea of east, west, north and south. They are wearing soiled clothes, their private parts are exposed, they toy with them and, if asked not to do so, they do it all the more. If their clothes have pockets, these are filled with some dirty sweets, which they eat from time to time, dropping some of these on the floor and making their sticky hands stickier. Their caps have become jet-black at the border and a bad odour issues from them. Only if motherly feelings spring up in the woman who looks after these five children can she teach them. The first lesson will certainly be to put them in good shape. The mother will give them a bath lovingly, she will do nothing but crack jokes with them for

<sup>1</sup> Meaning 'what'

several days and in many ways, just as mothers have done till this day, just as Kausalya did with little Rama; she will bind them in the bonds of her love and train them to dance to her tune. Until the mother succeeds in this, just as a cow distractedly runs here and there for her lost calf, she will become anxious about those five children. She will not rest so long as the children have not learnt to be normally clean, their teeth, ears, hands and feet have not become clean, their stinking clothes have not been changed, and 'hun' has not become 'shun'. After gaining this much control over them, the mother will teach the children the first lesson of Ramanama. Some will call Him Rama, some will call Him Rahman, but it is all the same. Economics will surely come after religion. And so the mother will now start teaching them arithmetic. She will teach the children the multiplication tables and addition and subtraction orally. Children ought to know about the place where they reside; hence she will point out to them the adjoining rivers and channles, hillocks and buildings and while doing so given them an idea of the directions. And she will add to her own knowledge for the sake of the children. In this concept, history and geography can never be separate subjects. Knowledge of both can be imparted in the form of stories only. The mother cannot be satisfied with this much. A Hindu mother lets her children hear the sound of Sanskrit from their childhood and therefore makes them learn by rote verses in praise of God and trains the children in correct pronunciation. A patriotic mother will surely give them knowledge of Hindi. Hence, she will talk to children in Hindi, read to them from Hindi books and turn them bilingual. She will not at this stage impart to them knowledge of writing, but will surely place a brush in their hands. She will make them draw geometrical figures, straight lines, circles, etc. A mother will not at all concede that the children who do not draw a flower or a jug or a triangle, have received education. And she will not deprive children of music. She will not tolerate it if the children do not sing in chorus and in a sweet voice national songs, devotional songs, etc. She will teach them to sing in rhythm. If she is a good teacher, she places a one-stringed instrument in their hands, gives them cymbals and teaches them a dance with sticks in which both boys and girls join. In order to develop their bodies, she makes them do physical exercise, makes them run and jump. And because the spirit of service is to be inculcated in them and they are to be taught some craft too, she would teach them to pick cotton pods and

break them open, to gin and card cotton and to spin it and the children would playfully spin for at least half an hour every day.

Most of the books we come across nowadays are useless for this curriculum. Her love will provide the books for every mother, because there will be different books of history and geography in every village and sums in arithmetic are of course to be set anew. A dedicated mother will prepare herself every day and will make up new stories and new sums in her notebook and teach them to the children.

It should not be necessary to prolong this curriculum. A quarterly course of studies can be drawn up from it, because the children have been brought up in different environments. Hence we can never have a uniform curriculum. We can draw up courses for them from time to time as and when the children come to us. Sometimes children come to us having learnt wrong things; we have to make them unlearn these. If a six-seven-year-old child is writing an indifferent hand or is in the habit of reading *ma bhu pa'*, we have to make him forget it. Until the false notion that the child will gain knowledge through reading is removed from his mind, he cannot make headway. It can easily be conceived that even he who has not mastered a knowledge of the alphabet throughout his life may become unlearned.

I have made no use in this article of the word 'teacher'. A teacher is a mother. She who cannot take the place of a mother can never become a teacher. A child should not feel that it is receiving education. The child whose mother's eyes follow it everywhere is receiving education all the twenty-four hours. A child who sits six hours in a school may not be receiving any education at all. In this topsyturvy life, perhaps we may not find women-teachers. It may well be that child education is practicable at present only through men-teachers. Then the men-teachers will have to acquire the noble status of a mother and ultimately the mothers will have to get ready for this job. But if my concept is right, any mother, if she has love in her heart, can become fit with a little assistance. And while preparing herself, she will prepare the children as well.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-6-1929

<sup>1</sup> For "Mother, give me water to drink"



## 69. GOSEVA SANGHA

A meeting of the Goseva Sangha was held in the Udyoga Mandir on May 28, and the following constitution<sup>1</sup> was approved. It is desirable that many should join this Sevak Sangha. It is at the same time necessary to sound this warning that one cannot become a worker merely by tendering money, yarn or leather by way of subscription. Among the duties of a *Sevak* which have been set down, some are compulsory and some, though necessary, have been included merely as voluntary. Only those who carry out the compulsory duties and try to observe the voluntary ones can join as members. For those who are fired by a desire to serve the cow, the obligations are not difficult to carry out. What should they do who are at present unable to carry out the compulsory duties, but are keenly desirous of maintaining a close connection with the Sangha? This question had been raised at the meeting of the Sangha. For that purpose, a class of helpers has been provided. I hope, however, that those who cannot become helpers will send donation as in the past and continue doing so.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 2-6-1929

## 70. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*June 2, 1929*

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter. Whenever I get back to the Ashram, I have less time to answer letters. Surely, with efforts, you will get over your temper. I see that you are vigilant. I was pleased when I went over your life sketch. May God grant you long life and health and strengthen your devotion to service. It will always benefit you if occasionally you give up bread or any other item that you find heavy.

I got your letter today after I had dictated this. I see there is a constant ebb and flow in your health. If you come over in July, we can try yet further treatment.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6785

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Goseva Sangha", 6-6-1929

## 71. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
June 2, 1929

CHI. JAMNALAL,

About Rukhi<sup>1</sup>, I have spoken to Santok<sup>2</sup>. According to the Gujarati calender, the year ends with *Diwali*. If therefore the marriage is to take place this year, it has to be in the month of *Ashadh* because, as Santok says, there are no marriage-days after this. It would be too early to have the marriage in *Ashadh*. Again Santok is so insistent on Banarasi learning Gujarati even before the marriage that she says the marriage should be fixed for the coming *Jeth* if marriage-days are available in the next year. It is thus a matter of one year. Indeed Santok has also the desire that in the meanwhile Rukhi can further continue her studies; and it is a welcome desire. So, I think, now we should leave the matter as it is. I am trying to ascertain whether or not there are marriage-days in the coming year. I think we need not hold up other similar alliances. Let us proceed on the belief that all betrothals will surely be followed by a marriage, and any alliance that we would now settle may perhaps require to be immediately followed by solemnization. But then you know more about this. Please make the right arrangements for the work regarding untouchability, and send me some news about it regularly every week if possible. On enquiries, I learn today that there are marriage-days in the coming year.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 9046

<sup>1</sup> Daughter of Maganlal Gandhi

<sup>2</sup> Wife of Maganlal Gandhi

## 72. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,

June 2, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. It has given me much comfort because the feeling had been weighing on me that my advising you to keep D.<sup>1</sup> with you was perhaps a mistake. There can be no two opinions that he had been treated very harshly by the girl's relatives. I have received a letter regarding this which I enclose for your perusal...had hinted at it....writes that...'s death was caused by heart failure. Is it correct?

I understand about *Forward*. There will always be attacks on public figures but we have to weigh things in the scales of justice. Subhas's courage is laudable.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C. W. 6171. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

## 73. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

June 3, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. It is true I have become weak. But no harm to the body is perceptible. I am conducting the experiment<sup>2</sup> with caution. You should not be anxious. Such experiments are an integral part of my life; they are essential for my mental peace and self-realization. I try to keep alive within the limits I have specified for myself. But I also believe that life and death are not in our hands. I am happy to know your ideas about Keshu<sup>3</sup>. His father took great pains over him and we all hope to get much service from him. I do not wish to restrict his freedom in any way. His being with you frees me from anxiety.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W.6172. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

<sup>1</sup> The name is omitted.

<sup>2</sup> On dietetics; *vide* "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929

<sup>3</sup> Son of Maganlal Gandhi

## 74. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA

[Before June 5, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I shall be able to take it on my return. There were letters from Manilal at three or four places. Each letter had a different tone. He is very simple-hearted. Very often he does not even know how his words might be interpreted. I know very well that Ba's conscience does not regard my behaviour as unjust. Ba has on her own written a letter to Lilavati<sup>2</sup>. That letter is worth reading. I did not send it to Lilavati but gave it to Mahadev and he has preserved it. You can see it some day. In my view the *shloka* you have quoted is quite irrelevant here. There the reference is to the anguish caused by the feeling of hostility. If injustice has been done to Ba by me, it has been out of love. That even that is undesirable is another matter, but that anguish would come under the category of attachment. The meaning of the word anguish mentioned in the first part of the *shloka* is clarified in the disturbed by people? What you write may induce me to correspond with you, yet I would not feel the weight of it. I may not write if I do not find time. I had no intention of writing today. That is why I had instructed Ramniklal to scribble a couple of lines. But I wrote this much since I found the time.

Bhai Ramniklal has decided to stay on here. He has talked to me to his heart's content. I am very happy at his decision, and the Ashram is spared a difficult situation. Narandas has also arrived. He too has decided to stay on. I would like to write much more, but of course I do not have time.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 10737. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

<sup>1</sup> From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the one to Tara Modi dated June 5, 1929; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 5-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> Lilavati Asar

## 75. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 5, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am glad you will join me during the tour. Copies of the reports make sad reading. I suggest your sending copies to the respective committees with your observations and suggestions. The report about Bihar surprises me. But that shows the extent of our fall.

Hope Kamala and Krishna are well.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

## 76. LETTER TO TARA MODI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

June 5, 1929

CHI. TARA,

I have your letter. Ramniklal had talked to me about you. I am glad that you stay at Vedchhi, get plenty of experience and are learning a lot. It is a good thing that you should learn to live in the country and get to know how to be useful to the villages and that the two of you can live apart, whenever necessary, and remain content. As for staying here, you can by all means come here whenever you want to. Ramniklal is satisfied at heart and his decision to live here has brought him great peace. I would have endured separation with both of you but never would I have been able to get used to it. In spite of all this, I would certainly wish you to stay where you are happy at heart. And of course you would have my blessings in whatever you do. Write to me from time to time. You must have got the news that Chhaganlal and Kashi<sup>1</sup> have come over here.

Ramniklal must have written to you about my experiment. I hope you know also the changes about the Bal Mandir. Read carefully the article<sup>2</sup> on this subject appearing in *Navajivan*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N.4145

<sup>1</sup> Wife of Chhaganlal Gandhi

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Ideal Primary School for Children", 2-6-1929

## 77. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
Juene 5,

1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I got your letter after I had written to you. It seems your weight has again returned to normal. Such increase and decrease will always persist. I shall start for Almora on the 11th. My address during the tour of that area will be: Prem Vidyalaya<sup>1</sup>, Ranikhet. Write to me to this address whenever you want to.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6786

## 78. CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT

The following is the consolidated statement I promised to publish of the Andhra Desha collections. It has been prepared by Sjt. Narayanamurti as auditor of the A.I.S.A.<sup>2</sup> and checked by Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya:

I have never before had the opportunity or the inclination to supervise the conduct and expenses of tours during the past eight years as I had of this eventful Andhra tour. I had noticed before too much laxity about expenses and too much lavishness in ordering things. Much of it was done out of personal affection. But even that affection became a questionable thing when the expenditure was deducted from purses collected in the name of *Daridranarayana*. In Andhra Desha therefore, I took the law, as far as possible, in my own hands and insisted upon no deduction being made from cash collected without vouchers being produced and accepted by me. I further insisted upon all the railway expenses of my party being paid by me so that they might not become a charge upon the purses. I also insisted that all feeding expenses of my party should be paid by me when they were not paid by the local host. Thus the certified expenses include generally only motor hire, petrol, railway travelling of volunteers and the like. These expenses do not amount to more than

<sup>1</sup> Started in 1921 by Prem Vidyalaya Society to impart, besides the three R's manual training such as spinning, weaving, carpet-making, carpentering, etc., board and instruction being free

<sup>2</sup> All-India Spinners' Association

five per cent of the collections. To have brought about a great awakening in 319 villages was worth the expense incurred. Having said as much in defence of the expense, I must confess that even though the sums collected may be large, we cannot afford to fly from place to place and pay high motor charges. Whilst the tour was on, I published the full details<sup>1</sup> of one bill which the reader should recall if he will understand the full significance of my statement. There was even there considerable room for improvement and economy. It may seem ungracious to write thus of a tour which has been the most economic of all I have known. But it would be wrong to be easily satisfied or be satisfied with anything but the highest. Easy satisfaction means arrested progress leading to stagnation and finally retrogression. Speed of descent is in the inverse ratio to the snail-like speed of ascent. Workers therefore will take note that whilst Andhra expenses are some guide for the future, they may not be imitated without very considerable modification. That will come automatically when every worker realizes that he is to use national funds as jealously and as economically as a careful householder would use his own. Almora, beware!

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

### 79. GOSEVA SANGHA

The following is a translation of the constitution<sup>2</sup> adopted by the Standing Committee of Goseva Sangha that met on 28th and 29th ultimo at the Udyoga Mandir, Sabarmati. I hope the reader will not be disturbed over what may appear to him to be novelty in constitution-making in which members have no rights and strange duties are expected of them. The members of the Standing Committee have come to the conclusion that the very difficult work of serving the cow is not possible without a large number of men and women devoting themselves to it in a spirit purely of service combined with full desire and preparedness for learning the science of cow-preservation, nor need the reader be surprised over the alternative subscriptions in the shape of donating unslaughtered hide or self-spun yarn. It is any day easier to pay five rupees yearly than to find two hides of naturally dead cattle. The very act of procuring such hide by one's own effort

<sup>1</sup> Vide "In Andhra Desha [-III]"

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Goseva Sangha"

and not through deputy, involves a certain amount of trouble and the gaining of some knowledge about hides. This is a definite gain. And if the reader will but remember that the word cow is to be taken in the widest sense and includes all life that serves mankind and demands protection, the connection of self-spun yarn with the Goseva Sangha will become immediately obvious.

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

## 80. ATROCIOUS

Though house-searches, arrests without even reasonable ground or suspicion of innocent and respectable men, putting them in veils and handcuffs are in the air, I was wholly unprepared for the search of the offices of the well-known magazine, *The Modern Review*, much less the house of its equally well-known Editor, Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee. Therefore when I heard of the search I wired for particulars and Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee has sent me the following letter:<sup>1</sup>

On the 24th instant when I returned from my office at about 11.30 a.m., my second son told me that a Bengali police officer had come to search my house in connection with Dr. J.T. Sunderland's *India in Bondage: Her Right to Freedom*...

... I entered the sitting-room, where I found a man in plain clothes seated in a chair.... The officer asked me whether I had any printed copies of *India in Bondage*, etc., any manuscripts thereof, and any correspondence with the author relating to it in the nature of any business agreement. Thereupon I gave him one printed copy of the book...there was no other copy in my house...and two typewritten copies of the Indian and American editions. I also gave him the original copy of the agreement with the author signed by Dr. Sunderland by which I had bound myself to give him 25 per cent of the face value of each copy of the book sold. I gave the man the covering letter also.. .. He then wrote out an inventory of the things taken, got it signed by two local search witnesses, gave me a carbon copy, and went away. The warrant he had with him was only for searching my house. He was throughout polite...

Another Bengali police officer had gone to my press and office.. .. His warrant was for searching the premises and arresting Mr. Sajanikanta Das. .. printer and publisher of the book. ...the officer took away 42 copies of the second edition. .. one copy of the first edition, the manuscript from which the

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.



book was printed, and a few cash memos and other documents to show that copies of the book had been sold and sent by V.P.P. The printer and publisher was also arrested at my office and released on bail then and there on his signing a bond for Rs.1,000. His trial for sedition will commence on June 4 at the Presidency Magistrate's Court. At my office also the police officer was polite.

I have asked my office to send you by post a copy of the second edition of the book in order that you may be able to form your own opinion of it, if you can make time to do so.

Let us thank the police that they were courteous. It would have been monstrous, if they had been otherwise. But a search is a search even though it is courteous. Golden fetters are no less galling to a self-respecting man than iron ones. The sting lies in the fetters, not in the metal. The search itself was wholly unjustified. For Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee is not a nonentity of an editor. He is one of the foremost among journalists. He and his magazine enjoy an international reputation. *The Modern Review* is known for its sobriety and correctness of statement. It is one of the most cultured magazines commanding contributions from some of the most noted writers in India. Where was the occasion for the search? If Dr. J.T. Sunderland's book is seditious, let the publisher be prosecuted by all means, but the information the police required could have been obtained without any dramatic performance. But to the Government of the day, a dramatic performance is the thing they want. The tallest among us must be occasionally bent, lest we forget ourselves. Hence this exhibition of the red claw. There used to be in the mutiny days a rehearsal of humiliations. This search of Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee and much that is going on at the present moment is an edition of those rehearsals. They will continue till we learn to resent and resist such wanton insults.

Of Dr. Sunderland's book, I am sorry, I know nothing. Before it was printed, the author had sent me the manuscript for opinion. My preoccupations and continuous touring prevented my ever reading it. The manuscript is still lying with me. In due course the book was published. But I know that the worthy Doctor was anxious to have my opinion even after the publication of the volume. I could not make time for reading the book though I had hoped to cope with it during the Andhra tour. But what I could not do as a friend, I shall now have to do as editor. And this is possible for it will be part of the daily editorial routine. The point however is not whether the book is

seditious. The point is that searches and arrests are wholly uncalled for where the purpose can be served without them, and that they are the order of the day in India only in order to overawe and humiliate a whole people. This studied humiliation is one of the chosen methods which the ruling race consider necessary in order that they...though less than one hundred thousand...may rule three hundred million people. It is a state of things we must strain every nerve to remedy. To command respect is the first step to swaraj.

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

### **81. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT**

Sjt. Jairamdas has addressed a general letter to every District Congress Committee as to what is expected of it in the matter of boycott. The following are the operating extracts from the letter:

I send hereunder the full text of the new programme framed by the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee at its meeting on the 24th May. May I request you to place it before an emergency meeting of your executive and in view of the various items of the programme, prepare your own line of action within your jurisdiction? There is no reason why the programme for enrolment of Congress members adopted by the All-India Congress Committee at its recent meeting at Bombay should in any way interfere with the carrying out of this new boycott programme. On the contrary the enrolment programme will give very great opportunities of carrying the message of the boycott of foreign cloth to the thousands whom you may have to approach for enrolment as Congress members. The message of the Congress including the boycott of foreign cloth has naturally to be explained to the people before they are asked to join the Congress. I hope you will be able to show a far better record of boycott work done in the next four months than you have been able to do during the last five months.

#### **FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT RESOLUTION**

(a) The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee notes the response made by the people, in the course of the last three months, to the programme of boycott of foreign cloth laid down by the Working Committee, and urges all Congress Committees and other organizations co-operating in the boycott campaign to carry out that programme with even greater vigour during the remaining part of the year.

(b) The Committee suggests that in accordance with the above programme, organized efforts should be made to concentrate on:

1. organizing propaganda parties for touring outside large towns;
  2. arranging house-to-house visits for converting people to the boycott of foreign cloth;
  3. holding public meetings where house-to-house propaganda is not feasible;
  4. hawking khadi as often during each week as is possible ;
  5. collecting sufficient funds to run small khadi depots wherever necessary;
  6. organizing street propaganda and *nagar kirtans* on every Wednesday and Sunday in the week;
  7. engaging in special boycott activity on the first Sunday of each month, that is, 2nd June, 7th July, 4th August, and 1st September;
  8. arranging requisitions for special meetings of local bodies which have not so far considered the suggestions made by the Foreign- Cloth Boycott Committee for securing their co-operation in the boycott campaign;
  9. posting weekly reports of foreign-cloth boycott work on each Monday;
- and
10. observing 2nd October, 1929 (Gandhiji's birthday) as the Foreign- Cloth Boycott Day.

I showed last week<sup>1</sup> that the reorganization resolution not only did not interfere with the constructive programme but that it actually helped it. There is no meaning in going to the people for merely asking them to join the Congress if we will not tell them what it means and does for the nation and what it expects of every Congressman.

The need for intensive boycott propaganda is emphasized by the following extract I take from the speech recently delivered by the Secretary of State for India to the London Chamber of Commerce. He is reported to have said:

It was difficult to realize the prodigious amount of British capital which was sunk in India, and he was quite ready to believe that it could be put even so high as £700,000,000, or even £1,000,000,000. This year the Railway Department were assured of the prospect of spending £ 20,000,000 on useful productive works. In addition to the railway capital, the Government of India had nearly £100,000,000 invested in other profit-earning enterprises, and on top of those vast undertakings which accounted for so much of the Indian

<sup>1</sup> Vide "National Organization", 30-5-1929

National Debt, one must pile the incalculable capital sunk in the great trading ventures, which had been growing in value... .

India bought from us something like £85,000,000 worth of our commodities, and they could readily realize what the effect on our unemployment problem would be if the Indian market were lost or seriously curtailed. If British traders took to heart the exhortation recently given by the Prince of Wales, he was confident that British fair dealing and superior British workmanship would regain the ground which had been lost in recent years. At present Indian purchases in Great Britain represented only 5s. 3d. per head, while those made by New Zealand and Australia represented respectively £13 5s. 5d. and £8 17s. 3d. per head.

We could not share Lord Peel's joy as he quoted the enormous figures of British capital sunk in India and her purchases of British goods, nor can we associate ourselves with the cheers that greeted his perorations to the eloquent figures. They teach us a different lesson. Most of these purchases spell ruin to the peasantry of India. And let it be remembered that more than half the purchases are of British cloth which India buys whilst its millions of hands remain idle during half the year and whilst they can easily manufacture all the cloth they need in their cottages and stop this terrific drain from the country.<sup>1</sup>

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

## 82. NOTES

### A SUCCESSFUL EXPERIMENT

Very few readers know and perhaps fewer still are interested in the composition of the A.I.S.A. Council. The reader may recall that the Council timidly, before its time, tried the experiment of having three members added to its strength by election. The voters were A and B-class members who had paid up their subscriptions. Though the B-class membership was abolished for the reasons already stated in these pages<sup>2</sup>, for the purposes of this election, anomalous though it was in many respects, the B-class members were allowed to participate in the voting. The system adopted was proportional representation. The voting was conducted through the post. The result was very satisfactory. The voters understood their responsibility and

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "Pace of Boycott", 2-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Notes", sub-title A.I.S.A. Membership

appreciated the privilege. There were five candidates of whom three had to be elected. The following is an interesting summary of the voting lists:

Total votes cast	290
Invalid	31
Valid votes	259
Quota necessary	259
3 + 1	

#### FIRST VOTES

Sjt. V.V. Jerajani	148
Dr. B. Subrahmanian	55
Sjt. K. Santanam	41
“Deva Sharma Vidyalkankar	13
“N. Rama Lingam	2
“Jerajani elected.	

Analysis of Sjt. Jerajani's papers for second preferences:

Sjt. K. Santanam	70
Dr. B. Subrahmanian	31
Sjt. Deva Sharma Vidyalkankar	9

“N. Rama LingamNilAdding first preferences received, the result is as follows:

Dr. B. Subrahmanian	86
Sjt. K. Santanam	79
“Deva Sharma Vidyalkankar	22
“N. Rama Lingam	2

Dr. B. Subrahmanian and Sjt. K. Santanam elected.

Total voters:	Total votes cast(valid)
490 A class	212 A class
83 B class	47 B class
573	259

Thus without any canvassing and without fuss, a little over fifty per cent of the voters took part in an election in which there was no unhealthy rivalry and no vital issue at stake. Out of 290 voting papers,

31 were found invalid. That no doubt is a large figure but not too large for the first election on the proportional basis. It is to be wished that there will be more men and women joining the A.I.S.A. For, it is not merely a body for taking the message of the wheel to the remotest village of India but incidentally it is a training ground for evolving a vast democratic institution in which the highest position is one of pure service and that position is attainable by merit within reach of the lowliest among us. Let it be noted that the franchise of the A.I.S.A. is the most democratic the world has known. Franchise without any qualification whatsoever save that of age, is, in my opinion, no franchise. It can never lead to true democracy.

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

### 83. WANTED SELF-CONVERSION

It was at Kurnool during the Andhra tour that I received an anonymous letter complaining that members of the local reception committee who were surrounding me were khaddar-clad only for the occasion and that they were habitual wearers of foreign cloth and given to foreign fashions. At the meeting itself, I saw a fair display of foreign garments. I therefore referred to the contents of the letter whilst at the same time I criticized the anonymous writer for hiding his name. The anonymous writer who must have heard my speech promptly wrote to me disclosing his identity. As the letter does credit to the writer and is otherwise instructive, I give it below in full:

Secrecy is a sin. But owing to the reasons set forth below, I did not give out my name in my letter of yesterday. I am a Government servant. You are fully aware of the fact that as a Government servant I am not expected to express even my sincere opinion about my country's state or its needs. This is high treason. But still I could not bear to see the palpable insincerity of many of those that came to attend on you yesterday. That was torture to me to see. The duty of the literate lies in convincing the masses. But it is very wrong on the part of the literate to think that the illiterate masses can be made to believe by insincere behaviour. If everyone takes into his head to live by your advice even within his own home, I am sure the time will not be far when India can hold up her head as a free and independent country. Utter want of sincerity cannot convince the masses. We set a bad and a damaging example by our hollowness and we give occasion to the world to mock at us. My mind was ill at ease with all these thoughts and I therefore wrote to you. Though very poor,

I do not care whether it is well or ill for me as a Government servant to give out my name, as long as I feel convinced that I have done no wrong. I do not also much mind whether my telling out my name to you will jeopardize my position (as a Government servant) which is my sole means of livelihood.

The writer and others who may write to public journals with a reputation to keep should know that editors are bound to withhold from the public names which the owners give only for editors' satisfaction. The writer therefore may rest assured that his name will never be disclosed. If it is any satisfaction to him he may know that I destroyed the portion containing his name as soon as I had finished reading the letter and that I could not recall the name myself even if I tried.

In my opinion, even if he had written his letter for publication with his name, he could have come to no harm. The letter is perfectly innocent and such as any Government servant can write with impunity. We often hesitate to do the right only because of needless fear. We must learn to dare to do the right thing.

Whether the writers' specified charge against the Kurnool leaders can be borne out or not I do not know, but I know that what he says about the insincerity of public life has a substance of truth in it. If the leading class did as it preached, we should have no difficulty in getting an adequate response from the masses. What is therefore sorely needed is undoubtedly conversion of the leading classes. When that comes, the rest will be easy.

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

#### 84. DHOTI-CUM-SOLA HAT

Pandit Durgashankar Mehta of Seoni writes:

I was a practising lawyer but non-co-operated in 1921. Circumstances have driven me back to law but I am a strict khaddarite. I have given up the use of trousers and ties and attend court and the local legislature in dhoti. As Chairman of my District Council, I am running Famine Road Works, which require my being out in the sun. Recently I got a touch of the sun and went in for a hat, which has been specially made of pure khaddar. This has started a controversy. Will you take part in it?

This is an old controversy. My narrow nationalism rebels against the hat, my secret internationalism regards the sola hat as one of the few boons from Europe. But for the tremendous national prejudice

against the hat, I would undertake to become president of a league for popularizing sola hats. In my opinion, educated India has erred in taking to (in this climate) unnecessary, unhygienic, inelegant trousers and in betraying general hesitation to take up the sola hat. But I know that national likes and dislikes are not governed by reason. That Scotch Highlander will run the risk of being singled out by his kilt as an easy target for the enemy but will not abandon the awkward kilt. I do not expect India to take kindly to the sola hat. Nevertheless workers like Pandit Durgashankar need not be ruffled by criticism and may certainly wear khadi imitations of the sola hat. It is in reality an easily portable umbrella that covers the head without the necessity of one hand being occupied in carrying it. The Calcutta policeman who shades his head from the fierce sun by sustaining an umbrella in his belt puts himself under a double handicap when pitted against his European fellow-member. Those who have strong prejudice against sola hats, should study the contrast I have described. I may here draw the reader's attention to an indigenous and effective equivalent of the hat that is very generally worn by the poor farmers of Malabar. It is an umbrella without the handle, made of leaves with a bark hoop to fit the head. It is cheap, thoroughly effective and in no way akin to the hat and yet almost just as serviceable.

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

### 85. AN APOLOGY

I have always felt unhappy that even though I am the editor of *Hindi Navajivan* I have never written anything for the journal. There has always been a strong desire to do so, but I was not able to fulfil it before now. From now on, I intend to write something for it every week.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 6-6-1929



## 86. SPINNING v. WEAVING

Shri Moolchand writes from Khadi Ashram, Ringas<sup>1</sup> :

I feel that it is the duty of khadi workers to teach the art of weaving to those peasants who wish to learn it. But it cannot be considered as important as carding nor can it be propagated as successfully. Carding is an indivisible part of the process of spinning, as preparing dough is of that of making chapatis. If a person knows how to make chapatis but cannot prepare the dough he cannot be said to have mastered the art of making chapatis. So it is as important to teach carding as it is to teach spinning.

Weaving is quite a separate process, a distinct occupation. Moreover, it has not become extinct. India's poverty and weaving are in no way inter-connected. It is the extinction of spinning which is responsible for the greivous plight and the utter poverty in which our peasantry finds itself today. Even when we wish them to become self-reliant it is not necessary to teach them weaving. Self-reliance does not mean in any way that each man must do everything himself. It would be useless and harmful to attempt it. Man is a social being and depends on society. Self-reliance means only that each village ought to produce all the grain and all the cloth it requires. There has to be a division of labour in the villages. Only spinning will be essential for everyone. It was so in the past. So it should be now and in the future. Even a little reflection will make it clear that if spinning is to be done by hand, as it should be, then this is the way to do so.

We should not feel for a moment that because the weavers are not honest in their dealings, the peasants should learn how to weave. Our job is to make the weavers better. They are also a part of society. Of course one thing must be done...some of the khadi workers should learn to weave well so that they can influence the weavers and also save them from the injustice they have to suffer because of our ignorance.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 6-6-1929

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the work done in the Ashram and asked Gandhiji if weaving was not as important as spinning.

### 87. COUNCIL-ENTRY

A gentleman writes about Council-entry:<sup>1</sup>

My views on this subject are the same as they were in 1920-21. I do not feel that the country has benefited by people getting into the Councils. If however we must enter the Councils then those elected would do well to use this forum to promote the constructive programme, e.g., khadi, etc. Not to enter the Councils would be wisdom of the first order. But next best would be to join them and then to carry on there the work one would be doing outside.

I would advise the readers that they should forget all about the Councils if they have not set their heart on getting elected themselves or getting someone else elected.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 6-6-1929

### 88. LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL

*June 8, 1929*

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your second letter. It is answered in *Hindi Navajivan*<sup>2</sup>, which you may look up.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From a photos tat of the Hindi : G.N. 831

### 89. BURMA'S CONTRIBUTION IN 1926

Shri Manilal Kothari had gone to Burma in 1926 to make collections for the All-India Deshbandhu Memorial Fund. It was suggested to me while I was in Burma and I had agreed that the funds received at that time should be duly acknowledged in *Navajivan*. But immediately thereafter, I got caught up in tours and hence I could obtain no figures and there has been some slackness. Therefore, I apologize to those brothers who had expected to see this list. A sum of

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the work done in the Ashram and asked Gandhiji if weaving was not as important as spinning.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Sinning v. Weaving", 6-6-1929

Rs.39,787-14-3 was realized through three cheques received at different times. Out of it, a sum of Rs.19,743-4-0, which was earmarked for being spent in Kathiawar itself, was credited to the account of the Satyagraha Ashram and was disbursed through the agency of the Ashram. The balance was credited to the account of the All-India Spinners' Association and its disbursement is recorded in its account books. I see from an old paper that a sum of Rs.3,376 out of the promised contributions has not yet been received. I have with me the names of those who had recorded their proposed contributions. I hope with me the names of those who had promised contributions will send them or that workers will collect and forward them. If any donor wishes to have further information, he should write to the secretary of the Udyoga Mandir.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 9-6-1929

### 90. GUJARAT'S DUTY

The Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee has not at all been remiss in giving effect to the Congress resolution. It has sent a copy of the resolution together with suggestions to every place and, in order to facilitate the task of workers, it has provided even figures about the number of taluks in the districts of the Province, the number of villages and the population in each taluk and the extent of the contribution it has to make. And if every taluk does its duty, the Congress resolution will have been properly implemented. As the statistics<sup>1</sup> given are of permanent value and as they will be useful to workers in future also, I give them below:

I hope Gujarat will not be satisfied with enrolling a quarter per cent of its population as members, but as it had earlier pledged to do special work in proportion to its special capacity, it would do likewise this time too. Every district must do at least this much: The workers of the Provincial Committee should meet and assess their capacity. The workers of every district should meet and assess their own capacity and try to exceed the share that falls to them. By doing so, very good results can be obtained without effort and the backward districts and backward taluks can be covered. Gujarat should remember that the

<sup>1</sup> Not given here

Congress Committee, in fixing a quarter per cent, kept the weakest provinces in view. Gujarat does not regard itself as weak in its capacity for doing work. Other provinces, too, do not consider Gujarat as a weak province. Hence Gujarat cannot rest satisfied with enrolling a quarter per cent as members. For example, at the time of collecting a crore, when there was competition in Gujarat, Surat had done much better than its allotted share. Can Surat or Kheda district draw any satisfaction by comparing itself with Panchmahals? Wherever there is unity, the strong have always borne the burdens of the weak. In accordance with that principle, if we regard India as indivisible, we would shoulder the burdens of the weak provinces and the strong among us would bear the burdens of the weak. Where such an attitude is cultivated, the weak do not feel their burden and the strong do not feel proud.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 9.6.1929

### *91. WHAT SHOULD MUNICIPALITIES DO?*

It may be worth while knowing what the municipalities and local bodies should do in regard to the triple boycott. I do not know how many of these municipalities and local bodies in Gujarat are under Congress influence. The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee points out from time to time how much work can be done in regard to the boycott in those bodies to which Congressmen have been elected. The Committee publishes the names of these municipalities which do this work. Among them the names of local bodies in Gujarat are to be found scattered here and there. Instead of this happening, Gujarat's contribution ought to be large. There must be only a few municipalities or local boards in Gujarat or India which do not believe in boycott.

One thing they can do on a large scale. When the boycott gains momentum, there is bound to be a shortage of khadi. In overcoming this shortage, the municipalities can make a big contribution. All of them can get yarn spun in their schools and have it woven in their own villages. It is possible to do this work with ease and at a minimum cost. If the khadi thus produced is not now utilized by the respective villages or towns, it is possible to sell it off immediately at other centres. If this happens at all places, there can never be a shortage of

cloth. Just as we can never imagine a shortage of *rotlis* as long as wheat is available, people should experience no shortage of cloth whatsoever so long as cotton is available.

In order to do such lasting work, there should be an atmosphere of khadi. If there is such an atmosphere, there will be sacrificial spinners in every home and yarn will be spun in every home. An early start can be given to the creation of such an atmosphere through municipal schools.

What applies to municipalities certainly applies also to national schools. It is good that pupils go hawking, but it is even more necessary to produce khadi at present than hawk it. Greater labour, art and patience are needed in the production of khadi. Hence those who have an understanding of khadi and boycott have to give more emphasis to its production. Gujarat may well have less of yarn spun by poor sisters, but it should have an inexhaustible power to produce sacrificial yarn. At the moment Bhai Fulchand's band is hawking khadi in Kathiawar. That is praiseworthy. It also meets with success. Why should not the same band produce yarn and teach others to do likewise?

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 9-6-1929

## 92. ANONYMOUS DONATIONS

A donor has written an anonymous letter under the name "Natural Feeling" and sent a hundred rupees. Of this amount, Rs.50 is meant for the Lalaji Memorial, Rs.10 for the Maganlal Memorial, Rs.25 for relief of distress in the south and Rs.15 for cow-protection work.

I thank "Natural Feeling" for this anonymous donation. I have very often written that the habit of writing anonymous letters is very bad, that it should not at all be encouraged, that it is a sign of cowardice. But the anonymous letter of "Natural Feeling" deserves none of these reproaches. The action of "Natural Feeling" is one example of the fact that there are in the world very few things which are solely good or solely bad at all times and at all places. It is desirable that people should follow the example of "Natural Feeling". Donors love to see their names in newspapers. Ultimately, almost all desire that their names should be known at least to those to

whom they send their donations. There may be some among these who do not give their names even to the recipients; such people deserve to be encouraged. This way those who receive donations are fully tested since the donors can watch how their anonymous gifts are being utilized.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 9-6-1929

### 93. “SAD PLIGHT OF BULSAR BHANGIS”<sup>1</sup>

1. I have published the above article without changing a single word in it under the title given to it by Thakkar Bapa. How nice it would have been had he stopped in Bulsar even for a day and solved this problem of cruelty by making a constructive suggestion! Or if a solution were not possible, we would have got at any rate an idea of the cruelty of municipal councillors and the other respectable citizens. But is such a suggestion necessary for Thakkar Bapa? He spends all his twenty-four hours in work of this sort only. It is only to be seen what the Vibhishanas<sup>2</sup> of Bulsar do after reading this article. The municipality can, if it wishes, remedy this inhuman state of affairs in a day. Its chief officer can assess the extent of the Bhangis’ indebtedness, meet the Pathans and repay to them the loans advanced by them and can easily form a co-operative society. He can know why they have to incur debts and if they hereafter would take loans in an improper way, he can urge them not to do so. This will take a little time of the official and the work will be accomplished at once.

2. The same official can scrutinize their expenses and inquire into the additions to or deductions from their wages.

3. If no one is willing to let them draw water from his well, the municipality should construct one for them. And the Vibhishanas should, in order to set an example to the Hindus, draw water from it for themselves from time to time and on that excuse keep the well also clean.

<sup>1</sup> A.V. Thakkar had visited Bulsar with anti-untouchability workers. His report was published under this title.

<sup>2</sup> Vibhishana, Ravana’s brother, supported the cause of Rama because it was righteous. The reference here is to the fair-minded among caste Hindus who worked against untouchability, risking social ostracism.

4. It should forthwith provide to the forty-two servants residential facilities fit for human beings and explain to the Bhangi and non-Bhangi women that the lavatories constructed near their residences are open to Bhangi women also.

5. If the admission of the Bhangis' children into the existing schools angers the residents of Bulsar, the municipality should start a good school for the Bhangis and the Vibhishanas should send their children to it. The municipality can do all these things quickly, but if it does not do its duty, the Congressmen of Bulsar should do theirs, and the youth league of Bulsar should follow suit. In improving the sad plight of forty-two men, no big economic question can arise nor that of the availability or non-availability of many workers. The question is merely one of compassion. If the Goddess of Compassion dwells nowhere in Bulsar, this story of cruelty will remain buried in the files of *Navajivan* as a proof of Thakkar Bapa's anguish of soul. If there is any vigilant person in Bulsar, he should write to *Navajivan* and intimate whether anyone has taken any steps in this respect or not.

[From Gujarat]

*Navajivan*, 9-6-1929

#### 94. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

June 10, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I have your letter. By all means do come in July. By the first week of July I must be back here.<sup>1</sup>

Vandemataram from  
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6787

<sup>1</sup> From Almora

## 95. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

[June 11, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

For many years now the proposal to have a well dug for the *Antyaj* in Junagadh remains unfulfilled. Devchandbhai knows about it, and was also making some arrangements about it. Please inquire into this. And your *dal*<sup>2</sup> ought to complete the work on this well. I have already written to Devchandbhai that the expenditure would be provided for.

Hav'n't you included Maniklal Kothari in the Youth Conference? He ought to be included. A sum of Rs. 750 has come from Rangoon, about which also he had been speaking to me. It would be proper to decide in consultation with Bhai Nanalal how the amount should be spent. A letter signed by both of you should go to him.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

BHAI FULCHAND KASTURCHAND

KELAVANI MANDAL, WADHWAN CITY, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9189

## 96. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

*Tuesday, June [11]<sup>3</sup>, 1929*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Vallabhbhai told me that the cheque for Rs. 900 which I brought with me from Bardoli was not acknowledged in *Young India*, and that when he made an inquiry and again after an investigation into the matter, you wrote to him that you knew nothing about it. Please let me know what the facts of the case are. Now I sleep all right.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5421

<sup>1</sup> From the postmark

<sup>2</sup> Team

<sup>3</sup> The source has "12, which however was a Wednesday.



## 97. LETTER TO KHUSHALCHAND GANDHI

June 12, 1929

IN THE HUMBLE SERVICE OF MU. BHAISHRI,

I got your letter. I feel at ease now. Santok and Radha also were very happy. Jamnalalji<sup>1</sup> you know of course. He is a man of self-restraint. He feels to be in his own family in Benares [sic]. The famous Lakshminarayan temple is at his place.

Keshu is perfectly happy. It is Ghanshyamdasji<sup>2</sup> who provides him with money for his monthly expenses. He is pleased with Keshu. If Keshu keeps his habits moderate, he will go very far. I enclose his latest letter. You will know more from it.

Purshottam is with me. After putting him at Almora, I will return. It has been decided to keep Rukhi with Janakibehn. She has fallen ill again though from Matheran she had returned with her health much improved.

*Respectful prostration by*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33109

## 98. 'FOOD FADDISTS'

I have been known as a crank, faddist, mad man. Evidently the reputation is well deserved. For wherever I go, I draw to myself cranks, faddists and mad men. Andhra has its fair share of all these. They often find their way to Sabarmati. No wonder then that I found these specimens in abundance during my Andhra tour. But I propose to introduce to the reader only one fellow crank who by his living faith in his mission compelled my admiration and induced me to plunge into a dietetic experiment which I had left unfinished at the age of 20 when I was a student in London.<sup>3</sup> This is Sundaram Gopalrao of Rajahmundry. The ground was prepared for him by a survey superintendent whom I met at Vizagapatam and who told me he was practically living on raw food. Gopalrao has a nature-cure establishment in Rajahmundry, to which he devotes the whole of his time. He

<sup>1</sup> Jamnalal Bajaj

<sup>2</sup> Ghanshyamdas Birla

<sup>3</sup> Vide "An Autobiography"

said to me, "The hip-baths and other kindred appliances are good so far as they go. But even they are artificial. To be rid of disease it is necessary to do away with fire in the preparation of foods. We must take everything in its vital state even as animals do."

"Would you advise me to adopt entirely raw diet?," I asked.

"Certainly, why not? I have cured cases of chronic dyspepsia in old men and women through a balanced diet containing germinating seeds," was Gopalrao's reply.

"But surely there should be a transition stage," I gently remonstrated.

"No such stage is necessary." rejoined Gopalrao. "Uncooked food, including uncooked starch and proteid are any day more digestible than cooked. Try it and you will feel all the better for it."

"Do you take the risk? If the cremation ceremony takes place in Andhra, the people will cremate your body with mine," I said.

"I take the risk," said Gopalrao.

"Then send me your soaked wheat. I commence from today," I said.

Poor Gopalrao sent the soaked wheat. Kasturbai, not knowing that it could possibly be meant for me, gave it to the volunteers who finished it. So I had to commence the experiment the following day—9th May. It is therefore now a month when I am writing these notes.

I am none the worse for the experiment. Though I have lost over five pounds in weight, my vitality is unimpaired. During the last eight days the weight has shown a decided tendency to increase.

Fellow faddists should know what I am doing.

I take generally eight *tolas* of germinating wheat, eight *tolas* of sweet almonds reduced to a paste, eight *tolas* of green leaves spinach or pounded [*sic*], six sour lemons, and two ounces of honey. Wheat is replaced twice or thrice during the week by an equal quantity of germinating gram. And when gram is taken in the place of wheat, cocoanut milk replaces almond paste. The food is divided into two parts, the first meal is taken at 11 a.m., the second at 6.15 p.m. The only thing touched by fire is water. I take in the morning and once more during the day boiling water, lemon and honey.

Both wheat and gram germinate in 36 hours. The grain is soaked in water for 24 hours. The water is then strained. The grain is

then left in a piece of wet khadi overnight. You find it sprouting in the morning ready for use. Those who have sound teeth need not pound the grain at all. For cocoanut milk a quarter of the kernel is grated fine and you squeeze the milk through a piece of stout khadi.

It is unnecessary to enter into further details. What I have given is enough for diet reformers to help me with their suggestions. I have lived for years on uncooked fruits and nuts but never before beyond a fortnight on uncooked cereals and pulses. Let those therefore who know anything of unfired food favour me with literature or their own experiences.

I publish the facts of this experiment because I attach the greatest importance to it. If it succeeds it enables serious men and women to make revolutionary changes in their mode of living. It frees women from a drudgery which brings no happiness but which brings disease in its train. The ethical value of uncooked food is incomparable. Economically this food has possibilities which no cooked food can have. I therefore seek the sympathetic help of all medical men and laymen who are interested in reformed dietetics.

Let no one blindly copy the experiment. I have not Gopalrao's faith. I do not claim success for it yet. I am moving cautiously. The facts are published so as to enable me to compare notes with fellow food reformers.

*Young India*, 13-6-1929

### 99. DR. SUNDERLAND'S VOLUME

If the house of the editor of *The Modern Review* could be searched,<sup>1</sup> why should he not be arrested? The Government of Bengal did not leave us long in doubt. Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee has been arrested and is to be tried for sedition. The sedition evidently consists in his having published the Rev. Dr. Sunderland's book of which the Poet Rabindranath Tagore says:

The Rev. Dr. Sunderland became personally known to me during his visit to India and my visits to America, and won from the first my deep regard. I have greatly admired his courage, earnestness and sincerity in taking up in this book the cause of the Indian people... His love of humanity, which

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Atrocious", 6-6-1929

knows no geographical boundaries or racial differences, should be a lesson to all of us who seek to share his ideals and carry on his work.

In the foreword the author says:<sup>1</sup>

I very much desire not to be misunderstood as to my motive in writing this book. Let no one say, or for a moment believe, that the book means enmity to Great Britain. It means nothing of the kind, any more than pleas for freedom of the slave in the old days of American slavery meant enmity to the American nation which permitted slavery... I am in no sense whatever England's foe or ill-wisher. What I advocate for India I believe to be for England's good as well as for India's. I want no wrong done to England, in connection with India or anywhere else. But I also want England to do no wrong to India, or through India to the world...

The plain fact is: there are two Englands, just as there are two Americas. One of the Englands...that which I like to think of as the *true* one...believes in justice and freedom, not only at home but everywhere else. This is the England of Magna Charta; of Milton and Pym and Hampden; of Pitt and Fox and Burke in 1776 when they demanded justice for the American Colonies; of Burke and Sheridan in connection with the trial of Warren Hastings, when they demanded justice for India; the England that abolished its slave trade in 1807 and slavery in all British dominions in 1833; the England of the Reform Bills; the England of such friends of India as Cobden and Bright, Lord Ripon, Mary Carpenter, Professor Fawcett, Charles Bradlaugh, A.O. Hume, Sir William Wedderburn, Sir Henry Cotton, and many others in the past; and many today, both inside and outside of Parliament (and particularly the Labour Party)...

This England I honour and love....Unfortunately, there is another England. ... It is the England which fought against Magna Charta; which refused to give justice and freedom to the American Colonies in 1776; which has constantly allied itself with militarism and imperialism; which fought two wars to force opium on China; which long held Ireland in bondage; which opposed all efforts to abolish the slave trade and slavery; which has opposed practically all political and social reforms in England; and which today, while giving profuse promises to India of pots of gold at the end of a rainbow thrusts into prison without trial Indian leaders who agitate for freedom, and gives no assurance of any real intention of ever loosening its iron grip upon what King George calls "My Indian Empire".

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

This England I do not love or honour. It is solely against this evil, and as I believe, dangerous England, that any hostility or criticism found in the following pages is directed. ...

I believe that this imperialistic, might-makes-right England, if kept in power, will as certainly lose India to Britain, as the rising of the sun. The men at this England's head are the Lord Norths of our time, who are driving India to revolution, just as Lord North and George III in 1776 drove the American Colonies to Revolution. And India's revolution, if it comes, will be sympathised with by all Asia and by all intelligent lovers of liberty in the entire world. And there will be no possibility of its being put down. India will emerge a free, independent and great nation, wholly independent of Britain.

Something ought to be said here regarding my qualifications for writing about India. ... For more than forty years I have been a constant student of India's great religions, her extensive literature, her philosophies, her remarkable art, her long history, and above all, her pressing and vital present-day social and political problems. ...

Dr. Sunderland is a nonagenarian. He is no adventurer. If he is seditious, it is virtue to be in his company. Undoubtedly the book contains strong things strongly put. But there is no malice in them. The book is brimful of quotations from eminent English writers. It has passed through its second edition inside of a year. I tender my congratulations to Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee on his having published Dr. Sunderland's book and on his being therefore singled out for the honour of a prosecution. This arrest is forcible proof of Dr. Sunderland's indictment of British rule.

*Young India*, 13-6-1929

### *100. KHADI GUIDE*

The A.I.S.A. has just published a khadi guide which as well as the report of the A.I.S.A. for 1927-28 all public workers should possess. Both can be had at the offices of the A.I.S.A. or its many depots at Rs.1-2-0 and 0-4-0, respectively. The guide is profusely illustrated and gives information about the khadi activity in all the provinces. It contains too some useful maps. It should be the concern of every patriot to study the activities of an institution that finds work for nearly 1,000 middle class men and through them distributes among nearly one hundred thousand women, 5,000 weavers and 700 carders in over 2,000 villages twenty-four lakhs of rupees annually.

The report contains audited accounts which careful workers may criticise. The Association is in need of sympathy as well as informed and useful criticism.

*Young India*, 13-6-1929

### *101. BARDOLI ENQUIRY REPORT*

Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell's report is an illuminating document. Its pages are an evidence of the immense conscientious labours they have put into the work entrusted to them, within the limits prescribed by the reference whose operative sentences (including an abvious grammatical slip) were word for word as the people's representatives had drawn up. Though therefore the actual finding on the question of the amount of assessment is, as Mahadev Desai has, in my opinion, conclusively pointed out,<sup>1</sup> faulty, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the ryots of the tracts concerned are bound to accept it. It is upto them however at least to reason and point out to the Government the defects in the finding and to leave it to their honour to remedy them. Throughout the brave fight the people put up, the question never was one of rupees, annas and pies, burdensome though the assessment was. The question was one of principle and justice. Resentment was felt against the high-handed and contemptuous manner in which the people's case was treated. The authors of the report have completely vindicated its justice.

The Officers were to

enquire into and report upon the complaints of the people of the Bardoli Taluk and Valod Mahal and Chorasi Taluk...

(a) that the enhancement of revenue recently made is not warranted in terms of the Land Revenue Code,

(b) that the reports accessible to the public do not contain sufficient data warranting the enhancement and that some of the data given are wrong; and they were to find, that if the people's complaint is held to be justified, what enhancement or reduction, if any, there should be upon the old assessment.

On all these points the Commissioners have substantially found in favour of the people. As to the first complaint the Commissioners have found that the authorities have offended against the spirit of

<sup>1</sup> In *Young India*, 23-5-1929, under the title "The Bardoli Report: An analysis"

Section 107. The Commissioners' examination of the second complaint is detailed, exhaustive, able and instructive. It is the best part of the report and covers 40 out of 77 pages of the body of the report. This examination proves to the hilt almost every one of the charges brought by the people against Messrs Jayakar and Anderson. There could be no better vindication than this:

We are bound to hold that the complaint referred to in point (b) of the terms of reference is substantially justified. The data in the reports, apart from the rental and sale statistics, are obviously not sufficient to warrant either the general increases sanctioned in the maximum rates, or the much higher increases in the case of particular villages. The rental and sale statistics have been carelessly compiled, are demonstrably incorrect in a large number of cases, and in general must be regarded as completely unreliable. Further, the established method of using the statistics is in our opinion unsound in theory, and however it may work in practice in other districts, is not capable of giving satisfactory results in this part of Gujarat, where leases and sale transactions are affected by such a variety of disturbing factors. In view of this conclusion we submit that the present settlement cannot be allowed to stand in either of the two taluks.

Having thus found that the increase made by the Government had offended against the spirit of Section 107 of the Code and that the data relied upon by the Government were insufficient and faulty, the Commissioners had to say what the increase or the reduction, as the case may be, on the old assessment there should be. Though in my opinion the case before the Commissioners was for a substantial reduction in the old assessment, such a proposal was evidently beyond their ken. Revision has traditionally come to mean an increase, be it ever so slight, in the general rate of assessment. Though therefore they have rejected the Government rate of 22 per cent increase as excessive, they have proposed an increase of 5.7 per cent. This means an increase of Rs. 48,648 instead of Rs. 1,87,492.

For the people's representatives they have unmixed praise. I cannot resist the temptation to quote from the report the Commissioners' unqualified appreciation of their "valuable assistance".

At all our inspections the case for the agriculturists was also watched by representatives specially delegated for the purpose, principally Mr. Narahari Parikh and Mr. Mahadev Desai. In addition to the compilation of much useful information on their own lines, these gentlemen had systematically investigated and tabulated in advance the rental or sale transactions of each

village in our programme, and their detailed knowledge of individual cases not infrequently enabled us to obtain more accurate information that would otherwise have been available. We gladly acknowledge here the conscientious and impartial manner in which this assistance was given to us and its real value for the purposes of this enquiry.

But as I have already said the report suffers from limitations. Though the total increase proposed by the Commissioners is trifling in the aggregate, it is not warranted by the facts of the case and in certain cases serious injustice has been done, unconsciously no doubt, by the Commissioners. If the government is wise, it would redress the injustice. This is an injustice which it was within the power of the Commissioners to avoid and which they could and would have avoided, if they had more time, and if they had, as they should have, heard the people's representatives on the proposed increase. Such a precaution is necessary when every case or every village is never individually examined. In assessing particular villages Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell have simply drawn deductions from the condition of villages which they have thought to be analogous. What therefore they could not do or failed to do, the Government can, if they wish, do now without much time or trouble and render the needed justice in individual cases.

But the report also suffers from defects which the Commissioners had no power to remedy. Sardar Vallabhbhai's belief is shared by all those who have at all studied the land revenue policy, that the land is already over-assessed and that the case is not one of tinkering with particular assessments but it is one of overhauling the whole land revenue policy. The pages of this valuable report show that both the revenue laws and the methods of their administration are far from satisfactory. But this is a question which the people of Bardoli had not raised. It is for the country now to demand a radical change both in the law and its administration. This requires a critical study of both, and popular education and propaganda in revenue matters. It will tax the Sardar's best ingenuity and provide him with a platform for civil disobedience of an all-India character, should the Government still prove obdurate and deaf to public opinion. The illuminating report and the Bardoli triumph should render unnecessary any such heroic measure.

*Young India*, 13-6-1929



## *102. PANDIT NEHRU'S APPEAL*

Pandit Motilal Nehru has addressed the following appeal to Congress members of the legislatures:

You must have read with interest the recent pronouncement of the Viceroy and of some provincial Governors extending the life of the legislatures. As you are no doubt aware, the A.I.C.C.<sup>1</sup> and the Working Committee considered this situation and decided to call upon all Congress members of the legislatures to abstain from attending them till further notice. They were further asked to devote all their available time to the furtherance of the Congress programme in the country.

It is clear that the real strength of the nation is built up by work outside the present legislatures, and even our Council work carries weight only to the extent of the organized strength behind us. All indications point to an approaching crisis and by the end of this year at the latest we must be ready to face this crisis with confidence. The A.I.C.C. has therefore laid down a special programme of reorganisation for the next three months, failure to comply with which will lead to the disaffiliation or non-recognition of the Committee concerned. Those of us who are members on behalf of the Congress of the Central Legislature or the Provincial Councils have now to demonstrate that we can work outside the Councils as well as inside. Even from the point of view of future Council work it is essential that we should work in our constituencies and consolidate the position of the Congress.

I write this letter to appeal to you to give some time and energy to working for this Congress programme. You would naturally prefer working in your own constituency. This is right. I would suggest however that you should immediately get in touch with your Provincial Congress Committee so that full advantage may be taken of your time and your efforts may be co-ordinated with those of others.

You may of course concentrate on any item of the Congress programme. I would specially suggest however the formation of village and local Congress Committees, the enrolment of Congress members and volunteers and the boycott of foreign cloth. I would also strongly recommend your collecting funds for Congress work. These moneys should be sent to the Provincial Congress Committee concerned which will issue receipts to the donors. The money may also be sent direct to the A.I.C.C. office in Allahabad. I would like to keep a separate record of these activities of Congress members of the

<sup>1</sup> All-India Congress Committee

legislatures so that the country may know what we can do outside the Councils. I would therefore request you to send me a monthly letter telling me briefly what you have done to further the Congress programme. This report may take the form suggested on a separate sheet. It should be sent to me direct.

If you have any difficulties the office of the A.I.C.C. will be glad to help you in removing them.

This authoritative pronouncement that “the real strength of the nation is built up by work outside the present legislatures” has come none too soon. If the members of the legislatures will recognize this obvious truth and emphasize it in their speeches and acts during the remaining months of this year, we should be ready to face any crisis that may overtake the country.

*Young India*, 13-6-1929

### *103. A CARDING ENTHUSIAST*

Shri Mahavir Prasad Poddar writes the following in praise of carding:<sup>1</sup>

The carding-bow is indeed as praiseworthy as Bhai Mahavir Prasad says it is. For those who would learn the art of spinning in its totality it is essential to learn the use of this instrument as well. It is very easy to learn and the music it produces while it is operated is very sweet to the ears. I would advise all those who use clean snow-white cotton slivers to follow Mahavir Prasad's example.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 13-6-1929

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had emphasized the importance and beauty of carding. He had stressed the need to teach carding in every village and offered his services for this purpose.

## 104. MARRIAGE AND THE VEDAS

There is more of pomp and show and less of religion in the way the marriage rites are performed in the Hindu society these days. Those who are getting married do not know what these rites are or represent and what their obligations are after the ceremony. This is highly regrettable. The Vedas regard marriage as a sacrament and have described how it should be performed. Marriages should continue to be performed in the same way. It is the duty of the parents and the elders to explain to the couple the significance of these rites and their duties after going through the ceremony. These rites and the pledges that the couple have to take have already been published in *Navajivan*<sup>1</sup>. Readers may look them up.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 13-6-1929

## 105. NOTES

### SEWING AS A “YAJNA”

Shri Mahavir Prasad also writes:<sup>2</sup>

Whatever we do for the good of others is a *yajna*. A number of such big and small *yajnas* are necessary to make the khadi movement successful. Spinning of course is the biggest and most universal of these. If those who have a little spare time would tailor khadi it could be made very cheap. This work can be organized only at such places where khadi bhandars exist and only the khadi bhandars can efficiently manage it. I would like to thank Bhai Mahavir Prasad and Ghanshyamdasji too for making a start in this direction. I hope they will continue the sacred work they have undertaken. It should not be difficult to find such ladies in Calcutta who would volunteer to stitch khadi.

<sup>1</sup> Vide “With Bare Religious Rites”, 7-3-1926

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that by stitching khadi free of cost people could participate in the khadi yajna. He had referred to a scheme to this effect started in G.D. Birla’s house.

“NAVAJIVAN “ SERIES

There is no end to Shri Mahavir Prasad's greed. He is ever dreaming of propagation of khadi. He has extracted a number of articles regarding khadi and allied activities from *Navajivan* and distributed them in book-form in thousands. These booklets are available at a cheap price. He intends publishing them as a series to be known as *Navajivan Mala*. I have seen the first three books and I feel that they ought to be widely circulated. If enough khadi literature is made available to the public they will realize the potentialities of khadi.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 13-6-1929

106. LETTER TO LILAVATI

BAREILLY,  
June 13, 1929

CHI. LILAVATI,

I could not reply to your letter earlier; I had absolutely no time. Whatever you would do rests solely on your strength. My only advice could be that you can do whatever you would, after satisfying your uncle who, you say, has such great affection for you. If you wish to take some step in spite of his dissatisfaction, it must be subject to two conditions. It should proceed with restraint and be prompted by the inner voice. The bonds of kinship too slacken before the inner voice. All the same one ought to know that the inner voice is very often wrongly interpreted.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9314

107. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

BAREILLY,  
June 13, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

Parnerkar had given me points to be included in the letter to Sir Purushottamdas. I enclose them with this. They seem to be all right. In

the letter make clear that it will be for him to get a fencing put up. Give him an estimate of the expenditure for that. We should get occupancy right for 25 years. After that period, we should get compensation for the buildings we may have constructed at a rate to be fixed then. If the two parties differ as regards the amount, a duly authorized arbitrator should be appointed and we should be paid the amount fixed by him. We should be bound for five years to accept their cattle, even if we are incurring losses. You may also add that, if the society in Bombay wishes to discuss the matter further, Parnerkar will visit Bombay.

Have a talk with Chi. Kanti from time to time. We cannot say yet that he has calmed down.

I send with this Ranchhodbhai's letter; make good use of his criticism.

The change about the kitchen can be introduced with immediate effect.

I shall make one criticism about the names suggested for the different places in the Ashram. I see no uniformity in them. There is a mixture of Bengali, Marathi and Persian words. No thought seems to have been given to the matter. Why *Kutir* and not *Kuti*? Why should we not call the place "Magan Kutir" or "Magan Niwas"? What shall we gain by having a new name in place of the suggestive one, "Striniwas"? Why not "Prarthanabhavan"? Or, why should we not try to find a word which can be easily understood to indicate that the place where prayers are held is an open maidan?

I see no reasoning behind the suggestion to call the guest house "Nandini". I should certainly like Bhansali's name to be connected with Mahadev's dwelling. Why should we not name it "Jaybhuvan"? Why should the kitchen be named "Sharadamandir"? Why not "Bhojanshala"? Since the place serves both purposes, its name should refer to both. "Kailas" for "Vankar Niwas" sounds ostentatious. "Rustom Block" should be changed into a suggestive name. We should find the Gujarati equivalent for "block". "Goshala" is a suggestive name, and we have no right to replace it by the most sacred name "Gokul". "Uttar Prantar" and "Dakshin Prantar" too do not sound well to me. We should dismiss "Rajmarg". I have some doubt whether to permit "Vithi" to say. "Tirtha" should be dismissed.

You will now easily understand what is at the root of my criticism. Comments were invited at the time of the prayer; take this as

in response to that. Don't think at all that my suggestions must be carried out. It will be enough if this criticism receives attention along with other criticisms. Kaka will be able to think better about this problem. Preserve the accompanying notice. It is necessary that Chhaganlal<sup>1</sup> should see the *Vahivatdar*<sup>2</sup> when he goes there. If they have started any work, there will be no problem at all.

I have gone through the new scheme drawn up by Chhotelal for the production of khadi in Bahial. I enclose it with this. The weakest part of the scheme is that relating to carding. We can succeed only if it is taken up by the new class of people that has arisen.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 15802; also *Bapuna Patro*—7 *Shri Chhaganlal Joshine*, pp. 114-6

### 108. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BAREILLY,

*June 13, 1929*

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I fail to write when I am moving from place to place. I often intend to write but when it is time for the weekly mail my letter is not ready. This time too I have set out on a journey. The journey will lead me to the hills. Today we are at the foot of the mountain in Bareilly. This time I have a large convoy. There is Ba, there is Purushottam, then Prithviraj and Pyarelal too. Devdas will join us in Almora. The journey has been organized by Prabhudas. Among the women are Jamnabehn, Khurshedbehn, Mirabehn and Kusumbehn. Mahadev has been detained by Vallabhbhai. If both of you cannot come away and Sushila alone comes, it is all right. But I think there is nothing wrong if she stays on till both of you can come along provided she is keeping well and her separation from her parents is not very painful to her. What I mean is that you should do what both of you wish to. If Sushila desires to come she must not be held back. If proper arrangements about the journal, etc., cannot be made, I realize that you

<sup>1</sup> Chhaganlal Gandhi was manager and trustee of the Vijapur Khadi Ashram. The Gaekwar State had served some notice which is referred to here.

<sup>2</sup> An official under the Gaekwar of Baroda State

cannot come over. Ramdas is not particularly well. He is not yet free from his mental trouble. I am of course fine. About my recent experiment in diet you will read in *Navajivan* and *Young India*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4755

*109. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR*

BAREILLY,

*June 13, 1929*

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

In my reply to your letter I forgot to mention one thing. If you want to be very particular about the things to be taken with you, you may bring along a couple of bowls and a plate, and also a *lota*<sup>1</sup>. I have not yet been able to fix up a date on which to return to the Udyoga Mandir, but hope to do so in the first week of July.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6788

*110. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI*

BAREILLY,

*June 13, 1929*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. It is surprising that receipt of the Rs. 25 for the Lalaji Fund was not acknowledged and the contribution did not appear in *Navajivan* and *Young India*. I had given the cheque to Jamnalalji. Now that you are in Bombay you may enquire at Jamnalalji's shop by telephone or otherwise and send the information to Chhaganlal so that it can be published in *Young India*.

I shall personally see the accommodation at Almora and send you a telegram if necessary. Right now I am in a furnace. Tomorrow I shall be in the higher reaches.

<sup>1</sup> Metal jug

Rukhi has again fallen ill.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI  
C/O AMARCHAND KALIDAS  
121 FORT STREET  
BOMBAY (B.B.C.I. RLY.)

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

### *111. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA*

BAREILLY,  
*June 13, 1929*

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Harbhai is Nanabhai's colleague at Dakshinamurti Bhavan. Nanabhai has fallen ill. Following the talk we had at Wardha about this school I am sending him on to you. You were to consider what assistance you could give to this institution. I have today sent an assurance to Nanabhai taking it that you will make a donation. You will learn all the details from Harbhai, see the accounts of the institution and do whatever you consider proper.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6173. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### *112. SPEECH AT NAINITAL*

*June 14, 1929*

My voice is not as strong as it was in 1921. I should now stop making speeches. Here too, I did not and do not intend making a speech. But one who considers himself a representative of *Daridra-narayana* cannot stop begging. I have not much strength left. But you all keep giving me something or the other, so I cannot overcome my greed. I thank you for the address and the purse. I am grateful that in order to save time, you omitted reading the verses, and the chairman of the District Board left out the whole address. I thank you for the



same. You have not contributed enough money. Those who live here are not poor. They are the ones who have usurped the occupations of the poor. I have come to remind them of their duty. The population here has come down from 3 lakhs to 2 lakhs. Why has it decreased so much? Why this decline in spite of good climate? Why have so many people died or left? Evidently, because people have no employment here. They are suffering badly for want of employment. We send out our wool to foreign countries or sell it to the mills. We deprive the poor of their bread because we buy mill-cloth. Our tastes have changed. We consider swadeshi cloth to be bad and mill material good. We like to dress up like the sahibs. We have ruined the poor by aping others. People have become cowards. But if they try, they can cast off their fear. One should only fear God and no one else. I consider that the best remedy for India's poverty and the prevailing cowardice would be to give up foreign cloth. All the brothers and sisters should share in this effort. It can be done easily. People sing or recite poetry but this is not going to solve the problem of hunger. The truth is that only the charkha can satisfy our hunger and bring us swaraj. Ever since the message of the charkha has been spread in India it has given life to thousands of women. I would request all the brothers who use foreign cloth that they should wear the rough cloth made by their countrymen. They will thus provide livelihood to thousands. The Congress has called for prohibition. I do not know how many people here are addicted to liquor. It is this evil habit which brought about the destruction of the Yadavas even though they had Lord Krishna among them. Lord Krishna had warned them that drinking and gambling would lead them to destruction. But they did not heed his warning and were annihilated. I would request you also to give up liquor. Everyone should pay four annas and join the Congress. Those who join it have to take the pledge that they would achieve swaraj through peaceful and honest means. Everyone who fulfils these conditions can become a member of the Congress.

This then is the way to attain swaraj. If each man spins enough for himself, then swaraj cannot be far. This is what I have come to tell you. I have not much strength. But I would repeat two things which I had said in 1921. One is that if Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis were to unite and not fight with one another, we would attain swaraj today. But you have all lost your head. You have to become good. Then swaraj is within your grasp. The second thing is to remove

untouchability; otherwise the Hindu religion itself will be wiped out. How can any Hindu practise untouchability when he proclaims faith in Advaita<sup>1</sup>. It is our first and foremost duty to remove untouchability. Those who have not yet contributed to the purse collected here may please do so now. Women have often volunteered to give me their jewellery; they may do so here too. You have presented me with two boxes. They are very good. But where have I the place for such beautiful things? I would like to strike a bargain with you, you pay me a good sum and buy them. Where do I keep them during my travels, where can I keep them in the Ashram?

[From Hindi]

*Aaj*, 4-7-1929

### *113. DUTY OF REFORMERS*

I received last week a letter dated the 29th ultimo from a reform society of Ahmedabad. It is as follows:<sup>2</sup>

The matter of this letter must perhaps have become old by now but the incident which has been narrated in it, is likely to recur often.

There is no doubt that the bad habits which are ingrained in us will not go all at once. To get rid of them, the same efforts are needed which we are making for winning swaraj. Such efforts will produce and are producing the same strength, which results from our efforts for swaraj, for both things are the same. We labour under the illusion that we are unable to do anything because we are powerless. The other illusion is that nothing happens because we are small in number. I have no doubt that our strength will grow if we try to destroy evil, immorality and rot wherever we see them.

<sup>1</sup> Non-duality; the Vedantic doctrine of the identity of the individual self with the universal Self.

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. It stated that the Reform of Society League which was started three months earlier had only nine members. They cleaned the by-lanes and wrote to the Municipality for a urinal. The sanitary committee visited the spot. The opponents attacked them with sticks as well as words of abuse. The situation would have taken an ugly turn had they not held their peace. Now they had two ways open to them: violence and the law-court. Their lives were in danger; they sought Gandhiji's advice.

But there is a limit to such efforts. That is the limit set by truth and non-violence; hence there will certainly be discretion and politeness. We shall do what we mean to, but shall put up with our elders' abuse, stick and knife. A court of law has no place in the limits set by me. The law-courts of today are no law-courts at all. The victory scored in them is no victory. A reformer's victory lies in melting the heart of his opponent. A law-court cannot at all achieve that, even a stick cannot. Our forbearance can accomplish that with ease. I have no doubt that if the young people bear everything in silence, the elders will relent. But to put up with things and to launch satyagraha is not the way of the coward, but of the brave. This way is not for him who sees in it weakness and cowardice. Hence even if by having resort to the law-courts, the by-lanes of Ahmedabad can be improved, the reformers should certainly do so. Great daring is needed to improve those by-lanes, those lavatories, those urinals. I shall not be surprised if a number of youths have to sacrifice their lives for accomplishing this task. Dr. Hariprasad<sup>1</sup> has once again taken the task in hand. If the youths assist him, a lot of reform can be brought about. They can attend meetings, stage plays and take out processions. All this is good work and is to be done in a disciplined manner. But they count for little before certain services. The youths should themselves clean the roads. They should clean gutters and drains. We all should know how to work as Bhangis. And what applies to the improvement of by-lanes, applies also to many other things. If the students really wish to form themselves into an army for swaraj, they must go beyond the speech-making stage to the action stage. Their reports should contain an account not of how many speeches they delivered and how many plays they staged but instead of or in addition to these, of how many lavatories they cleaned, and how many wells in how many villages, how many bunds they built, how many patients they attended on, how much khadi they wove, how many wells or tanks they dug, how many night-schools they conducted and so on.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 16-6-1929

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hariprasad Vrajrai Desai, physician and Congress worker of Ahmedabad

#### 114. RAW v. COOKED FOOD<sup>1</sup>

Some look upon me as a fool, a crank or a faddist. I must admit that wherever I go I am sought out by fools, cranks and faddists. One can conclude from this that I must be having the characteristics of all these three types. Andhra has its fair share of all three. Some mad men come as far as the Udyoga Mandir in Sabarmati. So, when I went Andhra, how could I escape running into them. But I do not wish, at the present moment, to introduce all the three types to the readers. Among my fads is the one concerning experiments in diet. I wish to present one such faddist, because I have begun the experiment which I wish to describe and which I am undertaking under his influence. His name is Sundaram Gopalrao. He lives in Rajahmundry. He runs an institute of hydropathy and dietetics; I have been told, and I do believe, that many have benefited by his treatment.

This Gopalrao has been living on uncooked food for the last one year. He believes that fire should not touch man's food. The sun is a sustainer, fire is a destroyer. The sun matures food, fire takes away its essence. When food comes in contact with fire, its essence is burnt out. In accordance with this reasoning, he gave up cooked food and after gaining experience, he made the experiments on his patients. He holds that the most delicate intestines which digest cooked food will necessarily digest uncooked food as well.

I have believed for many years that one should not eat cooked food. I had given up cooked food at the age of 20, but that state could not last beyond 15 days. I tried it again in the year 1893 in the Transvaal; and then too could not proceed beyond 15 days.

I have been tempted by what Gopalrao says and by his experience and I have commenced at 60, an experiment which I had abandoned out of fear in my youth. In point of results, the experiment is very important and hence I shall tell the reader what it is. I have lived on raw fruit and dry fruit continuously for six years. But I have not lived for a long time on uncooked cereals and pulses and I have believed that a man like me could not digest it at all.

It is the opinion of contemporary Western medical men that our diet should contain a certain element in the absence of which a man cannot preserve his health. It is known as "vitamin". Vitamin means

<sup>1</sup> Vide also "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929.

the vital essence. Chemists cannot detect it by analysis. But health experts have been able to feel its absence. Having studied the effects of many types of diet, they have found out that this vital essence is a necessary thing. They believe that if any vegetable is cooked, this essence is destroyed. They have divided this essence into classes. Of them, vitamin A is to be found in leafy vegetables and germinated grains of cereals. Hence, they have been recommending for years now, the consumption of foods containing vitamins and therefore many people take raw vegetables, pulses, wheat, etc., which have sprouted after being soaked in water.

But many experts hold and Gopalrao cites his own experience in support of it that uncooked and cooked foods should not at all be mixed. If one wants to benefit fully by uncooked food, one must give up cooked food altogether.

I have faith in this argument. This view is becoming stronger day by day. We see support for this view even in the chapter on diets in the book by the T.B. expert, Dr. Muthu.

Apart from health, there is for me a great attraction in this diet. I regard the destruction of even vegetagbles as violence. Man cannot help such destruction. But despite knowing that, one who believes in the dharma of non-violence, will indulge in a minimum of such destruction. Moreover, diet has an intimate connection with physical celibacy. It has been the primary object of all my dietetic experiments to find out which diet is most helpful in the observance of physical *brahmacharya*.

It is also the purpose of all my dietetic experiments to find out which diet can be taken in the least time and at least expense and can fully safeguard health. I saw all this included in Gopalrao's experiment and so I too have plunged into it.

None should hastily copy my experiment. He who has no experience of such experiments should never do so. My experiment has not yet proceeded beyond the initial stage. I cannot even claim that it has succeeded. I do not have Gopalrao's faith. It is not even as simple as he believes it to be. I can say only this much now about that experiment that I have lost 5 lb. of weight. I shall not say that I have lost my bodily strength. Since last week, my weight has started increasing; I have regained one pound. There has been no obstacle in my incessant activities. Hence I wish to prolong the experiment. I shall keep the reader posted with its results. If the medical men having

some experience of such diet will communicate their experience to me, I shall be grateful. Now I shall describe my diet: Eight *tolas* of germinating wheat, eight *tolas* of almonds ground to a paste, eight *tolas* of green leafy vegetables crushed, eight sour lemons, five *tolas* of honey.

When I do not take wheat, I take an equal quantity of germinated gram. From this week, I have started taking wheat and gram together. I sometimes take the grated kernel of cocoanut in place of almonds, and, if there is scope, I take dried grapes or some other fruit in addition to the five constituents.

If wheat or gram is soaked in water for 24 hours and then the water is strained and it is then kept in a piece of wet cloth overnight, it sprouts. Salt is not considered necessary in this diet. I do not take it at present. I keep varying the proportion and mixture of wheat and gram. The above proportion is only by way of guidance. I have been taking wheat and gram together for the last three days. There should be no almonds when there is gram because both contain muscle-forming elements. I began with gram but the same purpose is served when it is replaced by *moong*<sup>1</sup> and other pulses. It is possible that wheat can be replaced even by *jowar*<sup>2</sup> and *bajra*<sup>3</sup>. This field is wide and interesting and worthy of development. It is more useful in this poor country. There is a lot of truth in the maxim that our actions are influenced by our food. We have misused the above dictum by exaggerating our food habits to the point of looking upon them as our dharma and further have been fussing about pollution by mere touch. I have believed for forty years that, leaving aside exaggeration, the question of diet is a serious one meriting thought. I thank God because He has given me the good sense and the strength to try my last experiment today, and by means of this article, I share with the reader the pleasure I derive from my experiment.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 16-6-1929

<sup>1</sup> A kind of green gram

<sup>2</sup> Kinds of millet

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

## 115. MY NOTES

### WARNING TO ME

When my article entitled “Is This Humanity?”<sup>1</sup> had caused an uproar and I was being inundated with letters, there was one I had preserved because it was written with good intention. It was dated 15-10-1926. As that letter served as a warning to me, I kept it in my file. When every week I open my *Navajivan* papers, my eyes fall on the stanzas from Akha<sup>2</sup> in it. The stanzas are:

Subtle *maya* is a silent sword  
Killing pleasantly;  
Once she plunges, she will not withdraw,  
She eats up a learned scholar from within.  
Myriad are the roles she plays,  
Taking what form she chooses, where.  
If sense perchance dawns in any  
Turned scholar, like an innocent She will pray,  
A thing that deserves discarding  
That itself is made a victim, sings Akha.  
Many are the forms that *maya* takes;  
We find them displayed wherever we look.

The letter is a long one. It contains an argument against my article. But its gist is this: whether, having fallen a prey to *maya*, I have not committed *adharma* in the name of dharma. I did not feel so at that time and do not today. But what of that? It is indeed true that *maya* sweetly kills. If I have been caught by *maya* and know it, how then can it be *maya*? If a blind man can see, how can we call him a blind man? How can I know when I shall be caught up in *maya*... I who am engrossed in many activities and finding retirement in them? Hence by publishing the above stanzas and describing the context, I gain peace praying to God to save me from *maya*. The thoughtful reader should certainly draw a lesson from this. None should act believing that what I say is gospel truth because I am called a “mahatma”. We do not know who a “mahatma” is. It is a good

<sup>1</sup> In eight instalments; *vide*

<sup>2</sup> Akha Bhagat, a Gujarati poet

thing that we should subject even a “mahatma’s” word to the test by means of our intellect and if it does not stand the test, we should discard it.

#### FAMINE IN THE SOUTH

Rajaji has once again made an appeal for funds in this cause. All his work is clear, precise and fruitful. Where the people’s hunger and thirst are banished and a man to satisfy this need is available, those who have wealth should make use of it. The readers responded to his first appeal. I am sanguine that they will satisfy his additional demand without delay.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 16-6-1929

### 116. A STUDENT

PREM [VIDYALA]YA,

[June] 1 [6, 192]<sup>91</sup>

A student means one who hungers for knowledge. *Vidya* means knowledge that is worth knowing. *Atma* is the only thing worth knowing and so *vidya* is the knowledge of the Self. But to acquire knowledge of the Self, one must study literature, history, geography, arithmetic, etc. These are all means to an end. Knowledge of the alphabet is necessary to get knowledge of these subjects. But we know of persons having such knowledge without the knowledge of the alphabet. Those who know this will not hanker after the knowledge of literature, etc., but they will seek the knowledge of the Self.

The student should forsake all those things which are obstacles in the pursuit of this knowledge and should cultivate what is helpful. The student life of one who understands this, never comes to an end and he goes on gaining knowledge while eating, drinking, sleeping, playing, digging, weaving, spinning or doing any other activity. To be able to do this, one must develop a habit of observation. Such a one does not need a group of teachers daily; in other words, he regards the whole world as his teacher and he goes on learning lessons from it.

BAPU

Form a microfilm of the Gujarati : M.M.U. II

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji reached Prem Vidyalaya on this date.



## 117. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 16, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I was somewhat worried after I sent you back but was relieved when I duly received your letter. I hope you had no difficulty in finding out your train and obtaining a seat at Mughalsarai. Did you have to pay more than Rs.10 for your fare? Keep up your daily lessons in the *Gita*, English and Arithmetic. Write something in your diary every day. Recite the *shlokas* in the presence of someone who knows Sanskrit. Free yourself from all fear. Write to me about father's health. We are all fine. It is, of course, cold here.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

CHI. PRABHAVATIBEHN

C/O BABU BRIKISHORE PRASAD, P.O. SIWAN, DIST. CHHAPRA, BIHAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3351

## 118. SPEECH AT PREM VIDYALAYA, TADIKHET

June 16, 1929

I heard the tale of your woes even before I came here, but the remedy lies in your own hands. Its name is self-purification. We are today weighed down by our own selfishness and parochialism of outlook, we must cast it out. We know how to die for our family but it is time that we learnt to go a step further. We must widen the circle of our love till it embraces the whole village, the village in its turn must take into its fold the district, the district the province, and so on till the scope of our love becomes coterminous with the world. Our Congress Committees are today in a moribund condition. It should be up to you to rally round the banner of the Congress in large numbers and once more make it throb and pulsate with life. You must cultivate self-confidence and make God your shield. There is none mightier than He. A man who throws himself on God ceases to fear man.

<sup>1</sup> Extracted from Pyarelal's report under the title. The Almora Tour II". Gandhiji presided over the anniversary celebration.

In your annual report, you have referred to your financial difficulties but I would ask you not to be disappointed by these difficulties but on the contrary, to regard them as a blessing in disguise. If the advice of a person with an experience of 40 years of public life and public institutions at his back, as I claim to have got, can have any value for you, take it from me that a little financial stringency instead of being a misfortune to be deplored, is a thing to be welcomed as a blessing in disguise by any public institution that really wants to serve the people. I hold that no institution that is worth its salt can be starved for want of funds. More institutions are smothered by opulence than are killed by poverty. Constant dependence on the public for funds teaches an institution the lesson of true humility and keeps it on the alert. On the contrary, an institution that is altogether independent of the public for its support is liable to succumb to inertia and become lax in the performance of its duties. The amount of public support that an institution can command affords a true measure of its utility. I would therefore advise every institution that is faced with financial distress to curtail its activities so as to bring it within compass of its means rather than to keep up appearances by borrowing funds. In the former case, the institution though reduced in size, will still retain its pristine health, in the latter case, its bloated size will only be a sign of its diseased condition. I would therefore earnestly beseech you to keep clear of this fatal error.

I am glad to find that your institution has dedicated itself to khadi work and has given to the spinning-wheel a central position in its activities. But that is not enough. I want you to understand the inner significance of this little wheel and to realize the full potency with which it is charged. Twenty-one years ago, I made the discovery, and since then I have never been tired of repeating it in season and out of season that there is no mightier agent for bringing together and tying in an indissoluble bond the teeming millions of India from Peshawar to Cape Comorin and from Karachi to distant Assam than the frail thread that is spun on this spinning-wheel. I would therefore suggest to you that you should not measure its worth in terms of rupees, annas and pies but in terms of the strength that it can generate, among the people. Above all, I would ask you to keep your faith unsullied and untarnished in this age of scepticism and disbelief and never to lose heart. For, remember that whilst it is given to man to strive, it is God alone who fulfils.

*Young India*, 27-6-1929

## 119. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

June 17, 1929

DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your letter. I see you are making steady progress in self-supporting method.

I see also that you have plunged into the uncooked dietary. I do not mind it so long as you can do it well without injuring the body. I have found that pounding injures the vitality and the electricity as Dr. Muthu calls it. It seems that this germinating seed food is as delicate as milk and perhaps equally, if not more, efficacious. It seems never to cause disturbance if taken whole, it does cause disturbance when it is pounded. If you have good teeth, insist upon taking the whole seed and the raw vegetable and fruit cleaned and chopped but not pounded. Mastication is an indispensable condition of doing justice to uncooked food. To avoid swallowing, let your morsels be small and well chewed, concentrate on that morsel you are chewing and see that it is reduced to a liquid before it passes down the throat. This method may take 45 minutes per meal. Do not grudge that time and have nobody near you at the time save the nearest companions. When you have acquired the habit of proper mastication, you will do your work whilst eating. For, uncooked whole food is clean and dirties nothing and can be carried about and even eaten whilst gently walking. I used to chew my nuts and fruit walking during the marches in the Transvaal. Uncooked food must contain nuts from which you get the oils. Grated undried cocoanut is perhaps the best when you take a pulse which gives you enough protein. Some books were sent to you from Sabarmati. You must go slowly.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

*Important*

I was forgetting your question. If you are summoned to give evidence, of course, you must refuse to give evidence on conscientious grounds. Write out your grounds.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1605

## 120. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

June 17, 1929

BHAISHRI BEHRAMJI,

I think the 7th of September is a Saturday; if it is, the day suits me. See if you can relieve me the same evening.

*Blessings to both of you from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6594

## 121. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

NAINITAL,

*Silence Day, June 17, 1929*

SISTERS,

Your responsibilities are increasing fairly rapidly. I send with this a letter from Kishorelal about "An Idea Bal Mandir". Read it and show it to the teachers. I should like those of you who take interest in the work to get trained up for it. Do so even if that means putting Narandas to a lot of trouble. It is possible to get a more intelligent guide than he, but we shall get everything we want if we cling, as the phrase goes, to the trunk of one tree.

Do your best to make the kitchen a success.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3715

## 122. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

June 17, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

I got your letter. I like the decision not to write to anyone for advice. It will be enough if you consult from time to time those who are there. You should also come to decisions quickly. Don't be afraid of making mistakes. One cannot help making some.

You say: “ I am well ‘today’”. I infer from this that an earlier letter is making its way to me. The letter in front of me is dated the 13th.

You must have received my letter<sup>1</sup> regarding Vallabhbhai's complaint.

We are all happy and in fine spirits. My experiment continues. Kishorelal's letter is meant for the women. You and the teachers also should read it.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5422

### *123. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI*

*June 17, 1929*

CHI. MAHADEV,

I just got your letter. By' just' I mean at 8.25. I have five minutes before I shall come out of my silence and therefore I write this. It was good that both of you went there. You both needed some rest badly. I have had no rest yet, nor did I expect to have any. They are talking about a week's [rest] after the 22nd and according to the programme, I should finish the *Gita* work during this period. Let us see what happens. Here too, the collection will be tidy. We do feel your absence. The experience we get here is also not be dismissed lightly. But we cannot have everything, can we? There you have Vallabhbhai's company which too is just as precious.

Yesterday, we came to the Prem Vidyalaya. There was a telegram informing us about Jawaharlal's wife's illness; so he left this very day. Kripalani has come. Devdas joined us at Nainital; Brijkisan too is with us. I have a crowd, sure enough.

The rains have given us no trouble yet. The weather is fine. Prabhudas's health is all right.

With what you have sent, [the matter] for *Young India* is enough. I have not been able to send matter for sixteen columns. A major part was supplied by Pyarelal. I wrote to fill about three columns only. We have sent plenty [of matter] for *Navajivan* today.

<sup>1</sup> Dated June 11; *vide* “Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi”, 11-6-1929.

You know, don't you, that I have now undertaken to write every week something for the *Hindi Navajivan* too? From there, you can keep an eye on the Ashram. There is a long letter from Surendra. He has come out of his swoon and now clearly sees the taint in his reason and his egotism. He is candid and was bound to see his error some day. He did not need Nath to decide.

It is very good that there you will get a chance to study revenue. I wish you would send a fitting reply.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11452

### *124. A LETTER*

BAREILLY,

TADIKHET,

*June 17, 1929*

CHI. . . .

I have your letter. Sincere repentance must leave no room for sorrow. Repentance is self-purification. It was of permanent importance that you freed yourself of the attachment. I had no doubt at all about my diagnosis. Do not now indulge in self-denigration. Whom does attachment not bring down? Do not think that even now it has completely gone. The last sentence in your letter is not proper. You should never make the distinction you have made between Nath<sup>1</sup> and me. Children should never remind their elders and teachers of their position. Let each person silently act as befits his position and, if possible, bring credit to it. Such relationships do not need to be acknowledge [to oneself], and relationships which do not need to be so acknowledged are made by man. Spiritual relationships are matters of the heart and are self-justified. But these are all subtle errors. All of us are guilty of them because we cannot easily forget our ego. I was certain that you would see your error, because your achievement is greater than your pride. Now engross yourself in your work. Do not even get into an argument with anybody about what has happened.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/52

<sup>1</sup> Kedarnath Kulkarni

## 125. A LETTER

TADIKHET,  
June 17, 1929

CHI. . . .

Your statement that “castes and sub-castes destroy the soul” and “degrade human beings” is hasty and betrays lack of thought. You may say that they are not necessary, that they harm society, that they have no basis in dharma and are economically harmful, and point out similar other defects. We do not observe that the thousands who live in conformity with caste rules are spiritually harmed or are degraded. We cannot say about the castes what we can about the practice of untouchability. In the original conception of castes there was much that was good. If you wish you may ask me to explain this further when I return. My purpose in writing this letter is not to suggest to you that you should withdraw your letter, though perhaps it may become necessary to do that. It is of course right that you have left your caste. But the language of the letter communicating your withdrawal needs improvement.

My purpose in this letter is to advise you to pay more attention to improving your thinking. If you are able to see the defects in you that I have pointed out do not be unhappy or disheartened. One progresses through such mistakes. It is my duty to point them out when I notice them. Your duty is only to correct a mistake when you realize it. But you should never admit one unless you can see it to be so.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/55

## 126. LETTER TO ASHRAM CHILDREN

TADIKHET,  
June 17, 1929

LITTLE BIRDS OF BALMANDIR,

In the spot where I am writing this birds in huge trees are chirping happily. How wonderful it would be if you too were in those trees chirping! I can only hear your voices from there. Here is Vimala and there is that Katto. Satyadevi is lost in painting.

And that Dhiru! How would he pay any attention at all? He does not even reply. But enough for today.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/7

### *127. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI*

*Silence Day [Before June 18, 1929]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I received your letter. Though aware of Chhaganlal's failings, all of you, including Maganlal, kept them to yourselves and, in doing so, you did the greatest injustice, first to Chhaganlal himself, then to me and then to the Ashram. But that chapter is over now. All have learnt a lesson or should learn a lesson from this. My writing on the subject in *Navajivan*<sup>2</sup> was a wise thing to do. You need not be nervous now. Instead you have to become still purer and be more devoted to duty.

I have wired today regarding my visit to Almora. Though I am very keen to be in the Ashram in June, I shall be willing to go to Almora. I hope it will not be raining there at the time. Let me know how to reach there. I would like to come down from there by the end of June. It, therefore, seems that I will get about fifteen days there.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Address your letter to Bezwada. I will get it wherever I happen to be at the time.

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32980

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Gandhiji's proposed visit to Almora; he reached there on June 18, 1929 and left it on July 3.

<sup>2</sup> Vide "What is One's Dharma", 21-7-1929



## 128. SPEECH TO CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY, ALMORA<sup>1</sup>

June 18, 1929

Gandhiji's reply which opened with a reference to his numerous Christian contacts in India as well as abroad and particularly his close friendly relations with the late Principal Rudra of St. Stephens's College, Delhi, was a feeling appeal to the Indian Christians completely to identify themselves with Indian ideals and Indian nationalist aspirations, and not to regard India's ancient culture and civilization as a relic of barbarism to be looked down upon and despised but to treasure it as a precious heritage that had to be enriched and enlarged. Surely a civilization that had produced such a galaxy of saints and prophets as India had, that boasted of sons like Chaitanya and Tagore and which was built on penance of so many pure souls, could not be a thing wholly evil. He held all religions to be true though at the same time no man-expounded religion could claim perfection which was the attribute of God alone. Similarly it was their duty not to disassociate themselves from their fellow-countrymen who professed a different faith from theirs but to cultivate an attitude of sympathy and broad tolerance towards them, to understand and appreciate their viewpoint and to help them not by proselytizing them but by making Hindus better Hindus, Mussalmans better Mussalmans and all of them better Indians.

*Young India*, 27-6-1929

## 129. TELEGRAM TO SWAMI<sup>2</sup>

[On or after June 18, 1929]<sup>3</sup>

SWAMI

CARE SHREE

BOMBAY

REFUSE    TERMS    DHOLKA    LAND    IF    TANNING    PROHIBITED.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15402

<sup>1</sup> In reply to their address at the Church grounds

<sup>2</sup> In reply to Chhaganlal Gandhiji's telegram dated June 18 from Sabarmati which read: "Gorakshamandal meeting this afternoon unwilling incur any expense. Rent thousand rupees likely. Oppose tanning. May agree on undertaking not tan [on] their land. Purushottamdas anxious help. Advises acceptance. Offers raise rent amount. Wire Swami Care Shree." *Vide* also the following item and pp. 79-80.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

130. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Wednesday [June 19, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. CHHAGANLAL JOSHI,

I have your letter. The problem of Chhaganlal is a delicate one. Discuss it personally with me. Not many days are left now.

I can offer some advice about Dahyabhai if I know whether he lives with his wife and, if yes, in what manner. Discuss this problem, too, with me after I return. I certainly wish to keep him.

Since you have written to Satyamurti, I am not writing to him. What you have written is all right.

Don't let your health suffer. The programme here is practically over. Only one place remains now. Letters, however, must be addressed to Almora. If I take rest, I can reach the place on 6th July, otherwise on June 30. I have not been able to decide what to do. I am really keen on finishing the *Gita*. I feel inclined to stay at one place for six days and do that. I must decide in a day or two.

I should indeed like it very much if you learn to work on your own responsibility. I shall take no objection if you inform me only about those things which you think it necessary to bring to my notice. If Krishnamaiyadevi<sup>2</sup> wishes to go to Darjeeling, certainly let her do so.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I am inclined to dispose of the land near Thana. Find out what Chhaganlal says about the matter. Write to Hirji afterwards and tell him to do what you think best about it.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro--7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 117*

<sup>1</sup> As given in the source

<sup>2</sup> Widow of a Congress worker from Nepal; Gandhiji gave her and her children shelter in the Ashram.

### *131. KHADI AND BOYCOTT*

Our disbelief is an extraordinary phenomenon. We have no faith in our ability to do anything. If it is total prohibition, it is regarded as impossible. Hindu-Muslim unity is a day-dream. Removal of untouchability in the face of Sanatanist opposition is unthinkable. Boycott of foreign cloth through mills we did not achieve, through khadi we cannot achieve. There thus remains nothing that we can possibly do. Hence swaraj is an impossible proposition and slavery our natural condition. This is a most debasing state for anyone to be in.

Our disbelief is the greatest stumbling-block in our march towards swaraj. Let us just examine the proposition that boycott cannot be achieved through khadi. It is said that khadi production is not enough for our wants. Those who talk or write thus do not know the A B C of khadi. Khadi is capable of infinite expansion because it can be as easily made as bread if we have the will. I need not go into the economics of khadi for the purposes of boycott. Supposing England and Japan ceased to send us their cloth and our mills somehow or other could not work, we would not think of the economics of khadi but we would simply manufacture the required quantity in our own homes. The merchants who had lost their piecegoods trade would all be occupied in khadi production. It is only because we have created a vicious atmosphere of impotence round ourselves that we consider ourselves to be helpless even for the simplest possible things. But for our hopelessness, there is no reason why we should not feel that what Bijolia has been able to do without the stress and incentive of boycott, we should certainly do under the great and patriotic incentive. It is being done today in Bardoli on such a scale that the technical department is unable fully to cope with the demand for wheels and accessories.

Undoubtedly the movement will fall flat if everybody becomes a critic and bystander and nobody says, "It is my business." This movement depends for its success upon the willing and organized co-operation of millions. This co-operation can be had for the asking if the thinking class will put their hands to the wheel with the fixed determination to succeed. Let them remember that this is a movement which has a growing and vigilant organization with a modest capital. It

has only to be worked by the nation to its fullest capacity and success is a certainty.

Let it be remembered that there is no other constructive scheme before the nation for effective action on a universal scale. I have repeatedly pointed out in these pages how production of khadi can be indefinitely increased. I have described the three methods, viz., spinning for hire, spinning for self and spinning for sacrifice.<sup>1</sup> Once the spirit of true sacrifice seizes the nation, it is possible to inundate the market with hand-spun yarn. And I have shown that the secret of khadi production lies in increased production of yarn. There are over ninety-seven lakhs of pupils studying in all the schools of India. It makes a miserable percentage of less than 4 per cent of the total population, but the number is enough for easy organization of sacrificial spinning. This figure takes no account of several other institutions that can be also similarly organized without much effort, if the determination is reached that we must achieve boycott through khadi.

*Young India*, 20-6-1929

### 132. NOTES

#### SHETH JAMNALALJI'S ACTION

As a self-respecting man, Sheth Jamnalalji could not have acted otherwise than he had in reply to the request of the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bombay, to deliver the copy in his possession of Pandit Sunderlalji's *History of British Rule*. He rightly regards the action of the U.P. Government as "high-handed and tyrannical" and house searches all over India as "highly insulting, objectionable and vindictive". He claims to have read the book which in his opinion is "unobjectionable and a praiseworthy endeavour to inculcate the lesson of non-violence". The action of the police in searching his house and offices in spite of his assurance that the book was not in any of them affords additional justification, if such was wanted, for the language used by him. The object of the search was clearly not to find the book but to insult Jamnalalji. The proper answer to this insult is for everyone who has Pandit Sunderlal's volume in his possession to inform the police in his or her district and the press of such possession

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Progress of F.C.B.", 30-5-1929

and challenge search or prosecution or both. If this course is adopted by the public and if there are many copies still untraced, the Government will soon discover that it will make of itself a laughing-stock by continuing the fruitless searches of numberless houses. Searches, imprisonments and the like are effective only so long as they frighten people.

#### “GITA” IN NATIONAL SCHOOLS

A correspondent asks whether *Gita* may be compulsorily taught in national schools to all boys whether Hindus or non-Hindus. When I was travelling in Mysore two years ago, I had occasion to express my sorrow that the Hindu boys of a high school did not know the *Gita*.<sup>1</sup> I am thus partial to the teaching of the *Gita* not only in national schools but in every educational institution. It should be considered a shame for a Hindu boy or girl not to know the *Gita*. But my insistence stops short at compulsion, especially so for national schools. Whilst it is true that *Gita* is a book of universal religion, it is a claim which cannot be forced upon anyone. A Christian or a Mussalman or a Parsi may reject the claim or may advance the same claim for the Bible, the Koran or the Avesta as the case may be. I fear the *Gita* teaching cannot be made compulsory even regarding all those who may choose to be classed as Hindus. Many Sikhs and Jains regard themselves as Hindus but may object to compulsory *Gita* teaching for their boys and girls. The case will be different for sectional schools. I should hold it quite appropriate for a Vaishnava school for instance to lay down *Gita* as part of religious instruction. Every private school has the right to prescribe its own course of instruction. But a national school has to act within well-defined limits. There is no compulsion where there is no interference with a right. No one can claim the right to enter a private school, every member of a nation has the right presumptively to enter a national school. Hence what would be regarded in the one case as a condition of entrance, would in the other be regarded as compulsion. The *Gita* will never be universal by compulsion from without. It will be so if its admirers will not seek to force it down the throats of others and if they will illustrate its teachings in their own lives.

<sup>1</sup> Vide “Students and the “Gita”, 9-9-1927

## A CONTRADICTION

The reader will recall a paragraph<sup>1</sup> I gave to a letter from an Andhra correspondent who had complained that the ladies at the women's meeting at Tanuku had a purificatory bath after the meeting under the belief that the *Antyaja* girl Lakshmi was with me at that meeting. Two correspondents have sent letters energetically protesting that the charge is wholly false. I gladly reproduce one of the letters:<sup>2</sup>

We were all surprised to read your note in *Young India* for the 16th instant entitled "Untouchability" about the ladies' meeting at Tanuku. The remarks are justified if what your correspondent wrote is true. But I am sorry to say your correspondent has erred grievously. ...

I was at the place of the meeting as the ladies of my family had been to the meeting. I am a Brahmin and my ladies have not had a purificatory bath. I know many ladies who attended and they assured me they never contemplated such a thing. ... Some might have bathed as they had to cook the evening meals. But to suggest that they did this to purify themselves from the touch of a so-called untouchable, is a gross libel.

Both the correspondents have given their names. I have no reason to disbelieve their statements and I am sorry for hurting the feelings of the ladies who attended the meeting. I had the name of the correspondent who had made the charge now contradicted. I have therefore written to him to inquire how he came to make the serious charge. it is a matter of joy to me that ladies nowadays resent the imputation that they would regard as pollution the presence of the so-called untouchables at meetings attended by them.

*Young India*, 20-6-1929

## 133. A FEW QUESTIONS

A gentleman has asked me some questions. This letter begins with praise of me. He has described me as completely free from fear and ill will, a perfect tyagi<sup>3</sup> and a perfect satyagrahi. Such adjectives are nearly always used in addresses, but as addresses are given to exaggeration, their use there may be considered excusable. But the use of such adjectives in letters is unpardonable and discourteous. It is

<sup>1</sup> Vide "In Andhra Desha [-V]"

<sup>2</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

<sup>3</sup> One who has renounced the fruit of action

uncivilized to praise a man to his face. I have noticed such praise specially in Hindi letters. That's why I have mentioned it here. In fact, I am not completely free from fear and ill will, nor am I a perfect satyagrahi or a perfect *tyagi*. If you take the word 'satyagrahi' in its literal sense, I could perhaps be considered a perfect satyagrahi, because it is easy to insist on truth after we have understood its value. One must also remember that insisting on truth is not the same thing as following truth. I am fully aware that I am not completely free from fear and ill will or a perfect *tyagi*. Mere external *tyaga* cannot make one perfect in these respects. Internal *tyaga* is a highly difficult affair and I cannot claim at all that my heart is free from fear, ill will and the like. It is true that my constant endeavour is to master my mind. But the difference between effort and achievement is as great as that between earth and sun. Therefore no one should think that I can never be wrong. I try to see things dispassionately...with a mind cleansed of all impurity, and say only what I so see. But one is free to reject it if it does not appeal to one's reason. Blind faith has caused us great harm. I don't wish others to have blind faith in me, I wish to avoid it. It is a barrier in my way. I will now discuss the questions put by this gentleman. He and other readers can give them intelligent consideration.

This is the first question:

What are the ways and means needed to develop spiritual strength apart from listening to or recitation of scriptures? I mean the kind of spiritual strength Prahlad and others had.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to acquire spiritual strength if we totally ignore listening or recitation. Hearing pious things serves as the spark to light the fire of awakening during the time when the soul is asleep. However, with the attainment of the inner seeing...the intuition...the need to hear good things vanishes. Prahlad had this capacity of inner hearing in an abundant measure. For the common man, the outer hearing is the first step.

The second question is this:

Is there no way of dealing with the problem of widows in India except remarriage which lowers the banner of chastity...a way which will safeguard their virtue and at the same time enable them to participate in work for the country? In India, there are more girls than boys and more widows than widowers. How then can this problem be solved by remarriage?

To say that widow remarriage leads to loss of chastity is wrong. To forcibly prevent a widow from remarrying, when she wishes to do so, would be harming chastity and dharma as well. Only by marrying a child-widow can we safeguard dharma and chastity. We can safeguard *brahmacharya* only by respecting the widows, by providing them means of education, and by granting them full freedom to remarry. Mental and physical prostitution is widespread today and the reason for this is the coercion used against widows. It cannot be proved that there are more girls than boys or more widows than widowers. It is true of a few castes. It is however to be desired that the too many castes now existing should disappear. There can be no more castes than the four *varnas*. The Hindu Shastras do not authorize the existence of the innumerable castes found today. It may be that the multiplication of castes served some useful purpose. But today, castes serve no purpose and meet no need.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 20-6-1929

#### 134. SPEECH AT ALMORA

*June 20, 1929*

I have noted what you wanted to tell me in your addresses. But at the moment, my heart is with Padam Singh...the man who was crushed under the car when he came to see me. The doctor had hoped that he would survive and I had shared this hope. But his life-thread has snapped. I have done a great deal of travelling and I have been doing it for the past many, many years. I have taken part in many gatherings and in order to do this, I have travelled a lot by car, but in my old age, this is the first time such an unhappy incident has taken place. I will never be able to get over it. I believe that I have no fear of death. All of us have to die one day. Padam Singh has become immortal by meeting his death in this manner. My unhappiness stems from the fact that I became the cause of his death. I have always felt that riding in cars makes men proud. The chauffeurs who drive are vain and hot-tempered. One should beware of drivers with a hot temper. But under the illusion that I will be able to serve better, I continue to use cars. I have reaped the fruit today. And yet, I cannot promise to give up the use of cars, as I cannot give up the fond desire to serve the country. I must therefore content myself with expressing



my sorrow at this meeting. The chauffeurs should remember that they must not be easily excited. I could see that the driver of this car had a hot temper. Padam Singh forgave him and gave a generous statement before the magistrate. But I do not consider myself or the driver free from blame. The unforgivable fact is that I should have got down in that crowd and it was the duty of the driver not to drive fast. But that's what he did. How can I forget this sad fact? Padam Singh was brave. Yesterday, he was able to talk without effort. But to die thus was his fate and it was my misfortune to witness his death, and now he is gone, I would like you to learn a lesson from this incident. Caught in the jaws of Death, we are like puppets in the hands of Fate, more delicate than a piece of yarn. In a short while, we all have to depart from this world. Then why stray from the path of duty? Why waste time in anger and in pleasure-seeking?

In your address you say that you want freedom and swaraj for India. You have also mentioned that swaraj can only be attained through peaceful means. You must therefore remember that your work should be faultless. It is easy to make it so. The District Board address mentions that young pupils do spinning. I would like to congratulate you on this. You have said that you spend as much as 60 per cent of your income on education and that you consider even this insufficient. Since you are working hard in the field of education, I would like to speak to you of my experience.

Even if we have crores of rupees, it is impossible to impart education in India in this way. Education should pay for itself. That is, we should not have to spend any money on it. If we are successful in doing this, we will be able to achieve two things. Firstly, we shall save money and secondly, we shall impart true education. The education given to our boys and girls today makes them unmindful of their morals, unhealthy and restless, whereas by making education self-sustaining, we will be making them mentally poised and morally excellent. I would request the District Board to try this out in two or three schools. There is no doubt in my mind that you will be successful.

I am grateful for the purse. As to the few presents given to me, you know now that I do not require such presents and I cannot accept them for my personal use. If I do so, I shall stray from the right path and it will also detract from my fitness as a leader. I will make an

exception of the fan and the *asana*<sup>1</sup> presented by the District Board. There is a small museum in the Ashram where the latter will be kept as a memento of the love and industry of the boys. I will lovingly use the shawl in winter and remember the boys who have made it even though I don't know their names. I would request those who have not given their contributions to do so now. You should know what the money will be used for. It will be used for financing the spinning and weaving work among the poor ...among such poor folks who are even poorer than the poorest among you. There are about a crore of such people in the country whose one and only meal in the day consists of dry *roti* and salt. I call them *Daridranarayana*. It is only for them you have given your contribution.

I know that the coolie or *begar* system came to an end in 1921 and I hope you will stop being afraid of anyone whosoever he may be... a high officer or an Englishman. If we follow our own path, why should we be afraid? Fear is a barrier in the way of swaraj. There is no more time. But I will ask for some time to bargain with you. I was asked not to auction these things. But I hope there are people here who can afford to pay and buy them. There are two more points I ought not to omit. the Nayaka Community here commits *adharma* in the name of dharma. They get their women to lead an evil life. I would request them respectfully to refrain from this *adharma*. It can only cause harm to them and the country. Their girls ought to get married and be educated. No woman in this world was born to lead the life of vice. Each woman ought to become as pure as Sita. Likewise, untouchability is a stain on us. It is our duty as Hindus to wipe it off. I am thankful that Hindus, Muslims, Christians and other communities here live in amity.

[From Hindi]

Aaj, 4-7-1929

### 135. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU<sup>2</sup>

[On or after *June 20, 1929*]

YOUR WIRE. 5TH JULY DELHI WILL SUIT SO AS ENABLE  
ME LEAVE NIGHT TRAIN. HOW IS KAMALA?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15403

<sup>1</sup> Something to sit on

<sup>2</sup> In reply to the addressee's telegram of June 19 from Allahabad received at Almora on June 20, wherein Gandhiji had been asked to wire date and place suitable for Working Committee meeting to consider Council work

### 136. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[June 21, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am nestling in the lap of the Himalayas; and this king of seers clad in white is lost in delight while taking a sun-bath. His trance is enviable. It stings me that you are not here to share my envy. But your place is there. Thus the pain of the sting is blunted.

Today, I begin the end of my work on the *Gita* which is still to be completed.

It is all right that you have become the President. You must associate yourself with work of this kind.

Tell Vallabhbhai that he must not budge from there before he is hale and hearty. Do not insist on showing me everything that you write for *Young India*. It does not matter if you commit mistakes.

I don't like Sunderlal's throwing off the burden. I must have a look at his book, whether Gujarati or English, which you write about.

If I write any more, that would amount to an affront to the *Gita* and Kaka.

I can stand the luxury of this place only if I give a major part of my time to the *Gita*.

We will be leaving here on Tuesday the 2nd.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

On the 5th, the Working Committee is [meeting] at Delhi and on the 6th night [I shall be] at the Ashram.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11453

<sup>1</sup> Gandhiji resumed his work on the *Gita* on June 21, 1929 immediately after arriving at Kausani; *vide* also "Letter to Mahadev Desai", 17-6-1929

*137. TELEGRAM TO PRESIDENT CONGRESS COMMITTEE,  
KARIMGANJ<sup>1</sup>*

[On or after *June 22, 1929*]

WIRE INCOMPLETE. WHO ARE YOU? GIVE DATE FLOOD. HAVE NO FUNDS TO  
SEND. IF I GET AUTHENTIC PARTICULARS CAN SEND REPRESENTATIVE  
INVESTIGATE. THEN IF NECESSARY CAN MAKE APPEAL.

GANDHI

From a phtostat: S. N. 15404

*138. TELEGRAM TO G.D. BIRLA*

[On or after *June 22, 1929*]<sup>2</sup>

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

ROYAL EXCHANGE

CALCUTTA

CAN YOU SEND REPRESENTATIVE INVESTIGATE DAMAGE DONE BY  
FLOODS KARIMGANJ ASSAM?

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15404

<sup>1</sup> In reply to addressee's telegram dated June 20 received at Nainital on June 22, which read: "Devastating flood throughout Karimganj Assam rendered thousands homeless. People sheltered railway embankment hills. Five hundred square miles affected. All communication dislocated. Deaths reported various quarters. Cattle washed away. Shortage flood staff threatens death starvation. Congress Committee commenced relief. Appeal funds one lakh. Pray remit ten thousand immediately."

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* the preceding item.

### 139. THE CONGRESS AND KHADI

Shri Chinoy writes:<sup>1</sup>

We are reaping as we have sown. As we have been indifferent in doing khadi propaganda, we are facing a difficult situation today. I shall never advise enrolment of members by keeping the people in the dark. On the contrary, I would not even say bluntly to those people: 'You become members, but you will not get voting rights until you wear khadi.' I would put in their hands a pamphlet for the purpose of explaining the position. I would include in it the Congress provisions concerning khadi and set out the benefits and explain their duty of becoming members. Our aim is not to frighten the people away but to attract them to the Congress. The problem relating to students and lawyers is a difficult one. They do understand everything. If they do not like khadi, how can they be convinced? Or, I would say to them: 'If you believe in the Congress as a great force and not in khadi, join the Congress, wear khadi if only to observe the rules and try to get the khadi clause abrogated. Congress work is carried on by majority opinion; hence, submit to the khadi clause until it is abolished and be proud to be its members.' I would say that those who do not understand even this much are not fit to remain in the Congress or any other organization because they do not appreciate the first condition of remaining in any organization...submitting to rules. They behave as if they were obliging the organization they join. Such patrons cannot serve the Congress and no help will be forthcoming from them in winning swaraj. Whichever organization they happen to be in, they will be a burden to it. It is the workers' duty to appeal to lawyers and students, but if they cannot be brought round ultimately, we should do without them. I would only appeal to that category not to insist on the condition described by Shri Chinoy.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent, who was the Secretary of the Surat City Congress Committee, had stated that they had decided to enrol 1,750 members. There were at the time only 70 khadi-wearing members on the register. The rule that no member who did not wear khadi could vote or fill executive positions in the Committee stood in the way of enrolment. The president of the local Youth League, too, had declined to enrol himself for this reason. The correspondent could not enrol members keeping them in the dark about this condition. So what was he to do?

Our real task is to reach the classes we have neglected so far. They are the merchants, craftsmen, farmers and labourers. I believe that these classes will not advance the argument which the president of the Youth League is believed to have offered. A bulletin meant for them would contain a short history of the Congress from its inception up to date, an account of its main activities and the benefits of joining the organization. Whether they become members or not, such a movement itself constitutes the political education of the people. It is my firm belief that where the Congress volunteers have been working and they are known, there should be no difficulty in enrolling the said classes as Congress members.

Now there remains the last question: What if, after everything is done, people do not enrol themselves because of the khadi clause? In that case, this matter should be communicated to the Congress and we should get the khadi clause rescinded. Or, if they themselves value khadi as much as swaraj, they should have patience till the people begin to believe in khadi. Do we not have in India people who say that they do not want swaraj? Again, if swaraj is interpreted to mean independence, more people will get alarmed. Even if this happens, those to whom swaraj is their life-breath will not relax the condition relating to swaraj.

I am personally neutral on the khadi clause. Khadi is the very breath of life to me. Hence I wish to see khadi wherever I am. But I do not wish to insist on retaining the khadi clause in the Congress constitution. If my other colleagues do not have as much faith in khadi as I have and if, in their opinion, that clause hampers the work propaganda will be continued even despite that. And my belief will remain unshaken forever that swaraj will come near us by as many yards as the number of yards of khadi by which we step up its production. To my mind, swaraj without khadi is as unthinkable as a barren woman having a son, because it would be no swaraj at all for the millions.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 23-6-1929

#### 140. MAURYA EMPIRE AND UNTOUCHABILITY

A reader sends the following extract<sup>1</sup> which is worth knowing.

The reader has culled the extract from *Maurya Samrajya Ka Itihas*. It shows that the revolt against untouchability is not a novel phenomenon of recent date. Our ancestors too have fought against it. That poisonous tree deserves to be destroyed root and branch.

[From Gujarati)

*Navajivan*, 23-6-1929

#### 141. A SUGGESTION CONCERNING “NAVAJIVAN”

A lover of *Navajivan* writes:<sup>2</sup>

I do not want to oppose this suggestion. I had laid down the scope of *Navajivan* when it became a weekly and came into my charge. And that was because of my inability. Purveying news is also an art. I had cultivated it specially for *Indian Opinion*. I used to give maximum news in minimum space and I had trained my associates to do so. This was necessary there. The task of *Navajivan* here was of a different sort. There is no dearth of newspapers here, hence we had no desire to issue *Navajivan* as a newspaper. Through it, satyagraha, ahimsa, etc., were to be propagated. It has succeeded fairly well in doing so. In trying to convert *Navajivan* into a newspaper also, there was the risk of having both aims defeated. That risk is present even today. Moreover, I am now older by over ten years; hence I cannot do that by myself. If I decide to give news, I shall have to increase the cost of producing *Navajivan*, its size too will perhaps have to be increased and fresh competent men will have to be employed whose

<sup>1</sup> This is not translated here. According to it, Chandragupta Maurya had 18 ministers of whom the first was a Brahmin. Among the enumeration of this minister's powers, there is this injunction of Chanakya's: "If any Brahmin minister, so ordered, declines to teach the Vedas to an untouchable or refuses to perform a sacrifice for him, he should be dismissed from his post."

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that just as *Indian Opinion* carried a column or two of news, so should *Navajivan*, and be a complete journal, as the number of people in this country who could afford to buy two papers were very few. He wanted foreign as well as Indian news to be given. He had requested Gandhiji to elicit the opinion of other readers on the subject.

only job will be to process news. A man of ordinary ability cannot make an abstract of news. Therefore, providing news is not such an easy thing as the lover of *Navajivan* believes.

Although I believe that the task of providing news is a difficult one, I do not wish to reject this suggestion outright. Hence, I ask for the readers' opinion in brief on the following questions:

1. Do you approve of the suggestion made by the lover of *Navajivan*?

2. If you do, do you believe in the necessity of increasing its size or will you be satisfied with its present size?

3. Do you not get the desired news by reading other newspapers in addition to *Navajivan*?

It will do even if the reader sends me his replies to these three questions on a postcard. He should superscribe at top left corner on the postcard or envelope the words "about *Navajivan*", so that the communication will surely reach me. I hope no readers make the mistake of believing that I read every letter addressed to me by name. Only those letters are passed on to me which my colleagues believe that I ought to read.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 23-6-1929

#### 142. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>

[On or after *June 23, 1929*]

NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

YOUR WIRE. I CERTAINLY MEANT<sup>2</sup> FIFTH NOT FIFTEENTH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15405

<sup>1</sup> In reply to the addressee's telegram received on June 23

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 20-6-1929



### 143. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

*June 24, 1929*

CHI. MIRA,<sup>1</sup>

It is well you do not want me to speak to you tomorrow on the incident. But I did want, after witnessing the exhibition, to reduce to writing my thoughts. I do that now.

The exhibition is proof of the correctness of my statement. None else would have felt like committing suicide over a simple innocent remark of mine. You want to be with me in my tours occasionally, it is true; you want to come to the Ashram leaving your work at least every four months. You recognize these desires as limitations. I make allowance for them. But why feel disturbed when I tell you what I feel to be the truth that they are not themselves the been touched. If you were not what I have described you to be, you would disease, but they are symptoms of a deep-seated disease which has not rejoice over my drawing attention to the disease and courageously strive to overcome it. Instead, you simply collapsed, much to my grief and anxiety.

This disease is idolatry. If it is not, why hanker after my company! Why touch or kiss the feet that must one day be dead cold? There is nothing in the body. The truth I represent is before you. Experience and effort will unravel it before you, never my association in the manner you wish. When it comes in the course of business you will, like others, gain from it and more because of your devotion. Why so helplessly rely on me? Why do everything to please me? Why not independently of me and even in spite of me? I have put no restrictions on your liberty, save those you have welcomed. Break the idol to pieces if you can and will. If you cannot, I am prepared to suffer with you. But you must give me the liberty to issue warnings.

My diagnosis may be wrong. If so, it is well. Strive with me cheerfully instead of being nerve-broken. Everyone but you takes my blows without being unstrung.

If your effort has hitherto failed, what does it matter? You have hitherto dealt mechanically with symptoms. There you have had considerable success. But if I say you have not been able to touch the root, why weep over it? I do not mind your failures. They are but

<sup>1</sup> The superscription in this and other letters to Mirabehn is in Devanagari.

stepping-stones to success. You must rise from this torpor never to fall into it again.

I have done. May God be with you.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5378. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9434

#### 144. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

Silence Day [June 24, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letters.

In front of me are Himalayan peaks wrapped in snow and shining brilliantly in sunlight. Below are hills clad with greenery, as though, feeling shy, they had covered their bodies with it. The solitude of the place is beyond description. We are to stay here for seven or eight days. I can permit myself such luxury only if there is some pretext for it. This was provided by Kaka and the arrangement was also suggested by him. He had entrusted the task to Devdas and Prabhudas, and I accepted this luxury after deciding to give practically all my time to the *Gita*. I wish, therefore, to write the fewest possible letters this week and also do the minimum work for *Young India*. Accordingly, I have decided to suspend routine correspondence.

What remains of what you want, I shall give you immediately I arrive there. Keep yourself ready. Note down all the things about which you wish to consult me. Think and decide who will do in your absence the work that you are doing. It would be good if Ramniklal agrees to do it. Also think and decide where you wish to go for rest.

Many boys do what Katto and others do. Giriraj is of course responsible for his faults. His letter throws a new light on the matter.

If possible, we should dispose of the Thana land. The other conditions of Dholka, we can accept but not the prohibition of tanning<sup>2</sup>. We may have connection with a dairy which does no

<sup>1</sup> This appears to have been written on the first silence day after Gandhiji's arrival at Kausani.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also "Telegram to Swami", 18-6-1929

tanning, but owning a goshala [is a different matter]. ‘*Dhuni*’ for ‘faddist’ is quite correct.

*Vaydo...*”Stupidly obstinate”

*Chakram...*”Madcap”

Are there two d’s in the English word?

I have read Kakasaheb’s draft and am returning it. I only expressed my view as a member. You may include the names which all of you approve.

You should send to Subbiah his usual pay. We have given him to Rajaji as interest-free loan.

There are many spelling and other mistakes in the copy of the telegram to Swami. I hope the wire was not sent with all mistakes.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I shall leave this place on the 2nd. On the 5th in Delhi, and on 6th morning or evening, in the Ashram. Send the mail to me only as long as I am at Almora.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5426

### *145. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

Silence Day [*June 24, 1929*]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. It is good that you observe the rules. Discuss everything with Father at length. We are in a secluded spot and we are going to spend eight days here. I will not write more as I want to finish [the work] on the *Gita*.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3350

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to “the work on the *Gita*”; *vide* also the preceding item and “Letter to Prabhavati”, 25-6-1929

*146. TELEGRAM TO DR. M.A. ANSARI*

[On or after *June 24, 1929*]

DR. ANSARI  
DARYAGANJ  
DELHI

PRAY THANK HIS HIGHNESS FOR INVITATION. DO NOT CONSIDER  
POSSIBLE VISIT BHOPAL BEFORE SEPTEMBER. MUST REACH ASHRAM 6TH JULY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15406

*147. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

*June 25, 1929*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I got your letter yesterday after I had posted one<sup>2</sup> to you. You must get rid of your cough. The vaidas usually have some ordinary medicine for it, as also the doctors. You can take it from either. Have your throat examined by a doctor. Has Jayaprakash left America? If his arrival is postponed or if he has come and agrees, you can come to the Ashram and finish your [study of the] *Gita* and English. In the meanwhile, you should analyse every single word from the Hindi translation and know its meaning. In this way, you will surely avoid some of your errors of pronunciation.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

We shall leave here on the 2nd and reach the Ashram on the 6th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3349

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his telegram dated June 23 from Lahore received at Almora on June 24

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Letter to Prabhavati", 24-6-1929

## 148. TELEGRAM TO KLOETZU<sup>1</sup>

[On or after *June 26, 1929*]

REACHING ASHRAM SIXTH. DIFFICULT MEET ANYWHERE TILL THEN.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15408

## 149. A QUAIN ADDRESS

Among the Andhra notes still lying unattended to, I find the following extracts from a quaint but instructive address presented by the working hands of S.L.N. Factory, Nallagaka:

It was in the year 1916 we could see for the first time our cotton being ginned by foreign mechanism driven by steam power. Till then ginning cotton in these parts was done by handgins when we had work enough for three months of summer to feed ourselves and our children. Our factory can now gin the produce of 20 villages and only a limited number of us are allowed to work.

About the year 1920 when you were beginning to revive hand-spinning in storm-beaten and almost worn-out Northern India, there were few among agricultural and labour classes in these parts who could buy cloth for daily use. Eight years have rolled by. Mill-yarn has appeared in the market. Its cheapness and evenness have attracted us. Self-spinning has lost its importance. We have almost come to the stage of buying cloth, woven mainly out of mill-yarn by local weavers majority of whom come from the suppressed. We still consider mill-made cloth and foreign cloth to be matter of luxury only fit to be used by Brahmin and Vaishya communities, the foremost to adopt foreign cloth for daily use. We have still belief in the quality of khadi cloth and always prefer that if available at a reasonable price.

We generally use in these parts eight-spoke charkha with an iron axis, all complete, costing Rs. 6, handgin costs Rs. 1-8-0, the cost of 20 *tolas* of seedless cotton as. 4, spindle costs Re. 0-0-6, carding charge for 52 *tolas* of cotton as. 6 to 8, spinning 20 *tolas* costs as. 2, arranging yarn to make cloth of 30'X27" is as. 3, weaving charge of cloth 30'X27" Re. 1, male dhoti measures 10-1/2'X30" weighing nearly 30 *tolas* and female sari measures

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his telegram dated June 24 from Ahmedabad received at Almora on June 26, which read: "Please wire Ashram where when can I meet you this week."

30'X30" weighing nearly 140 *tolas*. Carding is done by a professional carder, carding and weaving charges are often paid in *cholan* grain, the chief food crop of the district. The labourer gets his cotton as wages when picking up cotton from fields. Fortunately your visit to these parts has happened in a spinning season. You can see some of the villagers, quite illiterate of the present-day civilization, still plying their charkhas.

Though our number is small (only 50), we represent the important religions of the district, besides almost all communities and their sub-sections among Hindus. We observe untouchability as regards food and drinking water. One community of Hindus do not even drink water from the hands of another. Among the suppressed there are more than four sub-sections. One sub-section of them does not allow another to touch even drinking well. These suppressed classes are made to live outside the villages and their chief occupation is scavenging, spinning, weaving and shoemaking.

Muharram festival in these parts (we speak only of the villages) is mainly conducted by Hindus funds and help. Mohammedans help Hindus in celebrating Hindu festivals. In processions some of them actually carry on their shoulders Hindu idols. Hindus worship Muslim saints and are called by Mohammedan names, and Mohammedans worship Hindu gods and are called by Hindu names. Though this is all through our illiteracy we seem to follow the Sanskrit saying:

आकाशत्पतियं तच्च यथा गच्छति सगरम ।

सर्वं देवनास्कारं केलावं प्रति गच्छति ॥

Buffalo is the chief milk-producer and cow is scarcely reared for milking. Oxen used for agriculture are imported from Northern Circars. We have not got sufficient pasture land, and it is one of the chief reasons why the agriculturist does not welcome the cow.

Drink evil, on a large scale, exists among labourers and agriculturists. God bless us, none of us are habitual drunkards. Malaria, typhoid, cholera hold their sway for nearly three months in the year.

Strikes, A.I.S.A., Congress, swaraj, Hindu-Muslim question, these are all words or phrases we the villagers in general do not understand. None try to explain them for us, nor are we literate enough to know them.

We have all today assembled here to request you to accept our few coppers which may be of use in your public work and some samples of cotton and its products for your information about the qualities available here. We further demand your prayer to Almighty for our sound health, so that we may daily labour to earn our bread honestly.

I have tried to make the language more readable than it is in the original. Its merit lies in its directness, its sense of humour and its perception of the true situation in spite of adverse circumstances. It is wonderful how even those whose interests are opposed to the message of the spinning-wheel do not fail to perceive its truth. It shows how the so-called higher classes are responsible for the ruin of the supplementary occupation of millions and therefore for their semi-starvation. The remarks about untouchability and Hindu-Muslim relations are no less instructive

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### 150. SEXUAL PERVERSION

Some years ago the Bihar Government in its education department had an inquiry into the question of unnatural vice in its schools, and the Committee of Inquiry had found the existence of the vice even among teachers who were abusing their position among their boys in order to satisfy their unnatural lust. The Director of Education had issued a circular prescribing departmental action on such vice being found to exist in connection with any teacher. It would be interesting to know the results, if any, issuing from the circular.

I have had literature too sent to me from other provinces inviting my attention to such vice and showing that it was on the increase practically all over India in public as well as private schools. Personal letters received from boys have confirmed the information.

Unnatural though the vice is, it has come down to us from times immemorial. The remedy for all secret vice is most difficult to find. And it becomes still more difficult when it affects guardians of boys which the teachers are. "If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" In my opinion departmental action, necessary as it is in all proved cases, can hardly meet the case. The levelling up of public opinion alone can cope with the evil. But in most matters there is no such thing as effective public opinion in this country. The feeling of helplessness that pervades political life has affected all other

departments. We therefore pass by many a wrong that is being perpetrated in front of us.

### 151. A TRAGEDY

Throughout a life of continuous bustle lived among crowds for nearly thirty years I cannot recall a serious accident though I can many narrow escapes. But in Almora on the day of my entry, i.e., 18th instant, and after a crowded meeting, as I was returning to my host's house, a villager named Padam Singh who came rushing as villagers do to the car for *darshan* met with what proved to be a fatal accident. He could not dodge the car in time, fell and the car ran over him. He was quickly carried by kind bystanders to the hospital where he received the utmost attention and hope was entertained that he would survive. He was strongly built and brave. He lived for two days, his pulse was good he was taking nourishment. But the heart suddenly stopped on 20th instant at 3.15. Padam Singh died leaving an orphan boy 12 years old.

Death or lesser accidents generally do not give me more than a momentary shock, but even at the time of writing this I have not recovered from the shock. I suppose it is because I feel guilty of being party to Padam Singh's death. I have found chauffeurs to be almost without exception hot-tempered, easily excitable and impatient, as inflammable as the petrol with which they have to come in daily contact. The chauffeur of my car had more than a fair share of all these shortcomings. For the crowd through which the car was struggling to pass he was driving rashly. I should have either insisted on walking or the car proceeding only at a walking pace till we had been clear of the crowd. But constant moter-riding had evidently coarsened me, and freedom from serious accidents produced an unconscious but unforgivable indifference to the safety of pedestrains. This sense of the wrong is probably responsible for the shock. It is well with Padam Singh. Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant has assured me that the son will be well looked after. Padam Singh received attention at the hospital which moneyed men might have envied. He was himself resigned and at peace. But his death is a lesson to me as, I hope, it would be to motorists. Although I may be twitted about my inconsistency, I must repeat my belief that motoring in spite of all its advantages in an unnatural form of locomotion. It therefore behoves those who use it to restrain their drivers and to realize that speed is not



the *summum bonum* of life and may even be no gain in the long run. I have never been clear in my mind that my mad rush through India has been all to the good. Any way Padam Singh's death has set me thinking furiously.

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### 152. RASHTRIYA SANGHA AND SELF-SUPPORT

The boycott movement has its constructive as well as its destructive side. Destruction will be ineffective if it does not go hand in hand with construction. Just as a field denuded of weeds will send them up again if no crop is sown, so also will destruction of foreign cloth surely be followed by new consignments if there is no khadi available. Indeed destruction or giving up of foreign cloth is necessary because we must manufacture and find use for life-giving khadi. The Rashtriya Sangha of Bengal has taken up the constructive work. Satisbabu of Khadi Pratishthan who is the founder of the Sangha is concentrating his attention on villages being self-supporting for their cloth requirements. The Sangha is taking in its orbit parts of Utkal also. He recently visited the Alaka Ashram of Sjt. Gopabandhu Choudhry and in company with him and other friends surveyed some neighbouring villages. From his notes about the tour I take the following interesting extracts:<sup>1</sup>

We selected village Ranahata about five miles from the Ashram. The inhabitants are all peasants. There is the usual poverty. The village sends a portion of its manhood as wage-earner to Calcutta. The proposition to undertake the production of all necessary cloth within the village was readily responded to. A volunteer body of 10 was formed which is to receive training in the Alaka Ashram. After their training Sjt. Parihari is to come and stay in the village for carrying on the work. ...

There are some families of weavers round the Ashram in Jagatsinghpur. ... there will be however no difficulty about weaving the cloth for Ranahata at present at Jagatsinghpur. Ultimately of course Ranahata will weave its own cloth. . . .

We found the 30 miles road to the Alaka Ashram thoroughly lined with trees. . . . I found groups of women not only sweeping the road but the surrounding fields also for collecting leaves and stray twigs for fuel.

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

Collecting leaves one by one seemed to be an occupation. ... I sighed for the day when these women will sit by their wheels. . . .

What Satisbabu has described is typical of most Utkal villages. Those mentioned by Satisbabu are by no means the poorest. But there is not much to choose in the midst of growing poverty. If the Rashtriya Sangha succeeds in its effort, it would have conferred a real boon on the villagers of Utkal besides making a substantial contribution to the boycott movement.

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### 153. THE EVIL OF PURDAH

The belief that anything old is good is a source of numerous wrong practices. If all that is ancient is considered good what about sin? It is very old, but it will ever deserve to be discarded. Untouchability is also old, but it is a sin, therefore we should give it up. The same is true of drinking and gambling. If a thing which lies within the province of reason...which can be proved to be right or wrong with the aid of reason, does not appeal to reason, it would deserve to be immediately given up.

However old *purdah* may be, reason cannot accept it today. The harm it has done is self-evident. We should not try to justify *purdah* as we do in the case of many other things by putting an ideal interpretation on this custom. In fact the way it is now observed, it can stand no such interpretation.

The truth is that *purdah* is not an external affair, it is something internal. Many women who observe *purdah* externally are found to be immodest. However, a woman who retains her modesty without observing external *purdah* deserves to be worshipped. And fortunately there is no dearth of such women in the world even today.

In the scriptures we find many terms which had an external meaning at one time but which are interpreted at present anaogically. One such is *yajna*. Now we know that the killing of animals is not a true *yajna*. True *yajna* consists in burning up the animal passions within us. One can quote hundreds of such examples. Therefore those desirous of reforming and saving Hindu society need not be afraid of ancient conventions. We cannot find better principles than the old ones. But the way they are to be put into practice must continue to change. Change is a sign of growth while stagnation is the beginning

of decay. The world changes every moment. Only the dead do not change. Immobility is thus a sign of death. We are not talking here of the immobility, the calmness of the yogi. In the calmness of the yogi there lies hidden the speediest motion. There is in that calmness the utmost wakefulness of the *atman*. We are talking here of inert immobility...in other words, of inertia. Enslaved by this inertia we are driven willingly to acquiesce in all old evil customs. It prevents us from making any progress. This very inertia comes in our way in the attainment of swaraj. Now let us see how the *purdah* causes us harm.

1. It prevents women from receiving education.
2. It makes them timid.
3. It ruins their health.
4. It comes in the way of normal relationship between men and women.
5. It engenders in them a sense of inferiority.
6. Women lose contact with the outside world and as a result they are deprived of their due experience.
7. It prevents a woman from performing her role as man's better half.
8. Those women whose observe *purdah* cannot play their full role in the struggle for swaraj.
9. *Purdah* comes in the way of children's education.

Considering all these ill effects, it is the duty of all intelligent Hindus to do away with this evil custom.

As with the other reforms so also with the *purdah*. Charity must begin at home. When others observe the good results of our actions, they will naturally emulate our example. It is, however, important to remember one thing: A reformer must always be gentle and courteous. If in doing away with *purdah* our aim is observance of restraint, then it is our duty to take this step and we will surely succeed in our effort. But if what we aim at is not restraint but licence, it will not be possible to remove the *purdah*, because the public will then resent the move and in anger may even support this evil custom. The people are pure in their hearts and cannot respect a movement with an impure objective.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 27-6-1929

## 154. “ANASAKTIYOGA”<sup>1</sup>

### THE MESSAGE OF THE “GITA”

It was at Kausani in Almora, on 24th June 1929, i.e., after two years’ waiting, that I finished the introduction in Gujarati to my translation of the *Gita*. The whole was then published in due course.<sup>2</sup> It has been translated in Hindi, Bengali and Marathi. There has been an insistent demand for an English translation. I finished the translation of the introduction at the Yeravda prison. Since my discharge<sup>3</sup> it has lain with friends, and now I give it to the reader. Those, who take no interest in the Book of Life, will forgive the trespass on these columns. To those, who are interested in the poem and treat it as their guide in life, my humble attempt might prove of some help.

M. K. G.

Just<sup>4</sup> as, acted upon by the affection of co-workers like Swami Anand and others, I wrote *My Experiments With Truth*<sup>5</sup>, so has it been regarding my rendering of the *Gita*. “We shall be able to appreciate your meaning of the message of the *Gita*, only when we are able to study a translation of the whole text by yourself, with the addition of such notes as you may deem necessary<sup>6</sup>. I do not think it is just on your part to deduce ahimsa, etc., from stray verses”, thus spoke

<sup>1</sup> Literally, ‘the yoga of non-attachment’. The English translation by Mahadev Desai bore the title *The Gita According to Gandhi*. The English translation of the introduction to his Gujarati translation of the *Gita* was begun by Gandhiji on 16-12-1930, and was completed by him on 8-1-1931 in the Yeravda prison. The original manuscript in English (photostat: G.N. 7911), in addition to bearing the dates for each instalment of the translation, also mentions 24-6-1929 as the date on which introduction in Gujarati to the translation of the *Gita* was completed. However, in his letters to Mahadev Desai and Chhaganlal Joshi dated 28-6-1929 (*vide* pp. 133 & 135.), he mentions his having completed the *Gita* the previous day. The work therefore, is placed under June 27, 1929.

The English translation appeared first in *Young India*, 26-8-1931, with this prefatory note and they were both reproduced in *The Gita According to Gandhi*.

<sup>2</sup> On March 12, 1931 by Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad

<sup>3</sup> On January 26, 1931

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript has “Even”.

<sup>5</sup> *Vide* “An Autobiography”

<sup>6</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “We can appreciate your meaning of the message of the *Gita* only when you have translated the whole text with such notes as you may deem necessary and when we have gone through it all.”

Swami Anand to me during the non-co-operation days. I felt the force of his remarks<sup>1</sup>. I therefore told him that I would adopt his suggestion when I got<sup>2</sup> the time. Shortly afterwards I was imprisoned.<sup>3</sup> During my incarceration I was able to study the *Gita* more fully. I went reverently through the Gujarati translation of the Lokamanya's great work<sup>4</sup>. He had kindly presented me with the Marathi original and the translations in Gujarati and Hindi, and had asked me,<sup>5</sup> if I could not tackle the original, at least to go through the Gujarati translation. I had not been able to<sup>6</sup> follow the advice outside the prison walls. But when I was imprisoned I read the Gujarati translation. This reading whetted my appetite for more and I glanced through several works on the *Gita*.<sup>7</sup>

2. My first acquaintance<sup>8</sup> with the *Gita* began in 1888-89 with the verse translation by Sir Edwin Arnold known as *the Song Celestial*. On reading it I felt a keen desire to read a Gujarati translation. And I read as many translations as I could lay hands on. But all such reading can give me no passport for presenting my own<sup>9</sup> translation. Then again my knowledge of Sanskrit is limited; my knowledge of Gujarati too is in no way scholarly.<sup>10</sup> How could I then dare present the public with my translation?

3. It has been my endeavour, as also that of<sup>11</sup> some companions, to reduce to practice the teaching of the *Gita* as I have understood it. The *Gita* has become for us a spiritual reference book.<sup>12</sup> I am aware that we ever fail to act in perfect accord with the teaching. The failure is not due to want of effort, but is in spite of it.<sup>13</sup> Even through the

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript has "remark".

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript has "get".

<sup>3</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "then I was imprisoned".

<sup>4</sup> *Gita Rahasya*

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has "and asked me".

<sup>6</sup> The original manuscript has "I could not".

<sup>7</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "This reading whetted my appetite for reading more about the *Gita* and I glanced through several works on it".

<sup>8</sup> *Vide* "An Aautobiography"

<sup>9</sup> The original manuscript does not have the word "own".

<sup>10</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Then again my knowledge of Sanskrit is limited; my knowledge of Gujarati too is in no way of a higher type."

<sup>11</sup> The original manuscript does not have the words "that of".

<sup>12</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "It has become a spiritual reference book."

<sup>13</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The failure is due not to want of effort but in spite of it."

failures we seem to see rays of hope. The accompanying rendering contains the meaning of the *Gita* message which this little ban is trying to enforce in its<sup>1</sup> daily conduct.

4. Again this rendering is designed for women, the commercial class, the so-called Shudras and the like, who have little or no literary equipment, who have neither the time nor the desire to read the *Gita* in the original, and yet who stand in need of its support<sup>2</sup>. In spite of my Gujarati being unscholarly<sup>3</sup> I must own to having the desire to leave to the Gujaratis, through the mother tongue, whatever knowledge I may possess. I do indeed wish that, at a time when literary output of a questionable character is pouring in upon the Gujaratis, they should have before them a rendering, which the majority can understand, of a book that is regarded as unrivalled for its spiritual merit and so withstand the overwhelming flood of unclean literature.<sup>4</sup>

5. This desire does not mean any disrespect to the other renderings. They have their own place. But I am not aware of the<sup>5</sup> claim made by the translators of enforcing their meaning of the *Gita* in their own lives. At the back of my reading<sup>6</sup> there is the claim of an endeavour to enforce the meaning in my own conduct for an unbroken period of 40<sup>7</sup> years. For this reason I do indeed harbour the wish that all Gujarati men or women<sup>8</sup>, wishing to shape their conduct according to their faith, should digest and derive strength from the translation here presented.

6. My co-workers, too, have worked at this translation. My knowledge of Sanskrit being very limited, I should not have full confidence in my literal translation. To that extent therefore the

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript has “their”.

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript has “In spite of my knowledge of Gujarati being limited”.

<sup>3</sup> The original manuscript has “In spite of my knowledge of Gujarati being limited”.

<sup>4</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “I do indeed wish that at a time when literary output of a questionable character is pouring in upon the Gujaratis they should have before them a readable rendering of a book that is regarded as unrivalled for its spiritual merit and so that they may be able to withstand the overwhelming flood of unclean literature”.

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has “any”.

<sup>6</sup> The original manuscript has “rendering”.

<sup>7</sup> The original manuscript has “thirty eight”.

<sup>8</sup> The original manuscript has “For this reason I do indeed harbour the wish that every Gujarati man or woman”.

translation has passed before<sup>1</sup> the eyes of Vinoba, Kaka Kalelkar, Mahadev Desai and Kishorelal Mashruwala.

## II

7. Now about the message of the *Gita*.

8. Even in 1888-89, when I first became acquainted with the *Gita*, I felt that it was not a historical work, but that, under the guise of physical warfare, it described the duel that perpetually went on in the hearts of mankind, and that physical warfare was brought in merely<sup>2</sup> to make the description of the internal duel more alluring<sup>3</sup>. This preliminary intuition became more confirmed on a closer study of religion and the *Gita*. A study of the *Mahabharata* gave it added confirmation. I do not regard the *Mahabharata* as a historical work in the accepted sense. The “Adiparva” contains powerful evidence in support of my opinion. By ascribing to the chief actors superhuman or subhuman origins, the great Vyasa made short work of the history of kings and their peoples. The persons therein described may be historical, but the author of the *Mahabharata* has used them merely to drive home his religious theme.

9. The author of the *Mahabharata* has not established the necessity of physical warfare; on the contrary, he has proved its futility. He has made the victors shed tears of sorrow and repentance and has left them nothing but a legacy of miseries.

10. In this great work the<sup>4</sup> *Gita* is the crown. Its second chapter, instead of teaching the rules of physical warfare, tells us<sup>5</sup> how a perfected man is to be known. In the characteristics of the perfected man of the *Gita*, I do not see any to correspond to physical warfare.<sup>6</sup> Its whole design is inconsistent with the rules of conduct governing the relations between warring parties.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript does not have the word “before”.

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript does not have the word “merely”.

<sup>3</sup> The original manuscript has “attractive”.

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript does not have the word “the”.

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has “teaches”.

<sup>6</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “In reading these verses I do not find a single characteristic of a perfected man that can correspond to physical warfare.”

<sup>7</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “The whole design of the *Gita* is inconsistent with the rules of conduct governing the relations between contending parties in domestic disputes.”

11. Krishna of the *Gita* is perfection<sup>1</sup> and right knowledge personified; but the picture is imaginary. That does not mean that Krishna, the adored of his people, never lived. But perfection is imagined. The idea of a perfect incarnation is an aftergrowth.

12. In Hinduism<sup>2</sup> incarnation is ascribed to one who has performed some extraordinary service of mankind. All embodied life is in reality an incarnation of God, but it is not usual to consider every living being an incarnation. Future generations pay this homage to one who, in his own generation, has been extraordinarily religious in his conduct.<sup>3</sup> I can see nothing wrong in this procedure; it takes nothing from God's greatness, and there is no violence done to truth. There is an Urdu saying which means: "Adam is not God but he is a spark of the Divine." And therefore he who is the most religiously behaved has most<sup>4</sup> of the divine spark in him. It is in accordance with this train of thought, that Krishna enjoys, in Hinduism, the status of the most perfect incarnation.

13. This belief in incarnation<sup>5</sup> is a testimony of man's lofty spiritual ambition. Man is not at peace with himself till he has become like unto God.<sup>6</sup> The endeavour to reach this state is the supreme, the only ambition worth having.<sup>7</sup> And this is self-realization. This self-realization is the subject of the *Gita*, as it is of all scriptures.<sup>8</sup> But its author surely did not write it to establish that doctrine. The object of the *Gita* appears to me to be that of showing the most excellent way to attain self-realization.<sup>9</sup> That which is to be found, more or less clearly, spread out here and there in Hindu religious books, has been brought

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript has "perfect".

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript does not have the words "In Hinduism".

<sup>3</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Future generations pay homage as an incarnation to one who, in his own generation, has been the most religious in his conduct."

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript has "more"

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has "This incarnation habit".

<sup>6</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "Man is not at peace with himself till he has become like unto God, he is not happy without it."

<sup>7</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The endcavour to be that is the supreme, the only ambition worth having."

<sup>8</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "This self-realization is the subject of all scriptures as it is of the *Gita*."

<sup>9</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "But the object of the *Gita* appears to me to be to show the most excellent way of attaining self-realization."



out in the clearest possible language in the *Gita* even at the risk of repetition.

14. *The matchless remedy is renunciation of fruits of action.* 15. This is the centre round which the *Gita* is woven.<sup>1</sup> This renunciation is the central sun, round which devotion, knowledge and the rest revolve like planets.<sup>2</sup> The body has been likened to a prison.<sup>3</sup> There must be action<sup>4</sup> where there is body. Not one embodied being is exempted<sup>5</sup> from labour. And yet all religions proclaim that it is possible for man, by treating the body as the temple of God, to attain freedom. Every action<sup>6</sup> is tainted, be it ever so trivial<sup>7</sup>. How can the body be made the temple of God?<sup>8</sup> In other words<sup>9</sup> how can one be free from action, i.e., from the taint of sin? The *Gita* has answered the question in decisive language: “By desireless action; by renouncing fruits of action; by dedicating all activities<sup>10</sup> to God, i.e., by surrendering oneself to Him body and soul.”

16. But desirelessness or renunciation does<sup>11</sup> not come for the mere talking about it. It is not attained by an intellectual feat. It is attainable only by a constant heartchurn. Right knowledge is necessary for attaining<sup>12</sup> renunciation. Learned men possess a knowledge of a kind. They may recite the Vedas from memory, yet<sup>13</sup> they may be steeped in self-indulgence. In order<sup>14</sup> that knowledge may not run riot, the author of the *Gita* has insisted on devotion accompanying it and has given it the first place. Knowledge without

<sup>1</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “The *Gita* is woven round this as the centre.”

<sup>2</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “Devotion knowledge and the rest revolve like planets round this renunciation as the central sun.”

<sup>3</sup> The original manuscript does not have this sentence.

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript has “work”.

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has “exempt”.

<sup>6</sup> The original manuscript has “But every action”.

<sup>7</sup> The original manuscript has “little”.

<sup>8</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “And freedom is available only for those who become sinless”.

<sup>9</sup> The original manuscript has “Then”.

<sup>10</sup> The original manuscript has “activity”.

<sup>11</sup> The original manuscript has “do”.

<sup>12</sup> The original manuscript has “is necessary to attain”.

<sup>13</sup> The original manuscript has “but”.

<sup>14</sup> The original manuscript has “So”.

devotion will be like a misfire. Therefore, says the *Gita*: “Have devotion, and knowledge will follow.” This devotion is not mere lip worship, it is a wrestling with death.<sup>1</sup> Hence the *Gita*’s assessment of the devotee’s qualities is similar to that of the sages.

17. Thus the devotion required by the *Gita* is no soft-hearted effusiveness. It certainly is not blind faith. The devotion of the *Gita* has the least to do with externals. A devotee may use, if he likes, rosaries, forehead marks, make offerings, but these things<sup>2</sup> are no test of his devotion. He is the devotee who is jealous of none, who is a fount of mercy, who is without egotism, who is selfless, who treats alike cold and heat, happiness and misery, who is ever forgiving, who is always contented, whose resolutions are firm, who has dedicated mind and soul to God, who causes no dread,<sup>3</sup> who is not afraid of others<sup>4</sup>, who is free from exultation, sorrow and fear, who is pure, who is versed in action and yet remains unaffected by it, who renounces all fruit, good or bad, who treats friend and foe alike, who is untouched by respect or disrespect, who is not puffed up by praise, who does not go under when people speak ill of him, who loves silence and solitude, who has a disciplined reason.<sup>5</sup> Such devotion is inconsistent with the existence at the same time of strong attachments.<sup>6</sup>

18. We thus see, that to be a real devotee is to realize oneself.<sup>7</sup> Self-realization is not something apart.<sup>8</sup> One rupee can purchase for us poison or nectar, but knowledge of devotion cannot buy us either salvation or bondage.<sup>9</sup> These are not media of exchange. They are themselves the thing we want. In other words, if the means and the end

<sup>1</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “But this devotion is wrestling with death”.

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript has “but they”.

<sup>3</sup> The original manuscript has “whom people do not fear”.

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript has “them”.

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has “whose reason is disciplined”.

<sup>6</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “Such devotion is impossible in men or women with strong attachments”.

<sup>7</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “We thus see, that to know to be a real devotee is to realize oneself.”

<sup>8</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “Self-realization is not something apart from it.”

<sup>9</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “Just as one rupee can purchase for us poison or nectar so may we not use knowledge or devotion for attaining either salvation or bondage.”

are not identical, they are almost so. The extreme of means is salvation. Salvation of the *Gita* is perfect peace.<sup>1</sup>

19. But such knowledge and devotion, to be true, have to stand the test of renunciation of fruits of action. Mere knowledge of right and wrong will not make one fit for salvation.<sup>2</sup> According to common notions a mere learned man will pass as a pundit. He need not perform any service. He will regard it as bondage even to lift a little *lota*.<sup>3</sup> Where one test of knowledge is non-liability for service, there is no room for such mundane work as the lifting of a *lota*.

20. Or take *bhakti*.<sup>4</sup> The popular notion of *bhakti* is soft-heartedness, telling beads and the like, and disdaining to do even a loving service, lest the telling of beads might be interrupted.<sup>5</sup> This *bhakta*<sup>6</sup> therefore, leaves the rosary only for eating, drinking and the like, never for grinding corn or nursing patients.

21. But the *Gita* says:<sup>7</sup> “No one has attained his goal without action. Even men like Janaka attained salvation through action. If even I were lazily to cease working, the world would<sup>8</sup> perish. How much more necessary then for the people at large to engage in action?”

22. While<sup>9</sup> on the one hand it is beyond dispute that all action binds, on the other hand it is equally true that all living beings have to do some work, whether they will or no. Here all activity, whether mental or physical, is to be included in the term action. Then how is one to be free from the bondage of action, even though he may be acting<sup>10</sup>? The manner in which the *Gita* has solved the problem is, to

<sup>1</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “The salvation contemplated by *Gita* is perfect peace.”

<sup>2</sup> This sentence is not in the original manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “He will regard it as a bondage even to lift a little *lota*.”

<sup>4</sup> This sentence is not in the original manuscript.

<sup>5</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “The popular notion of a *bhakta* is that he is a soft-hearted maniac, telling beads and disdaining to do even a loving service lest his telling of beads might be interrupted”.

<sup>6</sup> The original manuscript has “he”.

<sup>7</sup> The original manuscript has: “Both these have been clearly told by the *Gita*”.

<sup>8</sup> The original manuscript has “will”.

<sup>9</sup> The original manuscript has “But”.

<sup>10</sup> The original manuscript has “doing it”.

my knowledge, unique.<sup>1</sup> The *Gita* says: “Do your allotted work but renounce its fruit...be detached and work...have no desire for reward, and work.”

This is the unmistakable teaching of the *Gita*.<sup>2</sup> He who gives up action falls. He who gives up only the reward rises. But renunciation of fruit in no way means indifference to the result. In regard to every action one must know the result that is expected to follow, the means thereto, and the capacity for it. He, who, being thus equipped, is without desire for the result, and is yet wholly engrossed in the due fulfilment of the task before him, is said to have renounced the fruits<sup>3</sup> of his action.

23. Again, let no one consider renunciation to mean want of fruit for the renouncer. The *Gita* reading does not warrant such a meaning. Renunciation means absence of hankering after<sup>4</sup> fruit. As a matter of fact, he who renounces reaps a thousandfold. The renunciation of the *Gita* is the acid test of faith. He who is ever brooding over the result often loses nerve in the performance of his duty. He becomes impatient and then gives vent to anger and begins to do unworthy things; he jumps from action to action, never remaining faithful to any. He who broods over results is like a man given to objects of senses; he is ever distracted, he says goodbye to all scruples, everything is right in his estimation and he therefore resorts to means fair and foul to attain his end.

24. From the bitter experiences of desire for fruit the author of the *Gita* discovered the path of renunciation of fruit, and put it before the world in a most convincing manner. The common belief is that religion is always opposed to material good. “One cannot act religiously in the mercantile and such other matters. There is no place for religion in such pursuits; religion is only for attainment of salvation”, we hear many wordly-wise people say. In my opinion the author of the *Gita* has dispelled this delusion. He has drawn no line of demarcation between salvation and wordly pursuits. On the contrary, he has shown that religion must rule even our wordly pursuits. I have

<sup>1</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads : “The manner in which the *Gita* has solved the problem, no other work has to my knowledge.”

<sup>2</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “This unmistakable and unmistakable teaching of the *Gita*” [sic].

<sup>3</sup> The original manuscript has “fruit”.

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript has “for”. The original manuscript has “would”.

felt that the *Gita* teaches us that what cannot be followed out in day-today practice cannot be called religion. Thus, according to the *Gita*, all acts that are incapable of being performed without attachment are taboo. This golden rule saves mankind from many a pitfall. According to this interpretation<sup>1</sup>, murder, lying dissoluteness and the like must<sup>2</sup> be regarded as sinful and therefore taboo. Man's life then becomes simple, and from that simpleness springs peace.

25. Thinking along these lines, I have felt that in trying to enforce in one's life the central teaching of the *Gita*, one is bound to follow truth and ahimsa. When there is no desire for fruit, there is no temptation for untruth or *himsa*. Take any instance of untruth or violence, and it will be found that at its<sup>3</sup> back was the desire to attain the cherished end. But it may be freely admitted that the *Gita* was not written to establish *ahimsa*. It was an accepted and primary duty even before the *Gita* age.<sup>4</sup> The *Gita* had to deliver the message of renunciation of fruit. This is clearly brought out as early as the second chapter.

26. But if the *Gita* believed in ahimsa or its was<sup>5</sup> included in desirelessness, why did the author take a warlike illustration? When the *Gita* was written, although people believed in ahimsa, wars were not only not taboo, but nobody observed the contradiction between them and ahimsa.

27. In assessing the implications of renunciation of fruit, we are not required to probe the mind of the author of the *Gita* as to his limitations of ahimsa and the like.<sup>6</sup> Because a poet puts a particular truth before the world, it does not necessarily follow that he has known or worked out all its great consequences, or that having done so, he is able always to express them fully.<sup>7</sup> In this perhaps lies the

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript has "doctrine".

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript has "would".

<sup>3</sup> The original manuscript has "their".

<sup>4</sup> In the Original manuscript the sentence reads: "It was accepted as primary duty even before the *Gita* age".

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has "is".

<sup>6</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "But in assessing the measure of renunciation of fruit, we are not required to probe the mind of the author of the *Gita* as to his limitation of ahimsa and the like".

<sup>7</sup> The original manuscript has "he is able to reduce them in language".

greatness of the poem and the poet.<sup>1</sup> A poet's meaning is limitless. Like man, the meaning of great writings suffers evolution. On examining the history of languages, we notice that the meaning of important words has changed or expanded. This is true of the *Gita*. The author has himself extended the meanings of some of the current words.<sup>2</sup> We are able to discover this even on a superficial examination.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that, in the age prior to that of the *Gita*, offering of animals in sacrifice was permissible. But there is not a trace of it in the sacrifice in the *Gita* sense. In the *Gita* continuous concentration on God is the king of sacrifices. The third chapter seems to show that sacrifice chiefly means body-labour for service. The third and the fourth chapters read together will give us other meanings for sacrifice, but never animal-sacrifice. Similarly has the meaning of the word sannyasa undergone, in the *Gita*, a transformation. The sannyasa of the *Gita* will not tolerate complete cessation of all activity. The sannyasa of the *Gita* is all work and yet no work. Thus the author of the *Gita*, by extending meanings of words, has taught us to imitate him. Let it be granted that according to the letter of the *Gita* it is possible to say that warfare is consistent with renunciation of fruit. But after 40 years' unremitting endeavour fully to enforce the teaching of the *Gita* in my own life, I have, in all humility, felt that perfect renunciation is impossible without perfect observance of ahimsa in every shape and form.<sup>4</sup>

28. The *Gita* is not an aphoristic work; it is a great religious poem. The deeper you dive into it, the richer the meanings you get. It being meant for the people at large, there is pleasing repetition<sup>5</sup>.<sup>6</sup> With every age the important words will carry new and expanding meanings. But its central teaching will never vary. The seeker is at

<sup>1</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "And in this lies the greatness of the poem and the poet".

<sup>2</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "The author of the *Gita* has himself extended the meanings of great current words".

<sup>3</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: "And this we are able to discover even on a superficial examination."

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript has "is impossible without perfect observance of truth and ahimsa".

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has "the same thing has been said often".

<sup>6</sup> The original manuscript adds "Therefore".

liberty to extract from this treasure any meaning he likes so as to enable him to enforce in his life the central teaching.

29. Nor is the *Gita* a collection of Do's and Don'ts. What is lawful for one may be unlawful for another. What may be permissible at one time, or in one place, may not be so at another time, and in another place.<sup>1</sup> Desire for fruit is the only universal prohibition. Desirelessness is obligatory.

30. The *Gita* has sung the praises of knowledge<sup>2</sup>, but is beyond the mere intellect; it is essentially addressed to the heart and capable of being understood by the heart. Therefore the *Gita* is not for those who have faith. The author makes Krishna say:<sup>3</sup>

“Do not entrust this treasure to him who is without sacrifice, without devotion, without the desire for this teaching<sup>4</sup> and who denies Me. On the other hand, those who will give this precious treasure to My devotees will, by the fact of this service, assuredly reach Me.<sup>5</sup> And those who, being free from malice, will with faith absorb this teaching, shall<sup>6</sup>, having attained freedom, live where people of true merit go<sup>7</sup> after death.”

## DISCOURSE I

*No knowledge is to be found without seeking, no tranquility without travail no happiness except through tribulation. Every seeker has, at one time or another, to pass through a conflict of duties, a heart-churning.*

Dhritarashtra said:

1. Tell me, O Sanjaya, what my sons and Pandu's assembled, on battle intent, did on the field of Kuru, the field of duty.

The human body is the battle-field where the internal duel between Right and Wrong goes on. Therefore, it is capable of being turned into the gateway to Freedom. It is born in sin and becomes the seed-bed of sin. Hence it is also called the field of Kuru. The Kauravas represent the forces of Evil, the Pandavas the forces of

<sup>1</sup> The original manuscript adds “Therefore”.

<sup>2</sup> The original manuscript has “learning”.

<sup>3</sup> In the original manuscript the sentence reads: “The author himself has said.”

<sup>4</sup> The original manuscript does not have the words “for this teaching”.

<sup>5</sup> The original manuscript has: “by the fact of this service of me will assuredly reach me.”

<sup>6</sup> The original manuscript has “will”.

<sup>7</sup> The original manuscript has “live”.

Good. Who is there that has not experienced the daily conflict within himself between the forces of Evil and the forces of Good?<sup>1</sup>

## DISCOURSE II

*By reason of delusion, man takes wrong to be right. By reason of delusion was Arjuna led to make a difference between kinsmen and non-kinsmen. To demonstrate that this is a vain distinction, Lord Krishna distinguishes between body (not-self) and atman (self) and shows that whilst bodies are impermanent and several, atman is permanent and one. Effort is within man's control, not the fruit thereof. All he has to do, therefore, is to decide his course of conduct or duty on each occasion and persevere in it, unconcerned about the result. Fulfilment of one's duty in the spirit of detachment or selflessness leads to Freedom.*

30. This embodied one in the body of every being is ever beyond all harm, O Bharata; thou shouldst not, therefore, grieve for anyone.

Thus far Lord Krishna, by force of argument based on pure reason, has demonstrated that atman is abiding while the physical body is fleeting, and has explained that if, under certain circumstances, the destruction of a physical body is deemed justifiable, it is delusion to imagine that the Kauravas should not be slain because they are kinsmen. Now he reminds Arjuna of the duty of a Kshatriya.

31. Again, seeing thine own duty thou shouldst not shrink from it; for there is no higher good for a Kshatriya than a righteous war.

32. Such a fight, coming unsought, as a gateway to heaven thrown open, falls only to the lot of happy Kshatriyas, O Partha.

33. But if thou wilt not fight this righteous fight, then failing in thy duty and losing thine honour thou wilt incur sin.

34. The world will for ever recount the story of thy disgrace; and for a man of honour disgrace is worse than death.

35. The maharathas will think that fear made thee retire from battle; and thou wilt fall in the esteem of those very ones who have held thee high.

36. Thine enemies will deride thy prowess and speak many unspeakable words about thee. What can be more painful than that?

<sup>1</sup> The translation of the Gita verses not commented on or referred to by Gandhiji is not reproduced in this volume. The translation both of the verses and of Gandhiji's comments is from Mahadev Desai's *The Gita According to Gandhi*.



37. Slain, thou shalt gain heaven; victorious, thou shalt inherit the earth: therefore arise, O Kaunteya<sup>1</sup>, determined to fight.

Having declared the highest truth, viz., the immortality of the eternal *atman* and the fleeting nature of the physical body (11-30), Krishna reminds Arjuna that a Kshatriya may not flinch from a fight which comes unsought (31-32). He then (32-37) shows how the highest truth and the performance of duty incidentally coincide with expediency. Next he proceeds to foreshadow the central teaching of the *Gita* in the following *shloka*.

38. Hold alike pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, and gird up thy loins for the fight; so doing thou shalt not incur sin.

39. Thus have I set before thee the attitude of Knowledge; hear now the attitude of Action; resorting to this attitude thou shalt cast off the bondage of action.

41. The attitude, in this matter, springing, as it does, from fixed resolve is but one, O Kurunandana; but for those who have no fixed resolve the attitudes are many- branched and unending.

When the attitude ceases to be one and undivided and becomes many and divided, it ceases to be one settled will, and is broken up into various wills or desires between which man is tossed about. 42-44. The ignorant, revelling in the letter of the Vedas, declare that there is naught else; carnally-minded, holding heaven to be their goal, they utter swelling words which promise birth as the fruit of action and which dwell on the many and varied rites to be performed for the sake of pleasure and power; intent, as they are, on pleasure and power, their swelling words rob them of their wits, and they have no settled attitude which can be centred on the supreme goal.

The Vedic ritual, as opposed to the doctrine of yoga laid down in the *Gita*, is alluded to here. The Vedic ritual lays down countless ceremonies and rites with a view to attaining merit and heaven. These, divorced as they are from the essence of the Vedas and short-lived in their result, are worthless.

45. The Vedas have as their domain the three *gunas*; eschew them, O Arjuna. Free thyself from the pairs of opposites, abide in eternal truth, scorn to gain or guard anything, remain the master of thy soul.

46. To the extent that a well is of use when there is a flood of water on all sides, to the same extent are all the Vedas of use to an enlightened Brahmana.

<sup>1</sup> Son of Kunti

47. Action alone is thy province, never the fruits thereof; let not thy motive be the fruit of action, nor shouldst thou desire to avoid action.

48. Act thou, O Dhananjaya, without attachment, steadfast in Yoga, even-minded in success and failure. Even-mindedness is yoga.

49. For action, O Dhananjaya, is far inferior to unattached action; seek refuge in the attitude of detachment. Pitiable are those who make fruit their motive.

50. Here in this world a man gifted with that attitude of detachment escapes the fruit of both good and evil deeds. Gird thyself up for yoga, therefore. Yoga is skill in action.

Arjuna said:

54. What, O Keshava, is the mark of the man whose understanding is secure, whose mind is fixed in concentration? How does he talk? How sit? How move?

The Lord said:

55. When a man puts away, O Partha, all the cravings that arise in the mind and finds comfort for himself only from atman, then is he called the man of secure understanding.

To find comfort for oneself from *atman* means to look to the spirit within for spiritual comfort, not to outside objects which in their very nature must give pleasure as well as pain. Spiritual comfort or bliss must be distinguished from pleasure or happiness. The pleasure I may derive from the possession of wealth, for instance, is delusive; real spiritual comfort or bliss can be attained only if I rise superior to every temptation even though troubled by the pangs of poverty and hunger.

59. When a man starves his senses,<sup>1</sup> the objects of those senses disappear from him, but not the yearning for them; the yearning too departs when he beholds the Supreme.

The *shloka* does not rule out fasting and other forms of self-restraint, but indicates their limitations. These restraints are needed for subduing the desire for sense-objects, which however is rooted out only when one has a vision of the Supreme. The higher yearning conquers all the lower yearnings.

60. For, in spite of the wise man's endeavour, O Kaunteya, the unruly senses distract his mind perforce.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai in The Gita according to Gandhi explains: "For starves his senses", Gandhiji has 'facts'. I think there is no violence to the meaning of the verse in applying 'starvation' to all the senses, including that of hunger."

61. Holding all these in check, the yogi should sit intent on Me; for he whose senses are under control is secure of understanding.

This means that without devotion and the consequent grace of God, man's endeavour is vain.

62. In a man brooding on objects of the senses, attachment to them springs up; attachment begets craving and craving begets wrath.

Craving cannot but lead to resentment, for it is unending and unsatisfied.

63. Wrath breeds stupefaction, stupefaction leads to loss of memory, loss of memory ruins the reason, and the ruin of reason spells utter destruction.

64. But the disciplined soul, moving among sense-objects with the senses weaned from likes and dislikes and brought under the control of *atman*, attains peace of mind.

66. The undisciplined man has neither understanding nor devotion; for him who has no devotion there is no peace, and for him who has no peace, whence happiness?

69. When it is night for all other beings, the disciplined soul is awake; when all other beings are awake, it is night for the seeing ascetic.

This verse indicates the divergent paths of the disciplined ascetic and the sensual man. Whereas the ascetic is dead to the things of the world and lives in God, the sensual man is alive only to the things of the world and dead to the things of the spirit.

70. He in whom all longings subside, even as the waters subside in the ocean which, though ever being filled by them, never overflows - that man finds peace; not he who cherishes longing.

71. The man who sheds all longing and moves without concern, free from the sense of 'I' and 'Mine' - he attains peace.

72. This is the state, O Partha, of the man who rests in Brahman; having attained to it, he is not deluded. He who abides in this state even at the hour of death passes into oneness with Brahman.

### DISCOURSE III

*This discourse may be said to be the key to the essence of the Gita. It makes absolutely clear the spirit and the nature of right action and shows how true knowledge must express itself in acts of selfless service.*

Arjuna said:

1. If, O Janardana, thou holdest that the attitude of detachment is superior to action, then why, O Keshava, dost thou urge me to dreadful action?

2. Thou dost seem to confuse my understanding with perplexing speech; tell me, therefore, in no uncertain voice, that alone whereby I may attain salvation.

Arjuna is sole perplexed, for whilst on the one hand he is rebuked for his faint-heartedness, on the other he seems to be advised to refrain from action (II. 49-50). But this, in reality, is not the case as the following *shlokas* will show.

The Lord said:

3. I have spoken before, O sinless one, of two attitudes in this world - the Samkhyas', that of jnanayoga and the yogis', that of karmayoga.

4. Never does man enjoy freedom from action by not undertaking action, nor does he attain that freedom by mere renunciation of action.

'Freedom from action' is freedom from the bondage of action.<sup>1</sup> This freedom is not to be gained by cessation of all activity, apart from the fact that this cessation is in the very nature of things impossible (see following *shloka*). How then may it be gained? The following *shlokas* will explain:

5. For none ever remains inactive even for a moment; for all are compelled to action by the *gunas* inherent in *prakriti*.

6. He who curbs the organs of action but allows the mind to dwell on the sense-objects - such a one, wholly deluded, is called a hypocrite.

The man who curbs his tongue but mentally swears at another is a hypocrite. But that does not mean that free rein should be given to the organs of action so long as the mind cannot be brought under control. Self-imposed physical restraint is a condition precedent to mental restraint. Physical restraint should be entirely self-imposed and not super-imposed from outside, e.g., by fear. The hypocrite who is held up to contempt here is not the humble aspirant after self-restraint. The *shloka* has reference to the man who curbs the body because he cannot help it whilst indulging the mind, and who would

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains here: "The 'bondage of action' in Gandhiji's note is the bondage of sansara, the cycle of death and birth. All action will have its consequences the consequences in one case, as we shall see, will be the bondage of sansara, in the other case it will be freedom from it."

indulge the body too if he possibly could. The next *shloka* puts the thing conversely.

7. But he, O Arjuna, who keeping all the senses under control of the mind, engages the organs in karmayoga, without attachment...than man excels.

The mind and body should be made to accord well. Even with the mind kept in control, the body will be active in one way or another. But he whose mind is truly restrained, will, for instance close his ears to foul talk and open them only to listen to the praise of God or of good men. He will have no relish for sensual pleasures and will keep himself occupied with such activity as ennobles the soul. That is the path of action. Karmayoga is the yoga (means) which will deliver the self from the bondage of the body, and in it there is no room for self-indulgence.

8. Do thou thy allotted task; for action is superior to inaction; with inaction even life's normal course is not possible.

9. This world of men suffers bondage from all action save that which is done for the sake of sacrifice; to this end, O Kaunteya, perform action without attachment.

'Action for the sake of sacrifice' means acts of selfless service dedicated to God.

10. Together with sacrifice did the Lord of beings create, of old, mankind, declaring: "By this shall ye increase; may this be to you the giver of all your desires."

11. "With this may you cherish the gods and may the gods cherish you; thus cherishing one another may you attain the highest good.

12. "Cherished with sacrifice, the gods will bestow on you the desired boons." he who enjoys their gifts without rendering ought unto them is verily a thief.

"Gods" in *shlokas* 11 and 12 must be taken to mean the whole creation of God. The service of all created beings is the service of the gods and the same is sacrifice.

22. For me, O Partha, there is naught to do in the three worlds, nothing worth gaining that I have not gained; yet I am ever in action.

An objection is sometimes raised that God being impersonal is not likely to perform any physical activity; at best He may be supposed to act mentally. This is not correct. For the unceasing movement of the sun, the moon, the earth, etc., signifies God in action. This is not mental but physical activity. Though God is without form and impersonal He acts as though He had form and body. Hence though he is ever in action, He is free from action, unaffected

by action. What must be borne in mind is that just as all Nature's movements and processes are mechanical and yet guided by Divine Intelligence or Will, even so man must reduce his daily conduct to mechanical regularity and precision, but he must do so intelligently. Man's merit lies in observing divine guidance at the back of these processes and in an intelligent imitation of it rather than in emphasizing the mechanical nature thereof and reducing himself to an automation. One has but to withdraw the self, withdraw attachment to fruit from all action, and then not only mechanical precision but security from all wear and tear will be ensured. Acting thus man remains fresh until the end of his days. His body will perish in due course, but his soul will remain evergreen without a crease or a wrinkle.

27. All action is entirely done by the *gunas* of *prakriti*. Man, deluded by the sense of 'I', thinks 'I am the doer'.

28. But he, O Mahabahu, who understands the truth of the various *gunas* and their various activities, knows that it is the *gunas* that operate on the *gunas*; he does not claim to be the doer.

As breathing, winking and similar processes are automatic and man claims no agency for them, he being conscious of the processes only when disease or similar cause arrests them, in a similar manner all his activities should be automatic, without his arrogating to himself the agency or responsibility thereof. A man of Charity does not even know that he is doing charitable acts, it is his nature to do so, he cannot help it. This detachment can only come from tireless endeavour and God's grace.

30. Cast all thy acts on Me, with thy mind fixed on the indwelling *atman*, and without any thought of fruit, or sense of 'mine' shake off thy fever and fight!

He who knows the *atman* inhabiting the body and realizes Him to be a part of the supreme *atman* will dedicate everything to Him, even as a faithful servant acts as a mere shadow of his master and dedicates to him all that he does. For the master is the real doer, the servant but the instrument.

33. Even a man of knowledge acts according to his nature; all creatures follow their nature; what then will constraint avail?

This does not run counter to the teaching in II. 61 and II. 68. Self-restraint is the means of salvation (VI. 35, XIII. 7). Man's energies should be bent towards achieving complete self-restraint until

the end of his days. But if he does not succeed, neither will constraint help him. The *shloka* does not rule out restraint but explains that nature prevails. he who justifies himself saying, 'I cannot do this, it is not in my nature,' misreads the *shloka*. True, we do not know our nature, but habit is not nature. Progress, not decline, ascent, not descent, is the nature of the soul, and therefore every threatened decline or descent ought to be resisted. The next verse makes this abundantly clear.

34. Each sense has its settled likes and dislikes towards its objects; man should not come under the sway of these, for they are his besetters.

Hearing, for instance, is the object of the ears which may be inclined to hear something and disinclined to hear something else. Man may not allow himself to be swayed by these likes and dislikes, but must decide for himself what is conducive to his growth, his ultimate end being to reach the state beyond happiness and misery.

35. Better one's own duty, bereft of merit, than another's well-performed; better is death in the discharge of one's duty; another's duty is fraught with danger.

One man's duty may be to serve the community by working as a sweeper, another's may be to work as an accountant. An accountant's work may be more inviting, but that need not draw the sweeper away from his work. Should he allow himself to be drawn away he would himself be lost and put the community into danger. Before God the work of man will be judged by the spirit in which it is done, not by the nature of the work which makes no difference whatsoever. Whoever acts in a spirit of dedication fits himself for salvation.

40. The senses, the mind and the reason are said to be its seat; by means of these it obscures knowledge and stupefies man.

When Lust seizes the senses, the mind is corrupted, discrimination is obscured and reason ruined. See II. 62-64.

41. Therefore, O Bharatarshabha, bridle thou first the senses and then rid thyself of this sinner, the destroyer of knowledge and discrimination.

42. Subtle, they say, are the senses; subtler than the senses is the mind; subtler than the mind is the reason; but subtler even than the reason is He.<sup>43</sup> Thus realizing Him to be subtler than the reason, and controlling the self by the Self (*atman*), destroy, O Mahabahu, this enemy - Lust, so hard to overcome.

When man realizes Him, his mind will be under His control, not swayed by the senses. And when the mind is conquered, what power

has Lust? It is indeed a subtle enemy, but when once the senses, the mind and the reason are under the control of the subtle-most Self, Lust is extinguished.

#### DISCOURSE IV

*This discourse further explains the subject-matter of the third and describes the various kinds of sacrifice.*

6. Though unborn and inexhaustible in My essence, though Lord of all beings, yet assuming control over My Nature, I come into being by My mysterious power.<sup>1</sup>

7. For whenever Right declines and Wrong prevails, then O Bharata, I come to birth.

8. To save the righteous, to destroy the wicked, and to re-establish Right I am born from age to age.

Here is comfort for the faithful and affirmation of the truth that Right ever prevails. An eternal conflict between Right and Wrong goes on. Sometimes the latter seems to get the upper hand, but it is Right which ultimately prevails. The good are never destroyed, for Right...which is Truth...cannot perish; the wicked are destroyed because Wrong has no independent existence. Knowing this let man cease to arrogate to himself authorship and eschew untruth, violence and evil. Inscrutable Providence...the unique power of the Lord...is ever at work. This in fact is avatar, incarnation. Strictly speaking there can be no birth for God.

9. He who knows the secret of this My divine birth and action is not born again, after leaving the body; he comes to Me, O Arjuna.

For when a man is secure in the faith that Right always prevails, he never swerves therefrom, pursuing to the bitterest end and against serious odds, and as no part of the effort proceeds from his ego, but all is dedicated to Him, being ever one with Him, he is released from birth and death.

10. Freed from passion, fear and wrath, filled full with Me, relying on Me, and refined by the fiery ordeal of knowledge, many have become one with Me.

11. In whatever way men resort to Me, even so do I render to them. In every way, O Partha, the path men follow is Mine.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "Gandhiji's translation says: 'because of My Nature'. Prakriti is here Nature. God by His mysterious power...maya...assumes the garb of prakriti and looks as though He was born".



That is, the whole world is under His ordinance. No one may break God's law with impunity. As we sow, so shall we reap. This law operates inexorably without fear or favour.

12. Those who desire their actions to bear fruit worship the gods here; for in this world of men the fruit of action is quickly obtainable.

Gods, as indicated before, must not be taken to mean the heavenly beings of tradition, but whatever reflects the divine. In that sense man is also a god. Steam, electricity and the other great forces of Nature are all gods. Propitiation of these forces quickly bears fruit, as we well know, but it is short-lived. It fails to bring comfort to the soul and it certainly does not take one even a short step towards salvation.

13. The order of the four *varnas* was created by Me according to the different *gunas* and karma of each; yet know that though, therefore, author thereof being changeless I am not the author.

14. Actions do not affect Me, nor am I concerned with the fruits thereof. He who recognizes Me as such is not bound by actions.

For man has thus before him the supreme example of One who though in action is not the Doer thereof. And when we are but instruments in His hands, where then is the room for arrogating responsibility for action?

15. Knowing this did men of old, desirous of Freedom, perform action; do thou, then just as they did - the men of old in days gone by.

16. 'What is action? What inaction?' - Here even the wise are perplexed. I will then expound to thee that action knowing which thou shalt be saved from evil.

17. For it is meet to know the meaning of action of forbidden action, as also of inaction. Impenetrable is the secret of action.<sup>1</sup>

18. Who sees inaction in action and action in inaction, he is enlightened among men, he is a yogi, he has done all he need do.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains :

"Three classes of action are here mentioned:

(1) Karma, i.e., action which is capable of being performed without attachment, but is not so performed and therefore binds; also including inaction or laziness which presupposes selfishness of attachment and therefore binds;

(2) Vikarma, forbidden action i.e., action which by its own nature is incapable of being performed without attachment, and hence necessarily binding e.g., murder, lying, adultery and so forth;

The 'action' of him who, though ever active, does not claim to be the doer, is inaction, and the 'inaction', of him who, though outwardly avoiding action, is always building castles in his own mind, is action. The enlightened man who has grasped the secret of action knows that no action proceeds from him, all proceeds from God and hence he selflessly remains absorbed in action. He is the true yogi. The man who acts self-fully misses the secret of action and cannot distinguish between Right and Wrong. The soul's natural progress is towards selflessness and purity and one might, therefore, say that the man who strays from the path of purity strays from selflessness. All actions of the selfless man are naturally pure.

19. He whose every undertaking is free from desire and selfish purpose and he who has burnt all his actions in the fire of knowledge - such a one the wise call a pundit.

20. He who has renounced attachment to the fruit of action, who is ever content, and free from all dependence - he, though immersed in action, yet acts not.

That is, action does not bind him.

21. Expecting naught, holding his mind and body in check, putting away every possession, and going through action only in the body, he incurs no stain.

The purest act, if tainted by 'self', binds. But when it is done in a spirit of dedication, it ceases to bind. When 'self' has completely subsided, it is only the body that works. For instance, in the case of a man who is asleep his body alone is working. A prisoner doing his prison task has surrendered his body to the prison authorities and only his body, therefore, works. Similarly, he who has voluntarily made himself God's prisoner, does nothing himself. His body mechanically acts, the doer is God, not he. He has reduced himself to nothingness.

22. Content with whatever chance may bring, rid of the pairs of opposites, free from ill will, even minded in success and failure, he is not bound though he acts.

(3) Akarma, i.e. action, mental or physical, which is performed without attachment and therefore does not bind.

Shri Vinoba has made a bold departure in his interpretation of the word 'vikarma'. It means, he says, specific action, i.e., when the mind co-operates with the body and helps to make a self-ful action selfless. Mathematically he expresses it in this formula, Karma+vikarma=akarma.

23. Of the free soul who has shed all attachment, whose mind is firmly grounded in knowledge, who acts only for sacrifice, all karma is extinguished.

24. The offering of sacrifice is Brahman; the oblation is Brahman; it is offered by Brahman in the fire that is Brahman; thus he whose mind is fixed on acts dedicated to Brahman must needs pass on to Brahman.

25. Some yogis perform sacrifice in the form of worship of the gods, others offer sacrifice of sacrifice itself in the fire that is Brahman.

26. Some offer as sacrifice the sense of hearing and the other senses in the fires<sup>1</sup> of restraint; others sacrifice sound and the other objects of sense in the fires of the senses.

The restraint of the senses...hearing and others...is one thing; and directing them only to legitimate objects, e.g., listening to hymns in the praise of God, is another, although ultimately both amount to the same things.

27. Others again sacrifice all the activities of the senses and of the vital energy in the yogic fire of self-control kindled by knowledge.

That is to say, they lose themselves in the contemplation of the Supreme.

28. Some sacrifice with material gifts; with austerities; with yoga; some with the acquiring and some with the imparting of knowledge. All these are sacrifices of sters vows and serious endeavour.

29. Others absorbed in the practice of the control of the vital energy sacrifice the outward in the inward and the inward in the outward, or check the flow of both the inward and the outward vital airs.

The reference here is to the three kinds of practices of the control of vital energy...*puraka*, *rechaka* and *kumbhaka*.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "Fires"...the plural is used to denote the different yogic processes of restraint...*dharana* (concentration), *dhyana* (meditation) and *samadhi* (absorption in the object of meditation)...all three constituting self-restraint...*sanyama*.

<sup>2</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "Puraka practice consists in drawing the breath in and stopping all exhalation, i.e. in the language of shloka 29 'sacrificing the outward (called prana) in the inward (called apana)'; *rechaka* practice consists in throwing the breath outward and stopping all inhalation, i.e. in the language of shloka 29, 'sacrificing the inward (apana) in the outward (prana)'; *kumbhaka* practice consists in checking the flow both ways and holding it in suspense either after an exhalation or inhalation."

30. Yet others, abstemious in food, sacrifice one form of vital energy in another. All these know what sacrifice is and purge themselves of all impurities by sacrifice.

31. Those who partake of the residue of sacrifice...call *amrita* (ambrosia)...attain to everlasting Brahman. Even this world is not for a non-sacrificer; how then the next, O Kurusattama?

32. Even so various sacrifices have been described in the Vedas; know them all to proceed from action; knowing this thou shalt be released.

Action here means mental, physical and spiritual action. No sacrifice is possible without this triple action and no salvation without sacrifice. To know this and to put the knowledge into practice is to know the secret of sacrifice. In fine, unless man uses all his physical, mental and spiritual gifts in the service of mankind, he is a thief, unfit for Freedom. He who uses his intellect only and spares his body is not a full sacrificer. Unless the mind and the body and the soul are made to work in unison, they cannot be adequately used for the service of mankind. Physical, mental and spiritual purity is essential for their harmonious working. Therefore man should concentrate on developing, purifying, and turning to the best use all his faculties.

33. Knowledge-sacrifice is better, O Parantapa, than material sacrifice, for all action which does not bind finds its consummation in Knowledge (*jnana*).

Who does not know that works of charity performed without knowledge often result in great harm? Unless every act, however noble its motive, is informed with knowledge, it lacks perfection. Hence the complete fulfilment of all action is in knowledge.

34. The masters of knowledge who have seen the truth will impart to thee this knowledge; learn it through humble homage and service and by repeated questioning.

The three conditions of knowledge...homage, repeated questioning and service deserve to be carefully borne in mind in this age. Homage or obeisance means humility and service is a necessary accompaniment, else it would be mock homage. Repeated questioning is equally essential, for without a keen spirit of inquiry, there is no knowledge. All this presupposes devotion to and faith in the person approached. There can be no humility, much less service, without faith.

35. When thou hast gained this knowledge, O Pandava, thou shalt not again fall into such error; by virtue of it thou shalt see all beings without exception in thyself and thus in Me.

The adage '*Yatha pinde tatha brahmande*' (... 'as with the self so with the universe') means the same thing. He who has attained self-realization sees no difference between himself and others.

36. Even though thou be the most sinful of sinners, thou shalt cross the ocean of sin by the boat of knowledge.

37. As a blazing fire turns its fuel to ashes, O Arjuna, even so the fire of Knowledge turns all actions to ashes.

38. There is nothing in this world so purifying as Knowledge. He who is perfected by yoga finds it in himself in the fulness of time.

39. It is the man of faith who gains knowledge...the man who is intent on it and who has mastery over his senses; having gained knowledge, he comes ere long to the supreme peace.

40. But the man of doubt, without knowledge and without faith, is lost; for him who is given to doubt there is neither this world nor that beyond, nor happiness.

41. He who has renounced all action by means of yog, who has severed all doubt by means of knowledge...him self-possessed, no actions bind, O Dhananjaya!

42. Therefore, with the sword of self-realization sever thou this doubt bred of ignorance, which has crept into thy heart! Betake thyself to yoga and arise, O Bhṛata!

## DISCOURSE V

*This discourse is devoted to showing that renunciation of action as such is impossible without the discipline of selfless action and that both are ultimately one.*

Arjuna said:

1. Thou laudest renunciation of actions, O Krishna, whilst at the same time thou laudest performance of action; tell me for a certainty which is the better.

The Lord said:

2. Renunciation and performance of action both lead to salvation; but of the two karmayoga (performance) is better than sannyasa (renunciation).

3. Him one should know as ever renouncing who has no dislikes and likes; for he who is free from the pairs of opposites is easily released from bondage.

That is, not renunciation of action but of attachment to the pairs, determines true renunciation. A man who is always in action may be a

good sannyasi (renouncer) and another who may be doing no work well be a hypocrite. See III. 6.

4. It is the ignorant who speak of samkhya and yoga as different, not so those who have knowledge. He who is rightly established even in one wins to the fruit of both.

The yogi engrossed in samkhya (knowledge) lives even in thought for the good of the world and attains the fruit of karmayoga by the sheer power of his thought. The karmayogi ever engrossed in unattached action naturally enjoys the peace of the jñanayogi.

8. The yogi who has seen the Truth knows that it is not he that acts whilst seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, walking, sleeping or breathing,

9. Talking , letting go, holding fast, opening or closing eyes...in the conviction that it is the senses that are moving in their respective spheres.

So long as 'self' endures, this detachment cannot be achieved. A sensual man therefore may not shelter himself under the pretence that it is not he but his senses that are acting. Such a mischievous interpretation betrays a gross ignorance of the *Gita* and right conduct. The next *shloka* makes this clear.

10. He who dedicates his actions to Brahman and performs them without attachment is not smeared by sin, as the lotus-leaf by water.

13. Renouncing with the mind all actions, the dweller in the body, who is master of himself, rests happily in his city of nine gates, neither doing nor getting anything done.

The principal gates of the body are the two eyes, the two nostrils, the two ears, the mouth, and the two organs of excretion...though really speaking the countless pores of the skin are no less gates. If the gate-keeper always remains on the alert and performs his task, letting in or out only the objects that deserve ingress or egress, then of him it can truly be said that he has no part in the ingress or egress but that he is a passive witness. He thus does nothing nor gets anything done.

14. The Lord creates neither agency nor action for the world; neither does He connect action with its fruit. It is nature that is at work.

God is no doer. The inexorable law of karma prevails, and in the very fulfilment of the law...giving everyone his deserts, making everyone reap what he sows...lies God's abounding mercy and justice. In undiluted justice is mercy. Mercy which is inconsistent with justice is not mercy but its opposite. But man is not a judge knowing past,

present and future. So for him the law is reversed and mercy or forgiveness is the purest justice. Being himself ever liable to be judged, he must accord to others what he would accord to himself, viz., forgiveness. Only by cultivating the spirit of forgiveness can he reach the state of a yogi, whom no actions bind, the man of even-mindedness, the man skilled in action.

15. The Lord does not take upon Himself anyone's vice or virtue; it is ignorance that veils knowledge and deludes all creatures.

The delusion lies in man arrogating to himself the authorship of action and then attributing to God the consequence thereof... punishment or reward as the case may be.

18. The men of self-realization look with an equal eye on a Brahmana possessed of learning and humility, a cow, an elephant, a dog and even a dogeater.

That is to say, they serve every one of them alike, according to the needs of each. Treating a Brahmana and *shwapaka* (dog-eater) alike means that the wise man will suck the poison off a snake-bitten *shwapaka* with as much eagerness and readiness as he would from a snake-bitten Brahmana.

19. In this very body they have conquered the round of birth and death, whose mind is anchored in sameness; for perfect Brahman is same to all, therefore in Brahman they rest.

As a man thinks, so he becomes, and therefore those whose minds are bent on being the same to all achieve that sameness and become one with Brahman.

20. He whose understanding is secure, who is undeluded, who knows Brahman and who rests in Brahman, will neither be glad to get what is pleasant, nor said to get what is unpleasant.

21. He who has detached himself from contacts without, finds bliss in *atman*; having achieved union with Brahman he enjoys eternal bliss.

He who has weaned himself from outward objects to the inner *atman* is fitted for union with Brahman and the highest bliss. To withdraw oneself from contacts without and to bask in the sunshine of union with Brahman are two aspects of the same state, two sides of the same coin.

23. The man who is able even here on earth, ere he is released from the body, to hold out against the flood-tide of lust and wrath...he is a yogi, he is happy.

As a corpse has no likes and dislikes, no sensibility to pleasure and pain, even so he who though alive is dead to these, he truly lives, he is truly happy.

27-28. That ascetic is ever free...who, having shut out the outward sense-contacts, sits with his gaze fixed between the brows, outward and inward breathing in the nostrils made equal; his senses, mind, and reason held in check, rid of longing, fear and wrath; and intent on Freedom.

These *shlokas* refer to some of the yogic practices laid down in the *Yoga-sutras*. A word of caution is necessary regarding these practices. They serve for the yogi the same purpose as athletics and gymnastics do for the *bhogi* (who pursues worldly pleasures). His physical exercises help the latter to keep his senses of enjoyment in full vigour. The yogic practices help the yogi to keep his body in condition and his senses in subjection. Men versed in these practices are rare in these days, and few of these turn them to good account. He who has achieved the preliminary stage on the path of self-discipline, he who has a passion for Freedom, and who having rid himself of the pairs of opposites has conquered fear, would do well to go in for these practices which will surely help him. It is such a disciplined man alone who can, through these practices, render his body a holy temple of God. Purity both of the mind and body is a *sine qua non*, without which these processes are likely, in the first instance, to lead a man astray and then drive him deeper into the slough of delusion. That this has been the result in some cases many know from actual experience. That is why that prince of yogis, Patanjali, gave the first place to *yamas* (cardinal vows) and *niyamas* (casual vows) and held as eligible for yogic practices only those who have gone through the preliminary discipline.

The five cardinal vows are: non-violence, truth, non-stealing, celibacy, non-possession. The five casual vows are: bodily purity, contentment, the study of the scriptures, austerity, and meditation of God.

29. Knowing Me as the Acceptor of sacrifice and austerity, the great Lord of all the worlds, the Friend of all creation, the yogi attains to peace.

This *shloka* may appear to be in conflict with *shlokas* 14 and 15 of this discourse and similar ones in other discourses. It is not really so. Almighty God is Doer and non-Doer, Enjoyer and non-Enjoyer, both. He is indescribable, beyond the power of human speech. Man



somehow strives to have a glimpse of Him and in so doing invests Him with diverse and even contradictory attributes.<sup>1</sup>

## DISCOURSE VI

*This discourse deals with some of the means for the accomplishment of yoga or the discipline of the mind and its activities.*

The Lord said:

1. He who performs all obligatory action, without depending on the fruit thereof, is a sannyasi and a yogi... not the man who neglects the sacrificial fire nor he who neglects action.

Fire here may be taken to mean all possible instruments of action. Fire was needed when sacrifices used to be performed with its help. Assuming that spinning were a means of universal service in this age, a man by neglecting the spinning-wheel would not become a sannyasi.

2. What is called sannyasa, know thou to be, yoga, O Pandava; for none can become a yoga who has not renounced selfish purpose.

3. For the man who seeks to scale the heights of yoga, action is said to be the means; for the same man, when he has scaled those heights, repose is said to be the means.

He who has purged himself of all impurities and who has achieved even-mindedness will easily achieve self-realization. But this does not mean that he who has scaled the heights of yoga will disdain to work for the guidance of the world. On the contrary that work will be to him not only as the breath of his nostrils, but also as natural to him as breathing. He will do so by the sheer force of his will. See V.4

4. When a man is not attached either to the objects of sense or to actions and sheds all selfish purpose, then he is said to have scaled the heights of yoga.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "We have had in the discourse a comparison of the jnanayogi or the philosophic mystic and the karmayogi or the active mystic. The shlokas v. 27-29 start a new comparison now...quite a parallel dichotomy as it evidences itself in the life of the devotee. Shloka 27-28 introduce to us the contemplative or meditative mystic...dhyanyogi...to be described in discourses VI, VII and VIII while shloka 29 describes the devotional mystic, the bhaktiyogi who worships the Supreme in His one or many manifestations to be described in discourses XI-XII. To him God appears or reveals Himself as the Acceptor of all sacrifices and the Friend of all creation."

5. By one's self should one raise oneself, and not allow oneself to fall; for *atman* (self) alone is the friend of self, and self alone is self's foe.

6. His Self alone is friend, who has conquered himself by his Self; but to him who has not conquered himself and is thus inimical to himself, even his Self behaves as foe.<sup>1</sup>

14. Tranquil in spirit, free from fear, steadfast in the vow of *brahmacharya*, holding his mind in control, the yogi should sit, with all his thoughts on Me, absorbed in Me.

*Brahmacharya* (usually translated 'celibacy') means not only sexual continence but observance of all the cardinal vows for the attainment of Brahman.

15. The yogi, who ever thus, with mind controlled, unites himself to *atman*, wins the peace which culminates in *Nirvana*, the peace that is in Me.

29. The man equipped with yoga looks on all with an impartial eye, seeing *atman* in all beings and all beings in *atman*.

30. He who sees Me everywhere and everything in Me, never vanishes from Me nor I from him.

31. The yogi who, anchored in unity, worships Me abiding in all beings, lives and moves in Me, no matter how he live and move.

So long as 'self' subsists, the Supreme Self is absent; when 'self' is extinguished, the Supreme Self is seen everywhere. Also see note on XIII. 23.

46. The yogi is deemed higher than the man of austerities; he is deemed also higher than the man of knowledge; higher is he than the man engrossed in ritual; therefore be though a yogi, O Arjuna!

The man of austerities means the man practising them with an eye to fruit; the man of knowledge does not mean the *jnani* who has realized the truth, but a man of learning.

47. And among all yogis, he who worships Me with faith, his inmost self all rapt in Me, is deemed by Me to be the best yogi.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "I have in my translation distinguished 'atman', the higher self, from the lower self, though it is not quite clear whether Gandhiji does so in his translation. Atman is, really speaking, neither friend nor foe, but the lower self makes Him friend or foe, according as it strives to lift itself up to Him or drag itself down from Him. In order that the moral end of perfection may be fulfilled, the self has to look to Him as "the Goal, the Witness, the Refuge, the Friend" (XI. 18); but it often makes Him his enemy as mortal men know to their cost."

## DISCOURSE VII

*With this discourse begins an exposition of the nature of Reality and the secret of devotion.*

The Lord said :

1. Hear, O Partha, how, with thy mind rivetted on Me, by practising yoga and making Me the sold refuge, thou shalt, without doubt, know Me fully.

4. Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Ether, Mind, Reason and Ego...thus eight fold is my *prakriti* divided.

This eightfold *prakriti* is substantially the same as the field described in XIII.5 and the perishable Being in XV. 16.

5. This is My lower aspect; but know thou My other aspect, the higher...which is *jiwa* (the Vital Essence) by which,O Mahabahu, this world is sustained.

6. Know that these two compose the source from which all beings spring; I am the origin and end of the entire universe.

12. Know that all the manifestations of the three *gunas*, *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*, proceed from none but Me; yet I am not in them, they are in Me.

God is not dependent on them, they are dependent on Him. Without Him those various manifestations would be impossible.

13. Befogged by these manifestations of the three *gunas*, the entire world fails to recognize Me, the Imperishable, as transcending them.

14. For this My divine delusive mysetry made up of the three *gunas* is hard to pierce; but those who make Me their sole refuge pierce the veil.

25. Veiled by the delusive mystery created by My unique power, I am not manifest to all; this bewildered world does not recognize Me, birthless and changeless.

Having the power to create this world of sense and yet unaffected by it, He is described as having unique power.

29. Those who endeavour for freedom from age and death by taking refuge in Me, know in full that Brahman, *adhyatma* and all karma.

30. Those who know Me, including *adhibhuta*, *adhidaiva*, *adhiyajna*, possessed of even-mindedness, they know Me even at the time of passing away.

The terms in italics are defined in the next discourse the subject of which is indicated in 29-30. The sense is that every nook and cranny of the universe is filled with Brahman, that He is the sole Agent

of all action, and that the man who imbued with this knowledge and faith completely surrenders himself to Him, become one with Him at the time of passing hence. All his desires are extinguished in his vision of Him and he wins his freedom.

## DISCOURSE VIII

*The nature of the Supreme is further expounded in this discourse. Arjuna said:*

1. What is that Brahman? What is *adhyatma*? What karma, O Purushottama? What is called *adhibuta*? And what *adhidaiva*?

2. And who here in this body is *adhiyajna* and how? And how at the time of death art Thou to be known by the self-controlled?

The Lord said:

3. The Supreme, the Imperishable is Brahman; its manifestation is *adhyatma*; the creative process whereby all beings are created is called karma.

4. *Adhibhuta* is My perishable form; *adhidaiva* is the individual self in that form; and O best among the embodied, *adhiyajna* am I in this body, purified by sacrifice.

That is, from the Imperishable Unmanifest down to the perishable atom everything in the universe is the Supreme and an expression of the Supreme. Why then should mortal man arrogate to himself authorship of anything rather than do His bidding and dedicate all action to Him?<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "Gandhiji has summed up in his brief note the gist of this quatrain for those who will not bother about technical terms. A deeply spiritual friend has obliged me with an interpretation which lights up the apparent abracadabras with a deal of meaning: The shlokas describe the whole process in which the Absolute becomes conditioned and from the conditioned state becomes Absolute again. (1) We have form the Impersonal, Unmanifest, Unconditioned Absolute; (2) It chose to reveal one of Its aspects...that aspect was primordial unmanifest prakriti...here called adhyatma; (3) Prakriti next became active - this disturbance in the equilibrium of its gunas was karma work, action; (4) the next steps in the process were the countless manifestations of matter, with name and form...that is adhibhuta; (5) then the Absolute informed these with its Ego, i.e., became conditioned; that is adhidaiva; (6) but the conditioned had the potentiality to recover its pristine unconditioned state by means of giving of itself a pure sacrifice. The culmination of this self-sacrifice comes with the dissolution of the body and the merging or identification of the conditioned in the Unconditioned.

In short, it is the cycle of sacrifice that is described. The Supreme Being sacrifices Himself in the first instance and ultimately the individual sacrifices himself to be merged in the original Essence. Cf. III 15, which describes the same cycle of sacrifice."

5. And he who, at the last hour remembering Me only, departs leaving the body, enters into Me; of that there is no doubt.

6. Or whatever form a man continually contemplates, that same he remembers in the hour of death, and to that very form he goes, O Kaunteya.

7. Therefore at all times remember Me and fight on; thy mind and reason thus on Me fixed thou shalt surely come to Me.<sup>1</sup>

8. With thought steadied by constant practice, and wandering nowhere, he who meditates on the Supreme Celestial Being, O Partha, goes to Him.

17. Those men indeed know what is Day and what is Night, who know that Brahma's day lasts a thousand *yugas* and that his night too is a thousand *yugas* long.

That is to say, our day and night of a dozen hours each are less than the infinitesimal fraction of a moment in that vast cycle of time. Pleasures pursued during these incalculably small moments are as illusory as a mirage. Rather than waste these brief moments, we should devote them to serving God through service of mankind. On the other hand, our time is such a small drop in the ocean of eternity that if we fail of our object here, viz., self-realization, we need not despair. We should bide our time.

18. At the coming of Day all the manifest spring forth from the Unmanifest, and at the coming of Night they are dissolved into that same Unmanifest.

Knowing this too, man should understand that he has very little power over things. The round of birth and death is ceaseless.

23. Now I will tell thee, Bharatarshabha, the conditions which determine the exemption from return, as also the return, of yogis after they pass away hence.

24. Fire, Light, Day, the Bright Fortnight, the six months of the Northern Solstice...through these departing men knowing Brahman go to Brahman.

25. Smoke, Night, the Dark Fortnight, the six months of the Southern Solstice... therethrough the yogi attains to the lunar light and thence returns.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "This shloka should make it abundantly clear that all through in his exhortation to Arjuna to fight, it was not only the actual warfare in front of them that was meant, but the fight...moral and spiritual...that is man's lot on earth. Cf. Jesus' words: 'Whosoever would come after me, let him renounce himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.' It is the taking up one's cross daily, at every moment, that is meant here. See also shloka 14. 'Life is a perpetual striving. There is always a tempest raging in us, and struggle against temptation is a perpetual duty. The Gita says this in several places.' "...Harijan, 8-7-'33

I do not understand the meaning of these two *shlokas*. They do not seem to me to be consistent with the teaching of the *Gita*. The *Gita* teaches that he whose heart is meek with devotion, who is devoted to unattached action and has seen the Truth must win salvation, no matter when he dies. These *shlokas* seem to run counter to this. They may perhaps be stretched to mean broadly that a man of sacrifice, a man of light, a man who has known Brahman finds release from birth if he retains that enlightenment at the time of death, and that on the contrary the man who has none of these attributes goes to the world of the moon...not at all lasting...and returns to birth. The moon, after all, shines with borrowed light!

26. These two paths...bright and dark...are deemed to be the eternal paths of the world; by the one a man goes to return not, by the other he returns again.

The bright one may be taken to mean the path of knowledge and the dark one that of ignorance.

27. The yogi knowing these two paths falls not into delusion, O Partha; therefore, at all times, O Arjuna, remain steadfast in yoga.

‘Will not fall into delusion’ means that he who knows the two paths and has known the secret of even-mindedness will not take the path of ignorance.

28. Whatever fruit of good deeds is laid down as accruing from (a study of) the Vedas, from sacrifices, austerities, and acts of charity...all that the yogi transcends, on knowing this, and reaches the Supreme and Primal Abode.

He who has achieved even-mindedness by dint of devotion, knowledge and service not only obtains the fruit of all his good actions, but also wins salvation.

## DISCOURSE IX

*This discourse reveals the glory of devotion.*

4. By Me, unmanifest in form this whole world is pervaded; all beings are in Me, I am not in them.

5. And yet those beings are not in Me. That indeed is my unique power as Lord! Sustainer of all beings, I am not in them; My Self brings them into existence.

The sovereign power of God lies in this mystery, this miracle, that all beings are in Him and yet not in Him, He is in them and yet not in them. This is the description of God in the language of mortal

man. Indeed He soothes man by revealing to him all His aspects by using all kinds of paradoxes. All beings are in Him inasmuch as all creation is His; but as He transcends it all as He really is not the author of it all, it may be said with equal truth that the beings are not in Him. He really is in all his true devotees, He is *not*, according to them, in those who deny Him. What is this if not a mystery, a miracle of God?

11. Not knowing My transcendent nature as the sovereign Lord of all beings, fools condemn Me incarnated as man.

For they deny the existence of god and do not recognize the Director in the human body.

20. Followers of the three Vedas, who drink the *soma* juice and are purged of sin, worship Me with sacrifice and pray for going to heaven; they reach the holy world of the gods and enjoy in heaven the divine joys of the gods.

The reference is to the sacrificial ceremonies and rites in vogue in the days of the *Gita*. We cannot definitely say what they were like nor what the *soma* juice exactly was.

21. They enjoy the vast world of heaven, and their merit spent, they enter the world of the mortals; thus those who, following the Vedic law, long for the fruit of their action earn but the round of birth and death.

22. As for those who worship Me, thinking on Me alone and nothing else, ever attached to Me, I bear the burden of getting them what they need.

There are thus three unmistakable marks of a true yogi or *bhakta*...even-mindedness, skill in action, undivided devotion. These three must be completely harmonized in a yogi. Without devotion, there is no even-mindedness, without even-mindedness no devotion, and without skill in action devotion and even-mindedness might well be a pretence.

23. Even those who, devoted to other gods, worship them in full faith, even they, O Kaunteya, worship none but Me, though not according to the rule.

“Not according to the rule” means not knowing Me as the Impersonal and the Absolute.

26. Any offering of leaf, flower, fruit or water, made to Me in devotion by earnest soul, I lovingly accept.

That is to say, it is the Lord in every being whom we serve with devotion who accepts the service.

27. Whatever thou doest, whatever thou eatest, whatever thou offerest as sacrifice or gift, whatever austerity thou dost perform, O Kaunteya, dedicate all to Me.

28. So doing thou shalt be released from the bondage of action, yielding good and evil fruit; having accomplished both renunciation and performance, thou shalt be released (from birth and death) and come unto Me.

29. I am the same to all beings; with Me there is none disfavoured, none favoured; but those who worship Me with devotion are in Me and I in them.

30. A sinner, howsoever great, if he turns to Me with undivided devotion, must indeed be counted a saint; for he has a settled resolve.

The undivided devotion subdues both his passions and his evil deeds.

31. For soon he becomes righteous and wins everlasting peace; know for a certainty, O Kaunteya, that My *bhakta* never perishes.

## DISCOURSE X

*For the benefit of His devotees, the Lord gives in this discourse a glimpse of His divine manifestations.*

36. Of deceivers, I am the dice-play; of the splendid, the splendour; I am victory, I am resolution, I am the goodness of the good.

The ‘dice-play of deceivers’ need not alarm one. For the good and evil nature of things is not the matter in question, it is the directing and immanent power of God that is being described. Let the deceivers also know that they are under God’s rule and judgement and put away their pride and deceit.

39. Whatever is the seed of every being, O Arjuna, that am I; there is nothing whether moving or fixed, that can be without Me.

40. There is no end to my divine manifestations; what extent of them I have told thee now is only by way of illustration.

41. Whatever is glorious, beautiful and mighty, know thou that all such has issued from a fragment of My splendour.

## DISCOURSE XI

*In this discourse the Lord reveals to Arjuna’s vision what Arjuna has heard with his ear...the Universal Form of the Lord. This discourse is a favourite with the bhaktas. Here there is no argument,*



*there is pure poetry. Its solemn music<sup>1</sup> reverberates in one's ears and it is not possible to tire of reading it again and again.*

53. Not by the Vedas, not by penance nor by gifts, nor yet by sacrifice, can any behold Me in the Form that thou has seen.

54. But by single-minded devotion, O Arjuna, I may in this Form be known and seen and truly entered into, O Parantapa!

## DISCOURSE XII

*Thus we see that vision of God is possible only through single-minded devotion. Contents of devotion must follow as a matter of course. This twelfth discourse should be learnt by heart even if all the discourses are not. It is one of the shortest. The marks of a devotee should be carefully noted.*

Arjuna said:

1. Of the devotees who thus worship thee, incessantly attached, and those who worship the Imperishable Unmanifest, which are the better yogis?

The Lord said:

5. The greater is the travail of those whose mind is fixed on the Unmanifest; for it is hard for embodied mortals to gain the Unmanifest...Goal.

Mortal man can only imagine the Unmanifest, the Impersonal, and as his language fails him he often negatively describes It as 'Neti'. 'Neti' (Not That, Not That). And so even iconoclasts are at bottom no better than idol-worshippers. To worship a book, to go to a church, or to pray with one's face in a particular direction...all these are forms of worshipping the Formless in an image or idol. And yet both the idol-breaker and the idol-worshipper cannot lose sight of the fact that there is something which is beyond all form, Unthinkable, Formless, Impersonal, Changeless. The highest goal of the devotee is to become one with the object of his devotion. The *bhakta* extinguishes himself and merges into, becomes, Bhagvan. This state can best be reached by devoting oneself to some form, and so it is said that the short cut to the Unmanifest is really the longest and the most difficult.

<sup>1</sup> Mahadev Desai explains: "The music, of course, of the original! In translation, 'the glory is gone'. For a very free rendering which brings out some at least of the haunting music of the original the reader must go to Sir Edwin Arnold's flowing stanzas."

6. But those who casting all their actions on Me, making Me their all in all, worship Me with the meditation of undivided devotion,

7. Of such, whose thoughts are centred on Me, O Partha, I become ere long the Deliverer from the ocean of this world of death.

12. Better is knowledge than practice, better than knowledge is concentration, better than concentration is renunciation of the fruit of all action, from which directly issues peace.

‘Practice’ (*abhyasa*) is the practice of the yoga of meditation and control of psychic processes; ‘knowledge’ (*jnana*) is intellectual effort; ‘concentration’ (*dhyana*) is devoted worship. If as a result of all this there is no renunciation of the fruit of action, ‘practice’ is no ‘practice’, ‘knowledge’ is no ‘knowledge’, and ‘concentration’ is no ‘concentration’.

### DISCOURSE XIII

*This discourse treats of the distinction between the body (not-Self) and atman (the Self).*

1. This body, O Kaunteya, is called the Field; he who knows it is called the knower of the Field by those who know.

2. And understand Me to be, O Bharata, the knower of the Field in all the Fields; and the knowledge of the Field and the knower of the Field, I hold, is true knowledge.

3. What that Field is, what its nature, what its modifications, and whence is what, as also who He is, and what His power...hear this briefly from Me.

4. This subject has been sung by seers distinctly and in various ways, in different hymns as also in aphoristic texts about Brahman well reasoned and unequivocal.

5. The great elements, Individuation, Reason, the Unmanifest, the ten senses, and the one (Mind), and the five spheres of the senses;

6. Desire, dislike, pleasure, pain, association, consciousness, cohesion... this, in sum, is what is called the Field with its modifications.

The great elements are Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Ether, ‘Individuation’ is the thought of I, or that the body is ‘I’, the ‘Unmanifest’ is *prakriti* or *maya*; the ten senses are the five senses of perception...smell, taste, sight, touch and hearing, and the five organs of action, viz., the hands, the feet, the tongue, and the two organs of excretion. The five spheres or objects of the senses are smell, savour,

form, touch and sound. 'Association' is the property of the different organs to co-operate. *Dhriti* is not patience or constancy but cohesion, i.e., the property of all the atoms in the body to hold together; from 'individuation' springs this cohesion. Individuation is inherent in the unmanifest *prakriti*. The undeluded man is he who can cast off this individuation or ego, and having done so the shock of an inevitable thing like death and the pairs of opposites caused by sense-contacts fail to affect him. The Field, subject to all its modifications, has to be abandoned in the end by the enlightened and the unenlightened alike.

11. Settled conviction of the nature of the *atman*, perception of the goal of the knowledge of Truth,...

All this is declared to be knowledge and the reverse of it is ignorance.

12. I will (now) expound to thee that which is to be known and knowing which one enjoys immortality; it is the supreme Brahman which has no beginning, which is called neither Being nor non-Being.

The Supreme can be described neither as Being nor as non-Being. It is beyond definition or description, above all attributes.

15. Without all beings; yet within; immovable yet moving; so subtle that it cannot be perceived; so far and yet so near It is.

He who knows It is within It, close to It,; mobility and immobility, peace and restlessness, we owe to It, for It has motion and yet is motionless.

20. *Prakriti* is described as the cause in the creation of effects from causes; *Purusha* is described as the cause of the experiencing of pleasure and pain.

21. For the *purusha*, residing in *prakriti*, experiences the *gunas* born of *prakriti*; attachment to these *gunas* is the cause of his birth in good or evil wombs.

*Prakriti* in common parlance is *maya*. *Purusha* is the *jiva*. *Jiva* acting in accordance with his nature experiences the fruit of actions arising out of the three *gunas*.

22. What is called in this body the Witness, the Assentor, the Sustainer, the Experiencer, the Great Lord and also the Supreme *Atman*, is the Supreme Being.

23. He who thus knows *purusha* and *prakriti* with its *gunas*, is not born again, no matter how he live and move.

Read in the light of discourses II, XI, and XII this *shloka* may not be taken to support any kind of libertinism. It shows the virtue of self-surrender and selfless devotion. All actions bind the self, but if all are dedicated to the Lord they do not bind, rather they release him. He who has thus extinguished the 'self' or the thought of 'I' has been extinguished, there is no sin. This *shloka* shows how to steer clear of all sin.

27. Who sees abiding in all beings the same Parameshvara, imperishable in the perishable, he sees indeed.

28. When he sees the same Ishvara abiding everywhere alike, he does not hurt himself by himself and hence he attains the highest goal.

He who sees the same God everywhere merges in Him and sees naught else; he thus does not yield to passion, does not become his own foe and thus attains Freedom.

29. Who sees that it is *prakriti* that performs all actions and thus (knows) that *atman* performs them not, he sees indeed.

Just as, in the case of a man who is asleep, his 'Self' is not the agent of sleep, but *prakriti*, even so the enlightened man will detach his 'Self' from all activities. To the pure everything is pure. *Prakriti* is not unchaste, it is when arrogant man takes her as wife those of these twain passion is born.

30. When he sees the diversity of beings as founded in unity and the whole expanse issuing therefrom, then he attains to Brahman.

To realize that everything rests in Brahman is to attain to the state of Brahman. Then *jiva* becomes Siva.

#### DISCOURSE XIV

*The description of prakriti naturally leads on to that of its constituents, the gunas, which form the subject of this discourse. And that, in turn, leads on to a description of the marks of him who has passed beyond the three gunas. These are practically the same as those of the man of secure understanding (II. 54-72) as also those of the ideal bhakta (XII. 12-20).*

19. When the seer perceives no agent other than the *gunas*, and knows Him who is above the *gunas*, he attains to My being.

As soon as a man realizes that he is not the doer, but the *gunas* are the agent, the 'self' vanishes, and he goes through all his actions spontaneously, just to sustain the body. And as the body is meant to

subserve the highest end, all his actions will ever reveal detachment and dispassion. Such a seer can easily have a glimpse of the One who is above the *gunas* and offer his devotion to Him.

20. When the embodied one transcends these three *gunas* which are born of his contact with the body, he is released from the pain of birth, death and age and attains deathlessness.

Arjuna said:

21. What, O Lord, are the marks of him who has transcended the three *gunas*? How does he conduct himself? How does he transcend the three *gunas*?

The Lord said:

22. He, O Pandava, who does not disdain light, activity, and delusion when they come into being, nor desires them when they vanish;

23. He who, seated as one indifferent, is not shaken by the *gunas*, and stays still and moves not, knowing it is *gunas* playing their parts;

24. He who holds pleasure and pain alike, who is sedate, who regards as same earth, stone and gold, who is wise and weighs in equal scale things pleasant and unpleasant, who is even-minded in praise and blame;

25. Who holds alike respect and disrespect, who is the same to friend and foe, who indulges in no undertakings...that man is called *gunatita*.

*Shls.* 22-25 must be read and considered together. Light, activity and delusion, as we have seen in the foregoing *shlokas*, are the products or indications of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, respectively. The inner meaning of these verses is that he who has transcended the *gunas* will be unaffected by them. A stone does not desire light, nor does it disdain activity or inertness; it is still, without having the will to be so. If someone puts it into motion, it does not fret; if again it is allowed to lie still, it does not feel that inertness or delusion has seized it. The difference between a stone and a *gunatita* is that the latter has full consciousness and with full knowledge he shakes himself free from the bonds that bind an ordinary mortal. He has, as a result of his knowledge, achieved the repose of a stone. Like the stone he is witness, but not the doer, of the activities of the *gunas* or *prakriti*. Of such *jnani* one may say that he is sitting still, unshaken in the knowledge that it is the *gunas* playing their parts. We who are every moment of our lives acting as though we were the doers can only imagine the state, we can hardly experience it. But we can hitch our

waggon to that star and work our way closer and closer towards it by gradually withdrawing the self from our actions. A *gunatita* has experience of his own condition but he cannot describe it, for he who can describe it ceases to be done. the moment he proceeds to do so, 'self' peeps in. the peace and light and bustle and inertness of our common experience are illusory. The *Gita* itself has made it clear in so many words that the *sattvik* state is the one nearest that of a *gunatita*. Therefore everyone should strive to develop more and more *sattva* in himself, believing that some day he will reach the goal of the state of *gunatita*.

## DISCOURSE XV

This discourse deals with the Supreme Form of the Lord, transcending *kshara* (perishable) and *akshara* (imperishable).

The Lord said:

1. With its root above and branches below the *ashvattha* tree, they say, is imperishable; it has Vedic hymns for its leaves; he who knows it knows the Vedas.

*Shvah* means tomorrow, and *ashvattha* (*na shvopi sthata*) means that which will not last even until tomorrow, i.e., the world of sense which is every moment in a state of flux. But even though it is perpetually changing, as its root is Brahman or the Supreme, it is imperishable. It has for its protection and support the leaves of the Vedic hymns, i.e., dharma. He who knows the world of sense as such and who knows dharma is the real *jnani*, that man has really known the Vedas.

2. Above and below its branches spread, blossoming because of the *gunas*, having for their shoots the sense-objects; deep down in the world of men are ramified its roots, in the shape of the consequences of action.

This is the description of the tree of the world of sense as the unenlightened see it. They fail to discover its Root above in Brahman and so they are always attached to the objects of sense. They water the tree with the three *gunas* and remain bound to karma in the world of men.

3. Its form as such is not here perceived, neither is its end, nor beginning, nor basis. Let man first hew down this deep-rooted *asvattha* with the sure weapon of detachment;

4. Let him pray to win to that haven from which there is no return and seek to find refuge in the Primal Being from who has emanated this ancient world of action.

‘Detachment’ in *shl.* 3 here means dispassion, aversion from the objects of the senses. Unless man is determined to cut himself off from the temptations of the world of sense he will go deeper into its mire every day. These verses show that one dare not play with the objects of the senses with impunity.

7. A part indeed of Myself which has been the eternal *jiva* in this world of life, attracts the mind and the five senses from their place in *prakriti*.

9. Having settled Himself in the senses...ear, eye, touch, taste, and smell as well as the mind, through them He frequents their objects.

These objects are the natural objects of the senses. The frequenting or enjoyment of these would be tainted if there were the sense of ‘I’ about it; otherwise it is pure, even as a child’s enjoyment of these objects is innocent.

11. Yogis who strive see Him seated in themselves; the witless ones who have not cleansed themselves see Him not, even though they strive.

This does not conflict with the covenant that God has made even with the sinner in discourse 9. *Akritatman* अकृतात्मन् (who has not cleansed himself) means one who has no devotion in him, who has not made up his mind to purify himself. The most confirmed sinner, if he has humility enough to seek refuge in surrender to God, purifies himself and succeeds in finding Him. Those who do not care to observe the cardinal and the casual vows and expect to find God through bare intellectual exercise are witless, Godless; they will not find Him.

## DISCOURSE XVI

*This discourse treats of the divine and the devilish heritage.*

23. He who forsakes the rule of Shastra and does but the bidding of his selfish desires, gains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the highest state.

Shastra does not mean the rites and formulae laid down in the so-called Dharmashastra, but the path of self-restraint laid down by the seers and the saints.

24. Therefore let Shastra be thy authority for determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done; ascertain thou the rule of the Shastra and do thy task here (accordingly).

Shastra here too has the same meaning as in the preceding *shloka*. Let no one be a law unto himself, but take as his authority the law laid down by men who have known and lived religion.

## DISCOURSE XVII

*On being asked to consider Shastra (conduct of the worthy) as the authority, Arjuna is faced with a difficulty. What is the position of those who may not be able to accept the authority of Shastra but who may act in faith? An answer to the question is attempted in this discourse. Krishna rests content with pointing out the rocks and shoals on the path of one who forsakes the beaconlight of Shastra (conduct of the worthy). In doing so he deals with faith and sacrifice, austerity and charity performed with faith, and their divisions according to the spirit in which they are performed. He also sings the greatness of the mystic syllables AUM TAT SAT...a formula of dedication of all work to God.*

23. AUM TAT SAT has been declared to be the threefold name of Brahman and by that name were created of old the *Brahmanas*, the Vedas and sacrifices.

24. Therefore, with AUM ever on their lips, are all the rites of sacrifice, charity and austerity, performed always according to the rule, by *Brahmavadins*.

25. With the utterance of TAT and without the desire for fruit are the several rites of sacrifice, austerity and charity performed by those seeking Freedom.

26. SAT is employed in the sense of 'real' and 'good'; O Partha, SAT is also applied to beautiful deeds.

27. Constancy in sacrifice, austerity and charity is called SAT; and all work for these purposes is also SAT.

The substance of the last four *shlokas* is that every action should be done in a spirit of complete dedication of God. For AUM alone is the only Reality. That only which is dedicated to It counts.

## DISCOURSE XVIII

*This concluding discourse sums up the teaching of the Gita. It may be said to be summed up in the following: "Abandon all duties and come to Me, the only Refuge": (66). That is true renunciation. But abandonment of all duties does not mean abandonment of actions; it means the abandonment of the desire for fruit. Even the highest act of service must be dedicated to Him, without the desire. That is tyaga (abandonment), that is sannyasa (renunciation).*



17. He who is free from all sense of 'I', whose motive is untainted, slays not nor is bound, even though he slay all these worlds.

This *shloka* though seemingly somewhat baffling is not really so. The *Gita* on many occasions presents the ideal to attain which the aspirant has to strive but which may not be possible completely to realize in the world. It is like definitions in geometry. A perfect straight line does not exist, but it is necessary to imagine it in order to prove the various propositions. Even so, it is necessary to hold up ideals of this nature as standards for imitation in matters of conduct. This then would seem to be the meaning of this *shloka*: He who has made ashes of 'self', whose motive is untainted, may slay the whole world, if he will. But in reality he who has annihilated 'self' has annihilated his flesh too, and he whose motive is untainted sees the past, present and future. Such a being can be one and only one...God. He acts and yet is no doer, slays and yet is no slayer. For mortal man the royal road ...the conduct of the worthy...is ever before him, viz., *ahimsa*...holding all life sacred.

36. Hear now from Me, O Bharatarshabha, the three kinds of pleasure which is enjoyed only by repeated practice, and which puts an end to pain,

37. Which, in its inception, is as poison, but in the end as nectar, born of the serene realization of the true nature of *atman*...that pleasure is said to be *sattvik*.

47. Better one's own duty, though uninviting, than another's which may be more easily performed; doing duty which accords with one's nature, one incurs no sin.

The central teaching of the *Gita* is detachment...abandonment of the fruit of action. And there would be no room for this abandonment if one were to prefer another's. It is the spirit in which duty is done that matters, and its unattached performance is its own reward.

68. He who will propound this supreme mystery to My devotees, shall, by that act of highest devotion to Me, surely come to Me.

69. Nor among men is there any who renders dearer service to Me than he; nor shall there be on earth any more beloved by Me than he.

It is only he who has himself gained the knowledge and lived it in his life that can declare it to others. These two *shlokas* cannot possibly have any reference to him who, no matter how he conducts himself, can give a flawless reading and interpretation of the *Gita* while conducting himself anyhow.

*The Gita According to Gandhi*

## 155. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

KAUSANI,

June 28, 1929

CHI. MAHADEV

Yesterday I completed my work on the *Gita* and experienced a profound delight. I hope I have carefully gone through everything. I have put in as much as I could digest from Kaka's notes. I have finished the preface.

I see from your letter that you will reach the Ashram about the same time as I.

Padam Singh's [death]<sup>1</sup> was a greater shock than Rasik's<sup>2</sup>. It was not the shock of death but of my own dimness. But I deliberately omitted to observe a fast. If death is something that should be welcomed, why observe a fast on its account? On the occasion of this terrible death also, having again reasoned in the same way, I had my evening meal, although the time for it had almost passed. I had eaten in the morning. After this the death occurred. The day before his death Padam Singh had talked to me about his death with a quiet mind, saying, "If I do not survive, bless my son". I told him I would take him to the Ashram, and if he wished it I would make arrangements for him at his own house. He replied, "I do not ask for this, it is not necessary. What I need is your blessing." I reassured him. After his death Mohan Joshi enquired after his relatives. Govind Vallabh Pant had initiated a collection. But the relatives refused to accept so much as a cowrie. "We want the Mahatma's blessings, nothing more." There is here as much heroism as grief. This whole family seems to be brave; or may be all the villagers in this province are like this. They sell milk. Everyone has his own little piece of land. The people are poor but not helpless; they are generous [though] penniless. The hill people daily visit this forest which looks uninhabited, and leave behind something [for us]. Now I am doing nothing with the cheque except returning it to you. If the person who gave it wishes to have it back give it to him and if he does not send it to the Ashram, we shall utilize the amount for the Prem Vidyalaya

<sup>1</sup> Vide "A aTragedy", 27-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> Son of Harilal Gandhi, Gandhiji's eldest son; vide "Aa boy of Much Promise", 21-2-1929 & "Sunset at Morning", 24-2-1929

here. Please let me have the reply to this at the Ashram itself. This will be posted tomorrow. You could get it on Tuesday when I leave this place. On the 5th in Delhi the whole day will be taken up by the Working Committee. On the 5th evening I start for the Ashram.

It is most important that Vallabhbhai does not leave Simla in a hurry. The article about Bordoli ought to be seen, although it has been despatched. It is good that you have thought of a pilgrimage to Kotdal. Reaching this spot is also a good thing. Tell Stokes I often remember him. I wish the complaint of piles is cured for good. How is it you never mention anything about Vithalbhai's health?

I got the letter about Gregg's marriage only this week, though I had the news earlier from Andrews's letter.

Panditji had suggested a medicine to Sir T. Vijayaraghavachari. I had asked it to be sent from the Ashram. Did he get it or not? And did he get the letter I asked Pyarelal to write telling how it is to be administered?

I shall go through what you have written about Dashkroi. I shall write what I can. I had believed that the postal department in Simla would be wide awake and took it for granted that the Speaker's quarters at any rate would be known to all the postal employees.

While returning from Bageshwar I was drenched in the rain for two hours; that again while sitting in a *doli*. I had no strength to walk. With wet clothes we had to drive up to the next stop and climb another three thousand feet. As a result I had fever for two days. I was expecting a temperature today but it is normal. Including what I had yesterday, I have so far taken six grains of quinine. My experiment in diet continues. It has not failed totally. I cannot say it has been successful. I have no more doubt that such food can be digested. I have yet to see to what extent it is superior to cooked food. You may not worry about this. That I derive the deepest joy from this experiment should be enough for all friends.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not read this again.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11454

156. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

KAUSANI,  
June 28, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I could finish the *Gita* work earlier than I had expected...that is, last night. I have, therefore, time to write.

You quite misunderstood my statement about the *Gita*. Now I shall have to hang my head in shame after I return to the Ashram, for I have not learnt a single verse by heart while here. Nor was it my intention to do so. I assumed that you knew that my translation of the *Gita* had not been revised. In any case, this must have been clear from the next letter.

Kusum's thinking that you would leave the Ashram in my absence indicates that she has judged you at less than your worth. I wonder what she must have seen in your life to form such an estimate. Never even in a dream has it occurred to me that you would for a moment leave the Ashram during my absence or without consulting me, and for a selfish end.

You should certainly pay more attention to all your children. Both of you should watch them more carefully and see that they come round. I can understand Ramabehn's strong desire to go somewhere outside the Ashram. It should be satisfied. It would even be better if you can send her away soon.

Tell Surendra that Giriraj still cannot take up the work of the tannery. It is Surendra's work to draft its report. If he does not or cannot attend to it, then Valji should do it. In any case, the burden should not fall on you.

So after all Bhansali has started a fast. I have not seen Kishorelal's speech. Show it to me when I arrive there.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5423

### 157. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

KAUSANI,  
June 28, 1929

BHAI JETHALAL,

I have your postcard. I am not competent to reduce the subscription in the form of hand-spun yarn. A thousand a month ought to be an easy job for you. As far as I remember, it would fulfil [the provision of] the Goseva Sangha's constitution<sup>1</sup> if you continue your efforts in regard to milk.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1348

### 158. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

KAUSANI,  
June 28, 1929

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I could write this letter because I have finished the work that I had resolved to do.

Such deserving women as Bhaktibehn can certainly become volunteers. Regarding Durbarsaheb, real permission can be had from Vallabhbhai. The satyagraha in connection with Pandit Sunderlal's book cannot be offered in a native State. The prize for the spinning-wheel could not be announced on account of my absence. The amendments from Devchandbhai should go to the Committee which was appointed in connection with this announcement since they relate to fundamentals. ...<sup>2</sup> I understand about Manilal. What you say is correct.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9297. Courtesy: Shardabehn Shah

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Goseva Sangha", 6-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> A few incomplete sentences which yield no meaning are omitted here.

*159. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM*

KAUSANI,  
*June 28, 1929*

BHAISHRI PURUSHOTTAM,

I have your letter. If your wife embroiders designs on khadi with foreign thread the best thing to do is to stop her from doing so. It would not be proper to tempt other to do the same by publishing this reply in the *Navajivan*.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/9

*160. LETTER TO M. ANNAPURNIAH*

KAUSANI,  
*June 29, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.<sup>1</sup> Although I don't agree with Sri Rama Raju's violent methods, his indomitable courage, sacrifice, single-mindedness, nobility of character and simple, hardy life are a lesson to us all.

EDITOR

'CONGRESS'

SITANAGARAM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/61

<sup>1</sup> For details, *vide* "An Andhra Hero", 18-7-1929

*161. TELEGRAM TO NAGESHWARA RAO<sup>1</sup>*

[On or after *June 29, 1929*]

NAGESHWARARAO

AMRUTANJAN

MADRAS

CAN YOU GUARANTEE REPAYMENT SEVEN THOUSAND WITHIN SIX MONTHS?

REPLY KASHIPUR.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15410

*162. A QUANDARY*

A young man has written a long letter about the quandary facing him. Following is its summary:

I am 24. I passed the matriculation in 1923. Since then I have been in continuous employment. I have been putting on pure khadi since 1921. I was married in 1924. We are four brothers and four sisters. My mother is alive.

I came to understand my country and swadeshi since 1920-21. And thereafter I have worn khadi, regarding that as my duty. But that much does not satisfy me. I very much feel inclined to join the fight for swaraj. But because of the immaturity of my thought and of vacillation between my duty to my parents and that to my country, I have had to mark time.

Our financial condition is not sound; on the contrary we are in debt. But I feel that it is not easy to pay off the debts while having to meet expenses demanded by society.

The reason why I say all this to you is that since 1921, I was feeling that when my father's economic condition permitted him to meet his daily wants comfortably and he had paid off his debts, I would join the fight for swaraj and be used up.

The plight to which the families in Orissa, Madras and other places have been reduced by the foreign Government's

<sup>1</sup> In reply to a telegram dated June 28 from Nageshwara Rao and Garsan, Madras, received at Almora on June 29 which read: "Request early attention telegram and letter. Matters critical."

policy of loot and plunder will also be ours and that of every family if that policy continues; because every year our country continues to waste its valuable manpower in addition to losing crores of rupees. Hence in the present condition of the country, every man must, if for no other reason, at any rate for the benefit of his family, join in the fight for swaraj.

When I place these thoughts before my parents and seek their approval, they are deeply hurt and feel that I am not discharging my debt to them. And they argue that one does not burn down one's house to go on a pilgrimage, that service to one's family comes before service to country, that I should help the family with money and should continue to support the old evil practices of society, staying within their sight.

I have great regard for my family. They are willing to see me happy in every way. But they do not like my idea and as a consequence our relations are strained.

It is about eight days since I commenced spinning and I shall spin all my life because I have unshakable faith in the spinning-wheel. For the last seven years or so, there has been an inward conflict in me; however, I have been able to maintain reasonable self-control.

It is now two years since my wife stopped buying foreign cloth; now she purchases pure khadi.

Other people in my house buy and wear foreign clothes. For the last fifteen days, they have been promising to wear khadi if I stay on, but perhaps that may be only in order to stop me from leaving.

I am ready to offer any sacrifice for the sake of the country.

Such a quandary faces many young men. In this transitional stage, there will certainly appear to be a contradiction between service to family and service to country. Parents will desire one thing, youths understanding the country's plight will desire another thing. At such a juncture, there cannot be the same way out in every case and it is not for an outsider to indicate it. The way prompted by one's inner voice alone is the true way out. Prahlad did not disobey his father at another's instance. Nor does everyone hear the inner voice. Only he hears it whose heart has been purified by self-control. What inner



voice can a drunkard ever have? Would an adulterer commit adultery if he acted in accordance with his inner voice?

One should not hastily go against one's father's command or wish. He who has brought us up has the right to command us, we have certain duties towards him. But we see that the parents of today act selfishly. Moreover, some of them do not at all know their duty to their country; some of them are faint of heart; some are blind to their duty. It may be questioned how far it is one's duty to carry out the commands of such parents.

Considering all this, it is difficult to offer definite advice in a case like this. But a number of general rules can be suggested.

1. Whenever parents give a piece of advice out of selfishness, it can be rejected courteously.

2. When parents ask to be served and if this cannot be done in any other way, it is the son's duty to serve them.

3. But just as a son who has turned a sannyasi cannot run to the rescue of his parents even when they are in difficulty, so too the son who has dedicated his all to serving the country cannot abandon the service of his country.

4. When parents expect more from their son than is required to meet their true needs, the son has a right to refuse their demand. As for example, it is the son's duty not to satisfy the wishes of his parents when they desire to incur undue expenditure on a wedding.

5. If the parents want their son to commit adharma, it is never a duty to do it.

6. There is no contradiction between pure service to country and pure service to family. This contradiction can occur only between something supposed to be service to family and something supposed to be service to country.

It is hardly necessary to add to these rules or to frame subtler rules. Where constant thought is being given to what duty is, one automatically knows what one's duty is in a given situation. Every reader should regard the above rules merely as pointers. Where there is viveka and vichara,<sup>1</sup> it is easy to know one's duty.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 30-6-1929

<sup>1</sup> 1 Discrimination and thoughtfulness

### 163. SMALLPOX AND CHOLERA

A reader writes:<sup>1</sup>

As long as we are ignorant and we malign women, the reign of superstition will continue. Superstition is there even in educated Europe and America. So long as man has the craving to live, etc., so long will superstition continue in greater or lesser degree. But as we limit our cravings, so will superstition be on the decline.

But where a superstition can be recognized clearly, an attempt should be made to remove it. Many people waste money in getting evil spirits exorcized during sickness and die prematurely. In the case of a disease like smallpox, where generally no medicine is administered, superstition establishes a firmer sway. Even the gooddeess of smallpox gets a fair share of it. The religious instinct is not at the bottom of this, but the craving to live. I am firmly convinced that vows, etc., which are made merely to cure smallpox are a superstition and deserve to be discarded.

It has been proved that smallpox mostly results from insanitation. In fact one whose blood has lost its vitality catches the infection. The disease is not as devastating as is believed. I have found no ground to modify what I have written in my book on health. It is my experience in many cases that the disease is cured by proper care. The patient ought to be provided enough air and light. His clothes must be changed daily. It is the experience of many doctors that hydropathy is beneficial. Nowadays even chromo-therapy is pressed into service. But the object here is not to suggest remedies for smallpox, but to deprecate prevailing superstitions and to get them discarded as well as to lessen the fear of the disease. Treatment must be sought at the hands of some knowledgeable and benevolent vaidya or doctor or one should acquire knowledge of hydropathy, etc., and master the treatment oneself.

Vaccination as a preventive remedy against smallpox is well known and, in general, doctors set great store by it. In many countries, it has even been made compulsory. I myself do not beleive in it. So

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that there was an epidemic of smallpox and cholera and a number of superstitions were prevalent about these maladies. He had also asked whether Gandhiji had modified the views given in his book on health.

far as prevention of smallpox is concerned, it does help a little. Even if it does prevent its onset, it produces a number of other complications. My opposition to it is more on religious grounds. In order to produce the smallpox vaccine, innumerable animals are tortured and it passes my understanding how vegetarians can ever take such vaccine. But those who do not get themselves vaccinated ought to know and follow the rules of sanitation; they should not blindly imitate a person like me in this matter. Social laws cannot be disregarded thoughtlessly. And if one is compelled to break them, one must put up even with the inconvenience arising from such breach. No one has the right to endanger society through his obstinacy. Hence, when smallpox spreads in a community which believes in vaccination, those who do not believe in it should, in addition to observing the rules of sanitation, segregate themselves voluntarily from that society.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 30-6-1929

#### 164. ANGUISH OF "A HINDU YOUTH"

"A Hindu Youth" writes as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Being a coward, he holds back his name. It is a good rule not to take cognizance of anonymous letters. This youth had no reason to feel ashamed to communicate to me his name. There was no fear at all of his name being published without his wish. But the poet's assertion that "cowards die many times before their death" is true indeed. Fewer people die of a disease itself than from fear of it. People who suffer from the fear of a certain thing, do not suffer so much when the thing itself comes to pass. There is nothing in this letter to be ashamed of. If there is shame at all, it is in doing an evil thing, not in exposing what has been done. On account of our not understanding this golden principle, we commit grave sins and turn hypocrites. Hence people like "A Hindu Youth" must get over fear.

I publish at times letters like the one under reference because, despite being anonymous, they contain matter which applies to many

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that he had to support a large family on a moderate income. There was a dearth of marriageable girls in his sub-caste, and one had to pay as much as Rs. 5,000 for getting a bride and so he had little hope of marrying. In his frustration, all manner of thoughts assailed his mind. He had pleaded for Gandhiji's advice.

people. This letter is of that sort. The condition of many Hindu youths is similar to this young man's. The narrowness of caste Hindu society's slavery to convention today are at the root of it. Instead of tradition following religion, religion is playing second fiddle to tradition. Conduct contrary to the caste is regarded as irreligious. There may be many vices current in the caste system, but, since it is an all-purifying Ganga, it has come to be regarded as faultless and as having the power to change vice into virtue. Because the practice of putting on the vertical mark of one's sect<sup>1</sup> on one's forehead has been handed down through generations, it is regarded as part of religion and if one does not put it on because it has become a symbol of hypocrisy or for some such strong reason, he is regarded as having forsaken his religion. Thus by surrendering to convention, we became emasculated and finally even lost our country. The slavery born in one field proved all-pervasive.

It has become the duty of forward-looking youths to destroy this tradition of castes. Nevertheless, a number of youths, instead of doing their duty, out of weakness break the restraints imposed by castes mentally and in secret action wherever opportunity offers. And yet they keep up the external pretence of observing them. The Shastras call this dishonest conduct.

Hence in predicaments like the one facing "A Hindu Youth", one has to show courage and hew down the tree of convention. The young man has entertained perverse thoughts because of his firm belief that one may not break the imaginary or artificial restraint imposed by caste. He wants to marry in order to satisfy his sexual urge. If he has money, he is ready to buy a bride and then he would pretend that the action fell out of the category of sexual indulgence because it could be called a marriage. If such adultery approved by custom or some other pretence is not possible, he is tempted to commit open adultery even. And if he holds himself in check, it is because he is afraid of appearing bad in the eyes of people. If, however, all these things fail him, he also entertains ultimately the thought of giving up his religion. This is the limit of cowardice. He who has even a little understanding of religion, can have no excuse whatever to give up this religion. A religion cannot be put on and put off like a garment. It is more precious than even the body. A body is born and it dies. Religion has taught us clearly that it is connected with

<sup>1</sup> The Vaishnava sect

the soul and cannot be changed. The rot that has set in in religion can be got rid of, but religion cannot be given up. How can one give up a religion in which the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Puranas were composed, in which myriads of men performed lifelong tapascharya, a religion whose adherents' bones have added lustre to the Himalayas and blood has made the trees and flowers of the Himalayas blossom forth? It is the reformers alone who have maintained this religion in a state of splendour by cutting down the dead wood of tradition. In opposing tradition men like the Buddha, Mahavir, Shankar, Ramanuja, Kabir, Nanak, Chaitanya, Rammohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Dayananda, Vivekananda and others have pointed out the way to us. These reformers, far from abandoning their religion, kept it fragrant and preserved it by breaking down bad traditions.

They were great; therefore they became famous as reformers. We may not be known as reformers, but it is our duty within our limited field to save our religion by pulling down irreligion wherever the latter holds sway by usurping the place of religion.

“A Hindu Youth” should now understand:

1. The married state is not meant for the purpose of sexual indulgence. It is for preserving the sacred love between man and woman and also for progeny. Moreover, when both are possessed of passion, religion permits its satisfaction while observing certain limits. People have held that the less such liberty is taken, the better it is. Sexual union outside marriage or even union with one's married partner merely for the satisfaction of one's sexual urge is adultery.

2. Adopting this attitude towards marriage, the “Youth” should seek a wife.

3. He should make a vow not to offer even a cowrie or pice by way of bribe while making that quest.

4. He should apply to his caste to secure such a girl for him.

5. If he does not secure one, having notified his caste, he should look for a girl belonging to the varna of his caste and should have confidence that if he has worth in him, he will get a suitable girl. If he is not worthy, he should try to become so. In doing this, his passion will abate and it will be easy for him to be patient in obtaining a girl.

6. If he does not get a girl of the same varna since the varna system has now become weak and exists in name only, he should secure a girl from any other varna.

7. If he cannot get a maiden, he should marry a widow.

8. If he has the courage to effect reform in his caste, then even if he can get a girl from his own caste, he should, in order to break the practice of marrying from the circle of sub-castes, insist on finding a girl of the same varna but from another caste.

9. If he has the courage to introduce a reform in regard to widow-remarriage and if he has the requisite fitness, he should insist on marrying no one but a widow belonging to the same or any other varna.

10. Ultimately, he should firmly resolve that, if he does not get a girl despite observing the nine rules above and even disregarding caste restrictions, he will not forsake his dharma and will not indulge in adultery.

It is improbable that observing the nine conditions, he will not get a girl from the twenty-two crores of Hindus. But even if the improbable happens, every man must have the courage and strength not to forsake dharma or to fall into sins like adultery. He who does not have this, will not be regarded as a man.

While taking the nine types of liberties, calamities like boycott by the community, parents' displeasure, loss of an inheritance, etc., are likely to befall one. This article is not meant for one who does not have the grit to bear such hardships.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 30-6-1929

### *165. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI*

*June 30, 1929*

CHI MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have your letters. I am at the moment sitting in a secluded spot in front of the peaks of the Himalayan ranges covered with snow. I spend all my time in the verandah. Here I finished revising my translation of the Gita. It will now be published if my friends so desire. If it is not printed, I shall send you a copy or you will see it if you come here in the mean time.

Has the name Sita now stuck to your heart? If not, it can be given up. If it is, it would not pain me at all. The right to give a name must belong to you. My wish is that you would ask for suggestions

from elders but do what you yourselves decide. It would be a different matter if you were children. I have opened this subject because Nanabhai says the name Sita hurts Sushila. There is no reason to be displeased. Since I do not insist on this why should she be unhappy about it.

Now about the alliance with a Marwari. I do not remember whether I had told Manilal about it, but before I received the offer of Sushila, it was my plan to form alliance with an educated Bengali girl. God may have joined you, because who knows whether with the Bengali girl, you could have merged as completely as you two now have. However, it was my intention even before I betrothed Ramdas to go out of Gujarat. It is essential that we do this. Of course, I wished to limit myself to the Vaishya community. The unnatural restrictions that now prevail, have done and are still doing much harm. The alliance that I have just concluded, I expect to be as successful as yours. Here again, the main role has been Jamnalalji's. He has found a groom who is one of his distant relatives. He is modest and educated. He was introduced to Rukhi and the alliance is formed as she and Santok were willing. This too is a way of bringing about India's unity. Now do you understand, can you swallow it?

Sushila should not be impatient to come here. I can quite understand her wish to see her family. But if it is found that she must stay on for the sake of the work there, it is her duty to stay on. This is my advice. But do only that which both of you think right.

Yes, if the community does not want Indian Opinion and it involved a loss, it should be closed down, however necessary it may be. But it must be proved that the community does not want it and that the losses are not owing to our slackness or remissness. Our writings should not be immature. Sastriji particularly insists that the journal should never be closed down. Whatever you would do, should be done with deliberation, after considering the advice of your friends and having made all the efforts needed to keep going.

I have with me Devdas, Prabhudas, Purushottam, Kusumbehn senior, Jamnabehn, Khurshedbehn and Pyarelal. Ba is of course there. Thus, this time I have a large company. And I quite forget Brijkisan.

Now about vaccination. I do not believe in cow-pox. It is a dirty practice. The cow's teats are made to fester till they stink and a vaccine is extracted from it. This is inoculated into our system. This is tantamount to partaking of beef. This question had arisen in the

South African jail; it also confronted us in the jails here. But in the end, no one let me off. Nor does it always prove beneficial. The opponents of vaccination are growing in number.

But it would be all right if you got yourself vaccinated. What I have stated above are my personal views. Generally, people do get themselves vaccinated. Do what you think right after both of you go deep into this matter, study it with interest and form an independent opinion about it.

I hope you read in *Navajivan* and *Young India* about my experiment with uncooked grain.<sup>1</sup> It still continues fairly well.

*Blessings from*

BAP U

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4756

### *166. LETTER TO NANABHAI I. MASHRUWALA*

KAUSANI,

*June 30, 1929*

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

Please convey my repeated congratulations to mother and daughter, Vijayalakshmi and Tara, for having suppressed the letter written by you under the pretext of revising it. I had occasion to meet Malavi[ya]ji and I am pleased with the way it turned out. Khadi is decidedly progressing but, I am afraid, it is at a snail's pace.

It appears advisable to let Sushila stay there if she does not want to come over leaving Manilal behind. We should be content that the two have become united like milk and sugar and live happily. It is not at all desirable that Manilal should rush here deserting his duty. I think it good for the youngsters that we give up our longing to see them when they have gone to other lands. It would be a different matter if they return at their own convenience and when they wish to.

Even before your letter came, I had known that Tara went hawking khadi regularly.

I had written to both of them to have any other name of their choice if they did not like the name Sita. The right to name one's

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929 & "Raw V. Coaked Food", 16-6-1929



children must belong to the parents; elders may offer suggestions, if asked for.

I have also written to them explaining Rukhi's betrothal to a Marwari. I think we ought to take such liberties within limits. I might not have told you that, before I had the offer of Sushila from you, I had almost decided to betroth Manilal to an eligible Bengali girl. For many years, I have felt that we ought to come out of Gujarat in this way.

Prabhudas will accompany me to the Ashram. Kakasaheb has asked for him for the Vidyapith. Prabhudas is his favourite pupil. We reach Delhi on the 5th and the Ashram on the 6th.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7518

### *167. LETTER TO G.D. BIRLA*

*Unrevised*

*June 30, 1929*

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your three letters are before me. I would have no right to be in this lovely, secluded spot surrounded by snow-clad mountains, if I had no special work to do here. The special work was revision of the translation of the Gita, which had remained unfinished at Wardha. I could complete it only in seclusion. I just sat down here for the purpose. I have postponed all other work that could be postponed till I could finish this job. That is the reason why I have not replied to you earlier. The work on the Gita is now over.

Now regarding Keshu. His father's hope and mine has been that ultimately Keshu would choose the Ashram life and dedicate himself to khadi work. But I do not wish to put any pressure on him. And now he is in your hands. You should take from him such work as he may be willing to do and as may be for his good. You should look upon him as your own son and train him.

You have trained numerous young men and I have been informed and I believe that many enterprises of the Birla family were started by you.

What shall I say about khadi when there is the opportunity of using your talent for the sale of khadi? The khadi stock is all sold out.

Still, it is bound to accumulate again. I shall then use your ability. At present we shall let the business run itself. I hope the khadi being “unasked for” does not mean I sent it without permission? As for production, it is true that here I cannot make much use of your assistance. We are making what efforts we can.

What happened about the dairy?

I have not fasted. Since I began to look upon death as my great friend I have given up fasting on account of death. I did not fast on the death of Maganlal and Rasik. Death now has ceased to hurt or, say, it hurts very little.

The experiment with uncooked food is continuing.

The meaning of [faddist]<sup>1</sup> can be understood as ‘dhuni’ in Gujarati. I am unfamiliar with the word ‘sanaki’<sup>2</sup>. ‘Chakram’ of course will not do. These days I try to write something every week for Hindi Navajivan. If you don’t happen to read it now, begin to do so and give me any suggestions that you deem fit about the subject-matter and language.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I shall reach Delhi on July 5 and the Ashram on 6th.

From Hindi: C. W. 6174. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

### *168. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI*

[About middle of 1929]<sup>3</sup>

CHI. SUSHILA,

This time your letter has come early, so it should satisfy me somewhat. It contains an adequate account. I am very happy to learn that your health is improving. It seems you are also giving good training to Sita<sup>4</sup>. You are very wise and therefore you must be behaving properly with Pragji<sup>5</sup> and Parvati<sup>6</sup>. It is possible to win over

<sup>1</sup> Illegible in the original; *Vide* “Letter to Chhaaganlal Joshi”, 24-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> Eccentric

<sup>3</sup> From the contents; *vide* “Letter to Chhaganlal Joshi”, 26-4-1929 and “Letter to Manilal and Sushila aGandhi”, 19-5-1929

<sup>4</sup> Sita Gandhi, addressee’s daughter

<sup>5</sup> Pragji K. Desai

<sup>6</sup> Parvati Desai, wife of Pragji Desai

everyone by developing generosity and love. I would like you to give a more detailed description of Phoenix. How many persons are living there and who are they? How many copies are you printing and what is the result? What are the leafy vegetables growing there? Has the approach road to the station been improved? Are all the Phoenix houses road to the station been improved? Are all the Phoenix houses occupied? Is the library being used? What is Sita's weight? What is your weight? At what time do you all get up? Is the recitation of the *Gita* going on? You know chapter XII by heart, don't you? Or is it that having learnt it for the sake of getting married, both of you have forgotten it? As you were born in a religious family, probably you already know chapter XII by heart, did you not? What did you see in Cape Town? Did you see the girl whom for a while. . .<sup>1</sup> was ready to marry? Is she married? There are innumerable such questions which you can guess and make your letter interesting by replying to.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4804; also C.W. 216

*169. LETTER TO G. G. EARLY*

KAUSANI,  
*July 1, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

Your letter.

I like the Englishmen for their grit.

I like the Mussalmans for their generosity.

*Yours,*

REV. G. G. EARLY (LUSSELT PET)

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/62

<sup>1</sup> The allusion is not clear in the source.

*170. LETTER TO M. P. SRINIVASAN*

KAUSANI,  
*July 1, 1929*

MY DEAR SRINIVASAN,

Your letter. I think a bridegroom has a perfect right to say what the bride shall wear as the bride has regarding the bridegroom. They are not yet husband and wife. Therefore there is no question of pressure. Every young man has a right to say what qualities his future partner shall have. So has every young girl.

Pomp and paraphernalia are a curse.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/63

*171. LETTER TO S. R. NARAYAN RAJU*

KAUSANI,  
*July 1, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

Truth means truth in thought, word and deed. When I say I would sacrifice the country for truth it means that the country cannot be served except through truth. In other words no one can be harmed by one pursuing truth.

*Yours,*

S. R. NARAYAN RAJU  
RAJAPALAYAM

From a copy : Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/64

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

KAUSANI,  
*July 1, 1929*

MY DEAR HENRY,

This is the last day of my week's retirement to a lovely spot in the Himalayas in front of the snowy range. I have your letter before

me. I swear by adult education and many other things even as you and Millie<sup>1</sup> do. But may one leave *swadharma* even for a better dharma. The irons I have in the fire are more than enough for me. But through the Vidyapith we are floating adult education also. And I cannot give it the attention I would if I was free. If you have ideas and leisure write a considered, instructive, not critical, article showing the way and I shall publish it in *Young India*.

My love to you all. Whether I write to you or not, you are ever in my thoughts and conversations.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's S.N. 32577/66

### *173. LETTER TO HELENE HAUSSDING*

KAUSANI,  
*July 1, 1929*

MY DEAR SPARROW,

“O ye of little faith!”, I am inclined to say on reading your letter. You made no allowance for a man who is on the wheel. Letters are bridges of love no doubt but no bridge is needed if we live on the even plateau.

You are wrong in thinking that I am disappointed. Loneliness is not bad but I cannot say I feel lonely. That you feel my surroundings to be alien to you and not me betrays something wrong. Find it out. When we quarrel with our surroundings the wrong is in us, not in them. I trust you receive my general weekly letter.

Love.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/67

<sup>1</sup> Millie Graham Polak, addressee's wife

## 174. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

KAUSANI (HIMALAYAS),

*July 1, 1929*

BHAI KRISHNACHANDRA,

I have your letter.

Involuntary discharge is no cause for alarm. Water-treatment, exercise, pure air, simple wholesome diet and reciting Ramanama will stop it.

Discontinue the milk at mealtime if you find it makes your diet heavy.

Spices should be completely avoided. Drink water if thirsty and eat only when hungry. You must walk for at least two hours every day, preferably before mealtime. It is better to avoid eating at night. My book on health would be a useful guide. Give up oil. Take ghee sparingly.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4260

## 175. LETTER TO LILAVATI

*July 1, 1929*

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. I have shown it to Jamnabehn. She will, moreover, go there in a few days. You should keep in touch with her. And it is a very good thing that you see Perinbehn regularly and help her in her work. As for the Ashram rules, they can be observed wherever one may be. Passions do not arise if one does not sit idle for a single moment, and constantly engages body and mind in good deeds and good thoughts.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9315

## 176. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

July 1, 1929

BHAISHRI VITHALDAS,

Herewith I send you an extract from Krishnadas's letter telling what he has written about you. My purpose in sending this is that you should compose a booklet on the science of selling khadi as Maganlal wrote one about weaving.

I had your letter about a memorial to Maganlal. I have not stopped thinking about it but one after another, things kept coming up and therefore I am silent about it. I do not wish to go begging from door to door for this collection.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9768

## 177. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

*Silence Day [July 1, 1929]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL (JOSHI),

I got your letters. You will probably get this on Thursday. I shall arrive there on Saturday evening. Can there be anything, then, to write about?

Today, too, the snowy Nandadevi and other smaller peaks are shining brilliantly in sunlight in front of me. I wish to invite you all to come and see this. Borrow Vinoba's imagination for a moment and share my joy from there.

Don't think all the time of your being weak. 'I am atman; the atman can never be weak; I will never be weak.' Resolve thus in your mind. Anyone who constantly thinks of his illness, never leaves his sick-bed. Keep yourself ready to go on your leave.

What did you do about Galiara's money which is to be spent in the neighbourhood of Kathor? Include this matter in your notes.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

<sup>1</sup> As in the above

[PS.]

Surendra will have become quite a familiar face before I arrive there. I do not write other letters; it is time for the post.

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro-7: Shri Chhaganlal Joshine, p. 121*

### *178. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI*

*July 1, 1929*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your letter after I had dispatched today's post. I do not remember anything about Anjani. I shall be glad if you go there and to other places so that, at least while you are there, you may feel a little lighter. You should certainly go out occasionally.

The sum of Rs.2,000 received from Galiara may be handed over to Kaka. He has decided to spend the amount for education through the Vidyapith. He was saying something about adding to this the money given by Mahadev and a few other sums. I have forgotten the details.

I did not know that Subbiah owed some money to the Ashram. You should certainly deduct something from his pay against that sum. Write to him immediately and ask him if he agrees.

Whenever there are many letters enclosed in one envelope, you should make it a rule to secure the envelope with a string. The string, moreover, should be tied fast. Instead of using an envelope, it would be easier and cheaper, when there are many letters to be despatched, to wrap them in a blank sheet of paper or a newspaper sheet and paste a blank slip on the letter. It is not obligatory to put the letters in an envelope. All that is necessary is that, if the packet containing the letters is sealed from all sides, stamps of the value required by the weight of the letters should be pasted on it. I will immediately implement this suggestion which I am making to you.

The idea had occurred to me a long time ago, but I did not carry it out so far.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5424



## 179. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[After July 1, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I read the current Congress Bulletin. I think that the reproduction of that statement was out of place in an official publication which is designed merely to record Congress activities. Is it not like a government gazette? On merits too, I understand that it was prepared by their counsel. It is not the outpouring of earnest souls as you and I thought it was.

Nor did I like your advocacy and approval of the fast<sup>2</sup> they are undergoing. In my opinion, it is an irrelevant performance and in so far as it may be relevant, it is like using Nasmyth hammer to crush a fly. However, this is for you to ponder over.

I would like you to come to a decision soon regarding the Presidentship. Why this hesitation? I thought at Almora it was agreed that you would wear the crown. On this, read the enclosed and hand it on to Father.

I hope Kamala is well.

*Yours,*

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

## 180. THE KELLOGG PACT

In *Young India* of March 21st was printed an appeal issued at the recent Conference of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in which occurs the following passage:

"The pact for the 'renunciation of war' has been signed by a large number of States. The logical conclusion of this renunciation can only be disarmament. And it is the only way to avoid fresh wars." It is possible that some of the readers of *Young India* are not fully conversant with the

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to the statement given in court by Bhagat Singh and Dutta in the Assembly Bomb case, which was published in the Congress Bulletin dated July 1, 1929.

<sup>2</sup> By Bhagat Singh, Dutta and some other prisoners in protest against the treatment meted out to them in jail

genesis of this Pact, the Kellogg pact. . . On August 27, 1928, it was signed by fifteen States, and within five or six months, practically all the States of the world signified their intention of adhering to it.

It consists of only two very brief and simple articles, by the first of which the signatories, in the names of their respective peoples, renounce war as an instrument of national policy; while by the second, they agree never to seek a settlement of any dispute, of whatever nature and whatever origin, save by pacific means. It thus stands as a clear and unqualified renunciation of war. .

How does all this affect India? Do not her poverty and her subjection make her powerless? I think not.... Let the teachers in the schools and colleges lead the way by seeing that the youths fully understand what this Pact really is...When this knowledge has been assimilated by the educated, it will in some form permeate the masses of the uneducated, preparing the way for the stand India will take when she has attained her freedom. . .

I gladly publish L.E.'s contribution<sup>1</sup> and have no difficulty in agreeing that the Kellogg Pact has great possibilities, the patent insincerity of many signatories notwithstanding. I share to the full the apprehension about the Pact felt by the correspondent whose letter to *Young India*, L.E. has mentioned. But this insincerity does not trouble me. My difficulty is as to the suggestion made by L.E. about India's part in promoting peace. India's contribution to peace must in the nature of things be different in kind from that of the Western nations. India is not an independent nation. And it may be inferred from her present position that she has not the will be independent. The parties to the Pact are mostly partners in the exploitation of the peoples of Asia and Africa; India is the most exploited among them all. The Peace Pact therefore in substance means a desire to carry on the joint exploitation peacefully. At least that is how the Pact appears to me to be at present. India has never waged war against any nation. She has put up sometimes ill-organised or half-organized resistance in self-defence pure and simple. She has therefore not got to develop the will for peace. She has that in abundance, whether she knows it or not. The way she can promote peace is to offer successful resistance to her exploitation by peaceful means. That is to say, she has to achieve her independence, for this year to be known as Dominion Status by peaceful means. If she can do this, it will be the largest contribution

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

that any single nation will have made towards world peace. If my diagnosis is correct, it will be realized that the teaching such as L.E. wants in the schools can only be ineffective and what is worse, hypocritical. Even if the teachers can make themselves believe in what they may be called upon to teach, it will find no echo in the hearts of the boys and girls of their classes, even as a person who has never hurt a fly will fail to understand the meaning of an appeal made to him to will not to spill blood.

*Young India*, 4-7-1929

### *181. A PLEA FOR COMMON SENSE*

A young man writes from Kashmir:

Some days ago, I bought a set of portraits of some of the great men of India. Today I find that all these portraits are printed in Germany. I am distressed to see what I have done...bought foreign things that were available in our own country, and the very sight of these portraits which was likely to inspire me with good ideas, is injuring my feelings. My friends who are also of the same mind suggest to me to burn them; but this is a thing which my conscience does not allow, as these are the portraits of those great men who have sacrificed their lives for our country. I request you to advise me in the matter. I await your answer through your *Young India*.

Well may this young man want my answer through *Young India*. I am glad the young man's conscience has prevented him from burning the portraits. It was no doubt wrong to have bought these portraits made in Germany. But there is such a thing as common sense in the world. Common sense is realized sense of proportion. The way to redress such trivial mistakes as the young man fell into, is to be more careful in the future so as not to repeat them. If the young man and his friends will search within and search also their surroundings, they will discover many more incongruities and foreign articles in and about them. Let them begin the reformation by banishing the worst foreign things and the rest will go without an effort. Here again, let these friends make use of common sense and understand that the adjective foreign is to be taken in its widest sense. Anything that harms the inner being is foreign. Do we not often strain at a gnat and swallow a camel?

*Young India*, 4-7-1929

## *182. MILL-OWNERS AND BOYCOTT*

Although I have before now dealt with this question in these pages, correspondents often inquire why the indigenous mills are not invited to take part in the foreign-cloth boycott movement. Others inquire what part these mills play in the movement. Yet others ask why Congress workers should not directly encourage and advertise indigenous mill-cloth side by side with khadi.

To take the last question first, these correspondents should remember that the Congress resolution contemplates the boycott through khadi. There are sound reasons for this partiality. Mill-cloth alone has had its opportunity for the past fifty years and it has not brought boycott about. Immediate boycott through the existing mills is an impossibility. New mills cannot be started for the asking. Therefore, if the boycott is to succeed, it can do so only through khadi. Khadi cannot be pushed side by side with mill-cloth. Given the choice, it must be confessed with regret that the unthinking multitude will prefer the apparently cheaper and easily obtainable calico to the apparently dearer and coarse-looking and not easily obtainable khadi. It follows therefore, that Congress workers, as far as their influence can reach...and it does not reach very far yet...must preach khadi to the exclusion of mill-cloth.

This brings me to the second question. But the exclusive preaching of khadi does not mean hostility to the indigenous mill-cloth. Mill-cloth is playing an important part in the movement whether the mill-owners will or not. The multitude buys it in competition with foreign cloth. The mills have their agencies direct and indirect in all the parts of India. As a distinguished mill-owner once very properly remarked to me : "We do not want your help, we penetrate where you will perhaps never even make your voice heard. If you preach our cloth, you simply invite us to raise our prices by creating a demand we cannot cope with." He was silenced when I told him that I contemplated boycott not through mill-cloth but through khadi. He at once agreed that was quite a feasible proposition if I could produce enough khadi to displace foreign cloth and popularize it. Most mill-owners recognize this as did the one I have quoted. Any advocacy then on the part of Congressmen of mill-cloth can only hinder boycott and ultimately even damage the mills by reason of the certain failure of the movement through the adoption of thoughtless

methods. The reader should realize that repeated failures of the movement must result in deepening despondency and then making the people indifferent in their purchase of cloth. We must avoid failure this time at any cost. We may risk no avoidable mistake through sluggish or imperfect thinking. It is the popular indifference that has given the foreign-cloth dealer his vantage ground. The moment the people are induced to think for themselves and make their choice, the boycott is a certainty. The indigenous mills are therefore playing their part in the movement and profiting by it without assistance from Congressmen.

Now for the first question. There is undoubtedly a way in which the mill-owners can actively, deliberately and effectively help the movement. An attempt was made last by Pandit Malaviyaji and Motilalji and myself to invite their active participation. The attempt failed, perhaps because it was not in the nature of things possible for the mills actively to participate in terms of the Congress in any movement with which the Government do not openly associate themselves or which they are suspected of secretly disapproving. The vast majority of them are under the influence of banking concerns which depend for their existence on Government goodwill. But if there are mills which can defy Government pressure, no matter how subtly exerted, here are the conditions under which they or anyone of them can directly participate in the movement wholly or partially :

1. They can sell khadi through their agencies;
2. they can lend their talents to the movement;
3. they can, by conference with the A.I.S.A., determine the varieties they should manufacture in terms of boycott;
4. they can cease to manufacture khadi whether in that name or any other;
5. they can standardize their prices so as neither to suffer loss nor to increase their profits; and
6. they can render financial assistance to the movement.

Several other ways may easily be deduced from the six chief ones I have mentioned. This assistance can be given only if the mill-owners and the shareholders are patriotically inclined and are prepared to limit their profits. I am sure the majority of shareholders if they were properly canvassed would not object. It is the capitalist who has

therefore, really to decide. As one of them told me, “We will come in when we must...not before.” He may be right.

Lastly, the reader should know that all mills because they are built on the Indian soil may not be called indigenous. They are mills that are indigenous only in name. They are owned and managed by foreigners, their shareholders are foreigners, they exclude Indians from management or shares, the major part of their earnings is drained away from India. The only thing that India gets out of their earnings is the paltry labourers’ wages. These mills are no more indigenous than the existing Government. These can never help the movement.

*Young India*, 4-7-1929

### *183. DESTROY ALL HIMSA*

Raja Mahendra Pratap is a great patriot. For the sake of the country, this noble man has chosen exile as his lot. He has given up his splendid property in Vrindavan for educational purposes. Prem Mahavidyalaya now conducted by Acharya Jugalkishore is his creation. The Rajasaheb has often corresponded with me. And I have withheld from publication communications from him. But the latest received from him I have not the heart to withhold. Here therefore is his letter.

As a friend of humanity and your fellow-countryman by birth, I demand of you kindly to publish the following thoughts in your worthy paper.

#### WHAT IS AHIMSA

I assert that I am a true follower of ahimsa. But it needs an explanation of this word to clear my position. It becomes still more necessary when I add and affirm that many who call themselves the worshippers of this holy word have no sense of its spirit.

Ahimsa, as I understand it, is not to give pain to anybody in mind or body by one’s thought, talk or action. However, to be a follower of this principle does not stop here. A follower of ahimsa has to change all those conditions under which himsa is practised or becomes possible. I call it worst kind of himsa, opposite of ahimsa, when a man tolerates or aids himsa of others.

Many people in India today deliver some very fine sermons on the beauties of ahimsa; however they do little to destroy the himsa of the British.

I say all such persons are abettors and aids to all that crime which the British commit in India against the weak, the hungry and the helpless.

Of course, no one can deny that our great leader Gandhiji has a very sincere desire to serve the Indian nation. However, I am afraid that his methods alone, unsupported by some more energetic active programme, cannot bring relief to the people.

I highly appreciate and strongly endorse the khadi movement of Gandhiji. It may or may not appreciably better the economic condition of the masses because there are today so many modern factors at work in our society; but in any case, the idea from the psychological standpoint is certainly admirable. It directs the human thought to a simple life and awakens in the people a certain sense of unity.

I must, however, add that we need much more. We have to destroy in the true spirit of ahimsa all that British organization which is himsa personified.

Let the nation as a whole strive to that end. At the earliest possible moment let us put an end to the British brutality in India, in fact, in the whole world. Let everyone perform his duty according to his natural endowments. In the true spirit of ahimsa, I cannot force my will on others. Let everyone find out for himself what one must do. I can only point out the eternal truth that the Creator certainly wants the good of all his creatures...all the men and women...in our common human race. If any man or group acts selfishly and oppresses others he surely misuses his gifts and acts against the wishes of the Creator. I can only say: Let everyone try his or her best to destroy all himsa. This is ahimsa.

*Young India*, 4-7-1929

### *184. FOR SELF-SPINNERS*

A.I.S.A. members and all those who send self-spun yarn as subscriptions or donations should be most careful about preparing and packing their yarn. Every yard of yarn spun means so much added to the wealth of the country. Let us not despise it. I have known quotations in South Africa of rice and other staples as low as 1/32nd of a penny. The keen-witted European merchants knew what these tiny fractions meant when they underwent endless multiplications as they did in transactions involving thousands of bags of rice. If we had the same wit, we would realize the value of a yard of self-spun yarn when it undergoes multiplication by the three hundred million hands

that may draw yards of yarn from day to day. Let it be then further remembered that the value of fineness, evenness and strength. And since hanks of yarn in separateness would fetch only a fraction of a copper coin, all cost of transit should be saved as much as possible. Those agencies therefore, that organize and collect yarn subscriptions and donations should see to the proper labelling and classification of yarn and send such parcels to the head office at fixed periodical intervals. Little is it realized even by the best workers that the message of the wheel means a complete revolution in the national life. Its successful delivery means a solidly-knit, well-organized, well-disciplined, self-restrained, self-contained, self-respecting, industrious, prosperous nation, no member of which willing and ready to work ever need starve.

*Young India*, 4-7-1929

### 185. AN UNFORTUNATE DAUGHTER

I have countless daughters in the country ...those I know and those that I do not know. One of them has written to me from Pushkar, signing herself as "your unfortunate daughter". Here is the entire letter<sup>1</sup>.

In India, there are many Hindu girls who suffer the same fate as this Lakshmi Devi. As soon as a girl grows up a little and begins to take interest in studies and games, selfish and bigoted parents push her into the sea of matrimony. The marriage that was forced on Lakshmi Devi cannot be considered a religious marriage. In a religious marriage, the girl should be told to whom she is getting married, her consent should be obtained for the marriage and if possible, she should be given an opportunity to see the prospective bridegroom. Nothing of the kind was done in Lakshmi Devi's case. Secondly, she was too young for wedlock. Therefore she has a perfect right to refuse to countenance such a marriage, to refuse to recognize it as marriage. The only heartening feature of this tragedy is that her mother is with her. I congratulate the lady. I would request Lakshmi Devi's father not to regard adharma as dharma and stand in her way. I hope

<sup>1</sup> Not translated here. The correspondent had said that she had been married off by her parents when still a child to a man who had another wife living, and that in her husband's house, she was subjected to much cruelty. She had expressed her desire to remarry.



Lakshmi Devi will remain steadfast in her resolution in the same brave and modest spirit that she has shown in writing this letter for publication, and will marry the young man who wishes to be bound to her in holy wedlock. I also hope that she will remain steadfast in her resolve to serve the country. Those girls who wish to do away with evil customs and follow a new path, who wish to become my daughters should never give up humility, discretion, truth and self-restraint. Licence and immodest behaviour would bring them unhappiness and I should be ashamed of them. They would never be able to show a way to others. Such girls should have the dignity, modesty and purity of Sita and the courage and strength of Draupadi.

These good daughters must remember that to establish swaraj Ramrajya in India they have to work shoulder to shoulder with men and it is their special duty to improve the condition of women.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 4-7-1929

### 186. FOREIGN SUGAR V. KHADI

A correspondent from the Meerut District writes:

Our family consists of about 30 or 32 members. For several generations we have been following the vocation of sugar refiners. We take crude molasses from the sugar planters and prepare white sugar from it by the indigenous process without employment of any machinery. But for the last several years we have been hard hit by the competition of foreign and machine-made sugar and the profits of our business do not suffice even to cover the ordinary wages of our labour. The importation of foreign sugar further means a heavy drain of wealth from our country and yet you never open your lips on the subject which is rather surprising. But that side of the question apart, we feel really at sea as to what we should do. Our womenfolk still follow their traditional occupation

<sup>1</sup> Originally published in *Hindi Navjivan*, 4-7-1929, this and "The Running Sore", 18-7-1929, appeared under the title "Notes from Hindi Navajivan" with the following introductory note by Pyarelal: ". . . Gandhiji has of late commenced regularly to write original articles for Hindi Navajivan. Apart from the fact that this special writing enables him to discharge his obligation towards a weekly of which he has been nominally editor all these years, he has found that it gives him an opportunity of coming into direct touch with the Hindi reading public and their peculiar problems which he could not do so well before. As a specimen, I give below a translation of two articles selected almost at random that have recently appeared in Hindi Navajivan."

of cotton spinning and get the yarn thus spun woven by the village weaver into khadi....

I am sorry to have to advise these friends to give up their present occupation if sugar refining is truly an unprofitable concern. For today, I really do not know how we can completely prevent the importation of foreign sugar into our country. I consider sugar to be an unnecessary, even harmful article of consumption. 'White poison' as it has been called by dietetic experts, it is a fruitful source of many a disease. But we have become so hopelessly addicted to its use that it is not quite an easy thing to get rid of it. We cannot today produce all the sugar that we consume. Again, country sugar is dearer and not being so white as the imported sugar, is less popular. It is not an industry for which a country-wide and mass agitation can be set up as in the case of khadi. Nor can such an agitation alone, even if successful, help to convert a losing into a paying concern. I can therefore repeat what I have already said that if the sugar manufacture is no longer a profitable trade, there is no help but to leave it.

But what to do next is the question that will naturally be asked. In my opinion, weaving is any day preferable as an avocation to sugar manufacture. Unlike spinning, weaving provides a whole-time occupation and what is more, it is a growing universal occupation with practically an unlimited scope before it.

As for the question of introducing khadi in his family to which the correspondent refers, it does not require much effort to spin fine yarn at home. If only each member of the household in question will but make up his or her mind diligently to spend one hour daily on the spinning-wheel, he or she can turn out the count that will suit his or her requirement and all the clothing needed in the family including fine saris, etc., can be had just for the charge of weaving yarn into cloth, while if like spinning, weaving is introduced in the household, as it well may be, it will constitute another big advance and simplify matters still further.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

187. LETTER TO R.B. GREGG

July 4, 1929

MY DEAR GOVIND,

I have not been as regular in writing to you as you have been. *Young India* gives the reason. You are never absent from my thoughts.

I knew of your marriage long before your letter. Andrews wrote a line about it. You give me a beautiful description about it all. I wish you and yours a long and happy life of service. It would be a joy to welcome you, Mrs. Gregg at the Ashram. Of course she must see all your Indian associates and Indian haunts.

I did get that book on food. It did not create much impression on me. You must have seen in *Young India* all about my latest experiment.<sup>1</sup> It still continues. But I am unable to report any decisive result yet. We have just descended from the Almora hills. I combined business with recreation in the coolness of the Himalayan hills. We had a glorious view of the snowy range. It was a dazzling snow-capped amphitheatre in front of us whenever the sky was clear.

I hope you are keeping perfect health now.

With love to you both,

Yours,  
BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 4664

188. LETTER TO C. SATYANARAYAN

KASHIPUR,  
July 4, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. You may not interfere with your sister. It is no business of yours to keep watch over her. God alone can guide her

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Food Faddists", 13-6-1929

course, if she will let Him. Your business is to keep a strict watch over yourself. If your conduct is correct, it will react on your surroundings.

*Yours,*

C. SATYANARAYAN  
C/O G. VENKAT RAO  
NARSAPUR

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/68

*189. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI*

[Before July 5, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. Certainly let me have your observations on Gujarat and Tamilnad and add your observations on the conduct of the Ashram. You have now lived there sufficiently long to form an opinion.

Yes, you may develop the wool industry in Sind if cotton is impossible. If Sind really wants to boycott foreign cloth, it would do sacrificial or self-spinning. Every province should realize that boycott of foreign cloth is impossible without khadi. We must therefore learn to spin enough for our own requirements. The takli is the easiest thing in this direction.

*Yours,*

BAPU

[PS.]

I reach Sabarmati on 6th instant.

From a photostat: G.N. 892

*190. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU*

ON THE TRAIN,  
*July 6, 1929*

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have slept over your proposal. But I feel I must not shoulder the burden. I am sure that Jawahar should preside. Let young men

<sup>1</sup> The original bears the entry ,”5-7-1929”, presumably written by the addressee on receipt of this letter

have their innings. We must stand behind them. There are a hundred reasons why I must not preside. There are five hundred to show why Jawahar should preside. If you get this in time and if you approve I would deal with the matter in the next issue of *Young India*.<sup>1</sup>

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

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

*191. LETTER TO JIVRAM K. KOTHARI*

[Before July 7, 1929]<sup>2</sup>

BHAISHRI JIVRAM,

Even when I wrote to you yesterday I had a feeling that there was another letter of yours I had not answered. I searched for it today and have found it. Your first letter carries a report of your work; this one has ring of despair. The letter to which I replied yesterday bears the date 20th and the one to which I am replying now is dated 10th June. I found the letter of 10th June after I had commented on the letter of the 20th for *Navajivan*. I am, however, allowing the article on the letter of the 20th to go as it is.

Your despair is natural. But how can one who has dedicated everything to God yield to despair? Let God despair if He will. Why should we, His obedient servants, yield to despair? Let us do the job He has entrusted to us. Whether the result is good or bad is His concern. We shall be doomed if we are found wanting in our efforts. If we are not found so wanting, we shall have won the battle of life. If you remember this you will not yield to despair again.

Do not worry that you are not able to attract other workers. If you remain steady in your place other workers will be attracted on their own. Pay more and more attention to the spinning-wheel. I am arranging to send Jethalal to you for some time. Women will not come to your meetings but Purbai can meet them in their houses. For the present she may only talk with them and invite them to meet her.

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Who Should Wear the Crown", 1-8-1929

<sup>2</sup> From the reference to Gandhiji's comments on the addressee's letter published in *Navajivan*, 7-7-1929; vide "Among the Skeletons of Orissa", 7-7-1929

You must all acquire a working knowledge of the Oriya language. This can be done more quickly not through books but by talking to children and picking up words from them. The language is not difficult.

If you can find a few orphans, you may bring them up and train them. Some of them at least will grow into good workers.

The experiment at Bijolia and Ringus has succeeded because the spinning-wheel had been in use there and had only to be revived. The people there are not as poor as in Utkal. The poverty of Utkal has reduced the people to utter passivity. If you can find one worker there against a hundred in Ringus, I would say that a reasonable proportion had been achieved.

To dismiss the weavers who have been found stealing is in itself satyagraha. We may not do anything more. You are bound to have such experiences there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/65

### *192. THE OLD STORY<sup>1</sup>*

Elsewhere will be found a digest prepared by Mahadev Desai of reports of alleged oppression in the Dholka and Dashkroi taluks in connection with the recovery of taqavi advances. In sending the digest Sjt. Desai observes that he had hoped that the Government would have learnt wisdom from the Bardoli experience but that he had been sadly disillusioned. In my opinion both the hope and the disappointment were wholly unwarranted. The Government did not change its policy in the case of Bardoli, it was only compelled to yield under the pressure of organized resistance of the Bardoli peasantry and it is bound to do so again wherever such resistance is well organized. Even so the peasantry of Dholka and Dashkroi taluks will find that no power on earth will dare to molest them once they have fully learnt the lesson of self-respect.

The moral, however, which I want to draw from these happenings is that where the people have not shed their cowardice, they will continue to be oppressed, if not by a foreign Government, by their own kith and kin, a hundred Bardolis notwithstanding. The first

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 7-7-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

and foremost duty of national workers should therefore be to inculcate the lesson of fearlessness among the people. We cannot have a Vallabhbhai to lead everywhere. But every worker can in his own humble way try to emulate his qualities. All may not have Vallabhabhai's sagacity, his matchless courage and generalship but everyone can, and ought to be able to, develop a bit of his alertness and sleepless vigilance.

The Government, evidently, is determined to go on exacting more and more revenue so long as the people continue meekly to submit to its demands. All that it cares for is the golden egg, no matter whether the goose that lays it lives or dies. And how else can it carry on its present top-heavy system of administration? "The people must be made to pay at any cost"...that is the unwritten law and policy, which consequently it has perforce to follow. To compel it to scrap this policy is half the battle of swaraj. Land revenue today forms the very basis of British rule in India. It is a wrong basis from the people's point of view. It has been proved times without number that the Indian people are already taxed far beyond their capacity. But the income of the Government falls short of its daily growing requirements and so its best brains are kept busy devising fresh ways and means of increasing taxation. Unless, therefore, the present system of administration is completely changed, i.e., the expenditure considerably reduced, the oppression of the people will continue unabated even when the reins of Government have passed into Indian hands. That is why I am never tired of repeating from the housetop that swaraj must mean a complete transformation of the present system of administration and not a mere change of hands. But that will be possible only when the people have mastered the art of resisting unjust taxes. The first step in this direction would be to make a thorough study of the present system of taxation and to demonstrate its utterly unjust character. Then when it becomes imperatively necessary, comes the undoubted right of the people to refuse to pay unjust taxes, undeterred by fines, prosecutions and worse.

But who is to teach this art to the people? It is a task essentially for our national workers who must go and settle in the villages in their midst, win their confidence by dint of selfless service, identify themselves with them in their joys and sorrows, make a close study of their social conditions and by degrees infect them with their courage and determination to do or die. But for silent, patient, constructive

work of this kind by a band of workers who buried themselves in the villages of Bardoli, even the matchless leadership of Vallabhbhai might have proved of no avail. No general, however capable he may be, can fight a battle single-handed. He can fight only with the help of his weapons and the only true weapons of a general are not rifles and guns but loyal, disciplined soldiers, who would be content to work silently and unostentatiously and carry out his orders without demur even at the cost of their lives. The instances of oppression recounted by Mahadev Desai are by no means isolated phenomena. More probably than not, they have their replicas in other parts of the country also, only we do not know them. It is a well-established principle of medical science that all the diseases that the human system is heir to have a common origin and therefore, a common cure. Even so, beneath the surface, variety of ills which our body politic displays today, there is a fundamental unity of cause. It is that we must trace out and tackle.

*Young India*, 25-7-1929

### *193. ON INCREASING THE SIZE OF "NAVAJIVAN"*

I have received many comments on the opinion of a lover of Navajivan which I had published<sup>1</sup> regarding the inclusion of news items in it. Amongst these, "a lover of Navajivan", who happens to be a city-dweller, writes as follows:<sup>2</sup>

A viewpoint which is diametrically opposite to the one quoted above is expressed by a villager who happens to be a lover of Navajivan:<sup>3</sup>

I feel that both these viewpoints are justified as they have been expressed from different standpoints. One way of solving this problem is for me to go through the list of subscribers to Navajivan and find out whether the majority of them live in cities or in villages. However, before arriving at any conclusion in that manner, it is necessary to get the opinion of still more readers. Hence, I hope that

<sup>1</sup> Vide "A Suggestion Confereng "Navajivan" ", 23-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that the journal might continue to be published as hitherto. In regard to its size and the choice of subjects dealt with in it, he desired that special attention should be paid to satyagraha, non-violence and swaraj or dharmarajya.

<sup>3</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had supported the inclusion of news items and an increase in the number of pages which would add to its popularity and increase the circulation in villages.



those who take interest in this controversy will send their opinions to me.

Perhaps, even if the majority of readers happen to be villagers and desire the inclusion of news items, I would still have to investigate further how far it would be possible for me to do so. It is necessary to mention this here lest the reader conclude that a supplement will definitely be published in order to give news items. An attempt is continuously being made to see to it that Navajivan is useful to the maximum number of readers. However, the question how far it can be turned into a newspaper in addition to being the vehicle of my ideas and a means of pointing out the way to the attainment of swaraj is not a minor one. It is my primary duty to ensure that the main purpose behind it is not jeopardized in any way. The original limits set by me are dear to me. And I do not regard the attempt to keep within these as vain, whereas I doubt as to the advisability of including news items in it. However, I look to lovers of Navajivan for some light in this matter. The request for publishing news items comes from a thoughtful individual. I cannot ignore it. He also desires that other readers should send in their considered opinions.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 7-7-1929

#### *194. INSTANTANEOUS EFFECT*

As a result of the letter of Thakkar Bapa that I had published regarding the sad plight of untouchables in Bulsar,<sup>1</sup> the enthusiastic youth of that town immediately took the task in hand and made the Municipality aware of the problem. During my tour, I received letters about this from the taluk committee, the National Seva Mandal and such other organizations. I give below extracts<sup>2</sup> from the report which I have received of the resolution that has been passed by the Municipality as a result of this movement.

I congratulate the Municipality and those workers who have tried hard and resolved to provide facilities for our Bhangi brothers in this manner and for starting a school for Bhangi children. I hope that

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Sad Plighat of Bulsar Bhaangis", 9-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> These are not translated here. The Bulsar Municipality passed the resolutions sanctioning sums of Rs. 500 each for digging wells for the 'untouchables' and for building sheds for them with full amenities.

this enthusiasm will not subside. Let them not rest in peace until they enter the hearts of the Bhangi brothers and free them from their addiction to drink.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 7-7-1929

### 195. AMONG THE SKELETONS OF ORISSA

Readers of *Navajivan* are not unfamiliar with the philanthropy of Shri Jivram Kalyanji Kothari. He has not been content merely with giving away his wealth. He has devoted even his body and soul to the cause of khadi. Day and night he thinks of nothing but this cause. Not being satisfied even with this, he decided to use his own physical energy also in that cause and having done so, found out the poorest and, from the standpoint of khadi, the most difficult province to work in. The idea took hold of him that the wealth that he had gained through labourers should now be returned to them and finally it bore fruit in Orissa. For the past year or so, he has been working in Orissa, accompanied by his wife. And now Purbai, the widow worker of Karachi has also gone there. With them is a gentleman, Maganbhai by name and another person known as Ghanshyam Shahu. On my requesting them to do so, they gave me in Calcutta a detailed account of their work in their broken yet sweet language. After having carefully scrutinized it and put it in the form of an article, I had sent it over during my tour of Andhra. However, that important article was lost in the post and has not yet been traced. Recently, I received another letter from Shri Jivram which contains an account of the work being done there at present. I publish it below, as it will give some idea about it to the reader:<sup>1</sup>

I have made few changes in the language of this letter. I have often found that such letters become less interesting if their language is altered. I realize that the minor changes that I have made in the genders, etc., have indeed made the letter less interesting. In revealing the true nature of Shri Jivram, the 'improvements' made in his letter have had the very opposite effect and made it more obscure. However, this is a matter which all readers will not ordinarily understand and I

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. It had described how the spinning-wheel had banished fear and idleness among the womenfolk in Orissa.

have attempted to improve the language for fear that they may get tired of reading a language that falters too much. False adornments and superficial make-up have taken such hold of us that we fail to recognize that which is genuine unless it is cast in the conventional mould. Instead of unbleached but durable and easily recognizable khadi, people prefer starched, bleached khadi, although the latter may be more expensive and they forget that repeated washing has made the latter variety less genuine or not. The same is true of such letters. However, I shall not dilate on this theme.

The changes made in Shri Jivram's letter will not affect the evaluation of his work.

It is my request to Shri Jivram and those like him who are doing difficult work in a difficult region that they should never lose hope. It is our dharma to do our work, the outcome is in the hands of God. When we have no doubts regarding the worthiness of the activity and the means employed, we should die doing it but never give it up. All great tasks in the world have been achieved in this manner. At the place where Shri Jivram lives, the only inducement is inner joy. The climate is inclement, milk and ghee are hardly or not at all available, the language is different, the people are lazy, not deliberately but due to the prevailing circumstances and the atmosphere is not at all congenial to the spinning-wheel. Only those whose hearts are overflowing with love and who have full faith in their duty can enjoy living in such conditions...under such risks.

Shri Jivram has been taking such risks. He should now gradually introduce the science of the spinning-wheel in his sphere of work, making spinning-wheels locally, find out how counts of yarn are calculated, learn to recognize the different varieties of cotton, understand the subtler aspects of the carding of cotton. Where there is a will, there's a way.

The example of Shri Jivram deserves to be followed by many young men and especially by those belonging to the richer classes. This latter should not rest content with contributing money, but should also put in physical labour and devote their hearts to the cause. If they are as diligent in their work as they are in their business, the cause of khadi will progress at a much greater speed. All those who have had the experience have found that the spinning-wheel is the only principal means of bringing about an awakening among crores of destitute persons, of serving them and of making them happy.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 7-7-1929

## 196. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

July 8, 1929

DEAR SATIS BABU,

What a tragedy? You plunged into the milkless experiment too soon. It is evident that Gopalrao's optimism and deductions are superficial. I am myself flourishing. I have put on 1 lbs. on a totally fruitarian diet, no wheat, no nuts, no pulses. I omitted cereals and nuts because of slight fever contracted in Almora. I was none the worse for it but better. But I can do these things I suppose because of my previous training. Mirabehn is taking germinating wheat, gram and some fruit and raw vegetable and flourishing because she has kept milk and ghee. You could perhaps do likewise. There is nothing wrong in the raw cereals if milk and ghee be not omitted. Most of the literature points in that direction. The milkless experiment cannot yet be claimed as a success. You must therefore adhere to milk and ghee for the time being. Please do not hurry over the thing.

*Yours,*

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1606

## 197. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

*Silence Day [July 8, 1929]<sup>1</sup>*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

We reached the Ashram comfortably on Saturday night. I have gained two pounds. [My experiment of taking] uncooked grain still continues. Is your cough cured? Jayaprakash is not returning soon; I have therefore written to Rajendrababu that if you are sent back here, I could have your Gita and English further improved. If Father permits, come soon provided you wish to. I shall certainly like it.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3347

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to the experiment of uncooked grain and Gandhiji's return to the Ashram.

*198. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU*

*July 10, 1929*

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Here is a free translation of Vithalbhai's letter.

"If you do not accept or rather ask for the crown this year, you would be committing another Himalayan blunder. I am coming on the 17th to persuade you to see my way." I can guess what he has to say. But I shall await his arrival.<sup>1</sup> I thought you should know this latest development. Your wire has brought me relief. I wish Jawahar will come to a decision and end the uncertainty.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

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

*199. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL<sup>2</sup>*

SABARMATI,

*July 10, 1929*

I have your letter. Do come. I understand. At least it will be a pretext for us to meet after a long time. But it seems to me that accepting the presidentship will diminish my usefulness. It is for you now to point out the Himalayan blunder. Come in good health.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/31

<sup>1</sup> Vithalbhai Patel met Gandhiji on July 17 and 18.

<sup>2</sup> The identity of the addressee in this and the following letter has been inferred from Gandhiji's letter to Motilal Nehru, the preceding item.

## 200. *ALMORA IMPRESSIONS*

### HOSPITALITY

When one meets with nothing but deep affection and great attention everywhere, it is difficult to give their respective measures. I thought that Andhra Desha could not be equalled in this respect. The experience of Almora following closely on the heels of Andhra compels a revision of the opinion. For Almora did no less. No pains were spared by the Almora friends to make my all too short a stay in the beautiful Himalayan hills most comfortable. In one respect, they improved upon Andhra. They would not make the reception expenses a charge upon. They would not make the reception expenses a charge upon the various purses collected. All the heavy motor expenses were borne by a few private friends. The Committee would not listen to the expenses being paid of those who were travelling with me but were not of the staff and who were able to pay them. "If they intend to pay, let them give what they choose to the khadi purse," was the final reply. Enough however of the necessary acknowledgment of this generous hospitality. In these hills, Nature's hospitality eclipses all that man can ever do. The enchanting beauty of the Himalayas, their bracing climate and the soothing green that envelops you, leave nothing more to be desired. I wonder whether the scenery of these hills and the climate are to be surpassed, if equalled, by any of the beauty spots of the world. After having been for nearly three weeks in the Almora hills, I am more than ever amazed why our people need to go to Europe in search of health.

### WHO IS UNTOUCHABLE?

Untouchability is a snake with a thousand mouths through each of which it shows its poisonous fangs. It defies definition. It needs no sanction from Manu or the other ancient law-givers. It has its own local smriti. Thus in Almora a whole class of people, whose occupation is, even according to the Santana dharma so called, innocent, are untouchables. They are all cultivators owning their own holdings. They are called shilpi, i.e., farmers. Another similar class of people called Boras suffer in the same manner although they do not even eat carrion or take liquor and observe all the rules of sanitation as well as any. Tradition has condemned these as untouchables. Hinduism that refuses to think accepts the tradition unquestioningly

and exposes itself to merited ridicule and worse. Reformers are trying to cope with the evil. I feel, however, that much more drastic methods are needed than are employed to rid Hinduism of the blot. We are needlessly afraid to wound the susceptibilities of orthodoxy. We have to shed the fear, if we expect to end the evil in our own generation. This untouchability naturally recoils on the heads of those who are responsible for it. In Almora, the choka...untouchability at the time of dining...has worked its insidious way even among castes and sub-castes till at last every man makes himself an untouchable. This choka exercises its evil sway even in national institutions like the Prem Vidyalaya. I was considerably relieved when upon inquiry I found that none of the trustees believed in the choka, and that they were tolerating it so as not to scare the parents of the boys attending the institution.

#### NAYAKS

Just as there is in the South a caste which dedicates to a life of shame girls euphemistically called Devadasis, so is there in Almora a caste called Nayak that similarly brings up its girls without any euphemism. Nevertheless, it too defends the practice on religious grounds and thus drags with the girls religion too in the mire. If God was a capricious person instead of being the changeless and unchangeable living Law, He would in sheer indignation wipe out all those who in the name of religion deny Him and His law. The Servants of India Society is trying to wean the Nayak parents from the sin of degrading their daughters. The progress made is slow, because the public conscience is asleep and man's lust provides material reward for the indecency.

*Young India*, 11-7-1929

#### 201. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

This committee is pursuing its course in a very systematic way. It has followed the President's letter to the M.L.A.s and M.L.C.s by supplying them with boycott and khadi literature to enable them to do their work. A letter to the editors of newspapers, among other things, reminds them of their obvious duty to eschew foreign cloth and liquor advertisements. It would be interesting to know if the appeal has met with much, if any, response. Let the reader remember that the first Sunday in every month is to be specially devoted to boycott work.

The next day of such observance is 4th August. A general letter to Congress Committees lays down the following ten points:

1. Organizing propaganda parties for touring outside large towns;
2. arranging house-to-house visits for converting people to the boycott of foreign cloth;
3. holding of public meetings where house-to-house propaganda is not feasible;
4. hawking of khadi as often during each week as possible;
5. collecting sufficient funds to run small khadi sale depots wherever necessary;
6. organizing street propaganda and nagar kirtan parties on every Wednesday and Sunday in the week;
7. engaging in special boycott activity on the first Sunday of each month, that is, 4th August and 1st September;
8. arranging requisitions for special meetings of local bodies which have not so far considered the suggestions made by the F.C.B. Committee for securing their co-operation in the boycott campaign;
9. posting weekly report of F.C.B. work on each Monday; and
10. observing 2nd October, 1929 as the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Day.

He Publicity Department of the F.C.B. Committee gives the following interesting and encouraging report<sup>1</sup> of the work being done in Vile Parle, Champaran and elsewhere<sup>2</sup>.

It is to be hoped that other places will copy these organizations. But the workers should bear in mind that the secret of the success of boycott through khadi lies in the recognition of the fact that we have to be manufacturers as we are consumers. It is the capacity for automatic production and distribution that makes khadi invincible the moment we recognize the fact. If therefore, hawking of khadi is undertaken without at the same time the same agencies working for production, soon there will be no khadi to hawk. And for the sale of khadi, just as the workers set the example by wearing it, so may they set the example in production by spinning themselves. The easiest way of doing this is to take up the takli. That little instrument has

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here..

<sup>2</sup> This covered Karnataka and Kathiawar.



unrealized possibilities which anyone who takes it up may verify for himself or herself.

*Young India*, 11-7-1929

## 202. SELF-SUPPORTING EDUCATION

The Almora district Board address, which narrated the story of how it educated the children under its charge, and its very laudable attempt to instruct the boys in wool-spinning and weaving, prompted me to repeat with greater emphasis than hitherto the opinion expressed before by me that education should be self-supporting. The opinion has gathered force during my wanderings. If the State has to bear the cost of education of millions of children, it will never be able to raise enough money by any conceivable measure of taxation. That it is the primary duty of the State to bring to its schools every boy and girl and give them proper, not perfunctory (as now), education is an axiomatic truth. But in a country like India such education must largely if not wholly pay itself. And if we could but shed the hypnotic spell which our English tutors have cast over us, we should not find any difficulty in discovering ways and means of achieving the end. With the best motives in the world, the English tutors could not wholly understand the difference between English and Indian requirements. Our climate does not require the buildings which they need. Nor do our children brought up in predominantly rural environment need the type of education the English children brought up in surroundings predominantly urban need.

When our children are admitted to schools, they need, not slate and pencils and books, but simple village tools which they can handle freely and remuneratively. This means a revolution in educational methods. But nothing short of a revolution can put education within reach of every child of school-going age.

It is admitted that the so-called knowledge of the three R's that is at present given in Government schools, is of little use to the boys and girls in after life. Most of it is forgotten inside of one year, if only for want of use. It is not required in their village surroundings.

But if a vocational training in keeping with their surroundings was given to the children, they would not only repay the expenses incurred in the schools but would turn that training to use in after life. I can imagine a school entirely self-supporting, if it became say a

spinning and weaving institution with perhaps a cotton field attached to it.

The scheme I am adumbrating does not exclude literary training. No course of primary instruction would be considered complete that did not include reading, writing and arithmetic. Only, reading and writing would come during the last year when really the boy or girl is the readiest for learning the alphabet correctly. Handwriting is an art. Every letter must be correctly drawn, as an artist would draw his figures. This can only be done if the boys and girls are first taught elementary drawing. Thus side by side with vocational training which would occupy most of the day at school, they would be receiving vocal instruction in elementary history, geography and arithmetic. They would learn manners, have object-lessons in practical sanitation and hygiene, all of which they would take to their homes in which they would become silent revolutionists.

The District Board of Almora and any other such Board which is unhampered by restrictions and which has a clear nationalist majority may try the experiment if it has faith and some members who will make it their business to see it through. Above all, it is a question national educational institutions must tackle if they would justify their existence. They have to conduct original researches, not reproduce clumsy imitations of those which they condemn and seek to replace.

No originality is claimed for the method advocated here. Booker T. Washington tried it with considerable success. If I recollect rightly, even the higher education he gave was self-supporting. In America, it is the most usual thing for even college boys to pay fully for their education by engaging in some kind of remunerative work. The plan is different but the idea underlying is not.

*Young India*, 11-7-1929

### 203. SYLHET INUNDATED

It was in Kausani that I received the first information<sup>1</sup> from the Chairman of the local Congress Committee of the devastating floods that have overtaken the Sylhet valley. Even the usual rainfall is terrible

<sup>1</sup> For this and Gandhiji's reply, *Vide* "Telegram to President, Congress Committee, Karaimganj", 22-6-1929

in these parts of India, but the papers before me tell me that a flood such as was recently experienced there, has not been known within living memory. The area affected is said to be 5,500 square miles and the population over 18 lakhs. I need not reproduce the terrible story of destruction which has been vividly described in the daily Press. I have had telegrams and letters from at least four committees asking for relief. These include one from Sjt. Subhas Bose informing me of the formation of the Central Relief Committee with Dr. P.C. Ray as its President. Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar has proceeded there to see with his own eyes the damage done to life and property.

Since Gujarat has had experience of such a flood only recently, it can understand Assam's tribulation. A man who is kind, has national feeling and patriotism, can never ask: 'How can one give every day if every day there are floods and famines? Who can afford to do so? Even the treasures of Kuber would be emptied if donations have to be given like this.' As long as we have the right to eat, the man who is starving has the right to ask for his share of food. If this is recognized as an established truth, then anyone who has more than his daily needs, cannot at all refuse to give if someone approaches him for donations for people affected by floods, etc.<sup>1</sup>

I ask those who have not already given, to send their subscriptions which will be used in a manner that would give the greatest relief with the means that the donors may put at my disposal. Relief in the case of unprecedented destructions such as this only comes in well after the first shock is over. First aid in such cases is rendered by Nature herself in that utter destruction is its own remedy. Man brings the healing balm through his fellow-feeling to those who remain behind to tell the tale of woe. The donations that the readers may send will be used after the most careful inquiry I may be capable of making.

*Young India*, 11-7-1929

## 204. PROHIBITION

Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari who has been entrusted with the prohibition propaganda by the Working Committee has issued the first number of the monthly Prohibition, the official organ of the Prohi-

<sup>1</sup> This paragraph is from the article, "Heavy Floods in Assam", published in *Navajivan*, 14-7-1929.

bition League of India. Its price is 2 annas, postage extra, and it can be had at Gandhi Ashram, Tiruchengodu. The contents are interesting. They show how the Government thwart prohibition by every means at their disposal. Damoh is a district of the Central Provinces. It carried prohibition in the teeth of opposition. I must ask the curious to read the history of the campaign in the pages of the journal. I cannot however resist quoting the following tragic story of damages claimed by a liquor vendor:

Perumal Naidu, Village Munsiff of Singarapet, Dt. Salem, Madras, was tried departmentally by the Divisional Revenue Officer ... and he was suspended for one year. ...

Not content with the infliction of this departmental punishment, the local toddy shop renter filed a suit for damages for Rs.300 on the ground that by reason of the defendant's dissuasion, he lost all custom for full three months, January to March 1926, and that the defendant was bound to make good the loss. ... The suit is pending.

Is it any wonder if I call a system Satanic under which such things are possible? I need not be told that there may be other systems more Satanic than this. It would be time enough to consider such a retort if I had to make a choice between Satanic systems. The pity of it is that many educated Indians who lead public opinion are drawn into this Satanic net as witness what Mahadev Desai said<sup>1</sup> about the recent dinner to the Viceroy at the Chelmsford Club. All but one or two Indians drank champagne to their fill! When Satan comes disguised as a champion of liberty, civilization, culture and the like, he makeshimself almost irresistible. It is therefore a good thing that prohibition is an integral part of the Congress programme.

*Young India*, 11-7-1929

### 205. THE PUNDIT SABHA OF KASHI

When I was in Kashi, three questions were sent to me on behalf of the Kashi Pundit Sabha. I considered it my duty to answer these questions, but I did not then have time to do so. Later the questions lay in my file. I could not attend to them during my tour either. Now I am cleaning up my file. The questions are:

<sup>1</sup> Under the caption, "A Simla Letter" in *Young India*, 11-7-1929

1. How can a sanatani Hindu who is well versed in the doctrines of sanatana dharma and accepts the Vedas and the smritis based on them as an infallible authority, contend that there is no untouchability in Hinduism or lend his support to freely mixing with untouchables, excepting on the occasions enumerated in the well-known verse: "In religious processions, marriages, emergencies, rebellions and in all festivals, contact with untouchables does not pollute"?

2. Your work is among the people of India who are predominantly sanatana dharmis and who implicitly believe in the Gita dictum: "Let the Shastras, therefore, be they authority in deciding what is to be done and what is to be shunned." How can you then effectively carry on the work of eradicating untouchability till you have proved that this work is in conformity with the Shastras?

3. The Muslim Ulemas are firmly convinced that there is merit in killing all those who follow any religion other than Islam for they are Kaffirs, and that Muslims can mingle with them only when they accept Islam. So long as all Muslims are under the influence of these Ulemas, how can Hindus make friends with Muslims while protecting the Hindu dharma?

The pundits should not expect a very learned answer from me. I shall humbly try to answer the questions as best I can on the basis of dharma and Shastras as I have understood them from my own experience.

The *shrutis* and *smritis* do not become scriptures merely because they are known by these respectable names. Whatever goes against the eternal principles of truth, etc., cannot be religious. *Manusmriti* and similar treatises put before us seem to be different today from what they were in their original form, as they contain some contradictory statements. In them are found statements that go against morality and reason. Having regard to the spirit of the shruti granthas, untouchability would indeed seem to be a sin. What I have said about untouchability is this: "There is no sanction in the Shastras for untouchability as we know it today." In this statement and the one the pundits have put into my mouth, there is a vast difference. Even if we accept the current smritis as our authority, we do not find in them any basis for untouchability as it is practised today. Even if we accept what the pundits have quoted as authority, three-fourths of our work is done. "Religious processions, marriages, emergencies, rebellions and festivals" are with us even today. Why do the pundits publicly support

untouchability when the smritis say that when any of the circumstances obtain, untouchability should not be observed?

There is no need for me to answer the second question any further. I have made it clear that for my purpose the statement of the pundits is enough. Let us now consider what may be called a Shastra. I have said above that if we treated every work written in Sanskrit as a Shastra then virtue could be proved to be sin and sin, virtue. Thus in the language of the Gita, Shastra can only mean, if the meaning is to be acceptable to reason, the utterances of a sthitaprajna<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, if the pundits wish to lead the people on the right path, along with learning they should also have a steadfast intellect, and they should give up passion and ill will. Till the pundits strive hard, do tapas and become the brahmabhutas<sup>2</sup> of the Gita an ordinary person like me will have no other alternative than to serve the people in the light of his experience.

That leaves the third question. In my humble opinion the pundits have only betrayed their ignorance in asking such a question. It is neither a teaching of Islam to kill the people who belong to other religions nor do the Ulemas have any such desire. All the Muslims are not under their control either. Nothing except the purity of the Hindus can save Hinduism. It is only oneself that can save oneself. According to the saying “if you are good the world will be good” it is our duty to live in amity with all. At any rate my experience teaches me only this.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 11-7-1929

## 206. WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS

Even since I expressed my views about widow-remarriage<sup>3</sup> I have been receiving lots of questions. Many which I feel do not need answering, I forget. But the following questions deserve consideration:

1. Up to what age should widows be permitted to remarry?

<sup>1</sup> Man of steadfast intellect

<sup>2</sup> Those who have become one with Brahman; *Vide* Bhagavad Gita, II, 55-72.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* “A Few Questions”, 20-6-1929

2. If, after widow-remarriage has been socially approved, a widow past the specified age should desire to remarry and insists on doing so, how can she be stopped?

3. After widow-remarriage has been socially approved, should widows with children, or those who are no longer young be allowed to remarry if they want to?

4. An article written by Shri Ramanand Chatterjee, Editor, Modern Review, has appeared in Widow's Cause, an English paper published from Lahore. The article suggests that widows should be allowed to remarry up to the age of thirty-five. Is this right?

5. Once the custom of widow-remarriage becomes established, widows will wish to remarry and even those widows who had not so far considered remarriage out of respect for custom will start doing so.

There is no need to answer these questions separately for they are all prompted by a misunderstanding of my views. The rights or latitude allowed to widowers should also be allowed to widows. Otherwise, widows become victims of coercion and coercion is violence, out of which only harm can come. The questions raised about widows are not raised about widowers. It can only be because laws applying to women have been framed by men. If law-making had been the business of women they would not have given themselves fewer rights than men enjoy. In countries where women have a hand in law-making they have had the necessary laws enacted for themselves.

Thus the answer to the above questions is that it is the duty of the father to marry off his young widowed daughter. As regards the rest no obstacles should be placed in the way of those who wish to remarry.

There is no reason to believe that when such an arrangement comes into effect all widows would remarry. In those countries where widow-remarriage is allowed all the widows do not remarry, nor do all the widowers. Only when widowhood is observed voluntarily is it worthy of praise. Enforced widowhood is to be condemned and leads to promiscuity. I know of many widows who do not wish to remarry though there are no restrictions imposed on them.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 11-7-1929

207. *LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL*

SABARMATI,  
*July 11, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind letter. I think it is impossible to prevent our meeting from becoming public property. I suggest a way out. If you take the metre-gauge from Delhi, you cannot avoid Ahmedabad. I could join you at Kalol or Mehsana and we could have an hour to ourselves unless you could break journey at Ahmedabad. If however either of these courses is inconvenient to you and if you think it absolutely necessary that we should meet, I shall gladly come down to Bombay on 31st.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/70

208. *LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI*

*July 11, 1929*

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

What is the news about you? Moti should be sent here for some length of time. I hear she has epilepsy. She is losing weight. If she comes here we can try some remedy.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12144

209. *LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
*July 12, 1929*

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I understand what you write about Bijolia. We have invariably found amazing results wherever truth and non-violence were sincerely employed. In response to your letter I wrote out one to Kshemanandji



on the same day. I myself do not know that Kshemanandji has not himself understood my point of view. His was very clear but you may ask him when you come or write to him. Send Ramnarayanji over here whenever he wants to come. I hope you know that his wife will live apart in the women's section, or don't you?

I had fever just for two days. My experiment with the diet has nothing to do with it. The experiment continues. I am pleased to know that Vaijanathji's book has been well received.

Please do not bother yourself about giving up milk. I myself cannot as yet claim complete success in my experiment of giving up milk. But I am pulling on somehow, because my insistence on giving up milk is my own and also long standing. I am distressed when I take milk. I get the almonds wiped with a clean dry piece of cloth and pounded fine along with the skin. The powder turns to something like ghee. Formerly, I used to skin them after soaking them in water. Later, I came to know that the skin too contained some salts. These ought not to be wasted. Moreover, the skin is certainly laxative. If you try the experiment of almonds you must take one of these, viz., tomatoes, cabbage leaves, fresh tandalajo<sup>1</sup>. From these one obtains the vitamin which is to be found predominantly in green leaves alone. Nowadays it is widely believed that this vitamin is essential. Green leaves, tomatoes or cabbage must be taken uncooked. Vitamin A is destroyed by the mere applying of heat. I do not think any part of your letter now remains unanswered.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6065. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

## 210. TELEGRAM TO NAGESHWARA RAO

[On or after *July 12, 1929*]<sup>2</sup>

NAGESHWARA RAO

POSITION            COMPLICATED            TRYING            SEND            "NAVAJIVAN"  
MANAGER    DISCUSS    WITH    YOU    AND    DECIDE    FOR    HIMSELF.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15425

<sup>1</sup> A variety of edible leaves

<sup>2</sup> This was sent in reply to the addressee's telegram dated July 12, 1929 from Madras which read: "Former Press decree 3,500. Paper merchant warrant 3,000. Arranging press security 7,000. Please remit telegraph transfer."

## 211. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*July 13, 1929*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

How is it that Dilip has not yet recovered? He used to be so healthy. Some lapse on his part must be the cause of his falling ill. When you are fit enough for the journey and go to Almora, I think he will regain his health. Our relations with people at Almora are such that when you go there you will feel at home.

I shall have to go to Allahabad on the 24th<sup>1</sup>. I shall be back here by the 29th. I shall go *via* Agra.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SJT. MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

121 FORT STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

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

## 212. LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI

*July 13, 1929*

BHAISHRI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. When Moti comes here after two or three months I would certainly not be here. Moreover it is not good to let such a disease drag on in this way. What is the hitch in sending Moti immediately?

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12145

<sup>1</sup> For the Congress Working Committee meeting

### 213. MEANING OF THE TERM 'FADDIST'

Readers have provided useful assistance in giving the meaning of the word 'faddist'. The equivalent of this word in Gujarati (*dhuni*) was sent in by four persons. One of them is a lady who does not know English. However, from the definition that I had given of it, she readily thought of the word 'dhuni' and that is the word which comes nearest in meaning to the word 'faddist'. Some others had suggested the Gujarati equivalent of the word 'crazy' (*chakram*). A faddist is never a crazy individual. In English, there is a good word for the latter type of person...a 'madcap'. The other word that was suggested was *dadharigo*; that, however, will not do.

For those who know both English and Gujarati, it will be an interesting pastime to find out the equivalents in one language of words in the other, and if anyone compiles such a dictionary, it will be a useful thing. It is not the function of the dictionary I have in mind to make sentences and thereby give the meaning of a Gujarati word in English and vice versa. In the dictionary which I visualize, only the equivalents of words that are used in daily life in either of those two languages are given in both languages. Anyone who is a diligent lover of the language can compile such a concise dictionary within a short period of time. Such a small dictionary will prove very useful to those like me who do not wish to use English words while speaking Gujarati. Anyone who has the ability, the interest and the time to spare should compile such a dictionary. If it is sent over to me and if it is found useful, Navajivan will be prepared to publish it and pay something for it.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 14-7-1929

### 214. HOW TO DESCRIBE THEIR MAJESTY?

Although both Simla and Darjeeling are in the Himalayas, in neither of these places could I get an idea of their grandeur. I stayed in these places only for a short while and they looked like British colonies to me. It was in Almora that I got some idea of what the Himalayas are. But for the Himalayas, there would be no Ganga, Jamuna, Brahmaputra and Indus; if the Himalayas were not there, there would be no rainfall and these rivers would not be there, and without rainfall India would become a desert like the Sahara. Our far-

sighted ancestors who knew this and who were always grateful to God for the gifts that were bestowed on them turned the Himalayas into a place of pilgrimage. Thousands of Hindus have sacrificed their lives in these parts in their search for God. These persons were not insane. It is as a result of their tapas that the Hindu faith and India herself still endure.

In Kausani, while looking at the row of snow-capped Himalayan heights glittering in the sunlight, I wondered how different types of people would react to the sight of those grand white peaks. Let me unburden my mind by sharing with the reader the thoughts that overpowered me again and again at that time.

If children were to see that sight, they would say to themselves that that was a mountain made of starfeni<sup>1</sup>, that they would like to run up to it and, sitting on top of it, go on eating that sweet. Anyone who is as crazy about the spinning-wheel as I am would say that someone has peeled the cotton pod, separated the seed from the cotton, carded the latter and made a mountain of cotton like an inexhaustible stock of silk and remark, 'How stupid the people of this country were that despite this wealth of cotton, they roamed about half-naked and half-starved!' If a devout Parsi happened to come across this sight, he would bow down to the Sun-God and say: 'Look at these mountains which resemble our dasturs<sup>2</sup> clad in milk-white puggrees just taken out of boxes and in gowns which are equally clean and freshly-laundered and ironed, who look handsome as they stand motionless and still with folded hands, engrossed in having the darshan<sup>3</sup> of the sun.' A devout Hindu, looking at these glittering peaks which collect upon themselves water from distant dense clouds would say: 'This is god Siva Himself, the Ocean of compassion, and who by holding the waters of the Ganga within His own white matted hair saves India from a deluge.'

Shankaracharya<sup>4</sup> had roamed about in Almora. Even today I can hear him say, 'This is indeed a marvellous sight, but all this is an illusion created by God. The Himalayas do not really exist, I do not exist and you do not exist. Brahman alone is real. It alone is the truth, while the world is illusory. Repeat, therefore, that while Brahman is the only reality, the world is unreal.'

<sup>1</sup> A sweet resembling in appearance white thread.

<sup>2</sup> Priest.

<sup>3</sup> Sight of a holy person or thing

<sup>4</sup> Eighth-century philosopher

Oh, reader! The true Himalayas exist within our hearts. True pilgrimage, or supreme effort on the part of all human beings, consists in taking shelter in that cave and having darshan of Siva there.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 14-7-1929

### 215. IF SPINNERS ALSO WEAVE?

Shri Jethalal Govindji's self-confidence and enthusiasm are most extraordinary. He has sent me the following report<sup>1</sup> which deserves consideration.

Where a spinner can weave, he is being encouraged to do so; however, it should be admitted that this is not being done with the same amount of fervour as shown by Shri Jethalal. Such enthusiasm can be found only in an experienced person. It is obviously desirable that all the processes involved in making khadi, including weaving it, should find a place in the farmer's household. It is for the sake of weaving that emphasis is laid on carding and spinning. However, if we stress all these activities equally, there is danger of the importance of spinning being lost sight of. Once the activity of spinning becomes established, weaving will automatically find a place in the farmer's household. An army commander who has besieged a wall, does not start shelling the entire wall, but rather concentrates his attack upon a small portion of it and makes a hole in it. He regards himself as having triumphed when the first hole is made. The mason who is engaged in the process of demolishing a wall does not bring down his hammer upon all the bricks but rather strikes a blow at a single key brick; once that crumbles, in an instant he knocks down all the rest with the help of a crowbar. A somewhat similar argument applies to the stress laid on spinning. This argument does not apply to Shri Jethalal. He should not limit his self-confidence at all. It does, however, apply to the patience of those who feel dizzy on reading this

<sup>1</sup> Not translated here. The correspondent had argued that, if a carder were also a spinner, he would card cotton so well that the yarn would not snap while spinning; that if a spinner were also a weaver he would spin in such a way that the yarn would not snap while weaving; if a weaver were also a salesman, he would weave well enough to attract buyers.

letter. If the talk about weaving scares them, let them ignore it. For all those who can understand them the calculations worked out by Shri Jethalal are full of hope and guidance. We have not yet even touched those skeletons of whom I speak so often and whose number exceeds a crore. Compared to these, the class of persons whom we have been able to reach is better off. These human skeletons do not even have room to keep looms, many are even without homes and roam about like wild animals. For them, the takli is the only tool available.

When they get this, their eyes will regain lustre. Weaving can only come as the next step. Shri Jethalal may not even have come across such individuals. I have seen a few such persons here and there. Even after covering much ground, I did not have the good fortune of visiting their homes, or one may say that my penance has not been adequate enough. They live at a great distance from the railway line. In those skeletons dwells the real Lord of the Poor.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 14-7-1929

## 216. ABOUT “NAVAJIVAN”

I have before me a pile of opinions sent by “lovers of *Navajivan*” regarding the publishing of news in this magazine. Every day I am inundated with letters on this subject. The readers have discussed the matter well and in an interesting manner. If numbers alone are to be considered, the majority welcomes the suggestion for the inclusion of news items. However, the number of persons who have opposed this idea is not small either. And the reader will well understand that it is likely that there is deeper reflection behind the negative answers. One of these is as follows:<sup>1</sup>

Another gentleman has written in Hindi to this effect: ‘I read *Navajivan* in order to find happiness from a vision of truth. I do not at all like the suggestion made by the “lover of *Navajivan*”.’

The above-mentioned letters contain much that is in the same strain. I have merely given the substance of these. Let us put aside

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that during the nine years that he had been reading *Navajivan* he had no difficulty in understanding an article because no news items had been published along with them. *Young India* and *Navajivan* were better than *Indian Opinion* because they contained “sacred articles” and no news.

their praise of Navajivan. The sum and substance of their opinions is as follows: 'The scope of Navajivan has already been defined. By adding to its size, it would lose both ways.' I feel that this argument is correct. The temptation to include news items is indeed great. However, it appears to be some sort of a craze. No periodical can serve several purposes. The task of Navajivan is to serve the cause of swaraj. Hence my dharma is to engage my colleagues' time merely in trying to achieve that end. To utilize their energy even for other worthy causes would be as good as retarding the cause of swaraj. This then is a fundamental consideration.

While considering the matter with Shri Mohanlal, I find that there are many practical difficulties too. News items cannot at all be included without increasing the price of Navajivan and this I regard as undesirable. Some persons are indeed of opinion that news items should be included even if it means increasing the price of Navajivan. However, such generosity should not be taken advantage of. Navajivan has to reach even the poorest of the poor sections of society. If at all it were possible for me to do so, I would lower its price, but would not increase it.

Moreover, there is a difficulty in the selection of news items. What items are to be included and what are to be excluded? The tone of the letters written by many persons implies that, since we do not get correct reports these days, Navajivan will be able to do that job. This is an illusion. The latter too, would have to depend upon inland and foreign telegrams and newspapers. Navajivan is not in a position to employ its own correspondents and get reports from them. No newspaper in India is in such a position. The cables sent by Reuter and such other agencies are not reliable. Almost all of them are motivated by self-interest, are hurriedly despatched, involve partiality and are provocative. Which of such news items should be included and which excluded?

I see other practical difficulties also. Hence, I have finally arrived at the conclusion that there is no room for news items in Navajivan. However, I found this discussion most interesting. I am indebted to those who took part in it. In particular, I have been enabled to understand my responsibility. Much remains to be done in the way in which Navajivan is being conducted. I shall attempt to do this if possible. I have to abandon many subjects owing to lack of time and to my tours. I shall try and take them up. And I shall take care to

bear in mind the original idea behind the suggestion, i.e., I shall try and give facts which have a bearing on any incident referred to in an article. In this manner, there will be no difficulty in understanding the subject-matter.

My suggestion to those who hanker after news is that they should get it from elsewhere and they will lose nothing if they give up craving for it. Balfour was Prime Minister of England; he was a highly learned man. He had said that he never read newspapers; his secretaries put up to him anything that he ought to know. This statement was neither exaggerated nor arrogant. He did not feel any necessity for reading newspapers. Being of a studious disposition, he did not wish to give his time to reading newspapers. What would villagers gain by reading newspapers? They would come to know of the progress of motion pictures, of the progress made in aviation, stories of murders, facts describing the various revolutions that are going on in the world, dirty descriptions of dirty proceedings of law-suits, news regarding horse races, the stock exchange and motor-car accidents. Mostly items of news mean only these things.

Of course, villagers, too, should have a knowledge of history and geography. There are other means for obtaining this knowledge. That is the task of the Vidyapith. This problem involves the education of the men and women dwelling in villages and not that of rural children. Kakasaheb has taken up this task with the help of the charitable gift made by Shri Nagindas. With the grace of God, we shall be able to see its good results within a short period. It has been decided to publish an educational supplement to Navajivan. Whatever can be done through it will certainly be done. Moreover, whatever news items are necessary for mental development, for an understanding of the world and for forging unity with it will readily be available in the supplement to Navajivan or in the second half of it.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 14-7-1929



## 217. LETTER TO A RUSSIAN CORRESPONDENT<sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI (INDIA),  
July 14, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your kind and interesting letter for which I thank you. I may not have been able clearly to express my view on war and non-violence in the pages of *Young India*, but you may be sure that I am not likely to take part in any armed conflict that may arise anywhere including my own country.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9703. Courtesy: The Embassy of the U.S.S.R. in India

## 218. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

July 14 [1929]<sup>2</sup>

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

Your letter. What has been said about that lady applies equally to the men. As for you, you must stop worrying and seek the support of Ramanama. All will be well.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 199

## 219. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
July 14, 1929

BHAI JETHALAL,

You must obtain a testimonial from the Vidyapith; only then can something be done.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1349

<sup>1</sup> Exhibited at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition (1969), New Delhi, by the Cultural Department of the USSR Embassy

<sup>2</sup> From the postmark

## 220. LETTER TO ALBERT M. TODD<sup>1</sup>

July 15, 1929

It is kind of you to offer me pecuniary assistance if I satisfy you that I am in need. Though I always remain in need by the very nature of the philosophy of life that I have adopted, my needs are supplied by those in India who are interested in the activities that I am engaged in. I send you herewith the constitution of the Ashram<sup>2</sup> which will give you some idea of the various activities.

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 15213

## 221. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 15, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

The customary letter from you has been missing for so long. why? It is all well here. About thirty of us are carrying on the experient of uncooked grain.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3348

## 222. A LETTER

SABARMATI,

July 15, 1929

Even the most alert person may unknowingly speak and write what is not true. . . .<sup>3</sup> Therefore silence is regarded as an adornment of truth. Your Gujarati can be improved if you wish but what will you do by improving it? I would not even like that you should spend your time in such an effort. Intelligence has nothing to do with grammar.

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his letter dated April 25, 1929, which read: "Because I wholly approve of you and your work, I would like to send some money, perhaps five hundred dollars. . . . If I find that you are in need of help, I will be glad to give, so far as I am able. . . ."

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Satyaagraha Ashram"

<sup>3</sup> Omission as in the source

There have been many great men in the world who did not know grammar. Where did Lord Buddha go to learn it? God has granted you intelligence, faith, etc., and that wealth is not little.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/73

### 223. *LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI*

*July 15, 1929*

DEAR SISTER,

I have your sorrowful letter. What should I write to you? God alone can give you strength. May it be well with you.

You should not start on uncooked food all of a sudden. Leafy vegetables can be certainly taken raw. But if you want to experiment, you should start with leafy vegetables, fruit and milk. There is no harm in taking a little salt.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

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

### 224. *LETTER TO MOOLCHAND AGRAWAL*

*July 15, 1929*

BHAI MOOLCHANDJI,

I have your letter. We can achieve very little through public agitation in the States. Do what you can by discussing things personally with the authorities. Or else call off the public meetings.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 755

### 225. *LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA*

Silence Day[*July 17, 1929*]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. GANGABEHN SENIOR,

I did shrink when I permitted you to resume the medical role. But it will not matter since you will exercise it with care. Make as little use of it as you can. Improve your own health. Do not be embarrassed

<sup>1</sup> As in the source, though the Silence Day fell on the 15th.

on account of the change of rooms. Let these changes go on. Indeed, do we ever have a room of our own? Aparigraha<sup>1</sup> is an attitude of the mind. If we regard a thing like a pen as belonging to us we commit parigraha. We should live as and where the world lets us live. A perfect spirit of service will be born only if one could conduct oneself in this manner. Be very firm regarding Krishnamaiyadevi and Maitri.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro—6: G.S. Gangabehnne, pp.25-6*

## 226. NOTES

### A GOOD SOUL PASSES AWAY

Dr. Ruth P. Hume writes from Ahmednagar:

A cablegram came today telling of the passing on [sic] of my father...Rev. R.A. Hume, D.D....on June 24th.

I wanted to tell you, as you and my father were personal friends. And I thought possibly you might care to mention it in *Young India*. Of his life and work you know...also that he was born in Bombay in 1847, returned to India as a missionary in Ahmednagar in 1875, and retired to America in 1926. He had been active until recently. But he was in poor health. So we would rejoice for his release and give God thanks for his long life of service.

Yes, indeed, I have pleasant recollectionsof the deceased friend. He carried on an extensive correspondence with me both whilst he was here and after he had gone to America. I recognized in his letters his warm-hearted affection for India. He rendered assistance to Dina-bandhu Andrews whilst he was touring in that great continent. I share with his daughter the rejoicings for the release of this good soul from the earthly tabernacle. Death such as this affords no cause for sorrow or condolence. Death always is but more especially in cases like this a"sleep and a forgetting".

### ANTI-VACCINATION

Sjt. Krishnagopal Dutt of Sialkot wires:

Secretary, Anti-vaccination League, Palghat, was imprisoned because he refused getting his son vaccinated. Refer my statements Associatied Press.

<sup>1</sup> Non-possessiveness

Pity people regard things other than political unimportant. Poor Secretary imprisoned, noble cause, but country's Press callously silent. Kindly express your strong feelings in Press.

I congratulate the Secretary on his incarceration for the sake of conscience. But I have no anger in me for the indifference of the public or the Press over the incident. I am and have been for years a confirmed anti-vaccinationist but I recognize that I must not expect public support for my views. Anti-vaccination has no backing from the orthodox medical opinion. A medical man who expresses himself against vaccination loses caste. Tremendous pecuniary interests too have grown round vaccination. A sort of temporary immunity from smallpox is gained by vaccination though at much cost otherwise to the body and certainly to moral fibre. But all this argument often based on solid experience counts for nothing against the tangible though temporary immunity from smallpox, which the person who has the filthy vaccine injected into his body gets. It will be thus to the end of the world. The State can only act as it has in the case of the Secretary. It will do so even when full swaraj is established. It behoves reformers then to be patient with an unbelieving public and a Press which generally refuses to move in advance of public opinion. This imprisonment of the Secretary must be regarded by us anti-vaccinationists as a boon, but it ceases to be that when we parade or exploit it. Such imprisonments are a prelude to reform when they are taken quietly and gracefully. Soon there would be a conscience-saving clause in the law. But before it comes those who do not believe in vaccination have to prove their immunity by following a strictly hygienic life and by imposing isolation on themselves in times of epidemic. I read in the Press that the Secretary fasted as a protest. I am convinced that this fasting was wrong and uncalled for. You fast against a wrong. Here there was no wrong done by the court. A civil resister cheerfully accepts imprisonment for his resistance. Again, you may not fast against all wrongs. Fasting to be good has well-defined limitations which I have often discussed in these columns. When the limit is crossed, it becomes ludicrous when it is not worse.

#### SACRIFICIAL SPINNING

The Secretary of the A.I.S.A. has addressed the various khadi organizations to enlist members of the A.I.S.A. which is the same thing as saying that they should canvass for increase in sacrificial spinning. There is unlimited scope for it, if we but set our minds to the

task. Hawking khadi is becoming popular after a great deal of whipping up. But it is not yet realized that hawking is useless if there is no khadi to hawk. Spinning for wages cannot be organized in a moment. It requires money and workers. Sacrificial spinning requires no money and few workers if the spirit of sacrifice and an appreciation of spinning for sacrifice can be evoked. I hope the appeal made by Sjt. Banker will meet with prompt and adequate response.

*Young India*, 18-7-1929

## 227. AN ANDHRA HERO

During the recent Andhra tour I was presented with a portrait of a young man as that of a great patriot. I did not know anything about Alluri Shri Rama Raju. Upon inquiry I was told many stories of his exploits. I thought them to be interesting and inspiring as an instance of sustained bravery and genius, though in my opinion misdirected. I therefore asked for an authentic record. Sjt. M. Annapurniah, editor of a Telugu paper called *The Congress*, has kindly sent it to me. I have considerably abridged it.<sup>1</sup> Though I have no sympathy with and cannot admire armed rebellion I cannot withhold my homage from a youth so brave, so sacrificing, so simple and so noble in character as young Shri Rama Raju. If the facts collected by Sjt. Annapurniah are true, Raju was (if he is really dead) not a fituri<sup>2</sup> but a great hero. Would that the youth of the country cultivated Shri Rama Raju's daring, courage, devotion and resourcefulness and dedicated them for the attainment of swaraj through strictly non-violent means. To me it is daily growing clearer that if the teeming millions whom we the articulate middle classes have hitherto suppressed for our selfish purpose are to be raised and roused, there is no other way save through non-violence and truth. A nation numbering millions needs no other means.

Much is not known of the early life of the great Alluri Shri Rama Raju. He was born of a respectable Kshatriya family in a village called Mogallu, in the West Godavari District . . . He studied up to the fifth form at various places

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> Trouble-maker

in Andhra Desha and was never known to be bright at school. He was a good singer, and a promising young poet . . . .

He was not known to have any great sympathy with the non-cooperation programme. His subsequent confessions and conduct show violence. But he patiently waited and allowed non-co-operation to have its trial. In the whole programme of Gandhiji boycott of courts and liquor appealed to him. He started in the Agency tracts of Godavari and Vizagapatam Districts a campaign of prohibition. His piety and devotion attracted huge crowds around him. His word was law to the Agency folk. They were guileless and his eloquent appeals touched their hearts. 'Don't dance attendance at the courts and don't drink' was his message to the villagers. His message spread like wildfire. Not one in the Agency but responded to his bugle call. A new consciousness dawned on the innocent folk. People gave up drink in large numbers. Courts were deserted. A number of panchayat courts sprang up in the villages and justice was administered locally. Raju is reported to have been a regular khadi wearer. From the confessions in the future trials, it is clear that Raju supplied only khadi uniforms to his troops. Sjt. Rallapalli Kasanna, a non-co-operator and khadi producer of Tuni, was put on trial for having supplied khaki khadi uniforms to Shri Rama Raju. Shri Rama's temple was his abode. There he used to perform tapas. Huge numbers flocked to have his darshan every day. They used to listen to his utterances which were, from all accounts, reported to be thrilling. He used to deliver spiritual messages, but in the milk of spirituality there was invariably the sugar of patriotism. People drank this milk with great fervour. What was the result? A young sannyasi of twenty-five, preaching revolution to illiterate Koyas, slow to move, but unapproachable, when they do move. The bureaucracy at once scented it. . . . The Mahommedan deputy collector and the saint Raju were alleged to have met. Nothing is known as to what transpired between them both. But the result was that he recommended to the Madras Government a grant of land of thirty acres to Raju with extensive facilities to undertake cultivation. The grant was actually made. The patriot was thus sought to be made a farmer.

But no! The patriot remained a patriot. He was not the man to be content with thirty acres, he wanted to wrest the whole of India from the usurping hands of the foreign bureaucracy. That was the ambition of his life. He read the Gita. He realized his svadharma. A vision of free India dawned upon him. And he quietly started his work. The situation in the Agency tracts helped him very much. He fully exploited it to the country's advantage.

The scene was the Gudem Taluk in the Agency. In the Agency, there is not the ordinary rule obtaining in the plains. . . . The Koya had lost his

elementary rights. He could not fell one tree in the forest as before for cooking his food. His cow could not freely graze on the forest pasture as before. Thus the whole of the Agency was seething with discontent.

. . . Rama Raju exploited these local grievances in the Agency for a fight for liberty. Raju was so much loved by the Agency people that they refused to give any information about him in spite of the greatest amount of coercion. . .

There were on the whole six encounters and in the first five Raju had a decided victory. The British requisitioned the services of the Malabar Force, while special troops arrived from Assam also. There was deadly fight... At one time Raju's forces were surprised by the enemy while asleep and Raju himself narrowly escaped death after heroically attacking the enemy. The last was also a surprise attack against Raju's forces and after desperate fighting the latter were vanquished. That practically was the end of the great struggle for liberty. Rumours were current in those days, that Raju was very much depressed to hear that the Agency people were put to enormous hardships by the Government by way of demanding supplies, infliction of punitive taxes and other kinds of coercion. This depression was to some extent responsible for his defeat or surrender....

But what about Raju?... His alleged death is shrouded in mystery.

*Young India*, 18-7-1929

## 228. SWORD OF DAMOCLES

Section 124A is hung over our heads like the sword of Damocles where we are feasting or fasting. It has descended upon Dr. Satyapal's devoted head whilst preparing the political feast for the Congressmen and women who will flock to Lahore during the Christmas week. Two year's rest in a prison plus a fine of Rs.500 is the reward that the Punjab Government had awarded to Dr. Satyapal for his having dared to love his country well. Dr. Satyapal has been adjudged guilty of sedition because he wants freedom for his country from misrule. Where is the Indian, be he Liberal or Nationalist, Mussalman or Hindu, who is not knowingly guilty of sedition, if Dr. Satyapal is? I have read again and again the speech which was the subject-matter of the indictment against Dr. Satyapal. A diligent man could easily find from the daily Press speeches much stronger than Dr. Satyapal's. Disaffection has been described by a commentator on the Section as want of affection. He goes so far as to say that he who



has no affection for the Government established by law is guilty of disaffection. I do not know any Indian who has actually affection for the Government as it is today established. It is a rape of the word 'law'. It is established by the naked sword, kept ready to descend upon us at the will of the arbitrary rulers in whose appointment the people have no say.

Dr. Satyapal's incarceration therefore suggests a wide agitation for the repeal of Section 124A. But repeal of that Section and the like means repeal of the existing system of government which means attainment of swaraj. Therefore the force required really to repeal that Section is the force required for the attainment of swaraj. It may be perfectly possible to make a show of repeal and retain by a concealed route the same powers now exercised under the Section. No such dodge will or should satisfy the people at this stage. If therefore we feel that Dr. Saytapal has been wronged and in him the whole movement, we must intensify the movement and evolve a government for which we can have real affection, which we can call our own. There will then be no sedition on a nation-wide scale, no political murders or attempts at such with the secret sympathy of a people tired or superimposed rule. That we have not yet changed the condition which we know to be intolerable is not proof of our satisfaction with it, it is proof no doubt of our helplessness. But that helplessness is fast going. Whether it is to find expression in anarchy and bloodshed or in well-ordered civil disobedience remains to be seen. Much will depend upon the wisdom of the English rulers, more however will depend upon ourselves. If we will look less towards Downing Street or White Hall and more towards ourselves, we shall shed our impatience. We shall then be too busy building up to be impatient. I have a suspicion that many of us want swaraj as a gift instead of earning it by the sweat of our brows.

*Young India*, 18-7-1929

## 229. UNFIRED FOOD EXPERIMENT<sup>1</sup>

Unusual and unexpected interest has been evoked by my experiment in unfired food. It has given rise to interesting and

<sup>1</sup> An article similar to this appeared in *Navajivan*, 14-7-1929, under the title "Unfired Food".

instructive correspondence. I observe that there is quite a number of men living on unfired food and many more who have at one time lived on such food. My correspondents will excuse me for my not acknowledging all such letters individually. But they may rest assured that I have taken in whatever was new and acceptable in their suggestions. Several have asked me for further information on the progress of my experiment.

The experiment still continues. There have been moments when I have weakly doubted the wisdom of continuing it. This was when extreme weakness had overtaken me during the Andhra tour. But my faith in the correctness of the theory behind unfired food and my partiality for it are so great that I would not easily give up the experiment. For it has for me a value not merely sanitary but also economic and moral or spiritual. It is of great importance to national workers who have to work in different parts of the country often in trying circumstances. This food surmounts all the difficulty arising from the different food habits of the different provinces. But of this more if I can write of the experiment with fairly absolute confidence. At the time of writing, all I can say is that it seems to have done me no harm. Dr. Ansari, who knows my body well, examined it carefully whilst I was in Delhi on the 5th instant and was of opinion that he had never found me to be in better health than now. My blood pressure (systolic) which after the breakdown at Kolhapur<sup>1</sup> had never been found to be below 155 was now registered at 118, pulse pressure at 46. Though 118 he thought to be subnormal, it was not bad sign as I had just risen from a slight attack of malaria and I was then living on juicy fruits only.

My resolve to continue the experiment has been considerably strengthened by reading Dr. Muthu's great work on tuberculosis and Colonel McCarrison's instructive and carefully-written food primer. The former contains an illuminating chapter on diet and the latter which is dedicated to the children of India is popularly written and gives in a very concise manner all the information on nutrition that a layman need possess. It is a book which needs to be read with caution. It puts, naturally for the author but unduly according to my experiences, much emphasis on the necessity of animal food such as meat or milk. The unlimited capacity of the plant world to sustain

<sup>1</sup> On March 26, 1927; for the "Medical Opinion", *Vide* "Medical Opinions", 29-3-1927

man at his highest is a region yet unexplored by modern medical science which through force of habit pins its faith on the shambles or at least milk and its by-products. It is a duty which awaits discharge by Indian medical men whose tradition is vegetarian. The fast-developing researches about vitamins and the possibility of getting the most important of them directly from the sun, bid fair to revolutionize many of the accepted theories and beliefs propounded by the medical science about food. Be that as it may, both these authors seem to me to agree that it is best to take all foods in their natural state if we are to derive the highest benefit from them and especially if we are not to destroy some of the important vitamins they contain. They opine that fire destroys some of the vitamins and the most essential salts and vitamins are removed when the covering of wheat is removed for the attainment of extreme fineness or of rice for its policy.

In my previous article, I have warned the reader against copying my experiment<sup>1</sup>. But after two months' trial, I am able to say with confidence that anyone may try it provided he retains a small quantity of milk and ghee. Though my own experiment is both unfired and milkless, I am not yet in a position to recommend avoidance of milk and ghee. Though my belief in the possibility of avoiding milk and ghee without endangering health is unshakable, I cannot claim as yet to have found a combination of vegetarian foods that will invariably produce the results claimed today for milk. These authors are undoubtedly of opinion that a little addition of milk and...or...ghee (pure) raises the food value of vegetarian proteids and fats and promotes assimilation of the latter.

I may now tell the reader what I am taking at present:

Sprouted wheat	Totals	8
Pounded almonds	"	4
Whole almonds	"	1
Green vegetable, e.g., marrow(dudhi)		
or cucumber or the like (grated)	"	16
Raisins or fresh fruits	"	20
Lemons	"	2
Honey	Tolas	4

Neither the quantity nor the variety is absolutely fixed. Often I avoid almonds or wheat or both. Sometimes I take sprouted gram and

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Dr. Sunderland's Volume", 13-6-1929 & "Raw v. Cooked Food"

grated cocoanut instead of wheat and almonds. The reader need not take honey. He may take gur<sup>1</sup> but in no case white sugar which is decidedly harmful. Sugars are best obtained from raisins, figs or dates all of which should be taken in moderation. He may increase the quantity of wheat if he finds it to be insufficient. In the beginning stages there will probably be a feeling of emptiness. It will be due to the fact that by ill usage the stomach is distended. Till it assumes its natural size, the emptiness should be put up with. It may be partly overcome by taking juicy fruit or a little more vegetable or better still by drinking plenty of water, never by exceeding the maximum quantity of wheat or gram. Milk may undoubtedly be increased if the purse allows it. Over thirty comrades have taken up the experiment with me. The maximum fixed for them is:

Sprouted wheat	Tolas	20
" gram	"	8
Vegetables	"	16
Cocoanut	"	8
Khismis	"	4
Lemon	"	1
Milk	lb.	
Fresh fruit when available		
Ghee instead of cocoanut	Tolas	2

The quantity of milk and ghee is the minimum. Those who need more are at liberty to take more. We all take a little salt. I omitted it for one month. But some medical friends have warned me against giving it up. And fancying that I was feeling weak or being really weak, I began taking salt in Almora. The quantity taken by me is not more than 30 grains during the day. Honey is taken 3 times a day separately with hot water. Too much stress cannot be laid on the great necessity of thorough mastication. We have so ill used our teeth and gums that we now find it difficult to make proper use of them.

*Young India*, 18-7-1929

<sup>1</sup> Jaggery

### 230. ARTLESSNESS OR AUDACITY?

The following correspondence<sup>1</sup> will be read with interest.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW, GONDA,

*June 19, 1929*

THE SECRETARY,

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE,

SIR,

I write to draw your attention to the famine in Gonda ... They<sup>2</sup> have done their part and the public are beginning to do theirs. I need money to relieve poverty outside the famine area and am receiving subscriptions from private persons.

I appeal to you as to an organization which claims to promote the country's welfare not only political but also social and economic . . . you have promised £1000-0-0 to the League against Imperialism; will you not give as much to the league against starvation?

Prominent members of the Congress are collecting funds to save from prison thirty-one alleged Communists at Meerut; will you not do the same to save from famine five lakhs of hungry men at Gonda.

Moreover if you wish to further two causes, charity and politics at a single stroke, will you send me all the foreign clothes you collect? I will despatch them to this wild tract on the Nepal border where they will no longer be an eyesore to good patriots. If you commute the sentence on European clothes from burning to banishment, I guarantee that they will never return. You will not, I think, wish any longer to burn clothes when you realize that there are thousands of your countrymen wearing rags which are too scant even for decency. True patriotism is to help your fellow-countrymen in their need, and I appeal to you for a generous contribution both of money and clothes.

*Yours sincerely,*

B.J.K. HALLOWES

PRESIDENT, FAMINE RELIEF FUND, GONDA

B.J.K. HALLOWES, ESQ.

PRESIDENT, FAMINE RELIEF FUND

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER'S BUNGALOW, GONDA (U.P.)

SIR,

Your letter of the 19th of June was delivered to me on the evening of the 24th June . . .

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here

<sup>2</sup> The Government

Conditions in the district of Gonda and in its neighbouring district of Bahraich are terrible enough . . . Surely there must be something very seriously wrong somewhere in the machinery of the State or the structure of society or both.

The days when we could cast the blame on the gods for all our ills are past. Modern science claims to have curbed to a large extent the tyranny and the vagaries of nature . . .

Your relief works must bring some solace, however temporary, to many. They are certainly to be appreciated. But do you not think that all this charitable relief does not touch even the fringe of the problem of Indian poverty? . . . It is certain that the charity of the wealthy does not put down poverty and famine relief measures do not put an end to conditions which cause famines.

The whole *raison d'être* of the National Congress is to put an end to such terrible conditions by removing the root causes. The Congress is convinced that only by changing the whole system of government and the structure of society can poverty be conquered and a measure of social well-being introduced . . . it is for this reason that the Congress associates itself with other organizations like the League against Imperialism, which also attack the root cause of poverty and inequality.

If the Government at present functioning in India were really desirous of attacking and eradicating poverty they would do something much more and vastly different from the petty relief they give in times of acute distress. They would feel that in a country where there is such terrible poverty it is a tragic absurdity to have an expensive and top-heavy system of administration. They would feel that the whole political and economic system they have built up in the country, and the social structure they have bolstered up, have impoverished the country with great efficiency and rapidity, and this process continues. They would realize that the responsibility for this poverty is theirs and therefore the speediest way of ending it is to remove themselves from the scene of action, liquidate their Government and make room for others who can tackle the problem with greater disinterestedness and competence than they have shown.

. . . You will want a surer remedy giving more permanent results than the quack's nostrum. I trust that you will appreciate that this sure remedy lies in the complete replacement of the present system of government and a change in the social structure . . . Your co-operation, moral and material, as well as the co-operation of all others who object to the exploitation of a country or a people or a class by another will be welcome.

. . . The Congress believes that even temporary relief should take the form of teaching an auxiliary industry to agriculture which will provide an immediate income now and a welcome addition in better times . . . . The Method of organizing this kind of relief is to encourage carding and hand-spinning by lending and distributing spinning-wheels and cotton. Hand-weaving, of course, automatically benefits by this. If you appreciate this kind of relief and are prepared to co-operate with it, I shall gladly recommend to the All-India Spinners' Association to do what they can in the matter.

*Yours sincerely,*

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

GENERAL SECRETARY

It is difficult to believe that the Deputy Commissioner's letter is seriously meant. It reads more like a veiled sermon to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru than a request for help. If it is a sincere request for help, the references to the League against Imperialism, the Meerut prisoners and the foreign clothes' burning are irrelevant if not impertinent. The Deputy Commissioner has got the answer he deserved. His request is like that of an army of occupation asking for help from comparatively better-off victims for the worse off, when both could be immediately relieved if the army removed the pressures by withdrawing itself. And why should Government officials expect help from organizations like the Congress which have their own method of dealing with famines and the like? The writer of the letter forgets that Congressmen who desire boycott of foreign cloth cannot consistently give it even to the famine-stricken. It will be in their opinion to perpetuate the state of starvation. Foreign cloth is believed by them to be one of the most potent causes of India's poverty. To make use of that cloth even in times of distress is to put off the day of relief from starvation.

*Young India*, 18-7-1929

### *231. SIKHS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA*

Dinabandhu Andrews writing about the Indian settlers in British Columbia says:<sup>1</sup>

. . . the Sikh community in British Columbia have done great credit to India, the Motherland. They have struggled on courageously all these years

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

and have helped one another in a truly brotherly manner. There has never been a case of destitution in which the Khalsa Dewan Society has not come to the rescue. It has done my heart good to see such sturdy independence of character and such manly endurance as has been shown by these brave people.

Secondly, the 'Komagata Maru' trouble is now a thing of the past. The British Columbians are ashamed of what happened and they do not in any way defend it. There has also been some amendment; because now the Sikhs are quite freely allowed to bring in their wives into Canada and many of them have done so. This is one thing accomplished...

One thing still remains, namely citizenship. They have not yet received citizenship, as Indians have done in Australia and New Zealand. Nevertheless, if this were pressed for now, it would surely be granted, and the time is ripe. What is needed is for someone, of noble character and bearing, like Mr. Sastri<sup>1</sup>, to go out to Canada as Agent-General and live there. If this were done, then citizenship would certainly follow.

Let me give the conclusion of the whole matter. The world today is drawing closer together. India cannot any longer afford to stand apart. India should have her ambassadors in every great progressive country of the world, making for fellowship and goodwill.

*Young India*, 18-7-1929

### 232. *THE RUNNING SORE*<sup>2</sup>

A Maheshwari young man from Sholapur referring to the question of marriages of child girls with old men writes:<sup>3</sup>

. . . Will you please advise as to the best way peaceful satyagraha can be offered in this behalf?

What, in your opinion, should be considered to be the proper age limit for the bride and the bridegroom, respectively, for marriage? And in what circumstances would you recommend the offering of satyagraha for the prevention of unequal marriages? . . .

Would you kindly let us have your opinion on all these points in the columns of *Hindi Navajivan*?

<sup>1</sup> V.S. Srinivasa Sastri

<sup>2</sup> Originally published in *Hindi Navajivan*, 18-7-1929, this appeared under the title "Notes from Hindi Navajivan". For Pyarelal's introductory note, *Vide* footnote on "Foreign Sugar v. Khadi", 8-8-1929

<sup>3</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here



There is no doubt that satyagraha is the right thing in such cases. But how to offer it is another question. I have more than once dilated, in my writings, on the limits of satyagraha. Satyagraha presupposes self-discipline, self-control, self-purification, and a recognized social status in the person offering it. A satyagrahi must never forget the distinction between evil and the evil-doer. He must not harbour ill will or bitterness against the latter. He may not even employ needlessly offensive language against the evil person, however unrelieved his evil might be. For it should be an article of faith with every satyagrahi that there is none so fallen in this world but can be converted by love. A satyagrahi will always try to overcome evil by good, anger by love, untruth by truth, himsa by ahimsa. There is no other way of purging the world of evil. Therefore a person who claims to be a satyagrahi always tries by close and prayerful self-introspection and self-analysis to find out whether he is himself completely free from the taint of anger, ill will and such other human infirmities, whether he is not himself capable of those very evils against which he is out to lead a crusade. In self-purification and penance lies half the victory of a satyagrahi. A satyagrahi has faith that the silent and undemonstrative action of truth and love produces far more permanent and abiding results than speeches or such other showy performances.

But although satyagraha can operate silently, it requires a certain amount of action on the part of satyagrahi. A satyagrahi, for instance, must first mobilize public opinion against the evil which he is out to eradicate, by means of a wide and intensive agitation. When public opinion is sufficiently roused against a social abuse even the tallest will not dare to practise or openly to lend support to it. An awakened and intelligent public opinion is the most potent weapon of a satyagrahi. When a person supports a social evil in total disregard of a unanimous public opinion, it indicates a clear justification for his social ostracism. But the object of social ostracism should never be to do injury to the person against whom it is directed. Social ostracism means complete non-co-operation on the part of society with the offending individual; nothing more, nothing less, the idea being that a person who deliberately sets himself to flout society has no right to be served by society. For all practical purposes this should be enough. Of course, special action may be indicated in special cases and the practice may have to be varied to suit the peculiar features of each individual case.

But what about the sensual old man who even in his decrepitude cannot help his sensuality? Sensuality is blind; it cannot discriminate, it seeks satisfaction anyhow and at any cost. How should society deal with such a man? The reply is, by refusing to provide him with hapless victims. The rule about not giving in marriage any girl below twenty and against her will should be rigorously enforced. The question as to what the old man should do if no girl should be willing to marry him of her own accord naturally arises. Society has no answer to such a question; it is not bound to furnish any. It is concerned only with saving hapless girls from falling victims to blind lust. It is no part of its duty to provide means for the satisfaction of the latter. In practice, however, it will be seen that when purity pervades the social atmosphere it will serve largely to quell the lust of the lustful.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

### 233. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

*July 18, 1929*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. On the 26th I shall touch Allahabad. We shall spend two days there. It will be good if you come over then. About coming here it is your duty to obey Father's command. But I believe Father will grant you his permission. Please pass on the enclosed letter wherever it should go.

I have now discontinued wheat and gram. I take only copra, fruits and some vegetable.

You must have your cough completely cured.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3359

### 234. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*July 19, 1929*

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. I do not want to push you to the trouble or expense of coming to Ahmedabad. There is nothing at all to talk about. My only desire is that all the three of you should go to Almora at your earliest and benefit from its climate and natural beauty. I think you will not have any trouble there. I wish Dilip would again become as strong as he was.

I shall be going to Allahabad on the 24th *via* Ajmer-Agra. If you are to catch the train for Kathgodam at Agra and if you are leaving there on the 24th, we can meet at 8.30 on the 25th at Agra. But I consider even that unnecessary.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

121 FORT STREET

FORT, BOMBAY

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

### 235. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

*July 20, 1929*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have glanced at the programme. So far as I am concerned it is all right. I think I shall easily stand it. I have not checked it for Mondays.

Pyarelal, Devdas and Kusumbehn will be with me. Vallabhbhai, Mahadev and Manibehn will reach via Jubbulpore. I do not think there will be any other company with me.

You will please not detain me on 28th. I would like to get away by the first train after finishing on 27th.

I hope Kamala is better. I do want to see her healthy and bright when I come to Allahabad.

*Yours*

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 236. *LETTER TO PRABHAVATI*

*July 20, 1929*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Herewith find the letter from Rajendrababu. Under these circumstances you should, for the present, remain at the Sadaqat Ashram and learn what you can, and in the month of August go to your in-laws' with courage. Having reached there you should serve your elders but observe your own discipline steadfastly. After all you have but to go there. Having pleased your parents-in-law with your humanity, you may come back. If you do not hear from Jayaprakash in the mean while, I think it would be a mistake not to go to them when they are insistent. You should go there but should not observe purdah. You should speak to your father-in-law with courage. If he is cross you should patiently bear with it. His anger will subside when he sees your purity. Even after going there you should insist on continuing your studies. You should speak about Jayaprakash's insistence on English. You should explain that the Gita is essential for inner satisfaction. You may, if you want to, visit me at Allahabad.

Ask me if you fail to understand anything. I shall reach Allahabad on the 25th morning.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3353

### 237. *A LETTER*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*July 20, 1929*

I have your letter. I can understand your sorrow. Its remedy is patience and time. I too see the defiance which you do. But the reason

for it is the atmosphere of self-indulgence prevailing in the world today. Wherever I have personal contacts, I try to restrain it as best as I can. One can do so only by pointing out the fine distinction between self-indulgence and self-restraint. I am of the view that it can never be done by suppressing genuine freedom. I see in the present age that parents, after educating their children, overstep their limits and try to prevent the children from making use of their education. How do you expect the children to behave in such circumstances?

In publicly touching the Ashram women I do not claim the least little yogic strength. However I do claim fatherly love. I try to observe the restrictions which I believe even a father should observe. I do not understand in what other way I can behave with the women in the Ashram. Men and women have separate dwellings in the Ashram. Married women staying in the Ashram with their husbands of course live in the same rooms with them.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/75

## 238. MY NOTES

### SUPPLEMENT TO "NAVAJIVAN"

What Kakasaheb decided long ago has at last been put into effect today. Hence along with this issue, the reader will receive with no extra cost a supplement to Navajivan entitled Shikshan ane Sahitya. The management of Navajivan have taken a risk by resolving in this manner to publish this supplement, because Navajivan is not going to receive any financial benefit by doing so. Behind this venture is, indeed, the expectation that lovers of literature will purchase more copies of these issues of *Navajivan* for the sake of this supplement. Regardless of whether that hope materializes or not, it will be brought out every month around the full-moon day. I hope that everyone will go through the supplements carefully and preserve them. It will be Kakasaheb's constant endeavour to make this supplement more and more useful from the educational standpoint. Ultimately, it is hoped that it will wholly become the organ of the expanding activities of the Vidyapith. It will also contain news of the Vidyapith and the various national schools running in India. There is, however, no need for me to anticipate the future. The reader himself will see and evaluate the improvements that will be made in these issues from month to month.

#### SAGRIFICIAL SPINNERS' DHARMA

Although everyone is aware of the story of bundle of sticks, it is worth refreshing one's memory about it from time to time. Even a delicate child can break a single stick. However, even a giant like Ramamurthi<sup>1</sup> cannot break a whole bundle of sticks. A single stick cannot even heat a little water, whereas a bundle can cook cereals for thousands of persons. Similarly, sacrificial spinning practised by a single individual may well prove ineffective. Sacrificial spinning practised by large number of persons can keep out cloth imported from Manchester, Japan and such other places and save one hundred million rupees which go out of India every year. The Charkha Sangha has been founded following the worldly law which knows of no exceptions. The very word 'Sangha' indicates the strength that underlies it. Hence, those who believe in the strength of the spinning-wheel, those who have faith in sacrificial spinning, should join the Sangha at this juncture and increase its strength. And those who have already joined it should invite their neighbours to follow suit. It should be borne in mind that even youths have a place in it. Though youth associations have been formed at various places in the country, I do not find young men making proper or full use of the strength that lies in unity. If all boys and girls studying in school realize the strength that underlies the takli, thousands of persons can enter the fold of the Charkha Sangha and a beautiful mountain of yarn can be raised every day. In this manner, every man, woman, child or aged person can readily do this in addition to his or her regular occupation and thus contribute one's share in the sacrificial offering that is swaraj. Will-power alone is required. Hence if you do not spin already, you should start doing so, inspire others to do so, start wearing khadi if you do not already do so, inspire others to do so, join the Charkha Sangha if you do not already belong to it and invite others to follow suit. Remember that spinning cotton yarn implies carding cotton and making it into strong even strands. Strands that have been spun anyhow or which appear to be like a rope are not yarn.

#### MAGANLAL MEMORIAL

Shri Vithalbhai Jerajani Writes:<sup>2</sup>

This matter certainly has not escaped my attention. However, because of my relationship with the late Shri Maganlal, I have hesitated to write much on the subject. I know that this should not be the case. I have no doubt that this task should be completed soon. It is

<sup>1</sup> A strong man then famous as 'the Indian Sandow'

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had asked Gandhiji to write about the Maganlal Memorial.

also true that the sum to be collected is a small one. If those who knew of Shri Maganlal's services wish to do so, they could collect the sum immediately and the nation would get a beautiful khadi museum.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 21-7-1929

### 239. RESULTS OF THE VICTORY AT BARDOLI

It is only gradually that we shall come to know the importance of the victory gained at Bardoli.<sup>1</sup> The final decision of the Government of Bombay which it has communicated in its correspondence with Shri Shroff<sup>2</sup> is the necessary result of the triumph at Bardoli. It will have its effect on the revenue department in the entire country. And if there is real improvement in this department, if that department is freed from corruption, it would amount to securing three-fourths of swaraj. This is because a foreign government largely depends upon money for its very existence. No one would run the government of another country merely for the pleasure of doing so, certainly not the British. They have withdrawn their settlements from places where they have not earned any money. One will rarely find in another department the chaos that is found in the Indian revenue department. The peasants of Bardoli have shed light on this darkness. However, there is nothing to be cheerful about the letter addressed to Shri Shroff. No great hopes can be pinned on it. Those in authority are experts in giving verbal promises and then violating them in practice; under the pretext of dispensing justice and introducing reforms, they have been found to perpetuate their real position and even to strengthen it further. As a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, officers have increased their salaries, consolidated their own positions, added to the expenditure of the army and strengthened the roots of their own businessmen. Hence caution will be necessary to see to it that the hopes that the letter from the Government has raised in regard to reforms in the land revenue system are realized. Bardoli has shown the way and cleared it. Swaraj lies on that route alone and that alone is the cure for starvation.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 21-7-1929

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Bardoli Report" and "Bardoli Settlement", 6-8-1928

<sup>2</sup> Member, Bombay Legislative Council

## 240. WHAT IS ONE'S DHARMA?

The following letter<sup>1</sup> has been written by a friend to Shri Valji Desai.

There is a verse in the Gita which says that even the learned become exhausted in the process of reflecting on the real meaning of karma. Here karma may be taken to mean dharma. In my opinion, dharma means morality. I do not know of any dharma which is opposed to or goes beyond morality. Dharma is morality practised to its ultimate limits. And morality in its turn means truth and non-violence. While the end is truth, non-violence is the means of attaining it. In such matters, however, the means cannot be separated from the end. Hence I have written that truth and non-violence are the two sides of the same coin.

However, the distinction between violence and non-violence cannot always be definitely demarcated. Non-violence would hardly have any value if it was easy to make this distinction. It is a fascinating field as it has no limits and countless persons have got tired exploring it. Many others have laid down their lives while doing so. Hence it always triumphs.

However, just because the field is so vast, some who have tried to dabble in it have also been misled. This should be no cause for despondency but rather for special efforts.

My Jain brethren regard non-violence as their monopoly; hence whenever I happen to transgress the boundaries of their non-violence and attribute non-violence to something beyond these limits, some of them are puzzled and some are annoyed, while others pity me. I would like to tell all these three categories of people that, if they will have a little patience, the riddle of non-violence can be solved to some extent. I am a seeker and a worshipper, not one who has already attained the end; hence I am liable to make mistakes and deserve to be forgiven. In this age of discoveries and exchange of ideas, no one will be harmed if I express my ideas. If I have committed any mistakes, I

<sup>1</sup> This is not translated here. The correspondent had asked whether uncooked food contained life in it, whether pulses soaked in water and sprouting should not be avoided. These questions arose from Gandhiji's article, "Raw v. Cooked Food", *Vide* "Raw v. Cooked Food", 6-6-1929



shall correct them. If there is any substance in my belief, other seekers will benefit thereby.

Let me now come to the subject-matter. My humble opinion is that perhaps there is some mistake in the prevalent Jain belief regarding diet. From the standpoint of non-violence, I feel that one commits an offence in killing plant life for the sake of food. The least amount of violence is involved when anything that is edible is eaten directly after it is plucked from the tree. All storage is full of violence. There is untold violence in the touch of fire. There is violence even in lighting a fire. Then to consign green or dried substances to the fire involves even greater violence. All this is self-evident. In not bringing vegetables near fire and not drying them, there is less processing of them. All needless processing is stained with violence. Anyone who eats vegetable products after drying or cooking them is not free from the original taint. By killing vegetable matter when it is outside of one's physical body and consuming it, one incurs the sin of killing it. Pulses allowed to germinate are not rendered stale; pulses prior to germination are not lifeless. Hence I see no objection in permitting these to germinate.

How cooked vegetables affect the body is a separate matter and one which deserves consideration. My experience and that of other experimenters suggest that the body does not get the same satisfaction from eating cooked vegetables as it does from eating them fresh and tree-ripened. Whatever is cooked over fire has an intoxicating element within it. hence it readily arouses passionate feelings. My experience of the last four years goes to show that as soon as I started eating cooked food I lost the freedom from passions which I had acquired while eating raw vegetables. I am again attaining to that passionless state now. I have before me similar experiences which doctors have reported. However I do not wish to add to the length of this article by quoting them. If anyone wishes to read the literature, I shall give him the names of the books.

I have no defence for the use of honey. I believe that it would be better if one could avoid it. I do not recommend eating it to healthy persons. Since I had not given it up, I started taking it when the doctor at Yervda specially recommended it to me and I still take it. However, at the end of this experiment, I hope to give up honey. I have already decreased the dosage. I regard honey as being less harmful than sugar. Both doctors and vaids are of opinion that, from

the standpoint of health, it is preferable to sugar. However, if this experiment succeeds, I will readily get from the items that are included in the experiment the same food value which I get from honey. Not a single bee is harmed if honey is extracted by the improved technique, but this is no justification for taking honey.

I do not differentiate as between health, non-violence and the ultimate aim of life. Whatever is health-giving should further the cause of non-violence and should not be opposed to the ultimate aim of life. What is in question here is health in its pure and real sense. In this poor country, where society has become disorganized and millions are dying of starvation, the question of the ultimate end has become a difficult one. However, it is required for the success of this experiment that it should be within the reach of the poor as well. This, however, is a long-term position. I myself cannot conduct this experiment taking into account only the body. I wish neither to survive nor to win swaraj by practising what I consider to be opposed to my dharma. I consider it to be a man's achievement to harmonize dharma and the ultimate aim of life, truth and swaraj; swaraj and government by all, the welfare of the country and the welfare of all. That alone is the path that leads to moksha, that alone is what interests me. None of my activities are carried on with any other end in view.

I do not know about the discovery made by Rishabhdev Swami.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 21-7-1929

#### *241. PRODUCTION OF KHADI IN GUJARAT*

Nowadays, there is an all-round increase in the sale of khadi, but its production has not kept pace with it. Gujarat has laid the foundation of the khadi movement but has not been able to build a solid structure over it. One reason for this is quite clear. Gujarat is the centre of the cotton textile industry. If Bombay too is regarded as a part of Gujarat, 99 per cent of the cotton textile mills are located in Ahmedabad and Bombay. It is for this reason that Gujaratis started wearing mill-made cloth earlier and, as compared to other provinces, Gujarat shelves the spinning-wheel sooner.

However, Gujarat has taken up the message of swaraj with enthusiasm. Its contribution to constructive activity is very large.

Hence it is befitting that Gujarat should also attain a place that is worthy of it in the matter of khadi production. Gujarati cannot possibly compete with Tamilnad and other regions. It can, however, make as much progress as it wishes in the method of self-reliance and in sacrificial spinning. It does not matter if the spinning-wheel is not adopted in Gujarat as a form of labour. For the method of self-reliance and sacrificial spinning, some sort of idealism is necessary. If this idealism is generated and if the idea takes root that swaraj is bound up with yarn, the methods of self-reliance and sacrificial spinning will succeed without the least difficulty. Why cannot the municipalities of Gujarat and other places imitate what is being practised in Almora? Why cannot those of us who have plenty of spare time learn to spin and start spinning regularly every day? It is necessary to propagate this idea in every house. Those who are engaged in door-to-door hawking of khadi should take up the task of producing khadi.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 21-7-1929

*242. LETTER TO V.S. SRINIVASA SASTRI*

SABARMATI,  
*July 21, 1929*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

I had expected a note from you on your return from East Africa. Do please tell me what you did there. I hope your health is good. I hardly read the papers for the continuous touring. And when I do, it is merely to cast a passing glance.

*Yours,*

From a photostat: G.N. 8817

### 243. LETTER TO N. TCHERKOFF<sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI,  
July 21, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter which was still lying in my file. I write this simply to acknowledge it with thanks. I hope to deal with it at length some day or other if I can scrape together a few hours. Meanwhile let me tell you that there is not the slightest difficulty about my endorsing the sentiment that all war under any conceivable circumstance is undesirable.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M. K. GANDHI

N. TCHERKOFF, ESQ.

MOSCOW—66, U.S.S.R.

From a photostat: C.W. 9704. Courtesy: The Embassy of the U.S.S.R. in India

### 244. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU

SABARMATI,  
July 21, 1929

MY DEAR MIRABAI,

So the wandering Singer has returned home after winning her laurels!<sup>2</sup> I take it you are coming to Allahabad. You will then tell me all about your doings in Europe. Of your conquests in America, American friends have told me more than your modesty will allow you to tell me. Hardly a mail passes without bringing something nice about you from America.

Love to you and Padmaja, who is sure to be there to greet you.

*Yours,*  
‘MYSTIC SPINNER’

From the original: Padmaja Naidu Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> Exhibited at the Gandhi Darshan Exhibition (1969), New Delhi, by the Cultural Department of the U.S.S.R. Embassy

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* also “Notes” sub-title Welcome Home”

## 245. LETTER TO FULSIMHA DABHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

July 21, 192[9]<sup>1</sup>

BHAISHRI FULSIMHAJI,

I have your letter. Indeed I would like the children to undertake the experiment in diet, but they can do so only under your supervision and with your consent. Here I let the children too try the experiment. It does them no harm. Sunshine, complete rest and open air all the twenty-four hours are most important for your wife. She should take as much milk and fresh fruit as possible. It is better if she takes bhakris<sup>2</sup> prepared from wheat roasted and ground at home rather than barley porridge. These bhakhris should be well masticated. [She should have] more of milk or curds and less of bhakhris. She should also chew green leaves of vegetable. If she does this her health will surely be all right.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SHRI FULSIMHAJI

SHRI V.B. RASHTRIYA VINAYMANDIR, SUNAV (VIA ANAND)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1293

## 246. LETTER TO JETHALAL JOSHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

July 21, 1929

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

Your postcard is yet to be answered. In the matter of sticking to ideals it is as much essential to be tolerant of others as it is to be strict with one's own self. Members of the family too are to be brought round with humility. Impatience or use of force indicates lack of faith in the ideal. If you want to see me you can come at 4 o'clock on any day, other than Monday, when I am at the Ashram.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1350

<sup>1</sup> The year is inferred from the reference to "experiment in diet".

<sup>2</sup> A kind of chapati

## 247. A LETTER

July 21, 1929

The situation there<sup>1</sup> is indeed serious. I am doing what I can from here.<sup>2</sup> But how much can I do? You will know the rest from the letter to Medh<sup>3</sup>. Only what you people there can do will matter. I see from the wire that Sir Jagadish<sup>4</sup> has declined to go. I would have done something if . . . .<sup>5</sup>

Now that you have taken up business, succeed in it. Preserve honesty.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/77

## 248. LETTER TO SURENDRARAI B. MEDH

[July 21] <sup>6</sup>1929

BHAISHRI MEDH,

What advice can I give about the law from here? I write to the Press what I think. I write about the Agent<sup>7</sup>, too, on occasion. I can give more practical advice only if I am present there and see things for myself. But I see no possibility of that in the present life. The dissensions among you there are indeed unfortunate. Do whatever you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/78

<sup>1</sup> Presumably South Africa

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Sir K. V. Reddy", 20-8-1929

<sup>3</sup> Surendrarai B. Medh

<sup>4</sup> Sir Jagadish Chandra Bose

<sup>5</sup> The rest of the sentence is unintelligible.

<sup>6</sup> Inferred from the mention of this letter in the letter dated July 21 1929; *vide* the preceding item.

<sup>7</sup> Presumably Kurma Venkata Reddi Naidu

## 249. A LETTER

SABARMATI,  
July 21, 1929

May you succeed in your vow of spinning. It may be prudent to put up with the rudeness of customers to some extent. But when the rudeness of a customer becomes unbearable, one should stop dealings with that customer, giving the true reason for doing so. You must have faith that those who are proficient in crafts like shoe-making will always be able to earn their livelihood. Using foreign tools for your work is unavoidable. Keep up the life insurance you have taken out. I would have been another matter if you had not taken the policy.

*Vandemataram from*  
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/79

## 250. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, KADI

*Tuesday, July 23, 1929*

I have been anxious to visit this institution<sup>1</sup> for the past year. Ever since I heard that Shri Chhaganbhai Pitambardas and other individuals are devoting their entire life to this institution, I have been eager to come here. It is laudable that this institution should be protected and nurtured by the citizens of Kadi and the people of Baroda State. Your children will receive a good education if you are prepared to send them here. Here you will find purity of thought and conduct which are even more valuable than a knowledge of the alphabet.

Along with the congratulations that I wish to offer to the secretary and the management of this institution on the simplicity and clarity of its report, I should also like to say how sorry I am that they have not yet been able to solve the problem of untouchability. Hinduism cannot be conceived of without the abolition of untouchability. If this untouchability is not destroyed in this age of reason, when one religion comes into contact with and is compared to

<sup>1</sup> The Kadva Patidar Ashram

another, any religion which is greatly polluted or whose roots are rotten cannot survive. If Hinduisim were rotten at the roots, I would have abandoned it. I am not content with having been born in a Hindu family. As a human being one may swim in one's father's well but not get drowned in it. If it harbours this ignorance, we must sacrifice our lives in order to remove it. This institution with which Chhaganbhai is associated may tolerate untouchability because of social pressure. In the welfare of the Kadva Patidar community lies the welfare of Hinduism and of all human beings. By assuming that in the welfare of one community lies the welfare of all others, one should regard this as a matter of pride. You will not be able to serve the Kadva Patidar community if you regard any human being as untouchable. If I were to institute a comparison between child-marriage and untouchability, I would disregard the former, as that practice is prevalent among the Patidars who are regarded as high class people. It is not prevalent all over the country. If it had been, society would have perished. One can be patient with regard to child-marriage but untouchability cannot be tolerated even for one moment. The people should make their intentions known that deserving untouchables will certainly be accepted. Along with this, people should also be advised to spin. Not only should spinning be encouraged, but great stress should be laid on it. You should insist that ornaments and jewels should be taken away from the children entrusted to you and that they should be taught spinning.

If you desire to further the growth of nationalism, you should accord a place to Hindi. It is a language which can be learned easily. It sustains work and also helps in carrying it on. The Congress programme, although light and beautiful, is also extensive. It is such that it can give those who live in the country a share in something worth doing and always welcome. The programme consists in propagation of khadi and boycott of foreign goods. Khadi should be accepted to the extent that even foreign thread should be boycotted. Khadi is being sold here but the demand for it cannot be met. It is not in keeping with the principle of khadi that it should be produced at one place alone and then distributed elsewhere. You should yourselves spin, make khadi and wear it. You could be said to produce wealth for the country even if you could spin a little while carrying on your activities. If you wish to wear fine khadi, you should spin fine yarn, but you should make fullest sacrifice in the boycott of foreign cloth.



In this State the income from liquor is large. We do not wish to derive any benefit from this income. Whatever the reason for it, we should approach those who own liquor booths, those who drink, and the Government, and launch a movement in this matter. You can also lovingly persuade people to abstain from drink. You can reason with those who run the liquor booths. Those who drink ruin their lives. They forget the distinction between a wife and a sister, a distinction which even a child can understand.

Nowadays, instead of protecting cows we eat them. The reason behind a large number of cows being exported to Australia...thanks to the Hindus of India...is that beef worth crores of rupees is being produced there. Its essence is extracted from that beef. I could make you shed tears if I described that process to you. Cows are being slaughtered there. Even our Muslim brethren do not carry out so much slaughter on Bakr-Id day. A large number of cows are sent from Gujarat and Kathiawar. We thus commit this sin directly. Rearing cows does not imply tying up a cow in front of one's house in order to worship it. If the she-buffalo is to be permitted to survive, the cow will have to be slaughtered. If the latter has to survive, the former must be given up. The buffalo benefits nobody. The person who discovered the buffalo for the purpose of milk has virtually caused the slaughter of cows. If someone says that camel's milk is useful and that the she-camel is a very serviceable animal, we shall kill both cows and buffaloes. We do not yoke the buffalo to the plough. The he-buffalo can be put to use in Konkan. Both the cow and her calf can be useful. Even medical science can demonstrate that the product of the buffalo cannot be put to as many uses as those of the cow. All that I wish to say is that it is our supreme dharma to protect the cow. If we on our part afford this protection to the cow, its protection will be brought about automatically. The Hindu can save the cow throughout the world. It is because we are steeped in our selfishness that we fail to see that which is there right before us. So long as we do not castrate the bull, we shall be unable to protect the cow. We could protect the cow only if we put it to full use. By regarding hide as untouchable, we encourage the untouchables to eat beef. We have lost the use of bone-manure. If this is made available free of charge, all farmers will make use of it. There is not a single tannery functioning in India where only the hides of dead cows are being used. I am the only one running such a tannery. I have engaged a person in the Ashram specially to [help me] master this trade and am gaining proficiency in it. If the

cow is to be protected, her progeny should be developed through castration. If her offspring are healthy, we can obtain a minimum of 20 seers of milk from each cow. I have seen a cow in Bangalore which yields 80 pounds of milk. But it is fed adequately. No buffalo can yield 80 pounds of milk. As many as five or six years would pass before we could obtain even 20 pounds of milk from the cows we have. Breeding bulls should be secured and taken to various [breeding] centres. That is the duty of the State as well.

[From Gujarati]

*Prajabandhu*, 28-7-1929

### 251. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU<sup>1</sup>

[On or after *July 23, 1929*]

JAWAHARLAL

YOU MAY FIX UNFURLING CEREMONY SUNDAY IF NO TRAIN AVAILABLE  
SATURDAY AFTER COMMITTEE MEETING.

From a photostat; S.N. 15434

### 252. FROM BRITISH GUIANA

The following from Dinabandhu Andrew's letter<sup>2</sup> dated 1st June at Georgetown will be read with interest.

There can be no question whatever, that conditions in British Guiana are better than elsewhere, except for the climate which is a very damp one....

The greatest of all things which draws me to this Colony is the obvious freedom from the worst forms of race prejudices. The number of Europeans is so exceedingly small...

...The African race does not compete economically with the Indians... the African people are on the whole turning away from agriculture, while the Indian people are sticking to it in all the enormous development of rice cultivation....

... We have as a people spent a very great deal of serious thought and consideration upon the Indians in Africa, but I say that here is, in the New World, an Indian population greater than that in the whole of Africa, and now I

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his telegram dated July 23 from Allahabad, which read: "May I announce you will unfurl National Flag Sunday morning eight."

<sup>2</sup> Only excerpts from this long letter are reproduced here.

feel the time has come for us to put our best energy into improving the condition of things out here in such a way that future generations may be proud of this colonization of Indians in the New World....

This letter has to be read with caution. I cannot enthuse with the Dinabandhu in his praise of Demerara as a land suitable for Indian colonization. Reports about its unhealthiness, it is clear, were not exaggerated. I should be most chary of encouraging emigration to such an unhealthy part of the world. I remember a naive suggestion once made in South Africa that the Indian settlers should be encouraged to remove themselves to tracts more suitable for their settlement and wholly unsuitable for white colonization, i.e., to the most unhealthy tracts in that continent. It was not suggested that the climate of South Africa was unsuited to the Indian constitution. If anything the Indian fared better than the European from the health standpoint. But he was not wanted there by the white man. Now Demerara is such a favourable spot. There white men can barely exist. No wonder, therefore, that there are no political disabilities from which Indians are suffering and that an African is the Attorney-General. This is a matter of necessity and carries no virtue with it. If the African refuses to do agricultural labour there, I fancy that it is not because he will not work on the land but because he is too independent to do so under unfavourable conditions. He does work on his own land in South Africa. Why should his poverty consign the Indian to the most trying occupation in the most unhealthy part of the world? It is the same story in East Africa. The Highlands are not for him. On the whole therefore the problem before the Indian public is just now to better the conditions of life here, and by attaining swaraj, to raise India's political status before considering colonization schemes. In my opinion it is enough for us if meanwhile we are able to safeguard the rights of Indians already settled in the different parts of the world.

*Young India*, 25-7-1929

### 253. URBAN v. RURAL

Several correspondents have sent me cuttings from Prabuddha Bharat containing an elaborate criticism of Gregg's book<sup>1</sup> and threa-

<sup>1</sup> Economics of Khaddar

nent the whole cult of the charkha. The articles are too long for reproduction in these pages. I must refer the curious to the original. But they enunciate the following propositions:

1. India must become industrial in the Western sense;
2. the question of physical existence cannot be solved by the charkha;
3. the conditions attached to the success of the charkha make too large claims on prevailing tendencies and human nature;

4. the justification and superiority of machines lie not so much in meeting the internal needs of a country as in invading and capturing foreign markets;

5. if India is to live and fulfil her spiritual mission among men, she *must* modernize herself. . . . Let us unhesitatingly and energetically assimilate the modern industrial methods . . . . But along with that we must practice spirituality intensely, create a mighty spiritual idealism in the mind of the nation and a great love for the country so that on the wings of them we may cross over the dark valley of modernism in which the West is sadly groping. Without spiritual idealism, modernism will spell a speedy ruin.

I have so far as possible copied the writer's words including his italics.

I am sorry that I am unable to subscribe to these propositions. They are obviously based upon the assumption that modern civilization is comparatively a good thing and that it cannot be resisted with any hope of success. There is a growing body of enlightened opinion in the West which distrusts this civilization which has insatiable material ambition at one end and consequent war at the other.

But whether good or bad, why must India become industrial in the Western sense? The Western civilization is urban. Small countries like England or Italy may afford to urbanize their systems. A big country like America with a very sparse population, perhaps, cannot do otherwise. But one would think that a big country, with a teeming population, with an ancient rural tradition which has hitherto answered its purpose, need not, must not, copy the Western model. What is good for one nation situated in one condition is not necessarily good enough for another differently situated. One man's food is often another man's poison. Physical geography of a country has a predominant share in determining its culture. A fur coat may be a

necessity for the dweller in the polar regions, it will smother those living in the equatorial regions.

The author's second proposition that "the question of physical existence cannot be solved by the charkha" cannot hold water. On the contrary that question can only be answered by the charkha or its equivalent. Every writer of note whether Indian or European has admitted the necessity of cottage industries, if India is to live physically. The writer of the articles in question has done less than justice to himself, to Mr. Gregg and to his own country by summarily dismissing Mr. Gregg's dispassionate thesis. Mr. Gregg has considerable engineering experience and he has shown conclusively that it will be suicidal, it must mean certain death to millions of India's population, if the solar power stored in the hands and feet of her three hundred million inhabitants is allowed to run to waste in the impossible attempt to replace it with steam or such other power *for the purpose of sustaining physical* existence. It would be on a par with the attempt made by a man not to use his hand for bringing food to the lips but to let a machine do the work of the hand and run the risk in the bargain of sometimes burning his lips for want of the automatic protection that the sensory nerves connecting the hand with the brain afford against overhot dishes.

The third proposition is now simply answered. "The conditions attached to the charkha" not only make no "large claims on the prevailing tendencies and human nature", but they are based on "the prevailing tendencies and human nature" as they are to be found in India. Were it otherwise, in the midst of confusion and disappointment running through so many national activities the charkha would not have spread through 2,000 villages nor would it have shown the steady, though necessarily slow, progress it had demonstrably made during the past eight years' revival.

In the fourth proposition the writer justifies the worship of the machine age not for the reason that it may meet the "internal needs of a country" but because it means an "invasion and capturing of foreign markets". Unfortunately or fortunately for India there are no foreign markets to invade and capture. The consummate exploiters of the West have "done the trick". We may invade and capture the foreign manufacturing countries. And if writer has any such grand scheme in contemplation, he thinks it is more difficult of

accomplishment than the task set before themselves by the votaries of the charkha.

The last proposition gives away the writer's whole case. He will modernize India and yet retain her spirituality without which he thinks, in italics, that "modernism will spell ruin". He will have India to do what experienced sages have told us is impossible of accomplishment. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." He seems to agree that the West has failed to reconcile the two. Why does he think that India can perform the impossible task? Why should it not be assumed that if the ancients could have done it, they would have done so long ago? Indeed it was after making the attempt that the authors of the Upanishads said, "All this is God's. Therefore live so as not to covet your neighbour's property."

Surely exploitation means usurpation. And usurpation can never be reconciled with spiritualism. It pained me therefore to read the article with such a dismal conclusion in a magazine which is solely devoted to spiritual culture.

What was more painful still was the exploitation of the name of Swami Vivekananda in connection with the double-edged theory propounded by the writer. The inferential invocation of the authority of the illustrious dead in a reasoned discussion should be regarded as a sacrilege. After all we, a handful of educated Indians, are shouldering a serious responsibility in gambling with the fortunes of the dumb millions whose trustees we claim to be. A still more serious responsibility rests upon the shoulders of those of us who claim to possess some spiritual perception.

*Young India*, 25-7-1929

## 254. NOTES

### WELCOME HOME

The Wandering Singer has returned home after making many conquests in the West. Time alone will show how lasting is the impression created by her. If the reports received from private sources in America be any criterion, Sarojini Devi's work has left a profound impression on the American mind. From that triumphal tour she has returned none too soon to take her share in solving the many and intricate problems facing us in the country. May she cast over us the spell she was able so successfully to cast over the Americans.

## ASSAM-BENGAL FLOOD

I am publishing the first list of donations to the appeal<sup>1</sup> in respect of the calamity that has overtaken East Bengal and Assam. Just at the time of sending the manuscript to *Young India* office I find the following wire from Dr. Prafulla Chandra Ghosh<sup>2</sup> :

Sheth Ramanlal Keshavlal of Petlad (Gujarat) accompanied by Bhim-jibhai, representative of Messrs Ranchhoddas Dayaram & Sons at Chittagong, Sjt. Harivallabh C. Shah and others came to Abhay Ashram, Comilla, on their way back from Silchar and Sylhet . . . . The method of work followed by the Ashram appealed to them, and they appreciated very much the idea of giving a sort of permanent relief to the agriculturists by the introduction of spinning-wheels, of which the Ashram has decided to have one thousand, and the idea of giving paddy for husking by which they can anyhow earn an honourable living instead of depending on doles. Shethji and Bhimjibhai were pleased to announce a donation of Rs. 2,550 on the following heads:

1. For 200 spinning-wheels Rs. 550;
- 2 for paddy-husking work Rs. 1,250;
3. for two huts for the Ashram Rs. 500; and
4. for khadi debt of the Ashram Rs. 250.

This is merely a sample of what is being received by me.  
*Young India*, 25-7-1929

## 255. MILL-LABOUR IN BARODA STATE<sup>3</sup>

TO

THE EDITOR

“*YOUNG INDIA*”

SIR,

May I draw your attention to the sad plight of the textile and other factory labour in the Baroda State and request you to extend your kind assistance for the betterment of their conditions? You are possibly aware that we have, in British India, a sixty hours' week rule, i.e., a general ten hours' day arrangement for the factory labour since 1922, but the mills in the Baroda State are even to this date allowed to

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Sylhet Inundated”

<sup>2</sup> Secretary, Abhay Ashram, Comilla; only excerpts from his telegram are reproduced here.

<sup>3</sup> This appeared under the caption “Correspondence”.

work as long as twelve hours and at times even more. In the matter of child labour too whilst the Factory Act here has laid down a twelve years' rule for half-timers and a fifteen years' rule for whole-timers, children of tender age are still taken in for work... as I know that it was with your advice and under your guidance that the textile workers of Ahmedad strove for and obtained a ten hours' day even before the present Factory Act was enacted, as also that it was at your instance and under your influence that a similar reform has been effected this year by the Indore State. The Baroda State is now thinking of revising its Factory Act and has issued draft rules, which, if finally adopted, would bring the Act in a line with that prevalent in British India. I, however, understand that the local mill-owners are opposed to this much-needed and long-overdue reform... This question is coming up for consideration before the Baroda Council during the next week and if you can kindly see your way to express your views on this matter at this juncture, it will prove very helpful both to the Council and the State in arriving at a just and sound decision.

*I am, etc.,*

'A FRIEND OF BOTH'

I gladly publish the foregoing letter<sup>1</sup>. I know the writer and I do believe him to be what he subscribes himself as. I do not know that my opinion will reach the quarters where it should, and if it does, whether it will have any weight. Anyway I am emphatically of opinion that no State, much less Baroda, can afford to do less than British India. Indeed even ten hours a day and the age limit for children in British India need improvement. If capital is not to fall into utter discredit, it behoves capitalists voluntarily to exercise self-restraint and make common cause with labour.

*Young India*, 25-7-1929

## 256. A VICIOUS BOOK

Three correspondents have written to me urging me to give my opinion on a book called Swami Dayanand, A Critical Study of *His Life and Teachings*, by F. K. Durrani, B.A., Muslim missionary. The author is the Secretary of Tabligh Literature Society, Lahore. A fourth correspondent has given me a copy of the book. One of them reminds me that I had no hesitation about expressing my opinion on Rangila Rasul and tells me that therefore I should have none in giving it on Mr. Durrani's volume. I have gone through the volume with as much

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts from it are reproduced here.



patience as I could command and I have come to the conclusion that it is a vicious, libellous book which should never have been written by a responsible man and published by a responsible society. The author protests in his preface that he will approach his subject in a scientific and dispassionate spirit. But he breaks that promise in the preface itself. He says, "We intend neither to praise nor to condemn." But in the very next page this is what he has to say on *Satyartha Prakash*. "It is a worthless book and the teachings and ideas contained in it are so absurd and so amusingly childish that one finds it hard to believe that a man who became the founder of such a powerful organization as the Arya Samaj could be the author of such drivel." The author has not hesitated to accuse the great reformer of falsehood, trickery, incapacity and addiction to bhang "whose narcotic juice often kept him insensate.". "The account of his life left by himself is pure fiction." "A pall of mystery hangs over his origin and early years." He has not one good word to say of the Swamiji or the Arya Samaj. He has gone out his way even to abuse Hindus and Hinduism. But I may not multiply proofs. Almost every page of the book furnishes ample ground for condemning it. The author lets the cat out of the bag in his concluding chapter. He says:

If we love our motherland, if we want to make India a great and a civilized country, it is our duty to wash it clean of the stains of ancient superstitions of Hinduism and reach out the healing of Islam to every child of the motherland...Islam is a conquering force and the Muslims were born to freedom and empire. Both can come to us, if we exert ourselves to expand our numerical strength. We are the children of the soil of India and we owe a duty to the motherland. Like other lands, she too should have a place of equality in the comity of nations. Hindu India will never be able to do that. She can be free and raise to power and glory only under the banner of Islam.

And this cherished desire of his the author has sought to fulfil by dipping his pen in venom and reviling one of the greatest reformers of modern times, his writings and the great growing sect of Arya Samaj and incidentally Hindus and Hinduism. I advise Mr. Durrani to reconsider his views, apologize for the libellous publication and withdraw it. This advice I venture to tender because in a public letter he says:

If anyone can prove that the book has been written out of spite and to hurt, hereby I promise to withdraw even the present edition and will not bring

it into the market. I have greater fear of my conscience than of any Government, and my conscience is clear in this matter.

If my testimony is worth anything, I can say that the book is bound to hurt every Arya Samajist and every Hindu, indeed every impartial man and woman not excluding Mussalmans. If a tree may be judged by its fruit then his book is a fruit of spite.

*Young India*, 25-7-1929

## 257. PROGRESS OF SELF-SUPPORT KHADI

Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta of Khadi Pratishthan sends the following interesting account<sup>1</sup> of the progress<sup>2</sup> being made by the Rashtriya Sangha which is trying to induce people to spin for their own khadi.

This is what I call good progress for the few months that the Sangha has taken up the work. If it becomes popular, there can be no doubt that the self-support method is the cheapest and the most efficient.

*Young India*, 25-7-1929

## 258. MY IMPERFECTIONS

A reader writes.<sup>3</sup>

What this correspondent says is of course true. I do use honey; I have not completely given up its use so far. I am more conscious of my imperfections than others can be. The fact is there are a number of things that I would like to give up but I have not yet been able to do so. Honey has been considered good for my health. I have not had the courage to give up honey, though I know that its use involves violence, as I have already given up a good many items of diet. To be intellectually convinced that a certain thing should be given up is one thing, to really give it up with one's heart is another. Having said this I must also say that my effort to give up honey continues. But if one

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here

<sup>2</sup> In Hooghly, 24 Parganas, Midnapur, Bogra, Burdwan and Calcutta

<sup>3</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that the use of honey should be given up as it involved violence to the bees. *Vide* also "What is One's Dharma", 21-7-1929

gives up honey one must also give up suagar and jaggery. From the point of view of vikriti<sup>1</sup>, sugar is the worst thing. Preparation of sugar involves a lot of violence also. Honey has not harmed me in any way. The doctors maintain that honey is very good for health. Then there is this in its favour: the modern methods of bee-keeping do not involve destruction of the bees. But of course that is no argument in favour of eating honey.

All enterprise carries with it some defect. All industry involves sin. The less of this the better.

I would now like to digress a little. The readers should understand that ahimsa does not end with consideration of what should or should not be eaten. But the ahimsa which has been described as the supreme dharma is much more than this. Ahimsa is the noblest feeling of the heart. So long as our relations with others are not pure and so long as we consider anyone our enemy, we cannot be said to have touched even the fringe of ahimsa.

A man who observes ahimsa scrupulously in eating and drinking, but is unscrupulous in business, does not hesitate to cheat and selfishly cause unhappiness to others, cannot be said to be observing ahimsa. But a man who, though a non-vegetarian, and not so particular about what he eats, is compassionate and has dedicated himself to helping others, must be considered a saint who knows the dharma of ahimsa and follows it whole-heartedly.

Straying from this central point we have forgotten our dharma. That is why I wish we would see the great himsa that the evergrowing distrust between us involves and prove our manliness in removing it. How should we behave with the English, with the Muslims or other communities? The search for an answer to this question provides the real field for ahimsa.

The research in pure food is the job of physicians endowed with noble qualities. The public in general cannot understand it. For this work a knowledge of science is essential. Whether I declare honey harmless or harmful does not matter at all. We should simply accept the views of one who has studied the technique of production of honey and has observed its effects. All enterprise is clouded with defect. Eating anything at all involves some violence. Having realized

<sup>1</sup> The correspondent had listed ghee, milk, curds, honey, liquor and meat as things producing vikriti, perturbation.

this our duty is clear: we should give up whatever we can do without. We should eat nothing to please the palate. One's body is the abode of God and one is merely its custodian. Therefore we should try our utmost to keep it pure as far as possible. We should never treat it as a means of indulgence. We should treat it as something meant to practise restraint upon and should increasingly cultivate self-control. Having once decided upon this, we are rid of the problem of what to eat and what to eschew.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan, 25-7-1929*

**259. SPEECH ON COMPROMISE RESOLUTION, A.I.C.C.  
MEETING, ALLAHABAD**

*July 27, 1929*

The resolution moved by Mahatma Gandhi runs that:

In view of the general situation in the country this meeting of the A.I.C.C. is of opinion that the time has come when all national effort should be concentrated on the preparation of the country for a campaign on non-violent non-co-operation after 31st December, 1929, and agrees with the Working Committee that all Congress members of the various legislatures, central and provincial, should resign their seats to give effect to this campaign; but having regard to the views expressed by a considerable body of Congress members of the legislatures and some members outside them this Committee resolves that the question of withdrawal from the legislatures do stand over till the forthcoming Congress at Lahore.

This Committee further desires the public in general and the members of the legislatures in particular to prepare for complete withdrawal from legislatures, should such a course be necessary, on and from the 1st of January next.

Provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent members of the Congress Party in any legislature from resigning their seats before the Congress is held at Lahore if they consider it necessary to do so on any new issue that may arise hereafter.

Speaking in Hindi on the resolution, Mahatma Gandhi said that many would have been surprised at the resolution and as many would have also felt pain at it. Personally, he too felt pain at putting the resolution before the Committee. But it was

the duty of the Working Committee to take into consideration all the circumstances before arriving at any decision. The opinion expressed by the members of the Councils was, he said, very strong. They would have resigned their seats in the legislatures if they were forced to do so by the Congress Committee but they would have at the same time kept a grievance and the result would have been that the Congress, which hitherto could boast of unity in its camp, would have been exposed to the danger of a split in its ranks. The Mahatma said:

Such a situation, none was prepared to face. At least I was not prepared to face it.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that the Working Committee had also invited the Congress members in the legislatures to put their case before it. Some of them presented their case to the Working Committee and also to him and their case was to the effect that the time had not come when the members should be asked to resign their seats in the legislatures although his personal view was that such a time had arrived and the country would be greatly benefited by severing connection with the legislatures. What opinion the President had now, he (Mahatma) held before and even then. But they had also to see that the Congress organization could not be conducted smoothly by enforcing individual views only. Mahatma Gandhi said:

You know that when the Swaraj Party came into existence and I came out of the jail, I entered into a compromise with your President and Mr. C.R. Das. I bent my head before them and the same thing I am doing today. Though I am not bending my head today before them but before those persons who think that they should not resign their seats in legislatures at this moment. We want to work with them.

It was this anxiety to maintain solidarity that prompted him to advise the Working Committee yesterday that although the time had arrived to take action suggested by the Committee, they should do what the Congress members of the legislatures desired today.

Proceeding, Mahatma Gandhi said that today they had postponed consideration of the question of resignations but the resolution authorized the members to resign of their own accord without asking the Working Committee in case any new issue arose necessitating their withdrawal from the legislatures before the Lahore Congress.

The resolution, he continued, also urged that it was their religious duty that they should start preparation from the 1st of January, 1930. They should prepare themselves to do from today what they would be required to do from the 1st January. On the 31st of August next, people would be called upon to give an account of their efforts for the enrolment of members for the Congress. It was not to be supposed that

the Congress members in Councils should work only in Councils and not outside them. The resolution had increased their responsibility. The Mahatma said:

I also want to tell them that when the Committee had paid great consideration to their views they should also carry on their duties very devotedly.

Concluding, Mahatma Gandhi hoped that it would not be understood by accepting the compromise resolution that they did not want independence or non-violent non-co-operation. He trusted that on 1st January, 1930 they would render a good account of themselves.

## 260. MY DHARMA

*July 28, 1929*

A father who is grieved by the conduct of his son and daughter-in-law writes:<sup>1</sup>

The writer of the letter is well known to me. He is a respectable gentleman. With his permission, his son and daughter-in-law stayed with me for some time. I have a pleasant memory of my association with this couple. Both of them have self-control, are sweet-tempered, courteous and eager to obey their elders. Both have accepted a simple way of life. They have come of age. The son earns his own living. The daughter-in-law is not fond of clothes or jewellery. She has given up the veil and some of the evil customs prevalent in their caste. The father does not quite approve of this. Hence he is grieved and believes that they defy their elders because of their association with me.

The above letter is the outcome. I can understand a father's grief. But I do not regret my own conduct. I feel that the behaviour of the son and the daughter-in-law has been correct. Parents cannot insist upon their grown-up children following their example in all matters. In this age of independence, parents should give up such a desire. Even the Shastras say that a son of sixteen should be regarded as a friend.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated that Gandhiji's advice to youth to differ from their parents if their conscience warranted it was causing estrangement between parents and children, that before they took the vows of brahmachaya and aparigraha, they should be old enough to understand their implications and that men and women should live separately in the Ashram.

I feel that, just as the son should observe certain restrictions, the father too should check his own desire to be worshipped as a god. The father should be satisfied if the son is polite, serves his parents when the need arises and looks after them if they become invalid. I have not heard of cultured parents in the past entertaining greater expectations.

I am aware that hundreds and thousands of young men have come under my influence. I am conscious of my dharma. I believe that I had attained some success therein. My parents regarded me as an obedient son and gave me full freedom. I never felt irked by the control they exercised over me. I have sons as well as grandsons. I impose no restrictions upon them. All who have come of age enjoy complete independence. I do not regret having given them this training. My eldest son openly goes against me. I am not unhappy over this. Despite this behaviour of his, I keep up my relationship with him as a father in accordance with what I consider my dharma. He signs his letters to me as "your obedient son". I do not feel that he is insulting me by doing so. I should realize that obedience has its limits. There are girls who stay with me as my own daughters, women who stay with me as my own sisters. They all enjoy freedom and have come to live here of their own free will. I do not feel that they should act in accordance with all my wishes. Their elders are not displeased because they stay with me. As a result of innumerable such experiences, I have arrived at the conclusion that while teaching one to exercise self-control in life, there is nothing wrong in giving one complete freedom. I have no knowledge whatsoever of anyone having come to harm through contact with me or of his life having become morally corrupt.

There is nothing mysterious in what I teach young persons; neither is there anything frightening about it. There is no danger in putting it into practice. In many instances I have found that all of it is acceptable to both the mind and the heart. Hence to those parents who are grieved at the conduct of their sons and daughters my plea is that they should recognize the signs of the times. I am alive today but may not be here tomorrow. The march of time is not going to be halted if I stay still. This trend is dragging people into leading a life of irresponsibility. By stopping it, I am trying to lead the young men on the path of self-control. Parents and guardians should assist me in this effort.

The writer finds fault with my conduct towards the women in the Ashram, in their touching me in a motherly spirit. I have discussed this matter with my colleagues in the Ashram. I do not know of any other place in India where women enjoy the amount of freedom, restricted perhaps, that women ...both educated and uneducated... enjoy in the Ashram. I see no harm in a father innocently touching his daughter in public. My touch is of that kind. I never enjoy privacy. When young girls come out for a walk with me daily I put my hands on their shoulders and walk. The girls are aware of the fact and everyone else also knows that that touch is an innocent one without any exception.

We make our girls helpless, create undesirable ideas in them, and implant in them that which is not there. Thereafter, we suppress them and then often make them victims of adulterous conduct. They come to believe that they are incapable of protecting their honour. A superhuman effort is being made in the Ashram to free young girls from this feeling of helplessness. I had started a similar sort of attempt in South Africa itself. I have not seen it bringing about any bad effects. However, as a result of their training in the Ashram, some young girls although they have reached the age of twenty try to remain free from sensuous thoughts and they are day by day becoming fearless and self-reliant. I feel that the belief that the touch or sight of a maiden stirs a man's desire is an insult to man. If that is indeed a fact, brahmacharya would become an impossibility.

During this period of truce, the relationship between a man and a woman in this country should be confined within certain limits. I have daily experiences suggesting risk in such freedom. Hence despite maintaining freedom for women, all possible restrictions are imposed in the Ashram. Except me no other man touches young girls as no such occasion arises at all. A fatherly relationship cannot be established at will.

I do not claim any power of yoga in order to justify my touching girls. I have no yogic powers. Like all others I too am a creature made of earth, subject to the same sexual instinct. But even men who have these feelings have been fathers. I have many daughters and many sisters. I am bound by the pledge of having only one wife. And my wife stays with me merely as a friend. Hence I have naturally to control the terrible sexual urge. My mother taught me the beauty of abiding by a pledge when I was in the prime of my life. The



wall of my pledge which is harder than a diamond protects me. That wall has protected me even against my will. The future is in the hands of Rama.

Except in the case of some elderly couples, the Ashram provides separate living-rooms for men and women.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 28-7-1929

### *261. WHAT HAS BEEN DONE FOR THE ANTYAJA?*

A reader of *Navajivan* writes:<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to answer the question what I am doing for the Antyaja. I cannot recount it. Hence I can reply that I have done nothing. If that appears to be a rude answer, one can say that I have done whatever my Antyaja brothers and sisters say I have done for them. As a matter of fact, I do for my own sake whatever I can by way of service to the Antyaja. It is wrong to say that anyone is uplifting these people. By doing away with untouchability, those who call themselves high-caste people uplift themselves and thereby protect the Hindu faith. Considered from this point of view, there is no need to give a reply to the above question. In so far as the question has been addressed to me alone, the answer is that on my own I do nothing and can do nothing in this matter. Innumerable colleagues of mine are engaged in this work in India. Anyone may take into account whatever part I may have in their work.

This gentleman erroneously believes that I am especially engaged in the work relating to khadi. I cannot even show that I am doing anything in this matter or what I can show is to the extent that I spin as a daily sacrifice. The rest is what is being done through my colleagues.

Moreover, it is obvious that in serving the cause of khadi, hundreds and thousands of Antyajias are automatically served. Moreover, service of the Antyajias is not something the value of which can be calculated in yards as in the case of khadi. If anyone asks how many schools have been started for them, how many wells have been

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had suggested that, if Gandhiji's volunteers worked in co-operation with the Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha, that would prove useful in achieving success.

dug for them, how many temples have been built for them, the replies to all these would certainly not satisfy me. If one can say how far the extent of untouchability has shrunk, one will certainly find an answer. But we do not have such an instrument for gauging this. Although there may be a thousand schools for the untouchables, as many temples and an equal number of wells, it may nevertheless be claimed that not a single brick has been pulled down from the edifice of untouchability. When the task of untouchability began, friends who regarded themselves as staunch Vaishnavas told me that they would give me as much assistance as I wanted in the task of building schools, etc., if only I gave up the idea of abolishing untouchability. What did I wish to accomplish by such assistance? It could give me no satisfaction whatsoever. I did not want separate institutions for the Antyajas, but only the right of entry for them into existing public institutions. Separate institutions would bring no glory to the Hindus, but rather constitute a blot upon them. And today, if I do get involved in having separate schools, temples, etc., for them, it is only because of a feeling of helplessness, because I regard it as my dharma at this juncture and because of hope that eventually the distinction between these institutions and others will vanish.

I myself can see untouchability disappearing but I do not have an instrument to show this.

People run away when they see the flames on the path of love. Those who have entered them enjoy great happiness, while the onlookers get burnt.

The Arya Samaj and the Hindu Mahasabha deserve to be congratulated on the service they render to the Antyajas. I do whatever little I can wherever possible. I must admit, however, that because of differences in the manner in which the work is being done, very often I cannot offer my services. I do not crave to have a hand in all that is being done, I do not even have the capacity to participate in everything. I am aware of my own limitations, and I consider myself fortunate in doing whatever I can while keeping within these limits.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 28-7-1929

## 262. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY CONGRESS MUSLIM PARTY

July 28, 1929<sup>1</sup>

I am glad you are having a Congress Muslim Party. If it is well supported and if it does not go to sleep, it must prove a tower of strength to the Congress and the institution will be of real service to India in general, and the Muslim community in particular.

*The Bombay Chronicle*, 29-7-1929

## 263. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ON THE TRAIN,  
July 29, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Your letters<sup>2</sup> to Indu are excellent and should be published. I wish you could have written them in Hindi. Even as it is there should be a simultaneous publication in Hindi.

Your treatment of the subject is quite orthodox. The origin of man is now a debatable subject. The origin of religion is a still more debatable matter. But these differences do not detract from the value of your letters. They have a value derived not from the truth of your conclusions but from the manner of treatment and from the fact that you have tried to reach Indu's heart and open the eyes of her understanding in the midst of your external activities.

I did not want to strive with Kamala over the watch I have taken away. I could not resist the love behind the gift. But the watch will still be kept as a trust for Indu. In the midst of so many little ruffians about me, I could not keep such a piece of furniture. I would therefore be glad to know that Kamala will reconcile herself to Indu getting back her darling watch.

My article on the Congress crown<sup>3</sup> is already written. It will be out in the next issue of *Young India*.

Yours,  
BAPU

*A Bunch of Old Letters*, p.72

<sup>1</sup> The message was read out by Abid Ali on this date at the first meeting of the party in Bombay, with Brelvi in the chair.

<sup>2</sup> Letters from a Father to His Daughter

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Who Should Wear the Crown", 1-8-1929

264. *LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI*

July 29, 1929

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have just read your Tamil Nad report on the train taking me back to the Ashram. It is good. I like the frankness about it. I am sending it to Vardachari<sup>1</sup> for report.

What about the flood there?

*Yours,*

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 893

265. *LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI*

ON THE TRAIN,

July 29, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

Send over the book Science and Art of Living by Dr. Leonard Hill if it is available at a low price. By low price I mean up to Rs. 3.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4713. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

266. *NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI*

July 29, 1929

I have written to this man to bring over the girl. He must not expect that we will keep her in any case. After interviewing her and if she can stand the life at the Ashram, may be there will be no hitch.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15432

<sup>1</sup> N.S. Varadachari, one of the joint authors of the essay Hand-spinning and Hand-weaving

<sup>2</sup> On Jangbahadursingh's letter dated July 17, 1929, from Gopiganj

267. NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 29, 1929

I have written to him that he can send over his representative. We shall bear the boarding expenses.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15418

268. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI

July 31, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You have despatched the book by return of post.<sup>2</sup> What could I send you besides my blessings?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4714. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

269. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

July 31, 1929

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. Please read in Hindi Navajivan what I have written about . . . <sup>2</sup> Your advice is correct. Find out the truth if you can. We have no remedy for . . . if he is corrupt. We would protect him if he were pure.

About spinning...I have both [the classes] in view. We however, want members from the educated class; not from amongst the poor spinning women. They would not understand this. We want to increase the production and also create an interest. Production would increase if we created interest. If men of understand would take up spinning with conscious interest, they would add to the bulk of fine yarn and would also make new inventions. Not all would do it, but inventors will come from this class of spinners only.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6066. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

<sup>1</sup> On B. Subramaniam's letter dated July 10, 1929, from Bezwada

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Shantikumar Morarji", p. 236.

<sup>2</sup> As in the source; for Gandhiji's article, *Vide* "Lakshmi Devi's Story", 1-8-1929

## 270. LETTER TO BECHAR BHANJI

July 31, 1929

BHAISHRI BECHAR,

I have your letter. You should put up with your wife's behaviour as long as you cannot win her over with love. You may insist on the girls putting on khadi if they are not grown up. There again I would have you use your discretion.

*Blessings from*

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5576

## 271. A LETTER

July 31, 1929

Kaka<sup>1</sup> read to me your letter to Chhaganlal. I read Chhaganlal's letter also. I only learnt about that letter having been written when I returned to the Ashram. I consider the letter to be harmless. Has Chhaganlal no right to write to you? If we cannot write freely to one another to whom else can we do so? The letter however happened to be written at the wrong time. What a coincidence that just when I should arrange for money to be sent to you Chhaganlal should write to you! There was no connection between the two things, however. Chhaganlal has written such letters to many others. He and Shankerlal have been inviting people to become yarn-members. It is thus true that just as the crow alighted on the tree the tree fell. But the poor crow is innocent. You, may, if you wish, count it as its fault that it is black. If all secretaries are black, how can it be helped? I can expect only one thing from you that is, do as your conscience bids you, not what I wish. If my wish and your conscience agree I would consider it a fortunate conjunction of planets. But such conjunction of planets is an uncertain business. I would, moreover, expect nothing from a person to whom I had been instrumental in giving monetary help if no such condition was made while giving the money. Nor can there be any question of helping you in expectation of anything. Or, rather, one may expect everything from you. But those expectations cannot

<sup>1</sup> D. B. Kalelkar

be described in words. They are too many to be described and would lose their weight if described.

You may now carry on the rest of the quarrel with Chhaganlal, but do not make yourself unhappy. Have a thick hide on your back. Those who run organizations cannot afford to be thin-skinned. They would take the blows and keep on smiling.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/82

## 272. A LETTER

*July 31, 1929*

If you can find a good teacher, put up even a thatched hut and start a school in it. Have it in the Harijan locality. This degrading practice will not end without great effort and sacrifice.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/83

## 273. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

[End of *July 1929*]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR FRIEND,

I had hoped to be able to meet you when I was in Hyderabad. But I see it was not to be.

This is to ask you if the duty leviable on khadi manufactured in the Nizam's dominion and passing from Secunderabad and Hyderabad could be exempted from the levy and whether the co-operative department can utilize the whole or portion of Rs. 10,000 placed at its disposal for research work. Surely the duty on khadi is a tax upon the poor cultivators.

I hope you are keeping well.

*Yours,*

DR. HYDARI

FINANCE MINISTER

HYDERABAD (DECCAN)

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/74

<sup>1</sup> As in the source

#### 274. 'IS SWARAJ WORTH HAVING?'

The following letter<sup>1</sup> will be read with painful interest.

I am a native of Vikrampur, and my home is only a few miles away from the home of Deshbandhu. I belong to the Namashudra community . . .

The clerks in the office, where I am working, numbering 50, are all so-called high-caste Hindus . . .

. . . I am looked upon here as a despised insect . . . Even the servant refuses to wash and clear away my plates . . . Although in cleanliness and decency I am not in any way inferior to any . . .

. . . Is swaraj worth having when the mentality of the people is so cruel towards their fellow-countrymen? Will not the treatment of the so-called higher classes who occupy most of the top positions towards the so-called lower classes be terrible when the power is in their hands? . . .

I am in intense agony of mind. Please reply sharp and also advise me what I am to do here.

As the writer does not wish to have his identity disclosed I have erased some parts of the letter. There is no doubt that what is happening to this Namashudra friend is the lot of many who are similarly placed. Though untouchability is undoubtedly going, the suppressed classes who are daily growing more and more conscious and naturally resentful of the terrible treatment meted out to them by the so-called higher classes are becoming restive. Their fear, too, that if the things remain as they are when swaraj is attained, the reformer's may be a voice in the wilderness and blind orthodoxy may reduce to nought even the little progress that has been made, has a surface justification. I wish the "suppressed" friends could be made to see that the fear is in reality groundless. They do not give sufficient credit to the reformers. It is not the quantity that will count when freedom is gained. It is the determination of the few that is going to be the deciding factor. Surely he who runs may see that in the forefront of the fight for freedom are to be found the reformers and not the reactionaries who even now seek the protection of the foreign power for sustaining their reactionary policy which they miscall religion. When therefore swaraj is attained it will be the reformers who must have the reins of Government in their hands.



Again the suppressed classes should know that in any constitution that can be conceived, there are bound to be full legal safeguards for their rights.

And lastly, they may not feel helpless and dependent on the aid of reformers. They have a just cause and they have themselves to defend it. True meaning of swaraj is that every member of the commonwealth is capable of defending his liberty against the whole world. Swaraj is an inward growth. their restiveness is the surest and the hopefulest sign of their and India's coming freedom. Healthy discontent is the prelude to progress. But meanwhile it behoves all the clerks and others who come in contract with these classes to treat them with exemplary consideration and courtesy.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

### 275. WHO SHOULD WEAR THE CROWN<sup>1</sup>

The occupation of the Congress chair is becoming more and more onerous year after year. It is a serious question who should wear the crown for the next year. It is all thorns and no roses. I have noticed my name as one of the possibilities. When I first saw it amongst the nominees of some committee, I did not treat it seriously. But now I find friends speaking to me seriously and pressing me even to ask for the crown even if it is not offered to me. I need not discuss here the reasons advanced in favour of the proposal. I admit the weightiness of some of them. I have given them all the consideration I was capable of giving them, but I must own I have neither the courage nor the confidence in my ability to shoulder the burden. I feel that I have become almost unfit for attending to the details of office work which I must do, as is my nature, if I accepted the office. I know too that I am not keeping pace with the march of events. There is therefore a hiatus between the rising generation and me. I look a back number in their company. Not that I believe myself to be a back number. But when it comes to working in their midst, I know that I must take a back seat and allow the surging wave to pass over me. I have mentioned two decisive reasons for my reluctance to shoulder the burden. There are others which I do not put in the same category as

<sup>1</sup> This was written before July 29, 1929, *Vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 29-7-1929

these. But I hold these two as sufficient to eliminate me from the list of nominees.

In my opinion the crown must be worn by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. If I could have influenced the decision, he would have occupied the chair even for this year. But the imperative demand of Bengal compelled the senior partner to capitulate.

Older men have had their innings. The battle of the future has to be fought by younger men and women. And it is but meet that they are led by one of themselves. Older men should yield with grace what will be taken from them by force if they do not read the signs of the times. Responsibility will mellow and sober the youth, and prepare them for the burden they must discharge. Pandit Jawaharlal has everything to recommend him. He has for years discharged with singular ability and devotion the office of secretary of the Congress. By his bravery, determination, application, integrity and grit he has captivated the imagination of the youth of the land. He has come in touch with labour and the peasantry. His close acquaintance with European politics is a great asset in enabling him to assess ours.

But say the older heads: "When we are likely to have to enter into delicate negotiations with various groups and parties outside the Congress, when we might even have to deal with British diplomacy, when we have yet the Hindu-Muslim knot to undo, we must have someone like you as the head." In so far as there is force in this argument, it is sufficiently answered by my drawing attention to the fact that whatever special qualities I may possess in the direction indicated, I shall be able to exercise more effectively by remaining detached from and untrammelled by, than by holding, office. So long as I retain the affection and the confidence of our people, there is not the slightest danger of my not being without holding office to make the fullest use of such powers as I may possess. God has enabled me to affect the life of the country since 1920 without the necessity of holding office. I am not aware that my capacity for service was a whit enhanced by my becoming President of the Congress at Belgaum.<sup>1</sup>

And those who know the relations that subsist between Jawaharlal and me know that his being in the chair is as good as my being in it. We may have intellectual differences but our hearts are one. And with all his youthful impetuositities, his sense of stern

<sup>1</sup> In 1924

discipline and loyalty make him an inestimable comrade in whom one can put the most implicit faith.

“Will not Jawaharlal’s name be a red rag to the English bull?”... whispers another critic. We give English statesmen little credit for common sense and diplomatic skill and betray less faith in ourselves when we think like the imaginary critic. If a decision is really right for us, it ought to be right for the whole world. If in choosing our President we have to take into consideration what English statesmen will think of our choice, we show little courage of our convictions. Personally I have a higher estimate of English character than that assumed by the critic. The Englishman prizes honesty, bravery, grit and outspokenness all of which Jawaharlal has in abundance. Even if therefore British statesmen are to be considered in making our choice, Pandit Jawaharlal suffers from no disqualification.

Lastly, a President of the Congress is not an autocrat. He is a representative working under a well-defined constitution and well-known traditions. He can no more impose his views on the people than the English King. The Congress is a forty-five-year-old organization and has a status above its most distinguished Presidents. And it is the Congress as a whole with which, when the time is ripe, British statesmen will have to deal. They know this probably better than we do. All things considered therefore my advice to those concerned is to cease to think of me and to call Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru to the high office with the fullest confidence and hope.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

### 276. A.I.S.A. PRIZE

The reader may recall that some years ago Sjt. Revashankar Jagjivan Jhaveri had offered a prize of Rs. 5,000 for a spinning-wheel that would do for the spinners what Singer’s Sewing Machine does for the housewife. Many tried to win the prize. A skilled man was admitted to the Ashram and given every facility to make his experiment under the best of auspices. The attempt however failed. But hope of finding a suitable cottage wheel was not given up. Sjt. Revashankar Jagjivan is one of those who never lose hope. He has succeeded in persuading the Council of the Association to announce a prize that would attract even the Western inventors to compete for it. Consequently the reader will find elsewhere the A.I.S.A. advertisement

announcing a prize of Rs. 1,00,000 or its present equivalent (roughly) £7,700. This figure will be maintained on the expiry of the time-limit irrespective of the fluctuations that the fickle rupee may undergo meanwhile. I hope that the prize will produce a spinning Singer who would raise the income of the village spinner eightfold.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

## 277 “BRITISH TRUSTEES”

It is a real pleasure to give elsewhere Mr. Pennington’s letter. Mr. Pennington is now a nonagenarian but his fith in himself and the nation he represents is as green as ever. I wish that we could have the same faith in ourselves and the nation we are humbly striving to represent. Mr. Pennington’s postscript<sup>1</sup> is marked “private” but there need be no privacy about it. I have printed it as it does credit to him. The reader will join me in wishing him many more years of life upon this tiny globe.

To come to the subject-matter of my correspondent’s letter, I must confess that he does not convince me. There would be no quarrel with him or the English administrators if they were real trustees. Mr. Pennington’s honesty is beyond question. But surely he is labouring under self-deception. Some of the highest men in the British Cabinet have frankly repudiated the doctrine of trust and denounced it for our benefit and the knowledge of the world the doctrine of the sword. “By the sword we have seized India, by the sword we propose to keep it”. The sword here means obviously gunpowder and all the tricks of diplomacy that accompany that substance. It was therefore the naked truth which was uttered when the doctrine of the sword was enunciated.

Nor need Mr. Pennington and those who think with him be reminded that a trust is always a burden, a responsibility. But the British people have used their possession of India predominantly if not exclusively for their benefit. In their own words, they have exploited the country and its people. In the late Lord Salisbury’s words they have bled India. Surely when a trustee discharges his trust, the ward feels its good effect and grows under its protection. But

<sup>1</sup> Which read: “You are quite at liberty to publish this, if you like. I can hardly hope to write again having been born in 1839.”

India's statesmen from Gokhale downward have testified that our growth has been stunted.

Pax Britannica is an overworked horse out of which no work is to be had now. Nobody is deceived by it. What we want is Pax Indica. And if we have to wade through a sea of blood before we reach it, the sooner we can do so the better. We do not want a superimposed pestilential peace that smothers us, we want an inward oxidizing peace that will make us healthy and strong.

Mr. Pennington reminds us of the mandates, that euphemism for usurpation for the purpose of exploitation. Let him ask the mandated nations how much they appreciate the mandates. Hypocrisy and camouflage are among the curses of modern times. But sweet words butter no parsnips. They have ceased to deceive the people concerned. That well-intentioned people can still be hood-winked into believing in worn-out beliefs and shibboleths is a great pity. Their usefulness for service is curtailed by unfortunate self-deceptions under which estimable men like Mr. Pennington labour.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

## 278. ASSAM FLOOD

Here is the first report<sup>1</sup> from Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar on this flood. The money collected is being sent.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

## 279. 'THE CREATIVE DELIGHT'

Under the above heading there appears in St. Berchmans' College Magazine a very readable and thought-provoking article<sup>2</sup> by Capt. A.R. Poduval of Cochin. Though for the pages of *Young India* it may be considered somewhat long, I have not had the courage to mutilate it. I present the reader with the whole of Capt. Poduval's

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here; the report narrated losses suffered in Cachar and Sylhet districts and requested for public funds for reconstruction of houses and supply of fodder for cattle.

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here. The writer had expatiated on the 'creative delight' in labouring with one's own hands to produce things for personal use and referred to spinning and the wheel in this connection.

article in the hope that it will bring converts to the great cause of Daridranarayana.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

## 280. BOMBAY MILK SUPPLY

Sjt. Nagindas Amulakhrai, the milk enthusiast, continues his well-thought-out agitation for procuring a cheaper and purer milk supply for Bombay. He has drawn up a memorandum showing that if the railway company would adopt a reasonable and responsive attitude it can very materially help cheaper production, i.e., by reducing the freight for milk and supplying cheap facilities for carrying milk from the suburban stations to Bomaby. He says<sup>1</sup> that it is owing to bad freight policy.

that places between Palghar (58 miles) and Bulsar (125 miles), although fully grass areas,... have no dairies started for milk supply to Bombay; that suppliers of milk in bulk have no alternative but to keep themselves and their buffaloes (16,003) confined in the stables (96) in the heart of the city in very unnatural conditions where there is no grazing area and the rent for accommodation of each buffalo in the stable is Rs. 9 or Rs. 10 per month resulting in a distinct additional loss at the rate of Rs. 240 per each of the 12 buffaloes that go dry every month after the lactation period out of a lot of 100 buffaloes in milk; and that the milk production from more than 26,000 buffaloes and supply thereof from year to year is being entirely stopped though they would again come into calf and produce milk to the same extent as before within a very short time if not slaughtered and wasted.

ontends that

. . . Bombay milk rate is the maximum in the world. It is much dearer than in New York and London. It is 50% dearer even than in Calcutta . . . The result is the highest infant mortality of the poor of Bombay and nearly total extinction of the best breed of buffaloes . . .

I understand that a Joint Committee consisting of a sub-committee of the Railway Local Advisory Board and a certain number of the members of the Bombay Corporation has been brought into being to consider this question. The question of cheap and pure milk supply for Bombay is a vital question. It affects the health of the inhabitants and especially the babies of 'the first city' of India. The

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

humanitarian and the economic aspects are no less important. It is to be hoped therefore that the Joint Committee will present a solution that will enable suburban dairies to thrive and simplify the question of removing the cattle stables from the heart of the city.

*Young India*, 1-8-1929

### 281. LAKSHMI DEVI'S STORY

I have received many letters in connection with the letter of Lakshmi Devi's, which I published earlier.<sup>1</sup> One of them is from the young man's name is Madan Mohan Sharma. He is studying in a college. Shri Madan Mohan Sharma writes:<sup>2</sup>

All the other letters I have received tend to support Shri Madan Mohan Sharma's statement. Shri Haribhau Upadhyaya has looked into the matter personally. He has also written to me. I have also read an article he wrote on this subject in *Tyagbhumi*. Shri Haribhau's letter<sup>3</sup> is before me just now. I feel that he has given sound advice to both the parties.

I don't know which of the two statements is to be believed. If the facts stated by Shri Madan Mohan are true then Lakshmi Devi has erred greatly. And if her statement is true, then I will stick to the views I have expressed earlier. Shri Madan Mohan has written other letters too and he swears that he has neither suppressed nor fabricated anything. He has also asked me to look into this matter. Bhai Haribhau Upadhyay is a fellow-worker and I have full faith in him. He has clearly written that he thinks both the parties have suppressed some of the facts. In that case it would be difficult to unearth the truth. I would advise Shri Madan Mohan Sharma to tell Haribhauji whatever else he wishes to add on the matter and remove his doubts.

I have also been told that I have done injustice to Shri Madan Mohan by publishing Lakshmi Devi's letter and have thereby promoted the cause of untruth. I, however, feel I have served the truth as well as both the parties by publishing Lakshmi Devi's letter. Men are quite often unjust to women. For most of such women their misery

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "An Unfortunate Daughter", 4-7-1929

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had denied the allegations Lakshmi Devi had made against him and charged her with lying.

<sup>3</sup> For Gandhiji's reply to this, *Vide* "Letter to Hariabhau Upadhyaya", 31-7-1929

ends only with their death. If Lakshmi Devi has been untruthful, then undoubtedly she has harmed her sex. But if I had not published her letter then this chance of exposing the untruth would have never occurred. What I said in my remarks on her letter can help her only if she is truthful, not if she is untruthful. My advice was given on the assumption that she had written the truth. If Lakshmi Devi has been truthful then it is up to her to come forward boldly and prove her innocence. But if she has been untruthful, she should admit it and atone for her sin. Many charges have been made against her in the letters I have received. Only truth, purity and steadfastness can save Lakshmi Devi.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 1-8-1929

## 282. *LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

August 1, 192[9]<sup>1</sup>

BHAI BAMESHWARDAS,

I have your letter. Ramanama is a matter of faith not of the intellect. And if one thinks of discontinuing it if it fails to bring one peace, this is as good as losing one's faith. Whether or not one gets peace from it, whether one feels happy or unhappy, one ought to keep up the repetition in the faith that Ramanama alone is real. One should never accept defeat.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 201

## 283. *LETTER TO SURENDRA*

*August 1, 1929*

I have shown your letter to . . .<sup>2</sup> Your letter is proof that it is the mind that makes one happy or unhappy. How strange it is that you do not even believe anything that I tell you. How often have I told you

<sup>1</sup> From the G.N. Register

<sup>2</sup> Omission as in the source



that I have not doubted the sincerity of your feelings? Does not the intellect of even those with the best intentions sometimes become dull? My criticism was of your wisdom, not of your intentions. And so long as I do not doubt your intentions the least little bit, why should you be pained?<sup>1</sup> Get rid of your pain, therefore, or you will make me unhappy. You need have no hesitation in writing anything you wish in your letters. You may write anything, sense or nonsense.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/83

## 284. A LETTER

*August 1, 1929*

Ramanama is not to be recited to the satisfaction of one's reason. It is to be recited with faith. If you think that you may stop reciting it if it does not give you peace of mind, it will mean that you have lost faith in it. One should keep reciting it, whether or not it gives one peace of mind or whether one is happy or unhappy, in the faith that it is the only real thing. One should never lose heart.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/84

## 285. LETTER TO AKBAR HYDARI

SABARMATI,

*August 2, 1929*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your prompt reply. Evidently I confounded customs with octroi duty but I did mean the latter.<sup>2</sup> All over India khadi is being exempted from octroi duty, for it means tax on the labour of the poorest and the most deserving. I wish you could exert yourself to have this tax removed. The best way to promote this village industry is to have a department as Mysore has for the supply of cheap and efficient wheels with accessories. Under capable management there is ample scope for improvement.

*Yours,*

A. HYDARI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/86

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", 13-6-1929

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Marriage and the Vedas", 13-6-1929.

## 286. A LETTER<sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI,  
*August 2, 1929*

I was very happy to read your long letter. I would be very glad if you came here. If you give up attachments and overcome ignorance, I think you can come. If you are convinced that you have freed yourself from attachments, not only will there be no harm in living with . . . , but you will be extremely helpful to him. Will a time come when you will regard . . . as you do the others and treat the other children as you do . . . and . . . ? If you wish, you have the strength to do so. You have understanding. You must also give up attachment to wealth . . . should not feel the need, and they do not. If you live as one of the Ashram inmates, you will need nothing for yourself. I will have a talk with . . . only after you have made a firm decision about this. Do keep writing to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/87

## 287. SPEECH AT TILAK'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY, GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

*[August 2, 1929]*<sup>2</sup>

This is what I understand your question to mean: to what extent does Tilak Maharaj's life reflect the belief that tit for tat was his principle? We shall not be able to gain much from pursuing this question. But I had a brief correspondence on this subject with Tilak Maharaj.<sup>3</sup> As a humble student of his life and an admirer of his virtues, I can say that he had a sense of humour. Vinod means humour. Since we have not begun to use the word vinod in that sense, I have to use the English word in order to make myself clear. If the Lokamanya did not have that sense of humour, he would have gone crazy ... he carried such a great national burden. But by this gift he used to save himself as also others from difficult situations. Another characteristic of his was that, while arguing with anyone, he deliberately used to indulge in exaggeration. I do not fully remember

<sup>1</sup> Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

<sup>2</sup> From Prajabandhu, 4-8-1929

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Naote on Tilaka's Letter", 18-1-1920

the correspondence I had with him on this subject; you may go through it. Tit for tat was not the guiding principle of Tilak Maharaj's life; if it were, he would not have gained so much popularity. I do not know of a single instance in the world of any man having based his life on that principle and become popular. It is true that in this regard he did not venture as far as I go...that we just cannot employ deceit against a deceiver. True, there is to be found some support for this in one or two places in the Gita Rashasya...in one or two places only. He indeed held that in the national interest the principle of tit for tat could be used if necessary. But he also truly believed that to employ truth alone against a rogue was the correct principle; but he used to say that only saints could implement this principle. According to Tilak Maharaj's definition a 'sadhu' does not mean a 'vairagi', but one who stays away from the world, he who does not participate in worldly affairs. He believed that, remaining in the world, anyone might be able to observe it, but if he could not do so, he had a right to have recourse to the other thing, that is, to employ deceit. However, if we have any right to evaluate the life of such a great man, let us not do it on such controversial points. His life is a rich legacy to India, to the world. That will be evaluated fully hereafter. That will be done by history, and only by history. The greatness of a living person can never be fully measured by his contemporaries; they cannot help being partial because it is only those with likes and dislikes that sit in judgement. Truly speaking, even historians are not free from it. Gibbon has been regarded as an honest historian; nevertheless I can perceive his partiality on page after page. Much of his writing is likely to have been influenced by his love or hate of certain individuals or institutions. There is a special likelihood of contemporaries being guilty of partiality. The best use we can make of the Lokamanya's noble life is that we recall the permanent principles in it and follow them.

Tilak Maharaj's patriotism was inexhaustible. Along with it he had a keen sense of justice. I came to know it quite by chance. He had attended the literary conference held at the time of the Calcutt session of the Congress in 1917. How could he find time from the work of the Congress? Nevertheless, he had come, delivered a speech and gone away. I could perceive his love for Hindi, the national language, at that time. But I saw a greater thing than that and that was his just and fair attitude towards Englishmen. Indeed, he began his speech in this way: "I criticize the British Government a lot. But we cannot forget the

services rendered to our language by English scholars.” Half his speech was full of this theme. And he said that, if we want to cultivate and develop the national language, we would have to toil and study as much as the English scholars had done. If we have been able to preserve our script, if our grammar has got standardized, English scholars have played a large part in it. The early missionaries who arrived here had a great love for the new language. Is Taylor’s Gujarati Grammar an ordinary achievement? It did not bother Tilak Maharaj at all that his popularity might diminish if he praised the English. The people expected him only to blame the English.

We cannot show even a hundredth or a thousandth part of the spirit of sacrifice that Tilak Maharaj had in him. And what of his simplicity? No furniture or any other decoration was to be found in his apartment. A stranger would not feel that this was the residence of some big man. Let us emulate his innate simplicity. Similar was his patience. He would remain steadfast and go on doing his duty and never neglect it. Even when he got news of his wife’s death, his pen did not pause.<sup>1</sup> We wish to enjoy great luxuries and to win swaraj. These are contradictory things. In this age, hypocrisy, irresponsibility and self-willed conduct are rampant. If we wish to win swraj, self-control should be our motto, capricious conduct never. Can we point out a single moment in his life when he had spent it in enjoyment? He had infinite patience. Hence he could take work from the worst of men. A leader of men ought to have this capacity. That does not do harm. If we are so particular that we will not take work from any given person, we should either repair to the forest or sit at home leading a householder’s life, provided we keep ourselves aloof.

We should not content ourselves with mere praises of Tilak Maharaj. Our principle should be work, work and work. At a time when we wish to win swaraj, we should not indulge in useless reading or thinking but utilize every moment towards work for swaraj. You may ask, should that work be done at the cost of studies? In 1921 also, I had the same argument with students. What did Tilak Maharaj do?

<sup>1</sup> A footnote in Navajivan says: I cannot but recall another more wonderful event. The Lokamanya had gone to Raigadh, Shivaji’s capital, to inaugurate celebrations in honour of Shivaji. He had to depart, leaving his eldest son who was lying seriously ill at home. No sooner did he reach Raigadh than a telegram arrived. He straight away put it into his pocket and only after completing the celebrations did he read it.

He wrote great books, not outside but inside the jail. It was only in jail that he could write the Gita Rahasya and the Arctic Home. He sacrificed his capacity for writing great and original books for the sake of his country. He thought to himself: this house is on fire; let me do my best to put out the fire. If he emptied a thousand buckets of water, let us pour at least one. Education and other things are necessary, but they are secondary. If they can be used for the work of swaraj we should do so, else we should let them rust. Therein neither we nor the world stands to lose.

Tilak Maharaj accomplished this in his life. There is so much to learn from his life, so great is his legacy to us, that there is no room for the question which was asked at the outset. It is our dharma to pick up virtues.

The work that has to be accomplished at the present moment cannot be done by slack persons. The work of swaraj is difficult. The atmosphere that exists in India today is such that we deliver speeches, we behave in a disorderly manner, we perpetrate violence, we somehow enter some associations and wreck them, we enter legislatures and make speeches there. We do not find this in Tilak Maharaj's life. What we have to learn therefrom is the virtues I have mentioned. If you do that, it will be worth your while to study at the national Vidyapith; otherwise the money spent on you would be a waste. If we do not do our duty, despite the speeches which have been made and the essays read out by students, we shall remain where we were and we would have only wasted a couple of hours. Let not this happen!

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 11-8-1929

## 288. *LETTER TO VISHVANATH*

*August 3, 1929*

SHRI VISHVANATH,

I have your letter. Your dictionary is for scholars. It has its place. My demand is for something different. I have felt the need of a dictionary for a busy man like me who can immediately find the right word when he is stuck. Such a man would not ask for evidence in support of the meaning given. Your dictionary is likely to be expensive too. And what I want is simple words which people can

easily understand, like *havagadi* for a motor-car, not words coined by joining some Sanskrit words.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/90/1

### 289. A LETTER

SABARMATI,  
August 3, 1929

I got your letter only today. I came to know about Surendra's grief from Chhaganlal's letter yesterday. It was a painful surprise to me. I have not in the least lost my good opinion of him. I never lost it at any time. I had no doubt at all about his sincerity. But I had none, have none, about his intellectual confusion either. Have not persons with the noblest feelings got confused intellectually? It happened to Arjuna. I have no doubt at all about my sincerity of motive in killing the calf. But many have ascribed confusion of intellect to me. How can I say that they are wrong? In the same way I have attributed intellectual confusion to Surendra. That should be no reason for him to feel unhappy. I have written him a consoling letter yesterday. I had also explained to him my point of view before I left. I think Nath perfectly understood it. I had even forgotten this storm in a tea-cup. I only wanted to see that Surendra did not stray from his duty. After Nath and you had reassured me on that point why should I have thought any more about his intellect? It is the Lord's promise that he who is sincere in his devotion to Him will be granted the light of understanding. What more do we need?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/90/2

### 290. A LETTER

August 3, 1929

I have your letter. I know for certain that you would not be happy at Gogade. Your place is in the Ashram. You may stay at Wardha if you prefer it. But you must find your peace only here. Beyond leading the recitation of the *Gita* verses, you should give up the desire to guide anybody. You would be qualified to do so only after you have become perfectly steady yourself.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/91

## 291. A LETTER

SABARMATI,  
*August 3, 1929*

I consider it equally wrong to cook grains either green or dried. I must have said that it is more sinful to dry the grain and eat it after cooking than to eat it fresh because drying involves an additional process which pains the living soul in the grain. But what I argue more strongly is that such things should not be so much linked with religion. Anyone who feels real compassion would automatically give up eating unnecessary things.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/89

## 292. LETTER TO MILLIE GRAHAM POLAK

AHMEDABAD,  
*August 3 [1929]*<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MILLIE,

I am writing this as I am watching the glorious rain descending in torrents before me. It will gladden the hearts of millions of men and women. There was a great dread of a most severe famine overtaking Western India. In the twinkling of an eye, all that fear has gone. It has given place to boundless joy. This rain is a veritable deliverance for millions upon millions of cattle. There is probably no place on earth that is so dependent on rain as India. You will now understand what part this rain must have played in giving me health. I have suffered agonies ≈ all due to my own follies. The punishment was adequate to the wrong done by me to the body. Through a faulty experiment I was suffering from dysentery. Whilst I was getting over it, I ate when I should have refrained and that brought on the inevitable crisis. I am so reduced in body and I have now to build up anew but there is no cause of anxiety. I am convalescent and regularly taking some nourishment and daily increasing the quantity and I hope to be able to walk alone in ten days' time. You ask me about nursing.

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to dysentery caused by Gandhiji's experiment in uncooked food; Gandhiji began to suffer from dysentery in the first week of August 1929 and gave up taking uncooked food from August 15, 1929; *vide*, "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 17-8-1929, "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 19-8-1929 and "Unfired Food", 22-8-1929

Everything that human love can do, has been done for me. It was my privilege and my pain to be on the sick-bed, privilege to find so much love rained on me, pain that I should need it all through my weakness and folly. This rich experiencing of love makes an added call on such service as I may be capable of rendering to humanity. But service to humanity is service of self and service of self is self-purification. How shall I purify myself? It is the one question that has been agitating me throughout my sickness. Pray for me.

With love,

*Yours,*

BHAI

[PS.]

Please pass on this letter to Henry as I shall not be dictating a separate letter to him.

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

### 293. *OUR SCHOOL*<sup>1</sup>

I have published the delectable description<sup>2</sup> of the Raniparaj School of Vedchhi given above just as it was received by me without the alteration of a single syllable. The reader will find some obvious grammatical mistakes in it which I have deliberately allowed to remain. Manual training is naturally given a place of honour in this institution. The three R's are taught not as a task but recreation. The artistic mind of Sjt. Jugatram<sup>3</sup> is clearly in evidence in all this. We may not all be able to emulate his consummate art. But if we can only emulate his overflowing love, we can dot the country with such model tiny institutions, and give to our teeming agricultural population just the sort of education which it so sorely needs to alleviate its condition. This institution inculcates culture, character, a knowledge of the rules of hygiene and sanitation, self-help and love of freedom. Let no one delude himself with the idea that such an institution can be good enough only for the Raniparaj children, but not for the children of the

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 4-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

<sup>2</sup> Not reproduced here

<sup>3</sup> Jugatram Dave, one of the tutors in the school



wealthy and the well-to-do. It can be easily shown that Raniparaj boys would feel smothered in our present-day schools for the children of millionaires. And what is smothering to the Raniparaj children cannot be uplifting for the rest. On the other hand, if the children of the millionaires attended the Raniparaj School of Vedchhi, it would enable them to breathe the pure, life-giving ozone of robust nationalism, and learn dignity of labour...a privilege which they sorely lack at present and might well envy.

*Young India*, 5-9-1929

#### 294. STATEMENT ON FUNDS COLLECTED IN BURMA

A brief statement on the funds collected during the tour of Burma, prepared by the secretay of the Udyoga Mandir, is given above.<sup>1</sup> The figures for all towns along with their names have been received from Rangoon. It is not necessary to give them here. However, if anyone wishes to see these, he can approach Shri Nanalal. Needless to say, funds have been sent to all the institutions for which they were received.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 4-8-1929

#### 295. MY NOTES

##### TWO CHILDREN'S SACRIFICIAL OFFERING

Chandan and Krishnavijay are sister and brother. Their mother is a widow. She is well-to-do, but has faith in khadi. Her entire family of six persons spins all the yarn that it needs. At the end of the year, some khadi is left over. All the children are studying. The two elder girls are studying at the Vinaya Mandir. Chandan is aged five, while Krishnavijay is six. Both these children spin of their own free will. No sort of pressure is applied; they spin simply because they see others doing so.

I have just seen a bolt of khadi prepared from the yarn spun by these two children and this deepened my conviction about the potential strength of hand-spun yarn. The yarn spun by them is of 5 to 6 counts. The entire bolt weighs five and a quarter pounds. Its

<sup>1</sup> The statement is not translated here.

length is 12 ft. 3 inches, its width is 33 inches and the count for the warp yarn is seven. I do not regard this as something ordinary. The reader may try and figure out the strength of that khadi which can be produced so easily. The mother, the uncle and the elder girls spin very fine and beautiful yarn. Let no one conclude that this family uses clothes sparingly. The children are as well and fully clad as those of any respectable well-to-do family. They use enough bed-covers, sheets, etc. Hence the example of this family is applicable to all middle-class families. The only distinguishing feature is that the family loves khadi and the uncle, who is the guardian of the family, has through his own love made all the members devoted to the cause of khadi. If all those who are dedicated to swaraj also dedicate themselves to the cause of khadi, we can boycott foreign cloth today sitting in our homes and if that boycott can be realized, the people will acquire new vigour and self-confidence. All children can follow the example of these children. Will parents inspire them to do so?

#### TO THE PERSON WHO IS ASHAMED TO REVEAL HIS NAME

You will not free yourself from guilt so long as you remain anonymous through shame. You should not regard the offence as a disease or try to conceal it from others. On the contrary, making it public will bring about a sense of shame and this in turn will help you in washing off guilt. So long as you have a false sense of shame, I regard your reading of the Upanishads too as something futile. The real disgrace consists in committing the offence. In trying to shield it, one is doubly guilty.

#### A CORRECTION

With reference to my article<sup>1</sup> regarding the services rendered in Orissa by Shri Jivram Kalyanji, the said gentleman writes:<sup>2</sup>

Despite Shri Jivram's desire not to publish this correction, I have felt it necessary to print it. This merely shows his honesty and sincerity. He does not wish to accept the credit which I gave him erroneously. For my benefit, he also wished to do away with the objection...that wealth was being accumulated at the cost of

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Amonag the Skeletons of Orissa", 7-7-1929

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The writer had stated that contrary to Gandhiji's impression, labourers were not exploited by voluntary workers but helped as the hardai (myrobalans) picked by them in the forests was purchased by merchants from Europe; and that there were other dedicated workers in the field besides himself, so that all the credit could not be given to him.

labourers...which lay behind the credit I gave him. Both grounds are genuine. It is not relevant to our subject-matter whether those who gather hardai can be regarded as labourers and whether trading in that which is obtained through their efforts may be regarded as earnings derived from their labour. The reader has merely to know from this that my belief that Jivram went to Utkal with a view to making money through the labour of others whom he underpaid was an erroneous one. It is sufficient for me and reader to know that the sentiment which actually prompted him to go there was also a pure one. That Shri Maganbhai is not a householder but a brahmachari is his special distinction.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 4-8-1929

## 296. *LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
*August 4, 1929*

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I got your letter. The restriction placed by the Conference does not prevent one from being appointed member of the executive committee or some other body of the Conference in any State. But I am very doubtful if in the present circumstances any State in Kathiawar would appoint a citizen of another State in this manner. It would be unbearable if you offer your name and it is rejected. If, therefore, Jamnadas can assure you that your name will be accepted, I see no objection to your getting yourself appointed. But I see no benefit either. Even from a practical point of view, it would be wise not to entertain such a thought at all. Having taken one step, you will not know where to stop. I am, however, ready to concede that you and others who are familiar with the local conditions, would know more about the whole matter. You need not, therefore, pay serious attention to this advice.

This time you must be made to change what has become a regular habit with you. I had never thought that I would have to attend the Conference on the dates fixed. All my time is booked. Do present an address to Jawaharlal. But it is not proper that it should be presented by me. My presenting it would look as appropriate as a father presenting an address to a son! I had a letter today from

Jawaharlal which he says that in case his wife had to be immediately operated upon he might not even attend the Conference. He is known to be very scrupulous about keeping a promise once made. If, however, unforeseen circumstances arise, like the possibility mentioned above, even the strength of a strong man avails him nothing. Let us hope that no such difficulty will arise.

*Vandemataram from*

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5718

### *297. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 4, 1929*

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I didn't know before now that a silent worker like you would commit the impropriety of falling ill after returning to his place. I hope you will have got rid of your fever when you get this letter. Quinine is the only effective remedy for malaria. You should therefore take it. Since you are not accustomed to taking medicines, the fever will come down if you take 3 grains of quinine with 15 grains of soda bicarb. It will suffice if you take this dose twice daily till you are completely free of fever. The quinine should be dissolved in water mixed with lime juice, and 15 grains of soda in four ounces of water should be added to it. The mixture should be swallowed as soon as effervescence appears. This is the best way of taking quinine. If the bowels are not clear take castor oil for purgative and eat light food. During the fever you may, with due care, continue without any fear the experiment of eating only uncooked food.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9846. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

## 298. LETTER TO SOMNATH

[After August 4, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

BHAI SOMNATH,

Perfect bliss is impossible without one's being absolutely free from passion. The means of stilling the mind is recitation of Ramanama from the heart. True renunciation lies in vigilantly and ceaselessly remaining engaged in service. The best way of keeping the *atman* happy in spite of the troubles of the body is to think and feel it to be different and separate from the body. Devotion is not devotion if it is bereft of humility. What produces pride is not knowledge. He who acquires inner knowledge automatically turns inward. It is possible to erase the effects of previous actions and that alone is the true object of endeavour in life. To become a cipher means to forget the ego-self.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/97

## 299. LETTER TO SHANKERLAL BANKER

[Before August 5, 1929]<sup>2</sup>

BHAISHRI BANKER,

If the yarn received had been despatched before the deadline, accept it.

I am sure the names of Manilal Kothari and Rajaji should be removed. If the rules permit we may re-elect them after we receive the yarn from them. We can show no partiality in this matter. We will face the problems which may arise from our following the straight path.

If you can suggest anything else in this regard, you may do so. Consult Jamnalalji if you wish. Where is Manilal these days? I intend writing to Rajaji after you meet me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/101

<sup>1</sup> As placed in the source

<sup>2</sup> From the contents this letter appears to have been written before the letter to C. Rajagopalachari, the following item.

### 300. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

SABARMATI,  
August 5, 1929

MY DEAR C. R.,

I was deeply pained to learn that in spite of repeated requests by letter and telegraph, you had failed to send your yarn subscription for the A.I.S.A. If the salt loses its savour, etc., etc. We might as well shut up shop if the tallest partner in the business is proved guilty of gross negligence. Do please send your yarn.

My experiment goes on merrily.

How are you and your prohibition work<sup>1</sup>?

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/93

### 301. LETTER TO K. V. SUBRAMANIA IYER

SABARMATI,  
August, 5, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am not publishing your letter as I still hold that your fast was wrong. You should read my article<sup>2</sup> again. I have said 'you should fast against wrong done by friend.' The court was no friend of yours. My advice to you is to refuse to have your child vaccinated and you should go to jail as often as they would take you. You should carry on a quiet, dignified and patient agitation against compulsion. there is no case for fasting.

*Yours loving,*

K. V. SUBRAMANIA IYER  
SECY., ANTI-VACCINATION LEAGUE  
PALGHAT

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/94

<sup>1</sup> With which the addressee had been entrusted by the Congress Working Committee; *vide* "Prohibition", 11-7-1929

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Notes" sub-title A Good Soul Passes Away"

### 302. LETTER TO M.R. JAYAKAR

SABARMATI,  
August 5, 1929

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

It was an unexpected delight to receive your letter accompanying the gift of your yarn. It reminded me of the good old days. I hope you will continue to send such reminders. Every yard of yarn you will spin will be so much addition to the country's wealth. And your addition will be ineffective.

*Yours sincerely,*  
M.K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence: File No. 407-VI. Courtesy: National Archives of India

### 303. NOTE TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

[August 5, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

Do what you can for this man. I shall of course be pleased if you could accommodate him. It is however for you to consider whether he is sincerely repentant.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15815

<sup>1</sup> This note in Gandhiji's hand is written on a letter from Jethalal Virji in which the latter denies having misconstrued Chhaganlal's letter. A note to the effect that a letter from Jethalal Virji has been replied to on August 5, 1929 appears on the latter's letter to Chhaganlal Joshi.

*304. LETTER TO BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI*

*August 5, 1929*

BHAI BANARASIDAS,

I have your letter. I have gone through the article in Maharatta. I think that we should not write anything about it. I am sure that it will produce no impact in the West. Even if it does, our reply will only make matters worse. Public servants will always be subject to such attacks. Deenabandhu<sup>1</sup> will certainly write to me if any action is necessary.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

SHRI BANARASIDAS CHATURVEDI

91 UPPER CIRCULAR ROAD

CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2556

*305. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJI*

*August 6, 1929*

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter and cheque<sup>2</sup> ; the receipt is enclosed herewith.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4715-B. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarji

<sup>1</sup> C.F. Andrews

<sup>2</sup> For Rs. 100 for the Assam Relief Fund.



### 306. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI J. PATEL<sup>1</sup>

SABARMATI,  
August 6, 1929

I have your letter. I am enclosing the draft. If we have something in us, we may hope for everything. We should display if I could accept his and your suggestion. But what can I do when I lack the necessary courage and self-confidence? How can one who loses courage act as a helmsman? I think that what I have suggested<sup>2</sup> is the right course. Nothing is possible with Jinnah. Sarojini Devi has some hope. If she wishes I will meet him.<sup>3</sup> You do not write anything about your health.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/102

### 307. TELEGRAM TO PRAFULLA CHANDRA GHOSH<sup>4</sup>

[On or after August 6, 1929]

PLEASE SEE AMRITLAL THAKKAR SILCHAR.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 15449

### 308. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

August 7, 1929

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I do not like the title "Dawn of History". "A Father's Letters to His Daughter" may be a better title than 'Letters to Indira' though I do not mind the latter.

<sup>1</sup> Although the source does not mention the addressee, it is clear from the contents that it was Vithalbhai Patel; *vide* also "Dr. Sunderland's Volume"

<sup>2</sup> Viz., that Jawaharlal Nehru be elected President of the Congress; *vide* "Who Should Wear the Crown", 1-8-1929

<sup>3</sup> Gandhiji was to meet M. A. Jinnah on August 12 at Bombay; *vide* "My Notes", 16-6-1929

<sup>4</sup> In reply to his telegram of August 5 from Comilla received at Sabarmati on August 6, which read: "Starting spinning in relief area. Solicit arrange give us ten thousand or as much as possible for same from your relief fund."

I wish Kamala would be freed from these recurring pains. I should risk the operation, if the doctors would perform it.

I am keeping the clock under lock and key and shall bring it on my coming there.

I go to Bomaby on the 11th to meet Jinnah. I admire Sarojini Devi's optimism. But I am going to Bomaby without<sup>1</sup> much hope.

*Yours,*

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### *309. LETTER TO SAROJINI NAIDU*

*August 7, 1929*

MY DEAR PEACE-MAKER,

I have your letter giving me all the information about dogs and daughters. I suppose you put the dogs first because they are less troublesome.

I shall be in Bombay on 11th by the Gujarat Mail, *not* the Kathiawar Mail which comes an hour later. I dare not stay at the Taj. I must go to Laburnum Road. Nothing will be required at Mr. Jinnah's house as I shall have taken horse's food at Laburnum Road.

You will please send me back the same day.

*Lovingly yours,*

MATTER-OF-FACT

(NOT MYSTIC)

SPINNER

From the original: Padmaja Naidu papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> The source has "with".

310. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

SABARMATI,  
August 7, 1929

MY DEAR HENRY,

I have your two letters. you retain the same promptness of action as before. When I receive Mrs. . . .<sup>1</sup> pamphlets, I shall write to her. you will see more about my experiment<sup>2</sup> in *Young India*.

As to your letter about. . .<sup>3</sup> I shall look forward to his coming. You may depend upon my straining every nerve to avoid a crisis. I am the same as I was in South Africa in these matters. There will be no standing on false dignity.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N 32577/99

311. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
August 7, 1929

BHAI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your postcard. It is good that you dropped the idea of having yourself appointed to the Committee.

Either Revashankerbhai or Durbar Saheb should present the address to Jawaharlal. I believe Durbar Saheb will be attending. Vallabhbhai would be in Madras Presidency.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5697

<sup>1</sup> Illegible in the source

<sup>2</sup> With uncooked food; *vide* also "Unfired Food", 8-8-1929, "Unfired Food", 15-8-1929 and "Unfired Food", 22-8-1929

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*

### 312. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

August 7, 1929

BHAISHRI,

I have your letter. May your efforts bear fruit. Please excuse me for my ignorance. Who are there on the Tariff Board? What are the powers allotted to them?

The Congress does not at present have the experts you expect it to have. It is a matter of regret that the intellectual wing of the Congress has weakened with the widening of its base. May be this was inevitable during the transitional period. Students of European economics, shaped according to the Government's model, could not appreciate the organization's rural bias, could not attune themselves to it, could not make the necessary sacrifices and therefore left it. But for this divorce we could have had the custody of Congress. I want you to explain your requirements more clearly and furnish me with the necessary information so that I may do all that I can. Importing salt is as preposterous as importing water. But, indeed, is there any limit to our absurdities? Despite producing enough cotton at home we import about a hundred crore rupees worth of cloth. What is a crore and a half rupees of salt in comparison with this? But this is a digression. Please therefore regard as enough what I have written above.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No.89/1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

### 313. A LETTER

SABARMATI,

August 7, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have read the portion marked. Believers in unfired food think that human intelligence is quickened by eating vital foods. But no vital-food believer entertains the hope that the whole of mankind will ever take to it. I don't despair of reading your work some day.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/100

### 314. A NOTE

August 7, 1929

I do not like deception anywhere. Whether corruption increases or decreases day by day has nothing to do with the removal of untouchability. The duty of removing it remains. I am not acquainted with Shri Aurobindo<sup>1</sup>.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/98

### 315. LETTER TO MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYA

[August 7, 1929]<sup>2</sup>

BHAISAHEB,

A newspaper by the name of Brahman Maha Sammelan is issued from Kashi. It proclaims itself the defender of sanatana dharma. It often publishes some very vicious attacks on Maharshi Dayanand Swami. The Arya Samajist papers have criticized it very much. Can't you do something to stop publication of such writings?

I hope you are keeping well.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

BHARAT BHOOSHAN PANDIT MADAN MOHAN MALAVIYAJI  
UNIVERSITY, BANARAS CITY

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 8683

<sup>1</sup> Aurobindo Gosh (1872-1950); Indian revolutionary, politician and mystic

<sup>2</sup> From the postmark

## 316. NOTES

### VACCINATION

Anti-vaccination enthusiasts rate me for having said that vaccination confers “a sort of temporary immunity from smallpox”.<sup>1</sup> The correspondents ignore the phrase “a sort of” and repudiate my claim to describe myself as an anti-vaccinationist. I would urge my enthusiastic friends to appreciate the fact that a person may be a good anti-vaccinationist although he may believe in a sort of temporary immunity provided that he renounces the benefit of such immunity. For myself I do not believe in vaccination giving any real immunity temporary or otherwise. It gives a seeming immunity because those who submit to the unclean process in numerous cases believe that they have escaped smallpox because they see some of their neighbours getting it. Who can persuade these fear-stricken men that even without vaccination they might have escaped the infection like the rest of their numerous unvaccinated neighbours? In my note I merely mentioned a psychological fact. Anti-vaccinationists will ensure reform in tolerably good time, if they will be absolutely accurate about their facts, take due account of popular prejudices and fears and patiently cultivate public opinion against compulsory vaccination. But for the apathy in such matters of educated India there would never be compulsion in a matter in which respectable medical opinion favours the reformer’s view and statistics exist which at least make out a reasonable case against compulsion. I can understand my compulsory segregation if my neighbours fear infection from me, but I cannot understand my being compelled to undergo an operation against which I have a religious or hygienic objection. A community has a right to protect itself from me but it has no right to impose an obligation on me merely for my protection. The essence of my freedom consists in my right to err so long as my error endangers no one else.

### A PATRIOT’S DEATH

A correspondent writes:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Notes” sub-title Anti- Vaccination

<sup>2</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

I am sure it will cause you genuine grief to know that L. Banke Dyal, editor of *Weekly Jhang Sial* and selfless Congress worker in the Punjab, is no more. . . . he acted as your Private Secretary to collect and sift evidence in certain villages of the Punjab in connection with the Congress Committee report regarding martial law atrocities. . . . Banke Dyal lived a life of poverty and even starvation. . . . Could you possibly stir up the Punjab Congress or Indian philanthropists to do something to relieve the misery of his dependants?

I have a vivid recollection of Lala Banke Dyal when I was in the Punjab in connection with the Martial Law Congress Inquiry, and can bear out what the correspondent says about his services. I tender my condolences to the family of the deceased. There is no doubt that it is the duty of moneyed Congressmen in the Punjab to investigate the condition of the family and make whatever provision may be necessary. All genuine patriotic workers should be able to feel that their true service is the surest insurance for their legitimate survivors. And relief should always be local. There is something wrong when the family of a patriot in Karachi has to be supported from Dibrugarh.

#### FOR A.I.S.A. DEFAULTERS

The Secretary, A.I.S.A., complains that many members are anxious to retain their membership but they are not prompt in complying with the rules. In spite of extension, several have failed to send in their yarn and ask for further indulgence. I have reluctantly authorized the Secretary to extend the time till 21st instant when the Council meets. But an organization weakens if its members continuously seek indulgence. I know that procrastination among members is the bane of most institutions. But an association which seeks to serve individually three hundred million men and women cannot afford to be lax regarding the observance of terms of membership. Nor is the condition severe if the members will spin regularly. Many allow arrears to accumulate and then fancy that they will be able to make up by giving many hours at a stretch. Unfortunately for them those many hours never come and they find themselves in default. Regular spinning for half an hour daily is no strain and it should be a joy to be able to renew from day to day through the wheel a vital contact with the millions of paupers. I hope that the members will realize the truth of my remark and hasten to make up for arrears and make a promise to themselves never again to fall into arrears.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

### 317. INCURABLE

Having read carefully the Governor's speech and the Revenue Member's on the proposed Land Revenue legislation and thereanent on the Bardoli Inquiry report, the conclusion forces itself upon me that the Government is incurable. The Bombay Government has accepted the Committee's report as it were at the point of the sword. It knows full well that rejection of the report would mean a resuscitation of the whole agitation in a much more serious form than before. There is no grace or dignity about the acceptance. Indeed the Revenue Member had the hardihood to say that the Government had accepted the report in order to close the matter though it could draw conclusions just the opposite of what Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell had drawn on the data collected and accepted by them. There is not one word of regret for the many acts of oppression committed by the officials or for the gross errors of Settlement officers which cost the people a protracted struggle involving terrible hardships. In the teeth of published letters of the ex-Governor, the Revenue Member dares to suggest that the inquiry was granted not under pressure but because there were definite allegations about the settlement being unlawful and the assessment being based on erroneous figures. He forgets that the ex-Governor had repudiated these charges and defended the settlement with unbecoming energy and had with equally unbecoming rashness prophesied that if any inquiry was granted the finding would show a higher figure.

The speeches make it abundantly clear that the Government does not believe in doing justice for its own sake. In important matters affecting its existence, it will yield only to pressure which if successfully exerted would place its existence in greater jeopardy than the justice demanded would. Thus it yielded to the Bardoli agitation because its pressure had become more dangerous for its existence than the reluctant grant of barest justice.

But the niggardly justice done to Bardoli has involved embarrassing implications. It has now been obliged to announce that it will bring in a revenue bill at an early date in order to obviate in future the errors discovered by Messrs Broomfield and Maxwell. But the faint outline given of the forthcoming bill by the Revenue Member need not enthuse us. It is much to be feared that the legislation will promise to the ear what it will break to the hope. All the public collection and preservation of statistics will be of no avail, if



the method of assessment is not radically altered and the decisions of Settlement officers are not made appealable in courts of law. To do this, the Government knows, means a tremendous loss of revenue. And an appreciable loss of revenue means a revolutionary reform in administration. For this the two speeches referred to give no hope whatsoever.

Here then is work cut out for Sardar Vallabhbhai and his newly-formed League. It has had an auspicious beginning. It represents all shades of opinion. All its resources will be taxed in seeing that the promised legislation gives the radical relief needed by a people groaning under the weight of a tax their holdings can ill afford to sustain. Absence of graceful and frank confession by the Government of the Bardoli blunder gives no hope of true reform being made without adequate, intelligent, well-informed and forcible agitation.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

### *318. MAHARASHTRA KHADI SANGHA*

Maharashtra Khadi Sangha is one of the most efficient and methodical khadi organizations in the country. No wonder, seeing that it has Sjt. Shankarrao S. Dev of Dhulia as its head. I take the following<sup>1</sup> from the interesting report sent by the Sangha to the Secretary of the A.I.S.A.

The workers undertook lecturing tours and visited principal towns in their respective divisions . . . . During these visits members in charge obtained signatures of persons who had already taken the vow or who took it newly of wearing khadi habitually and also of persons who promised to purchase khadi worth at least ten rupees per year. . . . at present nearly 4,000 people . . . . are habitual khadi-wearers. The movement of khadi in Maharashtra has undoubtedly passed through the first three stages of contempt, ridicule and indifference and has now reached the stage of active appreciation.

I hope that it will be possible for the Council to make the grant required. I would urge the Sangha to concentrate its energies in production along all the three lines often indicated in these pages, viz.,

1. self-spinning,
2. sacrificial spinning, and

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

3. spinning for wages by the semi-starved and partially idle.

The Sangha should have a map showing the places where the people are living in a state of semi-starvation and have idle hours during which they can card and spin in their own cottages. Needless to say that this work can be done only if the members of the Sangha know carding and spinning and can attend to simple repairs and adjustments.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

### 319. UNFIRED FOOD

The interest evinced in my experiment in unfired food and the testimony received in support are truly remarkable. Some correspondents even send their experiences for publication. But I refrain. I have found among enthusiasts a tendency towards exaggeration. They often build their conclusions on insufficient data or see a connection between a result and their experiment not warranted by actuality. Whilst therefore these experiences are very helpful to me, as I am able to check them by my own, I am chary of sending them out as a guide to fellow seekers. I therefore propose periodically to give the verified results of my own experiences and observation coupled with the caution that even they are liable to variation. I have found after prolonged experiment and observation that there is no fixed dietetic rule for all constitutions. All that the wisest physicians claim for their advice is that it is likely to benefit in a given case as in a majority of cases they have found it to answer fairly well. In no branch of science is the scientist so hampered in his research as in the medical. He dare not speak with certainty of the effect of a single drug or food or of the reactions of human bodies. It is and will always remain empirical. The popular saying that one man's food may be another's poison is based on vast experience which finds daily verification. Such being the case, the field for experiment on the part of intelligent men and women is limitless. Laymen ought to acquire a workable knowledge of the body which plays such an important part in the evolution of the soul within. And yet about nothing are we so woefully negligent or ignorant as in regard to our bodies. Instead of using the body as a temple of God we use it as a vehicle for indulgences, and are not ashamed to run to medical men for help in our effort to increase them and abuse the earthly tabernacle.

But now for noting the results to date:

1. There are now twenty-two in the Mandir making the experiment with me. Most of them have given up milk.

2. They are now having bananas added to their diet and the quantity of cocoanut taken has been increased.

3. It can be stated with tolerable confidence that when milk is retained there is no danger of weakness or any other untoward result.

4. There is no difficulty about digesting uncooked sprouted grains and pulses and uncooked green vegetables.

5. Cases of constipation have in most cases yielded to the elimination of grains and pulses and a liberal use of cocoanut milk and green vegetables such as dudhi (marrow), pumpkin, cucumber, etc., all taken with their skins well washed. Cocoanut milk is prepared by grating an undried cocoanut fine and mixing it with its own or other clean water and straining and pressing through a stout cloth. A whole cocoanut may be thus taken without the slightest injury or discomfort.

6. In the majority of cases weight has been lost, but the medical authorities who favour unfired food assert that the loss of weight is a healthy reaction up to a point and is a sign of the body throwing off poisonous matter.

7. The majority still experience weakness but persist in their experiment, believing in the above-mentioned authorities that weakness is an intermediate stage in this experiment. There is no doubt that the stomach which has undergone distension through overfeeding with starchy and fatty foods feels an emptiness till it resumes its natural size.

8. The experiment is not an easy thing nor does it yield magical results. It requires patience, perseverance and caution. Each one has to find his or her own balance of the different ingredients.

9. Almost every one of us has experienced a clearer brain power and refreshing calmness of spirit.

10. Many have found the experiment as a decided help in allaying animal passion.

11. Too much stress cannot be laid on the imperative necessity of thorough mastication. I observe that even many of the careful inmates do not know the art of mastication and have therefore bad

teeth and spongy gums. A few days of hard and conscientious chewing of the cocoanut and green vegetable has brought about wonderful results in this direction.

Several physicians are taking an interest in my experiment. They send me texts from Ayurvedic writings for or against the articles I have been using. Two or three have sent me the identical text against taking honey mixed with hot water and pronouncing dire results. When I ask them whether they have verified the text from their own experience they are silent. My own experience of taking honey mixed with hot water extends to more than four years. I have experienced no ill effect whatsoever. Objection has also been raised against the use of honey on humanitarian grounds. This objection has, I admit, considerable force though the Western method of gathering honey is cleaner and less open to objection. I fear that if I would be strictly logical I should have to cut down many things I take for use. But life is not governed by strict logic. It is an organic growth, seemingly irregular growth following its own law and logic. I began taking honey in Yeravda Jail under medical advice. I am not sure that its use is now necessary for me. Western doctors bestow high praise upon it. Most of them who condemn the use of sugar in unmeasured terms speak highly of honey which they say does not irritate as refined sugar or even gur does. I do not want to weaken my present experiment by abjuring honey just now. The humanitarian aspect will be infinitely more served, if the unfired food experiment succeeds beyond doubt.

Another physician quotes a text against the use of sprouted pulses but he too lacks actual experience for supporting his text. And this has been my complaint against many Ayurvedic physicians. I have no doubt that there is abundant ancient wisdom buried in the Sanskrit medical works. Our physicians appear to be too lazy to unearth that wisdom in the real sense of the term. They are satisfied with merely repeating the printed formula. Even as a layman I know many virtues are claimed for several Ayurvedic preparations. But where is their use, if they cannot be demonstrated today? I plead, for the sake of this ancient science, for a spirit of genuine search among our Ayurvedic physicians. I am as anxious as the tallest among them can be to free ourselves from the tyranny of Western medicines which are ruinously expensive and the preparation of which takes no count of the higher humanities.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

## 320. PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN<sup>1</sup>

TO

THE EDITOR, “*YOUNG INDIA*”

SIR,

Surely Mr. Rajagopalachari's scheme on p. 112 of your issue for the 4th April is inconsistent with Mr. Gandhi's dogma of non-violence. Prohibition is force, and force is no remedy for anything, least of all for intemperance, especially among those who repudiate the use of force (violence) in any shape. 'Non-violent' prohibition is self-contradictory. Could one frame a section of the Penal Code to the effect that anyone drinking a glass of toddy (or beer) in his own house shall be liable to fine or imprisonment? I am altogether in favour of real temperance, but equally opposed to tyranny, and the prohibition of moderate (quite temperate) drinking is nothing but tyranny.

*Yours truly,*

May 6, 1929

J.B. PENNINGTON

I am unable to subscribe to the opinion that prohibition is always force. If I prohibit my children from doing some wrong and for a breach of that prohibition I punish not them but myself either by fasting or otherwise as I have often done with excellent results, I use no force in Mr. Pennington's sense. I use the force, that is to say, not of the body but of the spirit; not of the brute but of love. But I am free to confess that Sjt. Rajagopalachari's prohibition is not spiritual but physical, not lovely [sic] but brutal, nevertheless I must plead guilty to having endorsed it. Unfortunately for me I have to confess that my non-violence is very imperfect, inconsistent and primitive. Only, it is still miles ahead of what Mr. Pennington is likely to conceive. I hold drinking spirituous liquors in India to be more criminal than the petty thefts which I see starving men and women committing and for which they are prosecuted and punished. I do tolerate very unwillingly, it is true, and helplessly because of want of full realization of the law of love, a moderate system of penal code. And so long as I do, I must advocate the summary punishment of those who manufacture the fiery liquid and those even who will persist in drinking it notwithstanding repeated warnings. I do not hesitate forcibly to prevent my children from rushing into fire, or deep waters.

<sup>1</sup> This appeared under the title “Correspondence”

Rushing to wine is far more dangerous than rushing to a raging furnace or flooded stream. The latter destroys only the body, the former destroys both body and soul.

*Young India*, 8-8-1929

### 321. ADHARMA IN THE NAME OF SANATANA DHARMA

These days as I write often for Hindi *Navajivan*, relevant extracts from Hindi papers which are worthy of my consideration are brought to my notice. I have today two newspapers before me: one of the Arya Samajists and the other of the Sanatanists. The Sanatanists' paper carries a rude, indecent and obscenely-worded denunciation of Maharashi Dayanand. The language used and the charges levelled against Swamiji are of a kind that do not become a religious paper and a responsible paper. I do not know if the paper enjoys any influence among the people. I hope nobody pays attention to it.

I fear that the attack on Swamiji has been made out of some selfish motive. That is why it is so barbarous and untruthful. I would not be surprised if it turns out to have been written by a member of the C.I.D. There would seem to be no other justification for such a vicious attack.

It is the duty of the Hindu Mahasabha to stop the publication of such dirty papers. I would request the Arya Samajists not to read such papers and even if they do, not to be angry. They should not even discuss them in their papers. Writers with unclean minds are avid for opposition for they feed on such opposition. Swami Dayanand had such a noble character and his services were so great that selfish and ignorant writers can cause him no harm. If the Arya Samajists will exercise a little patience, the publication of such filthy writings will cease automatically. When there is no one to comment on such writings or take note of them, this publication will stop of its own accord.<sup>1</sup>

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 8-8-1929

<sup>1</sup> Vide also "Letter to Madan Mohan Malaviya", 7-8-1929

### 322. A HUSBAND'S DUTY

A friend writes:<sup>1</sup>

Husbands are always eager to read sermons to their wives. Wives are even told to consider themselves the husband's property. The husband feels that he has the same proprietary rights over his wife as he has over his goods and chattels and livestock. To support this position they do not hesitate to quote from the Ramayana:

Drums, fools, Shudras, beasts and women,

All these are fit to be beaten.

These lines are considered to sanction chastisement of wives in our society. I am quite certain that this verse is not by Tulsidas. Even if it is one may be sure that it does not express Tulsidas's personal views but merely the prevailing social attitude. It is also possible that without giving the matter much thought he simply gave support to the prevailing social disposition. The Ramayana is a devotional poem written from the standpoint of a bhakta. Tulsidas did not write in the capacity of a reformer. That is why he has drawn a realistic picture of his age and described it so naturally. Although his description is not without blemishes, this does not lessen the importance of this superb work. Just as one cannot expect the Ramayana to give us correct geographical information, in the same way we cannot expect it to propound for us the modern view. But we are straying from the subject. Whatever Tulsidas's view may have been about women there is no doubt that a man who treats his wife like an animal, who considers her as his property, cuts himself from his better half<sup>2</sup>.

It is the duty of the husband to consider his wife a true companion, helper and his better half. He should share her joys and sorrows. A wife is never to be considered her husband's slave, nor merely meant to be the object of his lust. She has a right to the same freedoms which the husband wants for himself.

The culture in which women are not honoured is doomed. The world cannot go on without either the men or the women, it can go on only by their mutual co-operation. If the wrath of woman should be

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had mentioned a friend who was dissatisfied with his wife because in his opinion she was not a good housewife and wanted her to leave him. He had raised questions concerning the relative rights of husband and wife.

<sup>2</sup> The Hindi has *ardhanga*.

roused she could destroy man. That's why she has been considered Mahashakti.

Hindu culture has always respected women. They have always been given the pride of place. For instance, we say 'Sita Ram', never 'Ram Sita'. Vishnu is known 'Lakshmipati'. Mahadev is also worshipped as 'Parvatipati'. The creator of the Mahabharata gave the place of honour to Draupadi, as the Adikavi<sup>1</sup> Valmiki gave to Sita. We begin our day by reciting the sacred names of chaste women. A civilization so noble cannot bring the status of women down to the level of goods and chattels.

The questions are now easily answered. It is my firm belief that a wife has full right o her husband's earnings. She has an inalienable right to his property. It is the husband's duty to protect his wife and to do what he can to provide her food and clothing.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 8-8-1929

### 323. *LETTER TO NAJUKLAL N. CHOKSI*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 8, 1929*

BHAI NAJUKLAL,

I have your letter. At the moment I have nothing at hand for you. Meet Motibai's demand. When I have anything fit for you, I shall ask for you after giving you sufficient notice.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 12146

<sup>1</sup> Literally, 'the first poet'



### 324. LETTER TO DEVCHAND PAREKH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
August 8, 1929

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I enclose with this Jawaharlal's letter. It is a delicate matter.<sup>1</sup> Your reply, too, was not proper. You ought to have clearly stated that politics had been voluntarily excluded. You should have known that there would be agitation by the other party. And we should also admit that they have a right to carry on such agitation. Where there are differences of principle, we cannot close the mouth of our opponent. Now wait and see what happens. Your reply should have been simply: 'We have a difference of opinion with the person who has sent you the wire. It is not possible to explain anything in a wire or a letter. Our Committee, however, believes that after coming here you will feel satisfied.' Who will then say that your reply was an attack on the other party? There is nothing for it now but to wait and see what course events take.

*Vandemataram from*

BAPU

[P.S.]

I have not revised the letter.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: GN. 5719

### 325. LETTER TO GORDHANBHAI I. PATEL<sup>2</sup>

August 8, 1929

BHAISHRI GORDHANBHAI<sup>3</sup>,

Owing to pressure of work, your letter escaped my attention. I remembered it last night. The final award could be given only in mutual consultation. My opinion however is that the petitioners have

<sup>1</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru was to preside over the conference of the Youth League at Rajkot and some political worker in Saurashtra had sent a telegram to him which made him hesitate whether he should attend the conference.

<sup>2</sup> The letter was in reply to the addressee's letter dated 2-8-1929 in connection with the dispute between the Labour Union and the Mill-owners' Association, in which Gandhiji and Sheth Mangaldas had been appointed arbitrators.

<sup>3</sup> Secretary, Ahmedabad Mill-owners' Association

a right to add to or alter their petitions or to vary emphasis, etc.<sup>1</sup> The arbitrators have not yet considered whether or not they can go into the question of the propriety of the wage-cut in 1923.<sup>2</sup>

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14975

### 326. A LETTER

August 8, 1929

About Bhagat Singh<sup>3</sup> I had received the same information that you have given me. But I believed you when you told me the opposite. I understand what you write now. But isn't there something not quite true in this?

Both the sides in the Punjab are doing wrong things on a large scale. Things there are beyond the depth of Mahadev. If there is anything to investigate, I myself should go. But I shall not be able to get on in the prevailing atmosphere. I feel like a hard grain that cannot cook. what can be done under these circumstances? My optimism is based on faith. There is nothing in the surrounding atmosphere that can please me and nothing in which I can see a single ray of hope. The rays of hope are constantly shooting only from my unflinching faith in non-violence.

I understand about Prabhu Dayal—which Prabhu Dayal? ...<sup>4</sup> I still think that my decision about the presidentship was right. Others also have approved of it. I think it would have been a serious mistake if I had yielded to the temptation.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/103

<sup>1</sup> The labour Union by their letter dated 31-7-1929 had withdrawn their original contention that since 1923 the condition of the mills had improved sufficiently to warrant restoration of the cut in the workers' wages effected in 1923, and had argued instead that the cut was unjustified and should, therefore, be cancelled.

<sup>2</sup> For the arbitrators' award on the original issue, *vide* "Arbitrators Award", 14-8-1929. For Gandhiji's views on the new issue raised by the Labour Union, *vide* "Note on Dispute Between Mill-Owners and Workers", 7-9-1929

<sup>3</sup> Who had been sentenced to transportation for life for throwing two bombs in the Central Legislative Assembly on April 8, 1929

<sup>4</sup> Omission as in the source

327. *LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI*

August 9, 1929

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Your love letter. I am here the whole of August except next Sunday. So come when you can and like.

*Yours,*

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9609

328. *LETTER TO J. T. SUNDERLAND*

SABARMATI,

August 10, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You will please excuse me for my not having written to you earlier about your book<sup>1</sup>. The fact is my time is so mapped out that outside my daily routine there is hardly a minute left. And but for the prosecution of Ramanand Babu<sup>2</sup> I would probably not have been able to read your book even now. Having studied it I can bear testimony to your great industry and greater love for India. I flatter myself with the belief that I have an unusual capacity for discriminating between solid writing and venomous. Though your love for India has prompted you to say harsh things of British Rule and British method, I have detected in your work no venom. The prosecution in regard to your book only confirms your indictment of the system.

Wishing you many years of active service of humanity,

*Yours sincerely,*

REV. J. T. SUNDERLAND

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/105

<sup>1</sup> *Indian in Bondage: Her Right to Freedom*, which was proscribed in June, 1929; vide "Atrocious", 6-6-1929 and "Notes", sub-title The Oriental Brand

<sup>2</sup> Ramanand Chatterji, editor of *The Modern Review* and publisher of the addressee's book

### 329. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 10, 1929*

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. A reply has been sent to Jawaharlal. You must have come to know about the letter I wrote in this connection to Devchandbhai's address day before yesterday. Whatever Bhai Amritlal does, you are going to act with politeness and firmness.

I always get all manner of criticisms of the Parishad's working but I gulp them down; nor do I wish to worry you by referring them all to you. Let not however falsehood, pomp, pretence or excess come in anywhere. It is impossible for me to go over there. And I have already written who should present the address. I see nothing wrong if a person against whom a case is pending produces witnesses though he might have to pay them an allowance. He should not let himself be released on bail. A satyagrahi is tested also in a false case like this and gains heaven-sent experience. We gain or ought to learn a lesson which never even occurs to us. The aforesaid satyagrahi has checked his anger towards the shepherd. He can love the shepherd. If he cannot, he is no true satyagrahi.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9190

### 330. A LETTER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 10, 1929*

. . .<sup>1</sup> Give up all worries about the world and show true humility. We are God's slaves only and should therefore do the task He assigns to us and leave the worrying to Him. You are no doubt a priest for the Bhils, Dheds and other backward communities. But you don't believe, do you, that you are winning glory for your priesthood? It is our Master who crowns it with glory. He uses us as His hands and feet. I

<sup>1</sup> Omission as in the source

am sure you know the section of the law which says that if somebody thrusts a revolver in your hands and forces you to shoot and if, as a result, somebody is killed, it is not you, but the person forcing you to shoot who would be guilty of murder. And does God not force us to do many things? So let us leave everything to Him and be at peace. And when He again pushes us into a furnace we will let ourselves be pushed. This philosophizing is for your amusement. But one may find something worth while at times even in a joke. If you find any such thing in my jest, accept it, but if not, at least laugh at the joke and, having done so take perfect rest and be strong as a young man.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/106

### 331. *THE EFFICACY OF VOWS*<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent who seems to be a regular and careful reader of *Navajivan* writes:

I spin regularly, but the question is whether or not I should bind myself to it by a vow. If I take a vow to spin regularly for one hour every day, I suppose I must do an hour's honest spinning unfailingly, come what may. Suppose now, having taken the vow I am required to go out on a long journey, how can I fulfil my vow about spinning? Or again, suppose I fall seriously ill, even then I must do my spinning, or else be guilty of breaking my vow before man and God. On the other hand if I do not take a vow, what guarantee is there that my resolution would not give way and betray me at a critical moment?

You will perhaps say that one's resolution ought to be made of sterner stuff. But when even the acknowledged leaders of the country are seen hourly breaking their resolutions, what can we expect from the rank and file? What are lesser mortals like myself to do? Would you kindly resolve my dilemma?

Being accustomed from very childhood to taking vows I confess I have a strong bias in favour of the practice. It has come to my rescue in many a crisis; I have seen it save others from many a pitfall. A life without vows is like a ship without anchor or like an edifice that is built on slip-sand instead of a solid rock. A vow imparts stability, ballast and firmness to one's character. What reliance can be placed on a person who lacks these essential qualities? An agreement is

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 11-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal

nothing but a mutual interchange of vows; simultaneously one enters into a pledge when one gives one's word to another.

It old days, the word of mouth of illustrious persons was regarded as good as a bond. They concluded transactions involving millions by oral agreements. In fact our entire social fabric rests on the sanctity of the pledged word. The world would go to pieces if there was not this element of stability or finality in agreements arrived at. The Himalayas are immovably fixed for ever in their place. India would perish if the firmness of the Himalayas gave way. The sun, the moon and other heavenly affairs would come to a standstill. But we know that the sun has been rising regularly at its fixed time for countless ages in the past and will continue to do so in future. The cooling orb of the moon will continue always to wax and wane as it has done for ages past with a clock-work regularity. That is why we call the sun and the moon to be witness to our affairs. We base our calender on their movements, we regulate our time by their rising and setting.

The same law, which regulates these heavenly bodies, applies equally to men. A person unbound by vows can never be absolutely relied upon. It is overweening pride to say, 'This thing comes natural to me. Why should I bind myself permanently by vows? I can well take care of myself at the critical moment. Why should I take an absolute vow against wine? I never get drunk. Why should I forgo the pleasure of an occasional cup for nothing? A person who argues like this will never be weaned from his addiction.

To shirk taking of vows betrays indecision and want of resolution. One never can achieve anything lasting in this world by being irresolute. For instance, what faith can you place in a general or a soldier who lacks resolution and determination, who says, 'I shall keep guard as long as I can'? A householder, whose watchman says that he would keep watch as long as he can, can never sleep in security. No general ever won a victory by following the principle of 'being vigilant so long as he could'.

I have before me innumerable examples of spinners at will. Every one of them has come to grief sooner or later. On the other hand, sacramental spinning has transformed the entire life of those who have taken to it; mountains of yarn stored up by them tell the tale. A vow is like a right angle. An insignificant right angle will make all the difference between ugliness and elegance, solidity and

shakiness of a gigantic structure. Even so stability or instability, purity or otherwise of an entire career may depend upon the taking of a vow.

It goes without saying that moderation and sobriety are of the very essence of vow-taking. The taking of vows are not feasible or that are beyond one's capacity would betray thoughtlessness and want of balance. Similarly a vow can be made conditional without losing any of its efficacy or virtue. For instance there would be nothing wrong about taking a vow to spin for at least one hour every day and to turn out not less than 200 yards daily except when one is travelling or is sick. Such a vow would not only be quite in form but also easy of observance. The essence of a vow does not consist in the difficulty of its performance but in the determination behind it unflinchingly to stick to it in the teeth of difficulties.

Self-restraint is the very key-stone of the ethics of vow-taking. For instance, one cannot take a vow of self-indulgence, to eat, drink and be merry, in short, to do as one pleases. This warning is necessary because I know of instances when an attempt was made to cover things of questionable import by means of vows. In the heyday of non-co-operation one even heard the objection raised, 'How can I resign from Government service when I have made a covenant with it to serve it? Or again, 'How can I close my liquor shop since I have bound myself by contract to run it for five years? Such questions might appear puzzling sometimes. But on closer thinking it will be seen that a vow can never be used to support or justify an immoral action. A vow must lead one upwards, never downwards towards perdition.

The correspondent has concluded by having a fling at the 'acknowledged leaders' of the country and cited their so-called fickleness to justify his position. This sort of reasoning only betrays weakness. One should try to emulate and imitate only the virtues of one's leaders, never their faults. Our national leaders do not claim to be paragons of perfection. They occupy the position of eminence that they do in public life by virtue of certain qualities which they exhibit in their character. Let us ponder over those qualities and try to assimilate them, let us not even think of their shortcomings. No son can be called a worthy son of his father who only imbibes the shortcomings of his parents or pleads inability to keep clear of them. It is the virtues, not the faults of one's parents, that constitute one's true legacy. A son who only adds to the debts of his parents would be written down as unworthy. A worthy son would liquidate and increase the legacy left by them.

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

### 332. 'BITTER AS POISON'<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent has addressed me several posers for answers in *Navajivan*. One of these runs:

The fateful 1st of January 1930 is approaching fast, but you are still harping on your incantatory formula of “khadi, khadi and again khadi”, and refuse to give any effective lead to the country. I for one have no stomach left for this “hand-spun” war-cry of yours, and I believe it has begun to get on the nerves of the country too. Why not give a mandate to youthful leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose to raise a force of one crore national volunteers who would be ready to lay down their lives for the sake of the country? Let the wearing of khadi or in the alternative swadeshi mill-cloth be made a necessary condition for enrolment. Similarly, you may promulgate whatever other conditions as think necessary for the enrolment, and give to khadi the principal place among these. I do not mind that. The country is as impatient as ever to embark upon non-co-operation or civil disobedience; only it lacks the proper lead. Simultaneously with this I would suggest that leaders like Vallabhbhai should be called upon to organize labour and peasantry, and you will find that they would rise up and stand together like one man to face the ordeal of fire without flinching, even as the brave cultivators of Bardoli did last year.

I am sorry to say that even if khadi gets on one's nerves, as it is alleged by the correspondent to do, I have no other remedy to suggest in its place. I cannot conceive of swaraj without khadi, for the simple reason that without it the lot of the peasantry is bound to remain precarious in India, and it constitutes more than eight-tenths of her entire population.

Nor is it true to say that the country is utterly fed up with khadi, and that khadi has begun to get on the people's nerves. It may be so in the case of a handful of town-dwellers of India, but they do not constitute India. India's city-dwelling population in the midst of the teeming millions of her villages is as a drop in the ocean. The foundation of India's nationality is to be laid knot in her towns but in her villages, and the only movement that is at present actively going on among India's villages is that of khadi. It is daily expanding. It

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 11-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal



today provides a living to at least 2,000 middle-class young men, and enables over one lakh of poor women spinners to eke out a living. Similarly it is giving employment to over ten thousand weavers, and a host of washermen, dyers, carders, tailors, etc. If in spite of all these beneficent results that khadi has produced and is producing, it is as gall and wormwood to any, I can only pity them.

It is a gratuitous insult to Pandit Jawaharlal or Subhas Chandra Bose to say that they are awaiting my permission or mandate to organize the youth of the country, and are being kept back for want of it. They are already doing the work of organization to the best of their power and ability. They need no permission from me for doing their part. If they are true soldiers as I believe they are, I could not hold them back if I would. But the plain, painful fact of the matter is that today not to talk of one crore volunteers, there are not ten thousand who are prepared completely to sacrifice themselves for duty's sake. I know that they can get ready in no time if they wish, but 'the will to do' is lacking. You cannot get swaraj by mere speeches, shows, processions, etc. What is needed is solid, steady, constructive work; what the youth craves for and is fed on is only the former.

It is a gross misrepresentation of the true situation to say that the masses are impatient to be led to civil disobedience, but that I am hanging back. I know well enough how to lead to civil disobedience a people who are prepared to embark upon it on my terms. I see no such sign on the horizon. But I live in faith. I am still hoping that a way out of the "encircling gloom" will be found on 1st January next.

As for Sardar Vallabhbhai he carries my permission in his pocket always. But he needs a Bardoli to make good his leadership. How many Bardolis are there ready in the country today? It took Bardoli seven years of silent preparation to prepare for limited satyagraha for the redress of her wrongs. It is a question whether even Bardoli is today ready for utter self-immolation to obtain freedom for the whole of India. Both the Sardar and myself entertain the highest hopes about Bardoli, but her time is obviously not yet. She is herself in travail.

*Young India*, 5-9-1929

### 333. *FRUIT OF SATYAGRAHA*

A “Spiritual Seeker” writes:<sup>1</sup>

The fruit of satyagraha, howsoever slight, is the same as described by the “Spiritual Seeker”. The history of the world is full of the triumph of satyagraha. Not a single instance of its defeat can be found. But one should make sure that stress is laid on truth alone. I have received the amount sent by the Spiritual Seeker”. He has sent a currency note without registering it. No one should do this. Anyone who wishes to send a currency note should seal the envelope and register it.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 11-8-1929

### 334. *MY NOTES*

TO THE PERSON WHO HAS GIVEN HIS NAME

Although doctors very often regard marriage as a cure, they are, I think, gravely mistaken in this matter. I know that some persons have benefited, but I also know that many people have been harmed, by it. It is not proper to abandon the straight path and get misled by taking a crooked path because sometimes one feels that momentary success can be thus achieved. The better alternative is not to deviate from the straight path, despite any hardships that one may have to undergo; the path of self-control is hence the only one that I can recommend in circumstances such as yours.

TO ‘READER OF “NAVAJIVAN”

There is much in your letter that calls for a reply, but I do not wish to encourage anonymous letters. If you send me your name and address, I shall try to give you a reply.

TO ‘A KATHIAWARI YOUTH’

If there is no ill will in your questions, they are harmless. But whether they are well or ill meant, why this cowardice in concealing

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. Reporting that as a result of satyagraha, he had succeeded in persuading someone to take a vow of improving his conduct day by day, the correspondent had sent ten rupees to be utilized for diverse public causes.

your name while asking questions? You bring credit neither to yourself nor to Kathiawar by this concealment. Those who do not possess even the courage to reveal their names can render no service, much less join in the fight for swaraj.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 11-8-1929

### 335. DID RAMA SHED BLOOD?

This is the second question put by the very same gentleman to whom khadi is like poison:<sup>1</sup>

It is my confirmed opinion that non-violent non-co-operation is the strength not of the weak but especially of the strong. It is a universal principle. We practise it all the time, consciously or unconsciously. Current history takes note of wars waged by kings. The history of the people of the nation has to be written hereafter. When such history is written, we shall come across non-violent non-co-operation on every page of it. What a wife who refuses to submit to a cruel husband does, constitutes non-violent non-co-operation. The history of the Quakers<sup>2</sup> has been made glorious by non-violent non-co-operation. The history of the Vaishnavas in India bears testimony to the very same thing. The whole world can do what these people have been able to do.

Those who look into the matter can clearly see that the world is moving in the direction of peace. Although cast in human form, the human race has not yet given up its bestial instincts; it has no alternative but to give them up. Hence the example of cats and dogs is irrelevant and ill befits us. We are not cats and dogs but creatures who stand erect on two legs, who strive to realize the self and are endowed with the capacity to reason.

<sup>1</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that in his opinion non-violent non-co-operation was best for Indians only because they were weak and unarmed, that Rama had shed blood in his battle with Ravana, that a dog could snatch away a kitten only after killing the mother-cat, that 33 crores of Indians could not all have faith in non-violence. For the first question and answer, *vide* "Bitter As Poison", 5-9-1929

<sup>2</sup> Members of the Society of Friends, a religious sect founded by George Fox in the 17th century. They had adopted great simplicity of attire and were highly respected for their honourable dealings.

And what about Ramachandra? Who has proved that he shed rivers of blood in Lanka? When was a ten-headed Ravana born? Who had seen an army of monkeys? The Ramayana is a sacred book, an allegory. The Rama who is worshipped by millions of persons dwells in our heart and is its sovereign master. Ravana too is the terrible form given to the base desires which dwell within us. The Rama dwelling within us is continuously waging war against the Ravana. Rama is the very embodiment of compassion. We have not much to learn if a historical figure Rama had waged a war against another historical figure Ravana. Why should we go searching in the past for such characters? They are to be found at many places today. Rama the eternal is a form of Brahman, the image of truth and non-violence. The problem of India will be solved neither through anger nor through misinterpretations of the Ramayana, etc., nor through imitation of beasts. In order to solve this problem, we shall have to know ourselves. Non-violent non-co-operation is something that will remind Indians of their humanity. It may be that millions of men will not accept it all at once. Millions will never take up arms. Even if there are a few determined warriors in the non-violent war, they will be able to protect millions and instil life into them. Even if this is only a dream of mine, it appears fascinating to me. Even if it is a 'flower of the skies', it appears beautiful to my imagination and its fragrance ever haunts me.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 11-8-1929

### 336. *EXPERIMENT IN UNCOOKED FOOD*

I cannot give a report of progress only in regard to this experiment this week. I have had to ask two persons to give up the experiment, as I was not competent enough to deal with their weak state and their constipation and had to accept defeat. From the experiments on my own system and those of some others, I had concluded that coconut milk and raw greens would be able to cure their constipation. But that did not happen. Despite taking a large quantity of the above, their constipation could not be cured. On my own system, it is having just the opposite result. There is no sign of

<sup>1</sup> A Gujarati phrase meaning 'an impossibility'

constipation whatever; coconut milk and green vegetables are having too much the contrary effect. That too is not a good sign.

I cannot also note much progress in the experiments carried out by others. Despite this, I am convinced that this is a good field and deserves to be explored. Cooked food can never be as nourishing and tasty as food which is uncooked. As the field is a new one, we have before us relatively few experiences of it. Hence this experiment can be tried through patience alone.

Those who are carrying on this experiment should exercise caution in doing so, not stick to it obstinately, and should give it up if they do not have the capacity to carry it on. It can be safely stated that vegetables and pulses, if eaten, should be eaten raw; hence wheat would be the only item which would have to be cooked. No harm and no weakness would result from taking a diet of rotis, milk, raw vegetables and sprouted pulses. The quantity of pulses should be small; vegetables too should be taken in small quantities, i.e., about three tolas of the former and about five of the latter.

One of those who are carrying on this experiment has sent in the following report<sup>1</sup> about this experiment.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 11-8-1929

### 337. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

*August 11, 1929*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This is an account they have sent me of the little band of satyagrahis who will present you with an address.

You may not mind the wires and protests you are receiving.<sup>2</sup> You will judge things for yourself when you go to Kathiawar if at all Kamala's condition permits you to do so. I leave Bombay 7th September for Bhopal and reach Agra as per programme on 11th unless you want any alteration.

*Yours,*

BAPU

<sup>1</sup> Not translated here. The correspondent had given his experience of 28 days; in the beginning he felt hungry, but on increasing the quantity of intake the complaint vanished; he had constipation for some days, but when bananas were replaced by grapes, cereals were reduced and the greens and coconut milk increased, he got over the trouble.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 8-8-1929

### 338. LETTER TO N.R. MALKANI

[August 11, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have your letter. I shall now do what more is possible beyond the cheque sent by Vallabhbhai. These things are going beyond much human effort.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 894

### 339. INTERVIEW TO "THE HINDU"<sup>2</sup>

BOMBAY,

August 12, 1929

Gandhiji granted an exclusive interview to me today.

Asked about his views on Mr. MacDonald's speech and the absence of reference to India in the King's speech, he said:

I have not read the full text of the speech. I am unable to make any pronouncement on the question.

When informed of the impressions of those who had met the Secretary of State for India and other Cabinet members about the Labour Government's "anxiety" to conciliate Indian opinion, Gandhiji said:

I quite realize the Labour Government's difficulty. Everything depends upon the offer they make.

When pointed out that the Simon Commission to which the Labour Party had committed itself had not concluded their work, Gandhiji remarked:

Where there is a will there is a way.

Referring to the Lahore Congress Presidentship, Mahatmaji declared that he would not accept the honour. He was only a back-memeber, he said. When I pointed out that he was leading in the election in spite of his article<sup>3</sup> in *Young India*, Gandhiji repeated:

<sup>1</sup> As indicated by the addressee

<sup>2</sup> This was published under the caption, "Lahore and India: Gandhiji on Congress Demand" as from "an occasional correspondent"

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* pp. 239-41.

I will not accept it. The matter will be referred to the A.I.C.C. for final decision.

Asked if the final choice did not rest with the Reception Committee, he said:

No, the matter will be considered by the A.I.C.C.

Asked whether Independence would be declared in the Lahore Congress, Gandhiji stated in clear terms:

I have no reason to lose any hope. I am for Dominion Status. I will wait for it till the midnight bell of December 31, 1929 rings. I hope Dominion Status will be given by that time; if not, on January first I will be an Independence-wallah.

Gandhiji when questioned about his experiment with unfired food said:

That is the best question you have put me.

He added, he was enjoying the same amount of health. General condition was exceptionally good. Medical opinion was favourable, but he had lost ten pounds in weight. He had not come to any decision about unfired food.

*The Hindu*, 12-8-1929

### *340. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU*

*August 12, 1929*

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I had your letter about Jawaharlal. I hope the election<sup>1</sup> will go through all right. The more I think over it, the more convinced I feel of the correctness of the step I have taken.

But this is just to tell you I have seen Mr. Jinnah.<sup>2</sup> He explained the 14 points of demands framed at Delhi. The chief however is the demand for one-third representation in the C[entral] L[egislature] and separate electorate if the other 12 demands are not clearly accepted. How that can be done or whether it should be done, you know best. My mind is in a whirl in this matter. The atmosphere is too foggy for me to see clearly.

I hope Kamala will go through the operation bravely.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

<sup>1</sup> Of the Congress President; *vide* also "Telegram to Indian National Congress, Lahore", 19-8-1929 and "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 20-8-1929

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*

[PS.]

I saw the Ali Brothers. They had a fairly heavy list of complaints against me. But I could make no impression on them as they distrust the whole (practically) of my associates. But I was glad of the interviews. They may do good in the long run.

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

*341. LETTER TO ETHEL M. SHUTS*

SABARMATI ,  
*August 12, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

Your claim about American achievements seems to me to be far-fetched, premature and unproved and equally unfortunate is your estimate of “barbarous” races.

*Yours,*

MISS ETHEL M. SHUTS  
CLEVELAND

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai’s Diary. S.N. 32577/110

*342. LETTER TO C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR*

SABARMATI ,  
*August 12, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your two letters. The League of Nations business I do not understand. It cannot unite hearts. What I want is a union of hearts.

I am young at 60 for the work for which I have confidence. I should feel old at 16 for that about which I have no confidence.

You must get well quick and feel young like Mrs. Besant<sup>1</sup> who is nearly 90.

*Yours,*

C. VIJAYARAGHAVACHARIAR  
SALEM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai’s Diary. S.N. 32577/111

<sup>1</sup> Annie Besant (1847-1933); Theosophist, educationist and a leader of the Home Rule movement



### 343. LETTER TO B. S. MOONJE

SABARMATI,  
August 12, 1929

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

I had your letter in time. I have been to Bombay but have committed nobody to anything. I had no right to do so.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/112

### 344. LETTER TO FREDERICK B. FISCHER

SABARMATI,  
August 12, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

What I think of Andrews is that India has no servant more devoted, more sincere and more hard-working than Deenabandhu Andrews. He is truly what the Fiji Indians, I think, called him, Deenabandhu, friend of the lowly.

*Yours,*

BISHOP FISCHER

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/113

### 345. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 12, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I get your letters all right. And now I am also getting some details.

I have very little time left to me.

Sushila seems to have become restless; it is therefore only right that she should now come over here.

Sorabji is just what he was a year ago. But I can understand that Sushila should take to heart all that has happened since. But we have to live in this world without attachment, retaining [our] sweetness and without losing virtue.

Ramdas had been here for a few days. Nimu has gone to Lakhtar. Devdas went to Delhi from Almora.

I am keeping well.

*Blessing from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati : G.N. 4757

### 346. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

*August 12, 1929*

CHI PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. You needs must visit your in-laws for a week or two. They ask for your presence at some auspicious ceremony. They will be pleased; it will further clear your way.

The letter from Jayaprakash is all right. His return will continue to be postponed. At the moment I have no time to write more.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3358

### 347. TELEGRAM TO AMRITLAL THAKKAR<sup>1</sup>

*[On or after August 12, 1929]*

THAKKAR

RETURNED FROM BOMBAY TODAY. WIRED RAMANLAL MORNING DETAIN HARIVALLABH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15461

### 348. ARBITRATORS' AWARD

SABARMATI ASHRAM  
AHMEDABAD,  
August 14, 1929

The labourers have pleaded that the present condition of mills is so good that the cut effected in 1923 should be abolished and they

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 12, which read: "Have you written Petlad. Wiring detain Harivallabh Assam."

should revert to the minimum wages received by them in that year.<sup>1</sup> After hearing both sides on this point and after examining the statments submitted, the Arbitrators give their decision to the effect that, as the labourers' party could not prove its point, the plea has been rejected.

MOHANDAS GANDHI  
MANGALADAS GIRDHARDAS

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14975

*349. LETTER TO SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS*

ASHRAM SABARMATI  
*August 14, 1929*

BHAISHRI,

I have another letter from you and today some printed and typewritten material too, which I shall find time to go through. I shall leave nothing undone that I can. Please do keep me informed. I shall not be tired.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

NAVSARI CHAMBERS,

OUTRAM ROAD, FORT, BOMBAY-1.

Purushottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 89/1929, Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

*350. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJI*

SABARMATI,  
*August 14, 1929*

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

I have your private letter. The information you give me does not surprise me. Personal jealousy has been the bane of our public life. I have destroyed your letter.

<sup>1</sup> This was the original contention of the Labour Union, which, however, was subsequently withdrawn. *Vide* "Letter to Devchand Parekh", 8-8-1929

In the absence of instructions from Dr. Sunderland the step you took was inevitable.

I thank you for copies you were sending me of this proceeding.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/118

### *351. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 14, 1929*

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Though we met, I could not reply to your letter.

I think it necessary that you should attend in a detached spirit the function to felicitate the young man who has returned from England. You need not eat anything there. You should also go and attend the purification ceremony of the bungalow in the same generous and detached spirit. It is quite proper not to attend weddings, etc. But I think one cannot take a vow not to attend functions such as the above.

You yourself should keep an eye on Surendra<sup>1</sup> from there. I do discuss things with him whenever necessary.

Bhansali seems to show definite improvement. He takes milk, etc., but he suffers from delirium.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10714. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

### *352. LETTER TO CHUNILAL*

*August 14, 1929*

BHAI CHUNILAL,

Reading can be made popular by putting into practice what we read. Children can be trained to be good by our setting before them the example of our own firm conduct. The beginning can be made by wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel in public. You may

<sup>1</sup> Surendra Mashruwala

learn my views about school education from what I write in *Navajivan*. In trying to live a truthful life, one should learn to endure even seemingly unendurable hardships. In order to purify the poisonous atmosphere, one should make oneself like nectar. In order to keep the village clean, one should become a scavenger.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/114

### 353. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

ASHRAM SABARMATI,

August 14, 1929

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

I have your letter. Your own report is good. I have no time to dictate more now. Bhai Ghanshyamdas is led away by his love; he therefore gets angry even with one who makes an innocent suggestion. Nor am I going to let go the honey<sup>1</sup> in a hurry. I am carrying on my experiment with great care. Give plenty of reassurance to Ghanshyamdas and make him shed his fear. I am returning your two letters. I shall write if I get the time.

*Blessing from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6067. Courtesy: HaribhauUpadhyaya

### 354. TELEGRAM TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS TANDON<sup>2</sup>

[On or after August 14, 1929]

DO PLEASE COME SABARMATI OR BEFORE TWENTY-FIRST.

From a photostat: S.N. 15452

### 355. UNFIRED FOOD

DEAR SIR,

I have read the further account<sup>3</sup> of your dietetic experiment...reprinted in The Hindu of July 22...with much interest; and I am glad to see that your

<sup>1</sup> Like one who drops the honeycomb at the first sting

<sup>2</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 14 from Lahore, which read : "Retiring from Bank 31st August. Intend seeing you before 21st. May I come Sabarmati?"

<sup>3</sup> Vide "Unfired Food Experiment", 18-7-1929

do not carry your objections to milk and its products to the extent of recommending the 'youth of India' not to use it. Indeed, you are, if may say so, recording the results of your experiment with much open-mindedness. But there are in your account two mis-statements of fact: (a) the capacity of the plant-world to sustain man at his highest is not unexplored field to modern medical science, and his science has shown it to be not unlimited: one reason for the nutritive limitations of a purely vegetable diet for man is the difference in length and structure between the human gastro-intestinal tract and that of herbivorous animals. Mans digestive tube is not long enough nor capacious enough to accommodate a sufficient mass of suitable vegetable food, nor to extract from such as it can contain all the nutriment man needs for his fullest well-being; (b) there is only one vitamin... vitamin D... for which man can rely (to a considerable extent) upon the sun... there is nothing to indicate the possibility of "getting the most important of the vitamins from the sun", though, no doubt, the sun plays a great part in their production in the foods available for mankind....

One of the great faults in Indian diets at the present day is their deficiency in vitamin A, in suitable proteins and in certain salts; and the greatest nutritional need of India is the freer use of good milk... Do not, I beg of you, decry it: for a pint of milk a day will do more for 'Young India' than most things I wot of. It is, for example, the deficiency of vitamin A that we owe so much disease of the bowels and lungs, so much disease of the bladder (such as 'stone') and so much anaemia in this country.

*I am,*

Coonoor,  
26th July, 1929

*Yours sincerely,*  
R. MCCARRISON

PS. When next you make an Andhra tour, avoid "the extreme weakness" which overtook you in your last one, by taking a pint of milk a day!

I publish this letter<sup>1</sup> thankfully and wish that other men versed in medical science would also guide me. In making the experiment, I am trying to find out the truth about food in so far as it is possible for a layman to do so.

As for Dr. McCarrison's argument about the necessity of animal food, I dare not as a layman combat it, but I may state that there are medical men who are decidedly of opinion that animal food including milk is not necessary for sustaining the human system to the full. By instinct and upbringing I personally favour a purely vegetarian diet,

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

and have for years been experimenting in finding a suitable vegetarian combination. But there is no danger of my decrying milk until I have obtained overwhelming evidence in support of a milkless diet. It is one of the many inconsistencies of my life that whilst I am in my own person avoiding milk, I am conducting a model dairy which is already producing cow's milk that can successfully compete with any such milk produced in India in purity and fat content.

Notwithstanding Dr. McCarrison's claim for medical science I submit that scientists have not yet explored the hidden possibilities of the innumerable seeds, leaves and fruits for giving the fullest possible nutrition to mankind. For one thing the tremendous vested interestes that have grown round the belief in animal food prevent the medical profession from approaching the question with complete detachment. It almost seems to me that it is reserved for lay enthusiasts to cut their way through a mountain of difficulties even at the risk of their lives to find the truth. I should be satisfied if scientists would lend their assistance to such humble seekers.

I am thankful for Dr. McCarrison's more accurate statement about vitamins.

*Young India*, 15-8-1929

### 356. NOTES

#### THE ORIENTAL BRAND

So the editor of a world-known magazine has to pay a fine of Rs. 1,000 for having dared to re-publish in book form articles written for and published in his magazine from time to time by an American humanitarian. Dr. Sunderland's *India in Bondage* is nothing more than mainly his articles collected from *The Modern Review*. As I have often remarked in these pages<sup>1</sup> the section under which Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee was charged is so wide and so elastic that almost anyone who at all wrote truthfully and fearlessly could be found guilty under it. It is a travesty of justice to bring a man of the status of Ramananda Babu under that section. But he is labouring under the sin of possessing a brown skin. The brand of the oriental is marked on his forehead and so he and his publisher are punished as felons. I do not suppose this prosecution will in any shape or form

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Atrocious", 6-6-1929 & "Dr. Sunderland's Volume", 13-6-1929

affect Ramananda Babu's writings or his choice of articles for his magazine. He has received an unexpected advertisement. The Government has earned not immunity from disaffection but a larger measure of it for its pains in having embarked upon this prosecution. Those who are noted for their extremism expect prosecution some time or other. Men of Ramananda Babu's type though noted for their independence of spirit but always known for their sobriety were never expected to be hauled up as criminals before courts of justice (miscalled). The unexpected has however happened. I congratulate Ramananda Babu on his good luck in finding himself in the same distinguished gallery as Lokmanya Tilak. Whatever the technicalities of law, for the ordinary citizen this prosecution and judgement will be counted as a sin against the nation.

#### ASSAM FLOOD

Sjt. Bipin Chandra Pal wrote to me whilst I was in Bombay:

I am here since last Wednesday on a mission of mercy. You know that Sylhet is my native district. Sylhet and Cachar have been recently overtaken by a flood of the like of which the oldest living people of those parts have no recollection. I understand that you have already been moved by the reports of the suffering of the poor of these districts to send a few thousands of rupees for their help. The extent of the calamity is being gradually brought home to the workers there. Mr. Thakkar of the Servants of India Society had been to the afflicted districts and, seeing things with his own eyes, and realizing the inadequacy of the help already received, he asked the Sylhet-Cachar Flood Relief Committee to try and send a deputation to Bombay and other provinces and induce me to lead it. When asked to undertake this, I could not possibly refuse to do so though I am not as young as I was twenty years ago nor in the best of health. This is the story of my present visit to Bombay.

I write this to ask your help in this work. I enclose a cutting from the papers giving the latest estimate of the extent of the calamity. If you are moved to say a word in support of our appeal, I have no doubt that even the present trade depression, which is certainly very bad in Bombay, will not be able to close the channels of charity for this purpose. I have no doubt that you will do this for our poor.

I gladly endorse the appeal. The calamity is appalling and every little help tells.



#### CHARKHA FOR FLOOD RELIEF

Sjt. Dharendra Das wires<sup>1</sup> from Kulaura which is within the Assam flood zone:

Today I am reporting how the charkha is working. there were three spinning centres in the flooded area in Karimganj before the flood. . . . After the flood three new centres have been opened. . . . One important point to note is that the number of the ration tickets in the spinning centres is much smaller than in the other non-spinning centres that are equally affected. There is a great demand for wheels throughout Sylhet and Cachar districts. In every village there are some who know spinning. Two thousand charkhas can be introduced easily. Yarn can be consumed locally. There are weaver. Our other relief operations, namely, doling rice and paddy, house building, tank disinfection, supplying fodder, paddy husking, mat making, continue as usual. Sheth Ramanlal Keshavlal of Petlad came here and paid Rs. 250 for spinning and Bhimjibhai of chittagong Rs. 50 for general work. Sjt. Thakkar left Silchar leaving work with Sjt. Harivallabhbhai, the representative of Sheth Ramanlal. Harivallabhbhai often consults and helps in relief works other than spinning. Our funds are too inadequate to meet the situation. May we appeal to you for help?

This shows what an important part the charkha can play when everything else fails and how when it is well organized it spares people the humiliation of living on charity.

#### INTERVIEW WITH MR. JINNAH

No speculation need take place regarding my meeting<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jinnah in Bombay. Ever since her return from her brilliant tour in the West Sarojini Devi has been busy planning schemes for bringing about Hindu-Muslim union. to that end she has been trying to bring people together. As her landing place was Bomaby, she naturally commenced operations there and met Mr. Jinnah, and suggested at Allahabad that I should go to Bomaby at an early date and meet Mr. Jinnah as also the Ali Brothers. And so I went and first met Mr. Jinnah and then the Ali Brothers. Our conversation was as between friends. The two conversations were unconnected with each other. They were mere friendly conversations and need have no importance attached to them. I have no representative capacity and I did not go as a representative. But naturally I want to explore all possible avenues to

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> On August 12, 1929

peace and never lose a single opportunity of knowing the mind of those who have any influence in India. It is best therefore for the public not to speculate about the contents or the results of these conversations. If anything comes out of them, they will certainly know. Meanwhile let those who believe in prayer pray with me that there may soon be peace between Hindus, Mussalmans and all the other communities. And let those who believe with me that such peace is indispensable for our full growth, aye, even the progress of the world, strive their best for it. Every honest effort however humble will bring peace nearer.

*Young India*, 15-8-1929

### 357. FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

The propaganda for the boycott of foreign cloth is being steadily continued by the F.C.B. Committee as will be seen from the following extract<sup>1</sup> from its latest bulletin.

More Municipalities have taken action. Nipani in Belgaum district has, in addition to increasing local tax on foreign-cloth import, exempted hand-spun and hand-woven khadi from the same and resolved to purchase as far as possible homespun khadi for peons' uniforms, etc. Bezwada Municipality (Andhra) has resolved to make all their cloth purchases in hand-spun khadi only and also to push spinning in all schools. But the credit for by far the boldest action hitherto taken by a local body goes to Murwara Municipality (C.P.) which has resolved to raise terminal tax on all foreign cloth from annas 2 to Rs. 2 per maund. It has of course exempted hand-spun khadi from the same tax. . . .

Sind: 18 centres of khadi sale are working...7 in Karachi and one each at Hyderabad, Nawabshah, Bhiria, Halani, Talti, Rohri, Sukkur, Shikarpur, Naushahra, Feroze, Larkhana and Jacobabad. . . .

Agra (U.P.). . . . 250 houses were visited, 300 rupees worth of khadi hawked and pledges to boycott foreign cloth were taken from 100 persons. . . .

MYMENSINGH (BENGAL): Twelve lecturers with six magic lanterns and slides are touring the district and about 300 lectures have been delivered. . . .

But the Committee has its limitations. Unless there is willing, intelligent and sustained co-operation from all Congress Committees,

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

the work cannot bring about the boycott we want during the year. Much more concentration is necessary.

*Young India*, 15-8-1929

### 358. SOME RELIGIOUS QUESTIONS

A gentleman has sent the following questions:

1. What is the true nature and aim of dharma?

The evils perpetrated in the name of religion today are really amazing. We bring in religion in extremely minor matters. But are there any men today who understand the aim and nature of religion? This is all due to lack of religious education. I hope you will take the trouble of expressing your views on this and the following other questions in Hindi Navijvan.

2. What are the ways of attaining peace for one's soul and achieving one's object in this world and the next?

3. Do you think a man can escape the punishment for his past misdeeds if he atones for them?

4. What should be the prime aim and duty of man in his life?

It is a matter of joy and wonder that among the readers of *Young India*, Gujarati *Navajivan* and Hindi *Navajivan* it is mostly the Hindi reader who ask questions regarding religion. It does not necessarily mean that people from other provinces lack curiosity in matters of religion. It is, however, true that it is the readers of Hindi *Navajivan*, more than others, who love religious discussions and expect my help in solving their religious problems. I cannot claim a deep direct knowledge of the scriptures. But of course I do claim to be trying to abide by religious principles. In my attempt to do so if the experience gained by me can be of any help to the readers they are most welcome to it. Having thus mentioned my limitation in this regard I will now attempt to answer the questions.

1. It is true that we lack religious education in the country. Religious instruction can only be imparted through the practice of religion, not by exhibiting mere learning. That's why someone has said: What is there that satsang<sup>1</sup> cannot do for a man? Who does not know the emphasis Tulsidas laid on the importance of satsang? This does not mean that there is no need to read and understand religious books. But the need for books, etc., arises only after a man has had

<sup>1</sup> Association with good or good persons

satsang and has purified himself to a certain extent. If one starts studying religious books before this stage then instead of bringing peace this study could hinder the growth. This means that an intelligent man should put his religion into practice straightaway instead of worrying himself with all manner of questions. Then according to the maxim “as with the individual so with the world”, one is bound to influence the other. If each one of us was to take care of one’s self, nobody would need to worry about the others.

2. Only by living a saintly life can one obtain peace. This is the way to fulfilment in this world and the next. A saintly life is that in which we practise truth, ahimsa and restraint. Enjoyment of pleasures can never be one’s dharma. Dharma has its source in renunciation only.

3. It is possible to atone for one’s past misdeeds and it is our duty to do so. Atonement is not supplication, nor crying or whimpering, though there is some scope for fasting, etc., in it. Repentance is the true atonement. In other words the resolve not to commit the mistake again is without doubt the true penance. The results of the misdeeds are wiped out to some extent. Until we atone for a sin it goes on accumulating like compound interest. This stops once we do the penance.

4. The aim of man in his life is self-realization. The one and the only means of attaining this is to spend one’s life in serving humanity in a true altruistic spirit and lose oneself in this and realize the oneness of life.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 15-8-1929

### 359. *TRLU WORSHIP*<sup>1</sup>

A correspondent writes:

It is a common enough sight in this country to see men and women offering worship to stocks and stones and trees, but I was surprised to find that even educated women belonging to the families of enthusiastic social workers were not above this practice. Some of those sisters and friends defend the practice by saying, that since it is founded on pure reverence for the divine in nature and no false beliefs, it cannot be classed as superstition, and they cite

<sup>1</sup> The Hindi original of this appeared in *Hindi Navajivan*, 15-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

the names of Satyavan and Savitri whose memory, they say, they commemorate in that way. The argument does not convince me. May I request you to throw some light on the matter?

I like this question. it raises the old, old question of image worship. I am both a supporter and opponent of image worship. When image worship degenerates into idolatry and becomes encrusted with false beliefs and doctrines, it becomes a necessity to combat it as a gross social evil. On the other hand image worship in the sense of investing one's ideal with a concrete shape is inherent in man's nature, and even valuable as an aid to devotion. Thus we worship an image when we offer homage to a book which we regard as holy or sacred. We worship an image when we visit a temple or a mosque with a feeling of sanctity or reverence. Nor do I see any harm in all this. On the contrary, endowed as man is with a finite, limited understanding, he can hardly do otherwise. Even so, far from seeing anything inherently evil or harmful in tree worship, I find in it a thing instinct with a deep pathos and poetic beauty. It symbolizes true reverence for the entire vegetable kingdom, which with its endless panorama of beautiful shapes and forms, declares to us as it were with a million tongues the greatness and glory of God. Without vegetation our planet would not be able to support life even for a moment. In such a country especially, therefore, in which there is a scarcity of trees, tree worship assumes a profound economic significance.

I therefore see no necessity for leading a crusade against tree worship. It is true that the poor simple-minded women who offer worship to trees have no reasoned understanding of the implications of their act. Possibly they would not be able to give any explanation as to why they perform it. They act in the purity and utter simplicity of their faith. Such faith is not a thing to be despised; it is a great and powerful force that we should treasure.

Far different, however, is the case of vows and prayers which votaries offer before trees. The offering of vows and prayers for selfish ends, whether offered in churches, mosques, temples or before trees and shrines, is a thing not to be encouraged. Making of selfish requests or offering of vows is not related to image worship as effect and cause. A personal selfish prayer is bad whether made before an image or an unseen God.

Let no one, however, from this understand me to mean that I advocate tree worship in general. I do not defend tree worship because

I consider it to be a necessary aid to devotion, but only because I recognize that God manifests Himself in innumerable form in this universe, and every such manifestation commands my spontaneous reverence.

*Young India*, 26-9-1929

### 360. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 15, 1929*

BHAI CHANDRAKANT<sup>1</sup>,

Participants in Rentiya Baras<sup>2</sup> should take stock of their spinning for the last twelve months and, if it is found to be less than that for the year before, they should observe the day by resolving to stop observing it. This, truly, will be service unto Him. It will protect your pledge from being violated and will uphold the honour of this day. This is my message.

*Blessings from*

[From Gujarati]

*Bapuna Patro—3: Kusumbehn Desai, p. 82*

### 361. LETTER TO KAKALBHAI KOTHARI

*August 16, 1929*

BHAISHRI KAKALBHAI,

Whatever you want to say against Gondal today, send to me in the form of a summary of the points without taking me into the evidence. But you should not include in the charges any which you cannot fully substantiate. I have not written this letter for publication, nor for you to use it, directly or indirectly, for agitation.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/116

<sup>1</sup> Ex-president of the municipality and a worker of Kapadwanj Seva Sangh

<sup>2</sup> Literally 'Spinning 12th', Gandhiji's birthday according to Vikram era; the 12th *tithi* was celebrated by non-stop spinning.

### 362. LETTER TO LALJI NARANJI AND MANMOHANDAS RAMJI

August 16, 1929

SHETH SHRI LALJI NARANJI AND MANMOHANDAS RAMJI,

I have your kind letter. Your questions are appropriate, but after reading my article on the subject in *Young India* you will perhaps not consider further reply from me necessary. All the same I repeat here that I am nobody's representative and I did not go to Bombay as anybody's representative. I wish to assure you that I will do nothing that will bind other people. I have no remedy for those who may consider themselves bound by any action of mine. In the course of my life it has often happened that people have accepted me as their representative because of some service I may have rendered and considered themselves bound by my actions. I have even liked that. Of course such people consider me their representative when they want and dismiss me when they want. If, even after this explanation, you wish to draw my attention to any particular point, you may certainly come.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/115

### 363. LETTER TO CHANDULAL

SABARMATI,

August 16, 1929

BHAISHRI CHANDULAL,

I have your letter. Real generosity lies in releasing a person who does not apologize. We praise Tilak for not having apologized to the last. Why may not this gentleman's case be like his? Why should he apologize so long as he is not convinced of his guilt? You may continue your efforts. And be patient. I want to co-operate with all the Native States, particularly with Gondal, because I was attached to Gondal. I would be very much pleased if most of what I have heard should turn out to be false. And even if it is true, I shall be very happy if I know that the Thakore Saheb has undergone a change of heart.<sup>1</sup>

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/117

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji's letter to the Thakore Saheb of Gondal,

364. TELEGRAM TO G.D. BIRLA<sup>1</sup>

AHMEDABAD,  
August 17, 1929

GHANSYAMDAS BIRLA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE, CALCUTTA

YOUR WIRE. SLIGHT ATTACK DYSENTERY. CERTAINLY VERY WEAK BUT BEST DOCTOR ADVISING NO CAUSE ANXIETY. SHALL TAKE GOAT'S MILK WHEN BECOMES IMPERATIVE. UNCOOKED STOPPED SINCE THURSDAY.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7882. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

365. LETTER TO KRISHNADAS<sup>2</sup>

SABARMATI,  
August 17, 1929

MY DEAR...,

I have your extraordinary letter. It has pained me deeply. I thought that I was showing you the most delicate consideration in consulting you in everything about Ram Binod.<sup>3</sup> Surely you don't expect me not to do likewise with Rajendrababu. Instead of giving an award I have been trying to arrive at a mutual settlement that should leave no scar behind. But I see I was mistaken in my calculation. I take it you have written the letter in consultation with Guruji<sup>4</sup>. I should like to think he had not seen it.

As desired by you I am now corresponding with Ram Binod.

*Yours,*

From a copy: Kusumbhen Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/1 20

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 17, which read: "Much concerned about Gandhiji's health. Wire full details. Please persuade him to keep entirely on milk diet for a few days enabling him to regain his lost weight" (S.N. 15472).

<sup>2</sup> The identity of the addressee has been inferred from the contents.

<sup>3</sup> For details about the Ram Binod case, *vide* "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 21-2-1929 "Letter to Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 24-8-1929 and "Letter to Ram Binaod", 17-11-1929

<sup>4</sup> Satis Chandra Mukherjee



### 366. A LETTER

*August 17, 1929*

For the present you may spend two months there. After that we shall see. My attitude is that where we feel even a little bored we should go on trying to get rid of the boredom till there is not a trace of it left. But it is not something that can be forced.

You need not be frightened if you read anything there about my health. I am in bed, of course. I have dysentery. My experiment has failed.<sup>1</sup> I may again have to seek the protection of Mother Goat.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/123

### 367. LETTER TO RAM BINOD SINHA

SABARMATI,

*August 17, 1929*

BHAI RAM BINOD,

Krishnadas writes that he has withdrawn himself from your work, and the Charkha Sangh may launch proceedings in court if it pleases.<sup>2</sup> Is that also your opinion? Wire your reply to me. You can attend the meeting of the council of the Charkha Sangh on the 21st which is being held here.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/122

### 368. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

SABARMATI,

*August 17, 1929*

BHAI RAJENDRABABU,

I have a distressing letter from Krishnadas. I enclose a copy of it. I have written fully to Ram Binod. I am also enclosing a copy of

<sup>1</sup> For Gandhiji's article on the failure of his experiment, *vide* "Unfired Food", 22-8-1929

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* "Letter to Chhanganlal Joshi", 17-6-1929

my letter.<sup>1</sup> If he does not want to compromise then the matter will have to be taken to court. I believe you will be coming here on the 21st. We shall then talk more. I shall inform you when I get Ram Binod's letter.

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/121

*369. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA<sup>2</sup>*

[On or after *August 17, 1929*]

THANKS. REPORTS EXAGGERATED. MAKING PROGRESS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15474

*370. TELEGRAM TO KHURSHED NAOROJI<sup>3</sup>*

[On or after *August 17, 1929*]

EXPERIMENT FORGOTTEN. NOT YET RESTORED NORMAL CONDITION. NO ANXIETY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15473

*371. RURAL EDUCATION*

Kakasaheb wishes to serve a number of purposes through this supplement. One of these is that persons who have passed what is ordinarily regarded as the school age, who are householders, are engaged in a profession or otherwise and are employed...the men and women living in about ten thousand villages of Maha Gujarat...should receive some kind of education which it is possible to give them. The term education in this sense should be interpreted in a wider sense. It is something distinct from a knowledge of the alphabet. Villagers

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* the preceding item.

<sup>2</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 17, which read: Kindly wire Mahatmaji's health."

<sup>3</sup> In reply to her telegram dated August 17, which read: "All anxious for your health. Please forget all experiments."

today have no practical knowledge in many fields and we find, instead, that often ignorant superstition has established a hold over them. Through this supplement, Kakasaheb intends to rid them of these superstitions and give them some useful knowledge.

From the standpoint of health, the condition of villages is deplorable. One of the chief causes of our poverty is the non-availability of this essential knowledge of hygiene. If sanitation in villages can be improved, lakhs of rupees will easily be saved and the condition of people improved to that extent. A sick peasant can never work as hard as a healthy one. Not a little harm is being done because we have a higher death-rate than the average.

It is held that our economically backward condition is responsible for our deplorable insanitation and that if the former is bettered, the latter will improve automatically. Let this be said in order to malign the Government or to put all the blame on it, but there is not even fifty percent truth in that statement. In my opinion based on experience, our poverty plays a very small part in our insanitary condition. I know what part it plays and where, but I do not wish to go into it here.

The purpose of this series of articles is to point out the ways and means of eradicating those diseases for the incidence of which we are responsible and which can be readily eradicated at little or no expense.

Let us examine the state of our villages from this standpoint. Many of these are found to be like heaps of garbage. People urinate and defecate at all places in the villages, not excluding even their own courtyards. Where this is done, no one takes care to cover up the faeces. The village roads are never well maintained and one finds heaps of dust everywhere. We ourselves and our bullocks find it difficult even to walk on them. If there is a pond, people wash their utensils in it, cattle drink, bathe and wallow in it; children and even adults clean themselves in it after evacuation; they even defecate on the ground near it. This same water is used for drinking and cooking purposes.

No rules are observed while building houses. Neither the convenience of neighbours, nor residents' facilities for light and air are considered when buildings are put up.

Because of a lack of co-operation among villagers, they do not even grow things which are essential to ensure their own hygienic

conditions. Villagers do not put their leisure hours to good use, or perhaps they do not know how to do so, as a result of which their physical and mental capacity is depleted.

For want of general knowledge of hygiene, when there is an incidence of a disease, instead of employing some home remedies very often the villagers seek the help of magicians or get involved in the web of mantras and spend money and in return the disease is merely aggravated.

In this series, we shall examine all these reasons and see what can be done in the matter.

[From Gujarati]

*Shikshan ane Sahitya*, 18-8-1929

### 372. FLOOD RELIEF IN ASSAM

Shri Thakkar Bapa has written the following letter<sup>1</sup> on the above subject.

The reader will find from this that there is considerable need for assistance there and the sums contributed by him are being put to good use. I have requested Shri Harivallabhdas Shah to prolong his stay there and he would most probably have done so. It was necessary to obtain permission from Shri Naranbhai Keshavlal's firm to allow him to stay there longer. That permission was generously and promptly granted through a telegram.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 18-8-1929

### 373. NEED FOR FAR-SIGHTEDNESS

A reader makes the following comment on Shri Jivram Kayanji's "Correction" published in *Navajivan* dated 4-8-29:<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not translated here. Thakkar Bapa had acknowledged receipt of Rs. 24,000 and explained how it was used for distribution of rice, and encouraging spinning in flood-stricken Assam.

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had stated how *harde* or myrobalan, used in dyeing, tanning, etc., was exported by Indian traders, while Europeans processed the stuff and imported it into India for use in the dye industry, making enormous profits.

The above does not apply to Shri Jivram's argument. He merely argued that he had gone over to Orissa not in order to wipe out the prevalent impression that he had done an injustice to the labourers, but rather because he was touched by their sufferings. Those from whom he had purchased the *harde* were not labourers serving under him but persons who collected it on their own and sold it to him. The problem posed by the above correspondent is a separate but important one; hence I have published the letter. It is largely true that, although by collecting raw material and exporting it abroad, individuals may benefit themselves, the country as a whole is a loser rather than a gainer and is robbed of its wealth. However, such things also grow in India as cannot be utilized and for the utilization of which we do not have sufficient facilities. We should certainly export such items abroad and import them in the form of new products. I do not see any use for the craze that we should process all items that are grown in India. We may even do harm to ourselves by doing so. Whether *harde* is something that should be exported or not is a different question. I am unable to give an opinion on it. However, cotton is the most important item which should not be exported at all; so long as we are guilty of this offence, the export of other minor items is hardly of any significance. To take such small items into account is to do business without any sense of proportion. If we were far-sighted, we would devote all our time and all our talent for the present to the utilization of our cotton in our villages. If we can take care of this one factor, the rest will take care of itself. We should realize that, just as various small poisonous plants which thrive under the shade of a poisonous tree are automatically destroyed along with the destruction of the main tree, similar is the case of unscrupulous trading in cotton.

While considering this question, I have so far only taken in to account cloth that is imported from England and have shown that by doing so we throw away sixty crores of rupees. If we take into account the cloth that is imported from Japan and other countries, the figure would reach one hundred crores. However, that is not the whole story. In addition to this, lakhs of rupees are sent abroad as a result of this trade. This leaves out all the amount that the country spends on this Rs. 100 crores by way of insurance premia paid to foreign agencies and many more similar activities that are carried on.

Businessmen as a class are the greatest hurdle in the way of solving this important question. They are not prepared to give up their

trade in foreign cloth or change it for something else. They adopt many means, both fair and unfair, in order to keep up that trade and arguments can be found to support such practices. Again, just as we import our cloth from abroad, we also adopt foreign ideas. What we find here mostly are English newspapers and magazines full of beautiful pictures, well printed and written with great skill. As the owners of these journals have large sums of money at their disposal, it is but natural that their articles are clever. Hence, momentarily our own ideas appear insipid to us, whereas we are dazzled by their. And what more could we ask for when these ideas further our self-interest? Things being in such a pitiable condition, actually the main task is to bring about a change of heart in business men who deal in foreign cloth; in other words, our task in achieving swaraj will become most simple when business men introduce the concept of the welfare of others in their business and give national welfare an important place in it.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 18-8-1929

### 374. IF SPINNERS ALSO WEAVE?<sup>1</sup>

If the above figures are correct, the reader will see that the activity of spinning alone can remain the focus and all those who spin are certainly self-reliant for ever.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 18-8-1929

### 375. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 18, 1929*

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

Chhaganlal passes on your letters for me to read. And now I have one directly addressed to me. I think of you almost daily, I often

<sup>1</sup> Shivabhai Gokalbhai Patel in this article, not reproduced here, repudiates Shri Jethalal's plea that a person can earn more if he performs all the functions pertaining to making of cloth, i.e., carding, spinning and weaving by himself (p. 184). He further states that it is not possible to set up looms in every household. Besides that, weaving requires the help of other persons.

wish to write too, but I have no time. Besides, now I am confined to my bed. There is no cause for worry. I am better today. It is 2 o'clock now but I have had no motion since 6 o'clock. I remember the lady. The letter from her is nice. I hope you sent her a proper reply. Go on patiently doing what you can. It is essential, though, that you attain perfection in a few matters. I had a long and interesting letter from Tara. She enjoys great peace of mind at Vedchhi. You should improve your health too. How are things nowadays?

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4146

### 376. LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
*August 18, 1929*

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

I was wondering why there had been no letter from you. I have one today. There was no need for you to have offered anything, so please forget about it. Please do not be sorry. You must not invite domestic discord on that account. The weakness that you now feel will pass away if you are patient. Now that you have got a good deal of experience you will know what diet you should take. Moreover, I am now confined to bed. I had an attack of dysentery. I feel better today. On such an occasion there would be none to guide me regarding uncooked diet; my experiment is therefore suspended for the while. Eleven people are still holding their ground. Do write to me regularly about your health.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6790

### 377. LETTER TO NATHUBHAI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
*August 18, 1929*

BHAI NATHUBHAI,

My own experiment is discontinued. But you need not on that account discontinue yours. You should not give up milk though there is no need to have coconut with milk. The wheat should be properly

chewed. After sprouting it should not be used beyond twelve hours. What is left can be cooked. If the grain is of good quality, it can be made to sprout by soaking it in water for twenty-four hours and then keeping it out of water for twelve hours. If any portion of the grain remains unchewed, you should spit it out. Its remaining unchewed means that the Saliva of the person is defective. Such unchewed portion will not be digested in the stomach. In vegetables, apart from the greens, you can take in small quantities white gourd, brinjals, *tindolan*, radish, etc., as may be available. Tubers like potato, yam, etc., should not be eaten. You can certainly eat papaw. If you get constipation, take enema. Take only milk and fruit for a day, or you may even take a purgative. You should not allow your stomach to be upset.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/124

### 378. A LETTER

*August 18, 1929*

The cause of my dysentery seems to be my lack of teeth. I had early enough warning of it but I did not heed it. I took a purgative yesterday, so I am a little better today. There is no cause at all for worry.

There is a letter from Dr. Ansari today. He is surprised that the experiment has failed. That in spite of the dysentery I have no fever or other symptoms surprises the Doctor also.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/125

### 379. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

[On or after *August 18, 1929*]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got the short letters written by you both. I am content with such short letters.

If you have read any news about my health, you need not get alarmed on that account. It is improving now. I have only to regain

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to giving up "the experiment of eating uncooked grain" and to resuming milk; *vide* "Telegram to G. D. Birla", 17-8-1929 & "Unfired Food"



some strength. I have given up the experiment of eating uncooked grain. I have resumed milk too and I think, therefore, that I shall not take time to regain my usual strength. I start on a tour from September 7.

Devdas is still in Delhi. Ramdas is in Bardoli and Nimu in Lakhtar. Harilal is in Rajkot just now. The Udyoga Mandir is crowded just now. Many girls have recently joined and, therefore, we face a big problem about the women's education and related matters. Let us wait and see what happens. Just now Gangabehn senior looks after everything.

Prabhudas is here at present and is working with Kakasaheb in the Vidyapith. Did I write to you about this?

I am eager to know what you two have finally decided.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4747

### 380. *LETTER TO PRBHAVATI*

[Before August 19, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I replied you by wire to comfort you, in case my letter miscarried. God will certainly give you that courage you need to go to your in-laws', now that you have decided to. My tour of U.P. starts from here on 11th September. On that day I reach Agra and if you can join me there do come over. I have liked the quotations from the letter from Jayaprakash. He appears to be clean young man. He is right in asking for himself freedom in regard to khadi. It would be enough if he could be won over by love and reason in this matter.

Many people have turned up, so this is incomplete.

I will write the rest at leisure later. Let me have C. Arrah's address.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of Gujarati: G.N. 3309

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to the addressee's willingness to go over to her in-laws', this appears to have been written before the letter dated August 19.

### 381. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

SABARMATI,  
*August 19, 1929*

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA  
8 ROYAL EXCHANGE, CALCUTTA  
COMMENCED    CURDS    YESTERDAY.    NO    ANXIETY.

GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 7883. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

### 382. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

*Silence Day, August 19, 1929*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I am writing this from my bed. I got dysentery. So I have given up my experiment of uncooked [grain]. I am better today. I shall recover my strength in a few days. There is absolutely no cause for worry. I shall send you my tour programme. I do not have it with me now. I have got your letter. I am now waiting to see what kind of a letter you will get from your in-laws. By God's grace everything will be all right. I hope there was no difficulty; and if you are confronted with one, you should get over it.

Yesterday I had to take some curds out of goat's milk. The doctor thought that without it my dysentery would not be cured. I saw no point in being stubborn. I have destroyed the letter about Jayaprakash. I do not enough time to try and recollect the questions just now. If I happen to remember them I shall write the answers [for you].

You should learn as much as you can by yourself.

*Blessings from*  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3357

383. *TELEGRAM TO RAJENDRA PRASAD*

Monday [August 19, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

RAJENDRA PRASAD

KHADI DEPOT, MUZAFFARPUR

PAY SATIS CHANDRA MUKERJEE TWO HUNDRED FIFTY RUPEES MY BEHALF.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15498

384. *TELEGRAM TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI*

[On or after August 19, 1929]

RAJA

AM ADVISING VALLABHBHAI PREPARE GO. UNFIRED CAN NEVER BE DOOMED.  
GETTING ON.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15479

385. *TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*<sup>3</sup>

[On or after August 19, 1929]

RAJA WIRES AND INSISTS YOU SHOULD PRESIDE. PREPARE GO. COME  
HERE BEFORE LEAVING.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15479

<sup>1</sup> This telegram is scribbled in Gandhiji's hand on a sheet of paper entitled "Monday Talks and Instructions", whose date, according to the S.N. Register, is August 19, 1929, which seems to be correct as August 19 was a Monday, and on the same sheet is written in Gandhiji's hand: "I want Harivallabhadas's report on Assam" which obviously refers to the Assam floods. *Vide* "Food Relief in Assam", 18-8-1929. A copy of this telegram was sent to Satis Chandra Mukerjee also as just below the above draft telegram Gandhiji has written: "Satis Chandra Mukerjee, C/o" and added: "Now please send these. . . ."

<sup>2</sup> In reply to his telegram his telegram dated August 18, received at Sabarmati on August 19, which read: "Convinced no harm will result by reason difference over issue which nobody takes as real. Vallabhbhai's presiding is like your presence important for moral effect. Pray avoid disappointing. Now you have doomed uncooked food for ever hope inflammation subsiding."

<sup>3</sup> This is drafted on the back of the telegram from C. Rajagopalachari; *vide* the preceding item.

*386. TELEGRAM TO INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,  
LAHORE<sup>1</sup>*

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

CONGRESS

LAHORE

YOUR WIRE. WHILST THANKING YOU UNABLE ACCEPT HONOUR. CONSIDER SELF UNFIT. APART FROM WANT OF ENERGY IT IS WELL UNDERSTOOD AM OUT OF TUNE WITH MANY THINGS DONE CONGRESSMEN. MY OCCUPANCY CHAIR CAN ONLY EMBARRASS EVERYBODY INCLUDING MYSELF. PRAY ELECT PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15480

*387. TELEGRAM TO KRISHNAGOPAL DUTT<sup>2</sup>*

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

THANKS. CONDITION BETTER. PARTIAL FAST. FRUIT JUICE FOLLOWED NOW BY DILUTED CURDS.

From a photostat: S.N. 15482

*388. TELEGRAM TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ<sup>3</sup>*

[On or after *August 19, 1929*]

UNNECESSARY      TROUBLE JIVRAJ      JUST      NOW.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15483

<sup>1</sup> In reply to the following telegram dated August 19: "Congress reception committee forty-fourth session elected you president 83 overwhelming majority. Kindly accept"

<sup>2</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 19, which read: "Wire health Gandhiji what treatment following."

<sup>3</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 18, received on August 19, which read: "Leaving Monday night with doctor Jivraj, unless receive wire contrary."

389. TELEGRAM TO M. M. MALAVIYA<sup>1</sup>

August 20, 1929

MALAVIYAJI

THANKS. PROGRESSING. TAKING CURDS SINCE SUNDAY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15485

390. LETTER TO SIR K. V. REDDY<sup>2</sup>

SABARMATI,

August 20, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your very full letter. I have been delayed in replying to it, owing to my peregrinations and then illness from which, by the grace of God, I am recovering.

I do hope that the trade licences matter has been or will be satisfactorily settled. I continue to receive anxious enquiries from South Africa. I am obliged to tell them all that they should worry you and not expect much from here. However, when you think that intensive work here will assist you, you will please tell me.

The news you give me about matters educational is most encouraging. The success of Sastri College must in the end go a long way towards raising our status in South Africa.

I know how true you are when you tell me about our people's apathy in matters in which they are expected to exert themselves. I know even in our time the difficulties of the poor vegetable hawkers. It was their amazing industry that I thought enabled them to walk long distances early in the morning and dispose of, in the best manner they could, their produce before 9 a.m. May success attend your effort on their behalf.

Thank you for interesting yourself in Manilal and his wife. I hope they are helpful.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a copy: C.W. 9241. Courtesy: S. V. Subba Rao

<sup>1</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 19, received on August 20, which read: "Very sorry. Hope improving. When doctor advises please resume taking goat milk. Avoid almonds for sometime."

<sup>2</sup> Agent-General of the Government of India in south Africa

### 391. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or after *August 20, 1929*]<sup>1</sup>

BOTH WIRES RECEIVED. THANK GOD FOR KAMALA. REPLYING CONGRESS MESSAGE LAHORE<sup>2</sup> SAID COULD NOT PRESIDE AS AM OUT OF TUNE MUCH GOING ON UNDER CONGRESS NAME. HAVE AGAIN RECOMMENDED JAWAHAR'S NAME.<sup>3</sup> SEE NO USE MY PRESIDING.<sup>4</sup>

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15494

### 392. LETTER TO PANACHAND

*August 21, 1929*

BHAISHRI PANACHAND,

I have your letter. I don't mind what you say, but you have not understood the situation. I do not write about the Native States because I do not like to write a single word uselessly. In British territory I know we can exert some influence on the happenings, big and small, and so I write about them whenever I find it necessary. I write nothing about the Native States because I know that nothing can be done publicly about even the most glaring cases of oppression there. But to say that since I write nothing I do nothing betrays ignorance. I am doing what I can according to my lights. I do not feel disheartened because I am unable to show results. I can therefore understand the criticism by persons like you. For, except the result, what other criterion can you have to measure the success of what I may have done? You are therefore entitled to criticize. It is my duty to listen to and put up with the criticism.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/128

<sup>1</sup> One of the addressee's telegrams to which this appears to be a reply was dated August 20. It read: "Strongly recommended your accepting presidentship. Kamala progressing. Am returning Allahabad tonight." 41-20

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Atelgrama to Vallabbhai Patel", 19-8-1929

<sup>3</sup> A telegram from Jawaharlal Nehru dated August 21 read: "Beg of you not to press my name for presidentship" (S.N. 15496).

<sup>4</sup> Motilal Nehru's telegram dated August 21 in reply to this read: "Your telegram. Consider your reason for refusal strong reason for acceptance and reorganizing Congress on correct lines. Besides forcing Jawahar on country against its will unfair both to Jawahar and country" (S.N. 15497).

### 393. LETTER TO RUDRANATH

[August 21/22, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

BHAISHRI RUDRANATH,

I have your letter. You do not seem to have understood the life of Zaghoul<sup>2</sup> and Lenin. Both of them worked very hard at first and only then were they able to achieve what they did. I have only the spade, the [carding-]bow, the spindle and the basket fit for youthful blood. You are not ready to accept with faith any of these four. Had you really learnt to spin on the *takli* with courage, there would have been no need for me to write anything.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/129

### 394. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

[On or after August 21, 1929]<sup>3</sup>

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your second wire. I do not take the view you do about Jawahar. Jawaharlal would have been elected had I not been in the way. If the Congressmen concerned can be induced to think that I shall be of greater service without the chair they would surely have Jawahar. You may depend upon my not being unmindful of Jawahar's self-respect. I would not on any account thrust him on the country. But let us see how things shape. I shall take no hasty step.

I expect more news about Kamala. I hope she will now be entirely free from recurring pains and that this operation was all that was necessary to put her on her feet.

*Yours,*

From a copy. Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/133

<sup>1</sup> As placed in the source

<sup>2</sup> (1860-1927) Zaghoul Pasha, Egyptian patriot and leader of Wafd Party

<sup>3</sup> This appears to have been in reply to the addressee's telegram dated August 21, 1929 which read: "... forcing Jawahar on country against its will unfair to Jawahar and country"; *vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 20-8-1929, *fn.* 4.

### 395. UNFIRED FOOD<sup>1</sup>

Instead of hopeful progress, I have to report a tragedy this week. In spite of great carefulness in experimentation along an unbeaten track, I have been laid low. A mild but persistent attack of dysentery has sent me to bed and not only to cooked food but also to goat's milk. Dr. Harilal Desai used all his skill and patience to save me from having to go back to milk, which I had left last November in the hope of not having to go back to it, but he saw that he could not reduce the mucus and the traces of blood that persistently appeared in the bowels without making me take curds. At the time of writing this therefore I have had two portions of curds, with what effect I shall note at the foot of this article which is being written on Sunday<sup>2</sup> night.

It appears that I was not digesting the raw foods I was taking, and what I had mistaken for good motions were precursors of dysentery. The other conditions including vitality being good, I had no cause to suspect any evil.

My companions too have one after another fallen off, except four, of whom one has been on raw food for nearly a year with great success as he thinks.

The companions have left off because they were feeling weak and were losing weight week by week.

Thus Sjt. Gopalrao's claim that unfired food is suitable for any stomach and can be taken with impunity by young and old, sick and healthy, is to say the least of it 'unproven'. This apparent failure should serve as a warning to the zealots that they should move most cautiously and be scrupulously exact in their statements and careful in their deductions.

I call the failure apparent, because I have the same faith in unfired food today that I first had nearly forty years ago. The failure is due to my gross ignorance of the practice of unfired food and of right combinations. Some of its good results are really striking. No one has suffered seriously. My dysentery has been painless. Every doctor who has examined me has found me otherwise in better health than before. For my companions I have been a blind guide leading

<sup>1</sup> An article similar to this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-8-1929, under the title "Food Untouched by fire."

<sup>2</sup> August 18, 1929



the blind. I have sadly missed the guidance of someone who has known the virtue of unfired food and who would have the patience of a scientist.

But if I regain my health and have a little leisure, I hope to revert to the experiment with better hope in that I shall know what mistakes to avoid. As a searcher for Truth I deem it necessary to find the perfect food for a man to keep body, mind and soul in a sound condition. I believe that the search can only succeed with unfired food, and that in the limitless vegetable kingdom there is an effective substitute for milk, which, every medical man admits, has its drawbacks and which is designed by nature not for man but for babies and young ones of lower animals. I should count no cost too dear for making a search which in my opinion is so necessary from more points of view than one; therefore I still seek information and guidance from kindred spirits. To those who are not in sympathy with this phase of my life and who out of their love for me are anxious about me, I give my assurance that I shall not embark upon any experiment that would endanger my other activities. I am of opinion that though I have been making such experiments since the age of 18, I have not often suffered from serious illness and have been able to preserve tolerably good health. But I would also like them to feel with me that so long as God wants me for any work on this earth, He will preserve me from harm and prevent me from going too far.

Those who are making the experiment must not give it up because of the temporary check I have received. Let them learn from the causes of my failure.

1. If there is the slightest danger of insufficient mastication, let the ingredients be finely pulverized and dissolved in the mouth instead of being swallowed.

2. If there is an undissolved residue in the mouth, it must be put out.

3. Grains and pulses should be used sparingly.

4. Green vegetables should be well washed and scraped before being used and should also be used sparingly.

5. Fresh and dried fruits (soaked) and nuts should be the staples at least in the beginning stages.

6. Milk should not be given up till the unfired foods have been taken without any harm for a sufficiently long period. All the

literature I have read points to fruits and nuts with only a small quantity of green vegetables as a perfect food.

(I am able to report on Tuesday morning that dilute curds are working well.)

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

### 396. TOWARDS A PROPER WHEEL

I gladly publish the foregoing well-thought out specification.<sup>1</sup> I wish that many young men will evince in the spinning-wheel the interest that Sjt. Hiralal Amritlal Shah has. His preoccupations and his business have not prevented him from studying the movement with close attention. He has sent me a drawing to accompany the specification. I am unable to publish it, at any rate this week, as the article came into my hands just at the time of sending the last *Young India* matter to the printers.

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

### 397. REPORTERS A NUISANCE

The recently published Press report that my weight was reduced to 80 lb. and that I had fainted was utterly baseless but it succeeded in giving a fright to probably hundreds of well-wishers. I have wires from all over India, including Burma, making anxious inquiries. On more than one occasion, Press agencies have in my case rendered themselves liable to legal action by giving currency to false and harmful news. Often has my anger against them got the better, for a moment, of my non-co-operation. It is cruel to give a shock to the credulous public by spreading false reports. Good faith and ignorance are no excuse when thousands of men and women are concerned. Reporters are bound to take every precaution possible to ensure accuracy. In the case in point, it was easy enough to ask a responsible person at the Udyoga Mandir or Dr. Harilal Desai as to my exact condition and much grief and anxiety could have been avoided. I suggest to the agencies that they warn their reporters that they would be fined or dismissed for repeated offences of the character I have described.

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

<sup>1</sup> Not reproduced here

### 398. *OUR CHOICE*

An American correspondent has sent me a cutting from an old number of *The World Tomorrow* (August 1928). It is a remarkable article on "Pacifism and National Security" by John Nevin Sayre which is worthy of perusal by every patriot. The following opening paragraphs<sup>1</sup> show which way the writer would lead us:

Pacifism, first of all, asks people to consider whether national armament can really conduce to security in a civilization which uses the tools of twentieth century science. No matter what may be said for defence by armament in the past, we believe that it is an utterly obsolete and extremely dangerous way of attempting to attain security now. In the world in which we live and in the decades immediately ahead, it is open to the double objection: (1) mounting cost and (2) diminishing effectiveness for defence.

. . . every time the hands of the clock traverse twenty-four hours, the United States spends £2,000,000 [on] upkeep for army and navy. . . .

There is also an increasing human cost not measurable in dollars. . . today military strategists plan to conscript the activity of the entire manpower of the nation. . . . Compulsory military training in time of peace and the invasion of schools and colleges by military departments run by the Department of War are requisitioning study time of youth, and tending to regiment youth's thinking. The post office, the newspapers, the radio, the movies, artists and men of science are in danger of being drawn in to give their support to the building of war's preparedness machine. All this means an increasing cost to human liberty, to freedom of thought and discussion, to the possibility of social advance. . . .

Even worse is the fact that increase of expenditure for armament does not in the modern world purchase increase of security. It may do so, possibly, for a score of years, but the policy is subject to a law of diminishing returns and leads straight towards a climax of disaster. Senator Borah in discussing 'What is Preparedness?' recently called attention to the huge public debts and constantly increasing tax burdens which governments are putting on their peoples throughout the world. . . .

The fashion nowadays is to take for granted that whatever America and England are doing is good enough for us. But the figures given by the writer of the cost to America of her armament are too terrible to contemplate. War has become a matter of money and

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

resourcefulness in inventing weapons of destruction. It is no longer a matter of personal bravery or endurance. To compass the destruction of men, women and children, it might be enough for me to press a button and drop poison on them in a second.

Do we wish to copy this method of defending ourselves? Even if we do, have we the financial ability? We complain of ever-growing military expenditure. But if we would copy America or England, we would have to increase the burden tenfold.

‘Why not, if the thing is worth doing?’ asks the critic. The question then is, ‘Is it worth doing?’ Mr. Sayre answers emphatically and says, “It is not worth doing for any nation.” I say nothing about our so-called naval or military programme when it is resisted by the Government. The nation cannot be kept on the non-violent path by violence. It must grow from within to the state it may aspire to. The question therefore for us to consider is, ‘What is our immediate aspiration?’ Do we first want to copy the Western nations and then in the dim and distant future after having gone through the agony, retrace our steps? Or do we want to strike out an original path or rather retain what to me is our own predominantly peaceful path and therethrough win and assert our freedom?

Here, there is no question of compromise with cowardice. Either we train and arm ourselves for destruction, be it in self-defence, and in the process train for suffering too, or we merely prepare ourselves for suffering for defending the country or delivering it from domination. In either case, bravery is indispensable. In the first case, personal bravery is not of such importance as in the second. In the second case too we shall perhaps never be able to do without violence altogether. But violence then will be subservient to non-violence and will always be a diminishing factor in national life.

At the present moment, though the national creed is one of non-violence, in thought, and word at least we seem to be drifting towards violence. Impatience pervades the atmosphere. We are restrained from violence through our weakness. What is wanted is a deliberate giving up of violence out of strength. To be able to do this requires imagination coupled with a penetrating study of the world drift. Today, the superficial glamour of the West dazzles us, and we mistake for progress the giddy dance which engages us from day to day. We refuse to see that it is surely leading us to death. Above all we must recognize that to compete with the Western nations on their terms is to

court suicide. Whereas if we realize that notwithstanding the seeming supremacy of violence it is the moral force that governs the universe, we should train for non-violence with the fullest faith in its limitless possibilities. Everybody recognizes that if non-violent atmosphere had been maintained in 1922, we could have completely gained our end. Even as it is, we had a striking demonstration of the efficacy of non-violence, crude though it was, and the substance of swaraj then gained has never been lost. The paralysing fear that had possessed the nation before the advent of satyagraha has gone once for all. In my opinion therefore non-violence is a matter of patient training. If we are to be saved and are to make a substantial contribution to the world's progress, ours must emphatically and predominantly be the way of peace.

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

### 399. NOTES

#### A WORTHY SACRIFICE

Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon has given up the lucrative post of manager of a premier bank in order to join the Servants of the People Society founded by Lala Lajpat Rai of revered memory. Lalaji had made rigid rules. No life member could engage in any lucrative kwork. Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon was a dear comrade of the deceased patriot, and this sacrifice is in obedience to the call of duty towards a deceased leader. What is however a great step for us is nothing in the estimation of Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon. He has been used to making sacrifices. For many years past he has ceased to believe in making money for its own sake. He has been progressively simplifying his life. But there were family obligations he could not shirk unless he could carry with him in his own evolution towards the higher life the members for whom he was responsible. He has now evidently got over the difficulties and the way has been clear for him to take the final plunge. By such only are nations made. I congratulate Lalaji's Society on the event. Do the public deserve such sacrifice? The amount that was asked for in the Lalaji Memorial has not yet been subscribed in respect of a memorial to one of the noblest of Indians is a sad reflection. Let me hope Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon's sacrifice will spur the lethargic to action and evoke a response adequate to the occasion.

#### DESOLATION IN SIND

Sind has had a second disaster. I have purposely refrained from saying a word hitherto. The floods have this time wrought greater mischief than before. Only familiarity has made us indifferent. The distress however is not less felt by the afflicted on that account. Professor Malkani has sent me some harrowing details of the havoc wrought by the floods. The latest news is that cholera has followed in the wake of the floods. I suggest to the donors who have been sending donations for the Assam flood relief that they combine their donations for both the areas and leave me to apportion the amounts in the best manner I know. And unless or the other list, I shall treat the donation as jointly for both. Whatever is received for Sind will be disbursed through Professor Malkani. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel has already sent Rs. 10,000 out of the late Gujarat Famine Fund.

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

#### 400. 'THE OLD STORY'

THE EDITOR, "YOUNG INDIA"

SIR,

In your issue of the 25th instant you deal with the oppression by revenue officials, and whilst putting the blame on the Government on account of the system in force, you recognize that acts of oppression are committed on cultivators "by their own kith and kin". Further on in your leader you say that unless the present system of administration is completely change, "the oppression of the people will continue unabated even when the reins of Government have passed into Indian hands". Two things therefore appear to be necessary: first, alternation in the Land Revenue Rules providing for closer consideration of the condition and interests of cultivators which can and ought to be secured by agitation and representation in the Councils, and second, a 'change of heart' ... an expression much favoured when making demands on the conscience of Government ... in those who, being the kith and kin of the cultivator, now exercise their petty power in the direction of oppression, often to secure their own ends. It is much to be feared that the second measure will be the more difficult to secure . . . .

Would you essay an improvement, Sir? Start ryotwari tenants' associations and limit their activities to educating the ryots as to their rights. Then fight their cause in Councils, and finally, discourage them in the consumption of liquor, not as a weapon against what it pleases some to call

the 'satanic Government' but as a measure of moral uplift of the poor but lovable, over-labouring cultivator.

30th July 1929

J'AI ACCUSE

This letter<sup>1</sup> is from a well-known Anglo-Indian settler. His accusation is as old as the British rule. The accuser forgets that it is the system that is bad. What does it matter whether it is worked by the puggree or the sola hat? And it should be remembered that from the Patel to the Deputy Commissioner, they are all nurtured in the same traditions and have often been known to do better than their teachers. Those who carry out the tyrant's will often outdo the latter in the execution of his designs. So long as the system continues to be top heavy and the tallest Indian administrators have to remain subservient to the imperious will of a white chief whether in Simla or Whitehall, the evils 'J'ai Accuse' draws attention to will continue.

*Young India*, 22-8-1929

#### 401. A PAINFUL STORY

A gentleman writes from Ramgarh (Jaipur):<sup>2</sup>

One comes across such tragic incidents all over India. They would seem to be more common among the well-to-do. For even very old men of this class want to marry and when they die it is considered honourable to keep the girl in perpetual widowhood. The question of religion does not arise here at all. This is the reason why such cases are to be found more in the Marwari and Bhatia communities, etc., than among others. There is only one remedy for this evil. One should start in every community a peaceful agitation to rouse public feeling against such evils. When this happens, old men will not dare to marry again and young girls will not be condemned to widowhood. Besides, once public opinion has been created, no one will support the custom of keeping child-widows in perpetual widowhood and blaming it on fate or the sins of a previous birth. When a young man happens to lose his wife no one stops him from remarrying by bringing in the argument of the sins of previous birth. My advice to the reformers is not to lose heart. They should remain firm in their duty and go ahead with faith and self-confidence. Of course they must remember that

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had written about a girl of twelve who had been widowed within two months of marriage.

this work cannot be accomplished by merely delivering speeches. They may even have to resort to satyagraha. I have given my views concerning the scope of satyagraha in previous issues. The darkness that is child-widowhood cannot but vanish before the sun of satyagraha, for in the dictionary of satyagraha there is no such word as 'failure'.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 22-8-1929

#### 402. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

*August 22, 1929*

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I am delighted over Kamala's operation. I hope she will be fully restored now.

You may depend upon my not unduly pressing your name on the country. I felt bound to express my opinion to the committee at Lahore in reply to their wire.<sup>1</sup> It is enough for your self-respect that you do not want the crown. It is an ugly business for anybody this time. I have simply pressed your name as of a principle. If the country is not ready to assert that principle, we can wait.

If you are not to be the helmsman, the only alternative I can think of at this juncture is re-election of Father, or failing that, of Dr. Ansari. Can you think of any other name?

I am preparing for the U.P. tour. I am daily recovering lost strength. I am in no way sorry for my experiment from which I have learnt a lot.

*Yours,*

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1929. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Telegram to Indian National Congress Lahore", 19-8-1929



### 403. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 22, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I have no time left after attending to my illness, so I content myself by thinking [of your]. I am recovering strength. I take plenty of curds.

Do you have peace of mind there? How is your health? Have you regular motions? How is your appetite? Do you feel strong? Can you go for a walk?

Surajbehn has arrived from Bombay today. There is at present crowd of other people too.

I am expecting a detailed letter.

Blessings from  
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9261; also C.W. 508. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

### 404. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

August 22, 1929

DEAR KARSANDAS,

I have gone through the draft of the trust deed<sup>1</sup>. If the mistake was made by me, please help me see in what way I made it. If there are any letters from me to that effect, send them to me. I do not recall having suggested any such thing. Chhaganlal Joshi was actually astonished to see the document. But if I did decide to include the entire amount in the trust, I consider it my dharma to adhere to that decision. It is not enough for me that you agree to whatever I do. I am in a moral dilemma. I have made it a rule to keep even one-sided promises made by me and have been saved by that habit. You and Kishorelal should help me in this matter. I feel it is my duty to settle this matter quickly. Jamnalalji has left for Poona. See him when he

<sup>1</sup> Of the Stri-Seva Ashram being set up in Bombay. Gandhiji laid the foundation-stone of the Ashram on September 7, 1929, *ibid*

returns. If he says no, you too between yourselves may consider and let me know. I am slowly recovering.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/132

#### 405. LETTER TO ANJANADEVI CHOWDHURY

*August 22, 1929*

DEAR SISTER,

Jamnalalji has just informed me that Shri Ram Narayanji<sup>1</sup> has been taken seriously ill. Jamnalalji is coming that way. I know you to be a devoted wife and a devoted worker. It will be a good thing if Ram Narayanji gets well because of your nursing him. There is no death, however, for the soul residing in that body. Then why should we grieve over the body? Tell Ram Narayanji that he should remain calm and recite God's name.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/131

#### 406. TELEGRAM TO RAJA OF KALAKANKAR<sup>2</sup>

[On or after *August 22, 1929*]

THANKS WIRE. HEALTH SATISFACTORY. PROGRESSING.

From a photostat: S.N. 15500

#### 407. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

*August 23, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

I expect nothing but hindrance generally from the India office to the crusade against opium and drink. The reply you have sent me therefore does not surprise me.

When Mr. Silcock comes, he shall most surely receive a warm welcome. Of the young friend, I have already written to you. Of course he may come and stay here if it suits him.

*Yours sincerely,*

From a photostat: G.N. 1408

<sup>1</sup> Ram Narayan Chowdhury

<sup>2</sup> In reply to his telegram dated August 22, which read: "Anxious to know welfare. Wire health."

408. *LETTER TO AMIR AHMED*

SABARMATI,  
*August 23, 1929*

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter.

Please tender my thanks to His Highness the Nawab Sahib for inviting me. I do expect to reach Bhopal on the 8th September next by the train which arrives there by 3.28 p.m. from Bombay. But I expect to leave, if you don't mind, on the 10th September by the night express which leaves Bhopal at 8.41. My programme for Agra is fixed and I am due to reach there by the morning train on the 11th. I hope this will cause no inconvenience. We shall be a party of about five, including Dadabhai Naoroji's grand-daughter Shrimati Khurshedbai.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

COL. AMIR AHMED  
MILITARY SECRETARY TO  
HIS HIGHNESS, THE RULER OF BHOPAL

From a copy: Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Islamia Library

409. *LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL*

*August 23, 1929*

BHAISHRI JAISUKHLAL,

I have seen your resignation from the presidentship of the Congress Committee. There is no need for you to take such a step now. I will tell you to be ready when such a time comes. If you resign now, whatever little work is being done will come to a stop. I wish you to withdraw your resignation.

From a copy the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/135

#### 410. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

August 23, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I have your letter. Do give up worrying on my account. People fall sick even when they take regular diet. What does it matter if the same happens to me in the pursuit of truth? I am taking plenty of curds these days. May I tell you that even milk and curds are admissible only to a certain extent. They are not man's natural food. The argument you advance in support of milk is the same as that in support of beef-tea and liquor because some physical benefit is derived for the time being from all of them. But physical benefit [is not] everything. The abatement of carnal desires experienced by so many people while taking raw cereals is not the result of starvation. During the four years I was on fruit diet I used to walk forty miles daily and experienced the same mental peace. But I do not wish to emphasize this point overmuch. The mere physical benefit is not the only consideration in my experiment. I shall not change over hastily to raw cereals nor shall I give up milk in a hurry. At the moment many doctors are taking interest in this experiment. Many have sent me literature [on this subject]. If I resume the experiment, it shall be under Dr. Haribhai's supervision.

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6175. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

#### 411. TELEGRAM TO SECRETARY, RECEPTION COMMITTEE U.P. TRADE UNION CONFERENCE, KANPUR<sup>1</sup>

[On or after August 23, 1929]

PLEASE CONSULT PANDIT JAWAHARLAL. PROGRAMME HIS HAND[S].

From a photostat: S.N. 15503

<sup>1</sup> In reply to the addressee's telegram received on August 23, which read: "Reception Committee U.P. Trade Union Conference requests you join session 14th, 15th September and accept labourers' humble purse. Wire acceptance."

#### 412. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL

[After August 23, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

BHAISHRI JAISUKHLAL,

May I thank you for withdrawing your resignation at my request. I expected that of you. Your motive in resigning was indeed worthy of you. When you are placed in a moral difficulty, I will certainly not let you be in an awkward situation. For the present, preparing for civil disobedience means propagation of the spinning-wheel, removal of untouchability, propagation of Hindu-Muslim unity, propagation of prohibition, organizing the Congress, enrolling members, internal unity and self-purification. Nothing more than this at present. If the whole country takes up this programme there will be no need even for civil disobedience and we shall attain our objective with the least effort.

*Yours,*

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/142

#### 413. TELEGRAM TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS TUPTA<sup>2</sup>

[Before August 24, 1929]

SATISBABU

KHADI PRATISHTHAN

SODEPUR

YOUR ASTOUNDING LETTER.<sup>3</sup> NEVER DREAMT HEMPRABHA DEVI'S LETTER BUSINESS LETTER. KRISHNADAS SUGGESTION MISCHIEVOUS. MUST KNOW WHAT NIRANJAN SAID. YOU MUST NOT BE HYPERSENSITIVE. NEVER LISTEN OTHER PEOPLE'S VERSIONS ESPECIALLY WHEN PARTIES CONCERNED ALIVE.

BAPU

All the three wires go together. Show me after preparation.

From a microfilm: S.N. 15194-b

<sup>1</sup> From the contents; *vide* the preceding item.

<sup>2</sup> This telegram and the following item appear to have been sent on the same day before Gandhiji wrote to the addressee on August 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* "Letter from Satis Chandra Das Gupta", 24-8-1929

414. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

[Before August 24, 1929]

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have wired about your astounding letter.

I know nothing about any business letter from Hemprabhadevi. Even if she wrote a business letter, I should take a long time before taking it as such. As it is, her letters to me have been all love and no business. Your business letters too have been love letters for me. Such I have believed to be the relations between you and me. I had never thought you to be capable of misunderstanding me. Krishnadas's other suggestion seems to me to be equally mischievous. How he has drawn deductions passes my comprehension. His behaviour is inscrutable. Your taking him on trust regarding my doings and without reference to me is painful. I can say nothing of Niranjan till you tell me what he has told you. You should take it from me that I have told them nothing that I have not told you about your decision regarding Ram Binod.

You may come and see me about this if you are still not satisfied. Henceforth in all matters no matter who is concerned, never believe telltales. And those are telltales who regale their company with irrelevant tales about others. Again never believe anything against anybody without first referring the damaging statement to him. So you remember what I did when I heard unworthy suggestions about Dadabhai?

Say now you owe me ten thousand apologies for being so cruel as to believe things of me of which I have not ever dreamt.

With love,

BAPU

[PS.]

My health [is] improving.

From a photostat: G.N. 1607

#### 415. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

August 24, 1929

MY DEAR SATIS BABU,

I have your note. I cannot make out how Niranjan thought that I was irritated on your account. All I can tell you is that you have never given me cause for irritation. I have doubted often the soundness of your judgment, never your motive. Irritation can only come when the motive is questioned.

Subhas Babu will never pardon the loin-cloth. We must bear with him. He cannot help himself. He believes in himself and in his mission. He must work it out as we must ours.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1608

#### 416. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

August 24, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

There was no need for apology for your letter.<sup>1</sup> you are right in assuming that I could not be unaware of the difficulties you have mentioned in your letter. I went to Mr. Jinnah as Mrs. Naidu had arranged the interview. I think it was my duty. But I have bound nobody. I have no representative capacity even if I wished to bind anybody. I simply listened to Mr. Jinnah's exposition of his position. Similarly with the Ali Brothers too, I heard what they had to say. With the latter, the talk turned upon their grievance against me for my reticence.

*Yours sincerely,*

M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 407-VI. Courtesy: National Archives of India

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Letter from M. R. Jaayakar", 23-8-1929

#### 417. A KATHIAWARI'S WAIL<sup>1</sup>

An enraged Kathiawari youth writes:<sup>2</sup>

I must painfully tell you that you have put us in a very awkward fix by sealing our lips, and unless you release us from this disability you will unman us altogether. Even the restrictions imposed by Sjt. Mansukhlal which you decried were far more liberal than the disabilities that you have now imposed. . . . Is it not rather curious that whereas in British India the slightest wrong is enough to make you flare up in righteous indignation, you won't allow even a single condemnatory syllable to be uttered against any individual State though it might perpetrate the worst tyranny on its innocent ryots? It is time that you reconsidered your self-denying ordinance. And if you cannot withdraw it altogether you should at least revise it to the extent of restoring the liberty to protest against cases of "flagrant injustice". Remember, at Bhavnagar you undertook to obtain a redress of our grievances. Now that you have been disappointed in your efforts, does it not become your sacred duty to ventilate those questions before the public? But that duty you have not discharged yet and have prevented others from discharging. That is why we are today ground down by oppression. Freedom of public discussion is our sacred and inalienable right and you ought to teach the Kathiawar public to exercise that right. But you are doing just the reverse and by your curious silence are in fact conniving at the wrong. In moments of despair, I am tempted to charge you with showing an undue partiality towards the States. ...

Won't you remember and make good the promise you made at Bhavnagar?

The Kathiawari friend in question has an undoubted right to write to me as he has done, just as it is my duty to give a patient hearing to what the youth might have to say. Every duty performed confers upon one certain rights, whilst the exercise of every right carries with it certain corresponding obligations. And so the never-ending cycle of duty and right goes ceaselessly on. In the present case for instance the Kathiawari youth began by exercising his right to pour forth his grief to me. I discharge my duty by giving him a patient hearing, with the result that the right to speak out my mind to the Kathiawari youth has now accrued to me, and it is the duty of the

<sup>1</sup> The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 25-8-1929. This is a translation by Pyarelal.

<sup>2</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.



Kathiawari youth in question to hear and try inwardly to digest and assimilate what I might have to say.

I very well remember the promise I made at Bhavnagar. I have not yet lost hope. My efforts still continue, but their result is not in my hands, but in the hands of God who alone controls results. Nor is it necessary that my efforts in this direction should be before the public or involve my personally meeting the rulers in question. They may or may not even be direct, indeed they may begin and end with a heart-felt prayer. Let no one laugh at this. I want to enter into no special pleading on my behalf. I mention this method of work because it is part and parcel of my life. For years together in South Africa my efforts consisted practically only in waiting and prayer, and it is my firm conviction that that period of silent prayer was the most fruitful for that work. It constituted the bedrock on which whatever little was accomplished was based. Even today, perhaps I may be said to be doing nothing tangible for the attainment of Hindu-Muslim unity, yet it is my claim that I am striving for it ceaselessly. Even so in the matter of the Indian States, I am always on the look-out for an opportunity. Opportunities have always come to me for the waiting and praying. Let no one therefore be led away to think that I have ceased to concern myself about the question of the Indian States or to do anything in that behalf.

But I know that the impatient reader can judge my efforts only in the light of concrete tangible results. He may therefore well feel angry if he fails to understand my way of doing things. I must hold my soul in patience.

I may not here enter into a discussion of Mansukhlal's restrictions. My opinion in that respect has not undergone the least change. But circumstances alter cases. I have simply laid down the indispensable conditions for the holding of conferences in the Indian States. If such conferences must be held at all without observing these restrictions, I maintain that it is not possible as yet to hold conferences within the boundaries of the States.

But these restrictions apply to conferences only; they do not affect individual action. Anyone in his individual capacity has always perfect liberty to criticize as much as he likes any Indian prince, subject only to the measures of his own strength and consideration of sobriety and common sense.

Again I have never suggested that individual rulers of Indian States may never be criticized or that conferences untrammelled by any restrictions may not be held at all. On the contrary I hold that there is nothing improper in holding in British territory conferences at which individual States may be freely criticized. There is also the undoubted right of the subjects of any State to criticize the administration of that State within its own border. That this right is not fully exercised today is a matter of deep sorrow.

It is true that personally I do not through *Navajivan* or otherwise criticize individual rulers. But that is a different matter altogether. I claim to be a practical man. I have got a fair measure of my strength and I know how to conserve it. I have deliberately cultivated the habit of avoiding a useless or superfluous word. I do not hesitate unsparingly to denounce all wrongs great and small in British territory because I know that such denunciation is backed by consciousness of potential strength. In the case of the States, though I am not unaware of the terrible things going on in some of them, I have no strength to back my exposure of the wrongs.

I disclaim any undue partiality for the States. At the same time I owe them no grudge; I do not desire their destruction. There is an abundant scope for reform in them which it should not be impossible to effect today. But it is my firm belief that it is impossible to reform the States in the true sense while India is in bondage. It may be possible to obtain redress here and there in cases of flagrant injustice by leading a crusade against it. But such tinkering does not interest me. It gives me no satisfaction. I am therefore today concentrating all my energy on the root evil. If I can effectively touch the root, the branches will in time drop down of their own accord. Whereas on the contrary to divert public attention from the root evil and mobilize it against the branch evils in the States would mean lending an additional lease of life to the former. That is a risk that I for one am not prepared to run.

Let no one, however, understand me to mean from this that no action whatsoever is at present possible in the case of the States. I shall repeat here what I have already said. Wherever the subjects of States are ready for it they can and ought to organize an agitation against maladministration in that State especially if they have the strength to make use of the never-failing weapon of satyagraha. But it is a matter of deep sorrow to me that today the ruled are often tools in the hands

of wicked rulers. Grinding oppression has rendered the people nerveless. No one has yet been able to save goats from the clutches of tigers. The goats' emancipation would be possible only if one could envisage the goat world itself giving birth to its would-be emancipator. Though reduced to the position of the goat man is today in this country, especially in the States, all hope is not lost for him. He belongs to a higher species. Strength lies dormant in the weak. If they find an environment in which bipeds exactly like them exhibit strength, it is not unlikely that they will catch the infection. Bardoli was only a modest forerunner...a beam from the powerful sun. If Bardoli exhibited the full strength and qualifications necessary for full satyagraha, its example would spread throughout the length and breadth of the land, and we should find ourselves, including the people of the States, a free nation.

*Young India*, 29-8-1929

#### 418. MY NOTES

##### EVIL-MINDED GOVERNMENT

Bhai Mahadev has given in this issue a summary of some noteworthy correspondence between Sardar Vallabhbhai and the Government on the report<sup>1</sup> presented by the official inquiry committee on Bardoli and Chorasi. It is worth pondering over. There are two points in it: one about redressing the injustice done to several villages through oversight, and the other about the benefits, if any, likely to accrue to Bardoli and Chorasi as a result of the new changes proposed to be made by the Government. The Government has returned a negative reply in regard to both the matters. It would not even hear the plea of injustice. It is not willing to concede the benefits of future changes. Even if a rope is burnt, its twist endures.<sup>2</sup> The Government is aware that, if it cannot remove through negotiations the injustice done to certain villages, the Sardar will definitely not have recourse to a weapon like satyagraha. Such a weapon cannot be used in this way. Being thus free from fear the Government declines to do justice. Because of its policy of not doing justice until its hands are forced, the Government has become unpopular and is becoming more so. The officials are not inclined to understand the simple thing that

<sup>1</sup> The Broomfield-Maxwell Report

<sup>2</sup> A Gujarati saying

the Government does not stand to suffer any loss if a slightly reduced revenue was received from three or four villages. Their “prestige”<sup>1</sup> stands in the way. The other thing concerns the future. Just as we cannot launch satyagraha for the sake of particular villages only, we cannot but do so if the future benefits do not go to Bardoli and Chorasi. Then satyagraha will become inevitable. Hence the Sardar has told the Government politely but firmly that, if the new legislation proves to be beneficial and if Bardoli and Chorasi do not receive its benefits, satyagraha will surely be launched for their sake. There is one small legal loophole in the case of the villages of Bardoli. The Sardar cannot expose it, but if it exposes itself, the above-mentioned villages can perhaps take advantage of it.

Therefore, it is a different matter if the loophole exposes itself. Else those villages should be ready to put up with this injustice and if it becomes necessary to launch satyagraha, Bardoli should be ready for it. No one knows when the future will become the present. The legislation which the Government had promised to enact has hung fire for a number of years. But Bardoli has yet to discharge its original debt. The swaraj yajna commenced by Bardoli has still remained unfinished. If it gets ready to complete it, there is no need even to talk of the miniature satyagraha of the future.

#### ANOTHER TEMPLE THROWN OPEN

Thanks to Shri Jamnalalji's efforts, the famous Lakshminarayan Temple at Wardha was thrown open to Antyaja brothers and sisters. Now owing to his efforts, even the well-known Dattatreya Temple at Elichpur in Berar has been thrown open. Elichpur was the old capital of Berar. It has even today a population of 38,000. At a public meeting held on July 1, the temple was thrown open. Dr. Patwardhan of Amaraoti presided over the meeting. The ceremony of declaring the temple open was performed by Jamnalalji. The temple was built fifteen years ago at a cost of Rs. 83,000. Its management is in the hands of a committee of twenty-four members. The resolution to throw it open to the Antyajias was voted by eighteen out of twenty-four. There are five trustees, all of whom were unanimous in regard to the decision to throw it open. Now this signboard adorns the temple gate:

<sup>1</sup> The English word is used.

This temple is thrown open from today for free access to Mangs, Mahars, Chamars and all Hindus alike for purposes of darshan, bhajan, for offering worship and prayers and for attending religious discourses, etc.

This temple was erected by the efforts of Swami Vimalanand. The Swamiji was present on the auspicious occasion. At the time of declaring the temple open, Jamnalalji entered the temple with about fifty Antyajias. Jamnalalji and Vinoba Bhave of the Satyagraha Ashram, Wardha, delivered the main speeches on the occasion.

I congratulate the citizens of Elichpur, the trustees and Jamnalalji on this event. I can well imagine the joy of the *Antyaja* brethren at that time. Why should they not rejoice over securing that which Hindu society had till now deprived them of and which they had always hankered after? But this is only a beginning, a drop in the ocean. There are lakhs of Hindu temples in India. As long as the doors of every one of the public temples do not open to our Antyaja brethren, so long will the followers of Hinduism remain discredited and be unable to stand boldly before the world. By boycotting the Antyajias, Hindu society itself has been boycotted by the world. Let it learn from Elichpur and Wardha how to get out of that boycott.

BHANGI BRETHREN OF BULSAR

I have received a sad letter<sup>1</sup> about this which runs as follows.

If what is stated is true, it should put the Bulsar Municipality and the citizens of Bulsar to shame. It is to be regretted that a responsible body or responsible individual should remain indifferent where matters can be improved with a little money and much smaller efforts. How sad is it that the Bhangi brothers and sisters have to pull on in hope and to pay for water which rich people can get gratis and with ease? If these facts are true, the Municipality and citizens of Bulsar will, I hope, strive to set things right at once.

[From Gujarati]

*Navajivan*, 25-8-1929

<sup>1</sup> Not translated here. The municipality and its officers had done nothing to release them from the clutches of Pathan money-lenders or from difficulties about residential quarters. They still had to pay for water. The so-called respectable citizens of Bulsar had turned a blind eye to their woes. The correspondent eulogized the services rendered to the Bhangis by Navsari Municipality and hoped that Bulsar would emulate that example.

#### 419. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

*August 25, 1929*

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You cannot claim the right to commit errors simply because I make some mistakes of language. If I lose my teeth, should you have yours extracted? My lack of knowledge was tolerated but my successors' would not be. My health is now all right. I am recovering strength. You should stubbornly keep up your walking. It is now raining heavily here. My diet consists mainly of curds.

BAPU

CHI. VASUMATIBEHN

UDYOGA MANDIR, VIJAPUR

VIJAPUR OF GAEKWAR VIA KALOL

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9262; also C.W. 509. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

#### 420. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

*Silence Day, August 26, 1929*

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I get your letters regularly. You should shake off your worry. You should learn to win peace from perturbation. External circumstances are seldom what we desire. But it is within our power to train our mind to overcome circumstances. Even in adverse circumstances one should find occasions for rendering service. We should have only love for those who oppose us.

You will yourself arrange for your visit to Agra, won't you? Whom could I write to from here? You have to be courageous and find your own way. God will of course help you.

My health is steadily improving. I take only milk or curds; also fruits. I go for short walks too. I had not stopped writing and spinning altogether. So you are not to worry at all on my account.

I have written about your studies.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3354

#### 421. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

*August 26, 1929*

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

No independent work can be assigned to Shivabhai, but if he wishes to live in the Udyoga Mandir he may, making his own arrangements, as he agreed to yesterday. Ask me more about this if you want to.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15510

#### 422. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

*August 26, 1929*

CHI. DEVDAS,

Vallabhbhai and Mahadev are leaving for Madras today.

You must have read about me. What should I do? I do not have the courage to accept the presidentship. But now Motilalji also is after me. The proposal about Jawaharlal may be considered as good as closed. Now he also does not wish to be president. I am quietly waiting. God will show the way. How is your new residence? It will be enough if you are careful about your expenditure. I do not wish to suppress you. I want you to look after your health and be happy. Are you going on with the Urdu?

I hope you will meet me at Agra. I am likely to reach there at 6.30 on the 11th. Do write about the situation there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32577/139

#### 423. LETTER TO KARSANDAS CHITALIA

*August 26, 1929*

BHAISHRI KARSANDAS,

I have your letter. Arrange for the foundation ceremony on the 7th to be performed by me.

I will have a talk with Jamnalalji once about the Trust.

Joshi had even drawn my attention to the point when I read the document. I said that the amount of Rs. 25,000 was mentioned, but that it was not in the Trust. It was the amount belonging to the

institution<sup>1</sup>. I have to do everything in such a hurry that such things happen at times. I assume that since what I think is the natural thing to do, my words on an occasion like this would bear the meaning I intend. But as you are not in a position to say definitely that it is so, I will do for the present what I had intended.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/141

*424. LETTER TO KISHORELAL G. MASHRUWALA*

*August 26, 1929*

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I have your letter.

You will know about the Trust from the letter to Karsandas.

I knew about glucose. Dr. Desai<sup>2</sup> told me that glucose and jaggery water were much the same and taking the latter would do equally. The next day he corrected himself. However, there is no difference between glucose and fresh grape juice. It is known as invert sugar and is easily digested. That is what the doctors say. But grape juice is far superior to glucose. I have never needed glucose and I do not believe that jaggery water has done me any harm either. Now I am taking milk, curds and fruit juice.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

[PS.]

Tomorrow Vallabhbhai and Mahadev will be passing by there on their way to Madras.

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10715. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

<sup>1</sup> The Bhagini Samaj; *vide* also "Khadi and Boycott"

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Harilal Desai



425. *LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA*

August 26, 1929

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

What have you done about the auditing of the Bengal Congress Committee [accounts]?

*Yours,*

MOHANDAS

SJT. GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA

BIRLA COTTON SPINNING & WEAVING MILLS, LTD.

SUBZI MANDI, DELHI

From Hindi: C.W. 6176. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

426. *LETTER TO MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR*

August 27, 1929

BHAISHRI MADHAVJI,

You are certainly going on well with your experiment. Do not insist on not taking fruits with milk. But do continue it so long as it agrees with you. It will do you no harm at all.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

SJT. MADHAVJI V. THAKKAR

178 LOWER CHITPORE ROAD, CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6791

427. *LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL*

[August 27, 1929]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. I am suffering the consequences of my foolishness. Had I been wiser, nothing would have happened. I am now gradually improving. There is nothing to worry about. I think my health will improve as a result of this illness. I don't have the courage to accept the presidency.

<sup>1</sup> From the reference to Vallabhbhai Patel's leaving for Madras; *vide* p. 68.

I have already written to Lahore accordingly.<sup>1</sup> Vallabhbhai left for Madras last night.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/127

#### 428. LETTER TO LILAVATI GOKALDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
August 28, 1929

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have received your letter. You certainly cannot ask for slivers from outside. You must quickly learn carding. You should see Kishorelalbhai and arrange to learn it at Ville Parle. You may even be able to find someone in Bombay proper. You can find out from Bhai Vithaldas<sup>2</sup>.

You should not feel weak from a fruit diet. Do not give up milk and curds. You will then retain your strength. There is no harm if you lose a little weight. You have done well to begin the study of Hindi. You must make a practice of writing in ink.

My health is gradually improving.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

LILAVATI GOKALDAS  
C/O DWARKADAS GOKALDAS  
BACKSIDE CHAWL  
THIRD FLOOR, ROOM NO. 3  
KALBADEVI ROAD  
BOMBAY

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

#### 429. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
August 28, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. We had as usual the recitation of the whole Gita today because of Janamashtami. On this occasion I thought much

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Telegram to Vallabhbhai Patel", 19-8-1929

<sup>2</sup> Vithaldas Jerajani

about all the members of our Ashram. The recitation was performed with great enthusiasm and in a very sweet tone; it was interspersed with stotras. Being held at daytime, others too could read and this made the singing all the sweeter.

We have no rain today. After many days there is a little sunshine, perhaps you too have some relief today. Most of us are today on a fruit diet. Even if only one or two women take to carding, others will follow suit. Govindji should be relieved of other duties except carding and you should make him do this work. I am accordingly arranging to send someone from here. All of you should read this letter. My health is all right. It is certain, at any rate so far, that we start on the 6th. Today we are going to have bhajans in the evening at 7 o'clock. Panditji's band will also play. Ba sends her blessings to all.

From a photostat of the Gujarati:S.N. 9263; also C.W. 510. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

#### *430. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH*

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,  
*August 28, 1929*

BHAISHRI FULCHAND,

I have your letter. I am gradually improving. I see no need for you to come. I have written to Bhai Jawaharlal regarding the address. He comes here tomorrow evening. We have had a telegram.

He will leave this place in the evening, day after tomorrow. I take it that you will start the welcome from Viramgam onwards. It is not possible for me to come. Kaka is in Bombay.

Anasuyabehn can hardly go. I shall see if someone else could be sent.

You are all competent to explain the condition of Kathiawar. There is Revashankerbhai too. I do hope you have invited people from all groups. They should all be given freedom to see and say what they want to.

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 2859. Courtesy: Sharadabehn Shah

### 431. LETTER TO DHARAMSIMHA BHANJI KHOJA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

August 28, 1929

BHAISHRI DHARAMSIMHA,

What you write about khadi appears to be correct. Khadi made from mill-yarn would not do, because hand-spinning is our basis, our focal point. Occasionally I do speak out something about mechanization. As regards the native States see the current issue of *Navajivan*.<sup>1</sup> What you write about ghee and milk is quite correct. Ginning is certainly coming to life in the footsteps of spinning. If an occasion comes up in the Ashram a widow re-marriage may be celebrated by all means. But things cannot be brought about by force. Being beyond attributes God deserves to be called even by seemingly contradictory epithets such as 'without attributes', 'full of good qualities', 'immutable', 'ever-changing', etc. It is best not to become a soldier but having once taken up this profession, a soldier forfeits his right to consider whether a battle is right or wrong. Many ask for a contents [column] in *Navajivan*. Accepting contributions too is a necessary aspect of *Navajivan*. We have drafted a scheme under which the profits accruing to the *Navajivan* firm may be utilized mainly for the *Navajivan* staff.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I could not revise this.

SJT. DHARAMSIMHA BHANJI KHOJA

VICCHIA, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 19847

<sup>1</sup> Vide "A Kathiawari's Wail", 29-8-1929.

### 432. LETTER TO NANABHAI MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

August 28, 1929

BHAISHRI NANABHAI,

I have your letter. My health is steadily improving. I know of all the arguments in favour of accepting the presidentship, but what should I do if I cannot summon the courage? I have left everything to God. He will do what He wants to.

It seems now after all Sushila has got somewhat reconciled to the name 'Sita'. She makes no complaints nowadays.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6679

### 433. THE ANGLO-INDIAN

Some Anglo-Indian friends have often complained to me that I do not give the Anglo-Indian friends sufficient notice in these columns. I have always repudiated the charge. It is not my lukewarmness towards them that I do not often mention them in Young India. Indeed I have the honour to have many friends among them. My conception of swaraj requires the same consideration for them as for any other group. Only they stand in little need of any advocacy in these columns. Those who are despised in the country, those who are neglected by the Government or those whose interests are hostile to those of the Government claim a lien upon these columns. Just as Englishmen do not need the protection of these columns, so do the powerful Anglo-Indian interests stand in no need of it. I can mention several such indigenous interests that stand in little need of the assistance of Young India. But this general assurance I have tendered more than once that in these columns there never would be any sacrifice advocated or encouraged of a single legitimate interest.

I note in the constitution of the Anglo-Indian League the definition of the phrase Anglo-Indian community which I had not known hitherto. It "means and includes":

(1) All persons of mixed European and Indian descent whose father, grandfather or more remote lineal ancestor in the paternal line shall have been of European, American or Colonial birth, and

(2) Europeans, Colonial British subjects of European descent, and Americans domiciled in India.

In the circumstances these friends of the League really need not only no advocacy from these columns, but they have ranged themselves against the millions of India in so far as the European interest may be regarded as against that of India. If the half-borns claim the rights and privileges of the ruling race, theirs is an interest which as the occasion may demand will, if the ruling race can help it, override that of the indigenous inhabitants whenever the latter is in conflict with theirs. These columns stoutly resist such usurpation, no matter by whom advanced. At any rate the Anglo-Indian of the League may regard himself as well protected as the ruling race.

But I know that the Anglo-Indian not represented by the League is in an overwhelming majority. He does claim my sympathy, friendship and even pity in several cases. The half-born who takes the hue of his Indian parent and has no money is in a most unenviable condition. His political right is in no danger. It is his social status which is non-existent. He frets over his Indian parentage and he is disowned by the European race. He is therefore between Scylla and Charybdis. I often meet him. He is washed out in the process of living above his means and trying to live the European life and look like Europeans. I have pleaded with him to make his choice and to throw in his lot with the vast multitude. If these men and women will have the courage and the foresight to appreciate this very simple and natural position, they will serve themselves, they will serve India and they will be spared the galling position in which they find themselves. The greatest problem before the dumb Anglo-Indian is that of determining his social status. He is saved, the moment he recognizes himself as an Indian and lives like one.

To the vocal Anglo-Indian of the League I submit that the activities of the League are a mere tinkering with the grave problem. The League should, if it will truly represent the bulk of the Anglo-Indian community, revise its policy radically, change the definition to which I have adverted and step forward boldly and unequivocally on behalf of the glorious battle for India's freedom. Today in my opinion the League is attempting the impossible.

*Young India*, 29-8-1929

## 434. NOTES

A MUTE REFORMER

Sjt. Manilal Kothari writes:

You will remember that, writing on the Bhil situation in Rajputana in Young India in 1922, you recommended pardon for the Bhil leader, Motilal.<sup>1</sup> In 1924 Sir R. E. Holland, the A. G. G. in Rajputana, after sympathetic consideration of the whole case and in view of the peaceful situation then prevailing in Rajputana, advised the States concerned to pardon Motilal, so that some time later, his influence could be utilized for some useful social work amongst the ignorant and backward Bhils. I understand that all the Rajputana States, including Mewar, agreed to the proposal, and I was distinctly told by Sir R. E. Holland as well as by his successor Lt. Col. Patterson that I had their authority to tell the Government of Bombay that Rajputana had no objection to pardon being granted to Motilal by the Bombay States, viz., Idar and Danta. It is, therefore, surprising that of all the States, Mewar should now keep him under detention and that too without any trial.

The authorities allege that you had disowned Motilal. I believe it is not a fact. You have, I believe, known him personally and something of his work. I would, therefore, request you kindly to clear the misunderstanding and advise the Mewar Durbar to take a sympathetic view of the case and release the reformer.

The reader is not likely to know Motilal. Well, he is an unassuming, ignorant social reformer among the Bhils of Rajputana. His passion is to wean them from meats and drink. At one time he exercised among them very great influence. And now though it is not as great, his name commands respect among his tribesmen, who owe so much of their social transformation to him. I have had the privilege of meeting Motilal after my discharge from Yeravda. He is no man of letters and hardly talks to anyone. But he means business and believes in himself and his people. I am afraid that there is a colouring of truth in the imputation that I had disowned him in 1922. I had said that he had no authority to use my name which he was alleged in 1922 to have done. But after that and when I had come to know something of his mission I had strongly recommended that he should be pardoned. I had flattered myself with the belief that Sir R. E. Holland's recommendation had something to do with the Young India paragraph. Be that as it might, I had hoped that Motilal was pardoned,

<sup>1</sup> Vide "Notes" sub-title The "Bhils" of Rajputana

and that the incident of 1922 was wholly forgotten by the States concerned. It therefore surprises me that Mewar State has arrested and detained him not for anything he has done since but for the offences alleged against him in 1922. Apart from every other consideration, surely the Mewar State will avoid the charge of bad faith which the simple Bhils will bring against it, if their beloved leader is now detained under custody for what they have been led to believe had been pardoned. So far as I am aware Motilal has done nothing to deserve detention. I trust therefore that this simple and sincere reformer will be released and encouraged in his prosecution of social reforms among his own people.

BARDOLI<sup>1</sup>

The correspondence between Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and the Bombay Government published in the Press affords interesting reading, and is proof of the incorrigibility and the inelasticity of the existing system of Government. It sacrifices everything on the altar of prestige. In important matters it does justice only when pressure compels it. The few instances of unconscious injustice done in the Brofield-Maxwell Report and brought to light by the Sardar would under a responsive system have secured redress for the asking. Not so with this Government. It knows that the Sardar cannot and will not give battle on the question if he cannot secure redress by negotiation. And so the Government refuse to look at his proposal. I may mention parenthetically that there are legal difficulties in the way of enforcing any enhanced assessment. But Vallabhbhai is too proud to mention them and seek shelter behind them. The Government will deserve precious little thanks if it finds itself unable in virtue of its own laws to enforce payment. It has earned discredit by rejecting the Sardar's courteous advances. But there is another point on which the Sardar dare not yield even though it may cost another protracted struggle. He had naturally expected the Government to admit that Bardoli and Chorasi would receive the benefit, if any, of the proposed new legislation and consequent revision of settlements. Bardoli which has made such legislation obligatory on the Government cannot possibly be made to lose the benefit, if there be any, of such legislation. The Government thinks otherwise, and the Sardar promises battle, if there is any benefit and the then Government proves unbending. But on this the public need not speculate except to note the woodenness of the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "My Notes", Evil-Minded Government



Government, and hearten itself to destroy a system under which such procedure is possible.

“INDIA IN BONDAGE”

It would not have been in keeping with their tradition if the Government of Bengal had not followed up the prosecution of Sjt. Ramananda Chatterjee by proscription of Dr. Sunderland’s innocent volume. The seizure consequent upon the notice of proscription was effected with all the pomp, indignity and offence the police were able to accompany their brave performance [sic]. For it is reported that instead of politely asking Ramananda Babu to deliver the copies in his possession, they “raided his office and took away 350 unbound copies, 101 cloth binding cases, 5 bundles of loose formes of the book, one bundle of the pictorial dust cover and 44 bound copies of the book”.

The police and the Government of Bengal are welcome to the satisfaction of having subjected to indignity one of the foremost journalists and public workers of the land. Let them know that they are by such acts sending up the barometer of disaffection. Helpless we may be today to avenge such wrongs, but the time is fast coming when we shall no longer be so helpless.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon could not rest after having formally taken up the burden of guiding Lalaji’s Society.<sup>1</sup> He therefore came over to Sabarmati to confer with me as to how best to collect the balance of the Memorial Fund. He being a U.P. man and having passed a lifetime (practically) of service there, his eyes were turned to his own province. Would his tour interfere with my khadi collection was the question that worried him. I told him that he was not to mind the effect of his collection on my tour. Indeed I would love to combine the two collections myself. But experience has taught me that only one thing could be done at a time. Whilst therefore I could not combine the two, as in Andhra and Burma, I would love to receive subscriptions for the Memorial from whomsoever would give them to me. I therefore welcome Purushottamdasji’s touring for the Memorial Fund, and I should be glad if those who revere the memory of the deceased tribune of the people (and who does not?) will subscribe to the Memorial, and if they will, hand them to me. At any rate my tour ought in no way to interfere with the Memorial Fund to be collected

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* “Notes” sub-title A Worthy Sacrifice

by Purushottamdasji. Indeed it is a matter for sorrow and shame that this collection has been hanging fire for such a long time.

#### ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CAMPAIGN<sup>1</sup>

Sjt. Jamnalalji, the Secretary of the Congress Anti-untouchability Committee, has succeeded in having the famous Dattatreya temple of Elichpur, the former capital of Berar, thrown open to the so-called untouchables. He performed the opening ceremony before a distinguished gathering on 31st July last. The temple is one of the biggest in Elichpur which has a population of 38,000. It was built 15 years ago at a cost of Rs. 83,000 by the efforts of Swami Vimalanand. The Committee of Management consists of 24 of whom 18 voted for the opening. There is a board of 5 trustees who were unanimous in their decision in favour of the opening. The new signboard put up at the entrance reads:

This temple is thrown open from today for free access to Mangs, Mahars, Chamars and all Hindus alike for purposes of darshan, bhajan, for offering worship and prayers and for attending religious discourses, etc.

The opening ceremony was preceded by a public meeting presided over by Dr. Patwardhan of Amaraoti.

The organizers of the ceremony deserve congratulations for the service they have rendered to Hinduism and the nation. Let us hope that Jamnalalji will be able to induce the trustees of other temples to follow the example of Wardha and now of Elichpur. This beginning is but a drop in the ocean. For there are lakhs of temples that await this initial purification of lifting the ban on 'untouchables'. Hindus must hang down their heads in shame so long as the curse of untouchability persists.

#### SELF-SPINNING IN RAJPUTANA

Sjt. Mulchandji who is organizing self-spinning in Ringas sends an interesting report of the work done there from which I condense the following information:

The work was commenced in March 1928. It was started with a school through which contact was sought to be established. But it was found that direct contact with the elders was essential. So the workers visited the homes of the peasantry after they had returned from their fields. They had spinning-wheels which were in danger of being put away. The work was

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* also "My Notes" sub-title Another Temple Thrown Open"

however commenced by inviting them to learn carding. This some of them undertook to learn. Teaching was imparted at night between 7 and 10. This however excited the jealousy of the professional pinjaras who spread all kinds of wild rumours among the credulous peasantry. Nothing daunted, the workers called a meeting of the whole peasantry and explained the philanthropic object of their mission. Confidence was restored and the work went on smoothly. As a result in a population of 5, 289 in 61 villages, 410 families out of 933 had taken part in the movement up to the time for which the report has been drawn up. Of these 67 families have had all their clothing made out of self-spun yarn. This means 349 souls. 595 men and women had a portion of their cloth prepared from self-spun yarn. 915 persons learnt carding during the period under review, i.e., eight months. Altogether 2, 398 yards of khadi was thus woven. This is encouraging progress, and shows how by patient toil contract can be established with eople, and they can be persuaded to take an interest in their own well-being. What has been possible in the villages surrounding Ringas is surely possible more or less throughout India.

#### SAROJINI DEVI'S WORK IN THE WEST

Sjt. Dhan Gopal Mukarji writes:<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. naidu's visit was fortunate for the Indians in america, and also beneficial to the Americans themselves. She was not afraid to make enemies. That is why she succeeded so eminently. She pleased all because she curied favour with none. ... There is no living person that uses any language as well as she did her English. to rown all, she was not proud of her knowledge of the conquerors' language. This last bit of honest sarcasm ran the amor propre of her opponents like the finest rapier. A slave cannot be proud of his mastery over his conquerors' language.

You can see from the above how well we liked "our silver-tongued Sarojini of Hyderabad". She did her work well. Do send her again.

#### FOREIGN-CLOTH BOYCOTT

Sjt. Jairamdas Doulatram, Secretary, Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, writes:<sup>2</sup>

Only about five weeks remain before the second stock-taking of the nation's progress in regard to the programme of boycott of foreign cloth.

. . . The 2nd of October is the day for such national stock-taking. ... Unless in the course of the remaining few months of the year the Congress is

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*

able to organize the masses to an adequate extent through the medium of the boycott campaign, the Lahore Congress will not be placed in a position to decide upon taking any large step towards national satyagraha on the 1st January, 1930.

I would, therefore, earnestly appeal to all organizations to put forth as large an effort as is possible from 1st September to the end of December, 1929 to make the boycott programme a great success.

Measured by the past eight months it does not seem as if we are to make much progress with the movement during the remaining months. No doubt something has been done. For this we may be thankful, but nothing commensurate with the task before us has been accomplished. What we need is a hurricane campaign. That can come only if we have the adequate fire within us. The sad part of the work is that the Congress Committees do not respond. Very few have sent in regular reports. Many have sent none. Unless all Congress Committees act as one man and promptly, no effective work is possible.

*Young India*, 29-8-1929

#### 435. THE DEVADASI

The indefatigable Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi writes:<sup>1</sup>

As you have been openly denouncing the Devadasi system in the Hindu temples, I make bold to appeal to you for help in the great task of getting rid of that evil. In this Presidency, I find it an uphill task, as the so-called educated men and even some of the most prominent Congressmen oppose my reform measures and defend that infamous institution.

My Devadasi Bill, which has now become an Act, deals only with the Inam-holding Devadasis, but there is a section of that community which practise dedication under the cloak of religion simply to make a living out of prostitution. This is nothing but traffic in children; because children are even bought and adopted (adoption by Devadasi is allowed by our Hindu Law) . . . I have had many memorials and petitions from the enlightened section of that community asking me to bring about legislation to punish such wicked people who trade upon the children's souls and bodies.

The Penal Code Sections 372 and 373 have proved ineffective. Hence, I have given notice of another Bill for the success of which I want your blessings. Some may argue that legislation is no good so long as the people

<sup>1</sup> Only excerpts are reproduced here.

do not realize the evil in that custom; but my contention is that a good section of our people perceive the injustice.

Among the Devadasi community itself there is a great awakening, and they have been doing propaganda on a large scale, but I am pained to observe that the high-caste people do not help them in that community's efforts to reform themselves. And further, our laws for the protection of children are almost nil in this Presidency . . .

I heartily endorse the writer's proposal. Indeed I do not think that the proposed legislation will be in advance of public opinion. The whole of the enlightened public opinion that is vocal is against the retention of the system in any shape or form. The opinion of the parties concerned in the immoral traffic cannot count, just as the opinion of keepers of opium dens will not count in favour of their retention, if public opinion is otherwise against them. The Devadasi system is a blot upon those who countenance it. It would have died long ago but for the supineness of the public. Public conscience in this country somehow or other lies dormant. It often feels the awfulness of many a wrong, but is too indifferent or too lazy to move. But if some active spirit like Dr. Reddi moves, that conscience is prepared to lend such support as indifference can summon up. I am therefore of opinion that Dr. Reddi's proposal is in no way premature. Such legislation might well have been brought earlier. In any case I hope that she will receive the hearty support of all lovers of purity in religious and general social life.

*Young India*, 29-8-1929

### 436. *IMAGE WORSHIP*

An inquirer writes:

1. What ritual would you suggest or the kind of image-worship which you support? Would it be enough just to have the darshan of the image or would you also recommend the offering of food, etc.? Considering that the image cannot eat, how far is it proper to offer it food?

A. I have no specific ritual for the worship of an image. Each man or society can create his or its own ritual. And this is what usually happens. The ritual indicates the person's or the society's conception of good form. It is after all mostly a matter of convention. The devotee, as the saying goes, conceives of his deity in his own image,

which means that it is a matter of imagination, but so long as imagination holds sway it represents the real.

2. Inasmuch as man is an embodied being, even the greatest of men is bound to have a few defects. As I see it, the worship of him will result in the transmission of these defects to the worshipper, because both the merits and defects of the worshipped tend to be transmitted to the worshipper. Do you approve of this kind of worship?

A. For the object of one's worship one can choose either an ideal, that is, an imaginary figure, or a historical person. I prefer the former. Krishna conceived as a Sampurnavatara, i.e. a plenary incarnation of God is an ideal, that is, an imaginary incarnation. A historical Krishna may have defects. I agree that the merits and defects of the worshipped tend to be transmitted to the worshipper.

3. The body with the *jivatma*<sup>1</sup> is called *chetana*, i.e. the sentient, and after the soul has departed from it, it is called *jada*, i.e. the inert. If it is contended that the all-pervading divine Principle is present also in the lifeless image, how can one who considers God to be all-pervading limit Him merely to the image? Would it not amount to an insult to an emperor if one were to call him the ruler of a small village?

A. It is true that we cannot limit the authority of an emperor to just a village, but he is ruler of a small village in the same degree as he is of countless villages. And it is quite possible that the resident of a particular village may be completely ignorant of the existence of other villages. The prince of devotees, Tulsidas, had for his God the bow-bearing Ramachandra and not the discus-wielding Krishnachandra. That is why he had the darshan of Ramachandra even when he looked at the image of Krishnachandra.

4. You often say that for success in the tasks that we have undertaken, such as Hindu-Muslim unity, people should pray to God. That being so, will you say that the people who worship trees and other things should pray to them for selfish or altruistic ends?

A. There is no detachment in a petitionary prayer. There is in it an element of attachment and necessarily therefore of aversion. My ideal prayer is free from attachment and is therefore addressed to the all-pervading and unknowable Divine. But those who worship trees and other things may pray to them for success in such altruistic prayers as for Hindu-Muslim unity.

<sup>1</sup> Individual self

5. Along with faith, is not discrimination also necessary? Won't you say that faith devoid of discrimination is blind faith or superstition? And is not blind faith responsible for many evils in the world?

A. My faith includes both knowledge and discrimination. Faith has no place in things which can be dealt with by reason. It is thus clear that blind faith is not faith at all.

6. You prescribe the way of truth and non-violence as the only true way for all men. Could you not similarly prescribe some specific form of upasna<sup>1</sup> ...no matter what language is used for ritual or prayer?

A. Truth and non-violence represents a universal principle. Upasna, however, is only a means, though a necessary and powerful means, evolved by man. It is therefore determined by time and place. It admits of variation, and rightly too, though the final result is the same. Just as the waters of all rivers flow into the sea, even so do the prayer and adoration offered to the different deities find their way to Keshava.

[From Hindi]

*Hindi Navajivan*, 29-8-1929

### 437. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

*August 29, 1929*

BHAISHRI JETHALAL,

I have your letter and article. I am sending it to *Navajivan* as it is.<sup>2</sup> Critics challenging Shivabhai<sup>3</sup> and supporting you had come forward even before your letter was received. But now that I have your letter I am dropping their articles and publishing yours. You need not fear that anybody will be misled by my opinion based on limited knowledge. I got your previous letter also. I did not find anything in it worth publishing. Just now we do not need praises of spinning and weaving; we need knowledge based on experience. I therefore consider your experience of great value, and that is why I am tempted to publish your reply to Shivabhai immediately. I do not mind the bad handwriting. It is but natural while travelling. I have not

<sup>1</sup> Waiting on God, spiritual or religious exercise, meditation

<sup>2</sup> Vide "Scheme of Self-Reliance", 1-9-1929

<sup>3</sup> Shivabhai G. Patel; *ibid.*

been able to revise the letter.

*Vandemataram from*

MOHANDAS

SHREE JETHALAL GOVINDJI

C/o JEEVANLAL & Co.

55 CANNING STREET

CALCUTTA

From the Gujarati: C.W. 9847. Courtesy: Narayan Jethalal Sampat

*438. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

*August 30, 1929*

MY DEAR SATISBABU,

I have your precious letter. Krishnadas's attitude I cannot condemn too strongly. He has been a severe disappointment to me. The whole story you relate is sickening. You may show this to him if he is there or send it to him. I can only say that his conduct has deeply hurt me. I have shown your letter to Jamnalalji. He is amazed. He has always entertained great regard for you. Krishnadas's version is a perfect distortion. What I said was that Ram Binod's attempt to transfer book-debts would be like transfer of book-debts by Satisbabu, which he would never think of doing, but on the contrary he had given security for the loans given to Khadi Pratishtan. No one has ever thought of enquiring into the K.P.'s affairs. No one has ever dreamt that you had served self. Therefore you must not base any action on this painful episode. You have to stick to your post. You must not be sensitive and henceforth never listen to tales.

With love.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/143



### 439. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

August 30, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You should make a trip by all means, if you can free yourself from there. I take my daily walk regularly.

*Blessings from*

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9264; also C.W. 511. Courtesy: Vasumati Pandit

### 440. LETTER TO JAYASHANKAR

August 31, 1929

BHAISHRI JAYASHANKAR,

Why do you feel so nervous? What is there in your letter which only I may read? Your letter is absolutely innocent. Anybody may read it and no harm will come to you or to Jamsaheb. But this is a superfluous lecture. You will be amused and happy to know that I have not even read up to now the story in the press about the papers having been lost, though I have even received cutting from two places. And you will be happy to know that not a single paper has been lost. That file is lying on my table right before me. Of course, it did happen that Amritlal wanted his letters, but a co-worker had kept them safe somewhere and he was in Madras and the others did not know where they were. So I asked Amritlal to come later. In the meantime the place where the letters were kept was discovered. Now I will send your papers by registered post and relieve you of your worry. I have not yet been able to attend to them, but now I am giving up that desire. It is not possible to register the packet today and tomorrow is Sunday. But it will definitely be dispatched with Monday's post.

Please take care of your health.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/144

An argument advanced by the mill-owners is that even today the mills are running at a loss. I regard the evidence given in support of this as rather weak. It is possible that a few mills are running at a loss; but the majority of them would not incur losses. If the shareholders were given a smaller dividend or if the percentage in respect of

depreciation were not deducted before declaring the dividend and if nothing can be taken to the Reserve Fund, I would not place these as losses as against the wages of labourers.

I must mention one point here. Labour had put forward two arguments in support of its demand. I have already discussed one of them. The second was that mills were at present making such profits that they should withdraw the wage-cut. Labour, on its part, could not prove this and on this the panch has given a unanimous verdict.<sup>1</sup>

It is my opinion that the other point has been proved by labour. There is an understanding between my colleague and myself that the papers put before the panch should be sent by both these parties to a Sarpanch<sup>2</sup>.

I have to write out my verdict first; after seeing it my colleague should write out his<sup>3</sup>; after seeing the latter, I should offer my comments.

If the Sarpanch wishes to consult the panch, they should meet at a time and place convenient to all three.

If the *Sarpanch* feels that any further proof is necessary, he has the right to ask for it.

Besides the papers which have already been presented, if any of the parties wish to present any more facts relating to the point in question before the Sarpanch, they can do so after showing it to each other.

Finally since unrest is spreading among the labourers as a result of the delay in the decision, the Sarpanch is requested to give his decision as early as possible.

I have to tour the U.P. till the 24th of November, but if the Sarpanch wants to ask me anything, he should write to me care of the Satyagraha Ashram, whence the letter will be forwarded to me wherever I am and I shall send the Sarpanch whatever replies I may have to after consulting my colleague.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 14974

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* "Arbitrators Award", 14-8-1929

<sup>2</sup> Umpire

<sup>3</sup> For the note by Sheth Mangaldas, *vide* S.N. 14975.

## *APPENDICES*

### *APPENDIX I*

#### *GOSEVA SANGHA*

The Cow-protection Conference held at Belgaum on 28th December 1924 resolved to found a permanent body called 'All-India Cow-protection Association' and appointed a committee to frame a constitution for it. the Committee met in Delhi on 26th and 28th January 1925, and the constitution drafted by it was adopted with some amendments at a public meeting held in Madhavbag, Bombay, on 28th April 1925. This 'All-India Cow-protection Association', having not been able to command such public attention and sympathy as to entitle it to be called an all-India organization, its members met at the Satyagraha Ashram, Sabarmati, on 25th July, 1928, disbanded it and adopted the following resolution:

"Inasmuch as the All-India Cow-protection Association has not been able to command public attention and sympathy commensurate with the all-India character it has claimed, and inasmuch as its activities have been confined to the slow spread of the objects of the Association and especially to helping to conduct a dairy and tannery at the Satyagraha Ashram in terms of the objects of the Association, and inasmuch as the subscriptions and donations are mainly confined to friends who are interested in the experiment, and inasmuch as the numerous goshalas and pinjrapoles which were expected to respond to and be affiliated to the Association have nearly entirely failed to do so, the existing members of the Association resolve to disband it, and not retaining the existence of the Association in any shape or form, to adopt the less pretentious title of Goseva Sangha (Cow-service Society) and irrevocably to entrust the affairs, management and control of the funds and stock of the Association to the following Permanent Standing Committee of management of the Society (for names of the members, see below), with full powers to disburse the funds, conduct the said experiments, to add to their number, to fill up vacancies caused by the resignation or the death of a member, to expel a member by a majority vote and otherwise carry out the objects of the expiring Association and to frame a constitution and rule for the management of the Society and to make such amendments thereof as may from time to time be required."

In pursuance of this resolution the Standing Committee of the Cow-service Association hereby adopts the following constitution for it:

The object of the Cow-service Association and the means by which it shall carry on its work are identical with the object and the means of the late All-India cow-protection Association, which are as follows:

## OBJECT

Whereas the Hindus have failed in cow-protection which is an obligation imposed on them by their religion, and whereas the cows in India and their progeny are deteriorating day by day:

The All India Cow-protection Sabha is formed for the proper fulfilment of the religious obligation of cow-protection.

The object of the Sabha shall be to protect the cow and her progeny by all moral means.

‘Cow-protection’ shall mean the protection of the cow and her progeny from cruelty and slaughter.

NOTE. It will be against the fundamental policy of the Sabha to bring physical force or pressure to bear on those communities whose religion does not prohibit, or regards as obligatory, cow-slaughter.

## MEANS

The Sabha shall carry on its work by the following means:

1. by pleading with those who may be ill-treating cows, bullocks, etc., and by carrying on propaganda against such ill-treatment by means of leaflets, lectures, etc.;
2. by taking charge of diseased and disabled cows and oxen from their owners wherever the latter cannot afford to maintain them;
3. by superintending and inspecting the administration of existing pinjrapoles and cow-protection institutions, and by helping in their better organization and management, as also by establishing fresh institutions;
4. by breeding model cows and draught cattle by means of cattle farms, etc., and by providing clean and cheap milk through properly kept dairies;
5. by opening tanneries for tanning hides of dead cattle and thereby stopping or reducing the export abroad of disabled cattle;
6. by enlisting men of character and education in the cause, and founding scholarships, etc., for training them in the work;
7. by holding an inquiry into the causes of the disappearance of grazing lands and into the advantages or disadvantages thereof;
8. by investigating into the necessity or otherwise of the practice of castrating bulls, and if found necessary and useful, investigating into the possibilities of discovering a harmless method of castration or a wholesome modification in the present method;
9. by collecting funds; and

10. by taking whatever other steps as may be necessary for the work of cow-protection.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Any person of the age of eighteen years, who subscribes to the object of the Association, and

1. who pays to the Association an annual subscription of five rupees; or
  2. who sends to the Association 12,000 yards of even and well-twisted self-spun yarn; or
  3. who sends to the Association every year two cow or bull hides whether raw or tanned,
- shall be a member of the Association.

Any person who pays to the Association in advance a consolidated amount of Rs. 500 shall be a life-member of the Association.

#### DUTIES OF MEMBERS

This Association has been conceived as a body of servants, who have not so much rights as duties, or to whom duties should be as rights. The following therefore shall be the duties of members:

1. They shall, as far as may be, use only cow's milk whenever they have an occasion to use milk or milk products.
2. Whenever they have to use leather articles for personal use they shall use only the hides of dead cattle and never use the hides of slaughtered cows or bullocks. With regard to other things made of leather, they shall also, as far as may be, use only dead cattle hide.
3. If members keep cattle for milk, they shall keep cows only and not buffaloes. They will reason with buffalo-keepers to replace buffaloes with cows.
4. They will carry the message of the Association to pinjrapoles, goshalas and similar humanitarian organizations.
5. In case they follow cow-keeping as a profitable occupation, they will devote all profits beyond their maintenance to the cause of cow-protection so long as cow-protection in India has not been placed on a satisfactory footing.
6. They will induce moneyed men to take up dairying and tanning for humanity's sake.
7. They will try to acquire the knowledge requisite for carrying on dairying or tanning, and will, wherever possible, seek to maintain themselves through the service of the cow.

#### SYMPATHIZERS

Any person, who, while approving of the duties laid on members, is unable to discharge them fully but is anxious to acquire the ability to shoulder them, may be a sympathizer of the Association, provided that he fulfils the conditions of membership in other ways.

#### ADMINISTRATION

The entire administration of the Association shall vest in a Standing Committee consisting of the following members:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (President)

Revashanker Jagjivan Jhaveri (Treasurer)

Jamnalal Bajaj

Vaijnath Kedia

Manilal Vallabhji Kothari

Mahavirprasad Poddar

Shivlal Mulchand Shah

Parameshvariprasad Gupta

Dattatreya Balkrishna Kalelkar

Vinoba Bhave

Chhaganlal Khushalchand Gandhi

Chhaganlal Nathubhai Joshi

Narayandas Khushalchand Gandhi

Surendranath Jayasval

Chimanlal Narasinhadas Shah

Pannalal Balabhai Jhaveri

Yashvant Mahadev Parnerkar

Valji Govindji Desai (Secretary)

with full powers to disburse the funds, to conduct dairying and tanning experiments and otherwise carry out the objects of the Association, to add to their number, to fill up vacancies caused by the resignation or death of a member or otherwise, to remove a member by a majority vote on proper and sufficient grounds, to frame a constitution and rules for the management of the Association and to make such amendment thereof as may be required from time to time.

Only members of the Association shall be eligible for appointment to and continuance on the Standing Committee.

Five members shall form the quorum for a meeting of the Committee.

In case of emergency the president shall have the power of taking necessary action without waiting for calling a meeting of the Committee, and also when there is

no quorum at a meeting actually called. The President however shall immediately inform the members of action thus taken.

Whenever it is difficult or unnecessary to convene a meeting of the Committee, the Secretary shall have the power to circulate a resolution among members and obtain their votes by correspondence. Such resolution shall be considered as duly agreed to if none of the members objects. If a member does not reply within a fortnight, he will be held to have waived his right to object.

The books of the Association shall be open to public inspection and shall be audited by competent auditors every year. A statement of accounts shall be published every six months.

The treasurer shall be responsible for the account of all the receipts and disbursements, all amounts exceeding one thousand rupees to be kept deposited in a bank of his approval.

All communications relating to the Association should be addressed to the undersigned.

UDYOGA MANDIR  
SABARMATI  
ASSOCIATION

VALJI GOVINDJI DESAI  
SECRETARY,  
COW-SERVICE

*Young India*, 6-6-1929

## APPENDIX II

### *LETTER FROM SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

[Before August 24, 1929]

BAPU,

I have your letter on Niranjana Babu's affairs. I welcome your decision about him. I have been trying to help him in my own way. I suggested to him that he should readjust his family obligations if he wants to stick to khadi and avoid similar grief in future.

Kristodasji saw me yesterday. He told me about a letter Hemprabha wrote to you. You took this letter to be a business one, being of the nature of an invitation to you to take up the responsibility of Pratishthan's ownership! I laughed loudly and heartily over it, for it was a love letter, pure and simple. Could love be so dull as to mistake it? And what was the origin of this? Hemprabha felt an yearning to be near you and being unable to take the journey and desiring all at Sodepur to be benefited by your presence, she desired that you should regard Sodepur as your own place and grace it with your presence for the spiritual uplift of all the inmates.

But the matter of this letter was not all. I could not laugh away all the rest that Kristodasji said. He reported to me the conversation he had with you at Almora in which myself and Pratishtan were drawn in.

Niranjan Babu on his way back from Sabarmati met me. He also told me about your sarcasm about my Utkal report which I did not then understand at all, although what he said jarred painfully. Now after Kristodasji's interview Niranjan Babu's utterances become explicable. You have wronged yourself hopelessly in all these. But let time pass.

As I woke up this morning and was going to the prayer-ground a thought of Marcus Aurelius came across my mind and from the depth of my heart I repeated, "Today I shall meet with blows . . . But I cannot be injured by anyone of them." At 2 p.m. Kristodasji came and blows there were sure enough.

*My pranams,*  
SATIS

From a microfilm: S.N. 15194

### APPENDIX III *LETTER FROM M.R. JAYAKAR*

*Private*

THAKURDWAR  
BOMBAY,  
*August 23, 1929*

DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I am writing this letter to you because I feel certain that you will not misunderstand its motives. It is nowadays the fashion in Bombay to condemn, as a communalist, any Hindu who happens to speak in favour of his community. Mahommedan leaders, of course, are immune from this charge. I am sure that you will not judge me by such a partial test.

My purpose in writing this letter to you is to make you acquainted with the apprehensions of a very large body of Hindus (outside the Hindu Mahasabha) that any attempt at this time to vary the solution of the Hindu-Muslim question adopted in the Nehru's Committee's report is fraught with far-reaching consequences. I am sure, you are aware that many Hindus, who were against the continuance of communal representation, accepted the Nehru's Committee's solution as a kind of compromise for the sake of peace and harmony. As I said in my speech at the Calcutta session of the All-Parties Convention last December, with reference to Mahommedan demands, that compromise had proceeded on four well-recognized principles, and that the demands set up by the Mahommedans at the Calcutta session were flagrant variations from those principles. These demands were then only five or six in number. They have since risen to 14. Even when they were five or six, they were turned down at Calcutta by an overwhelming majority of All-India delegates, including Sikhs and Christians.



One of the grounds of their decision was that the Mahommedans were divided, on these demands, into four well-known groups. Three of them were against joint electorates at any price. It was therefore not clear on whose behalf Mr. Jinnah spoke, and what bulk of the entire Mahommedan community would be placated if his demands were conceded.

My own opinion in the matter is that it would be desirable for us all to concentrate on the Nehru Committee's report, accepting it on all essential points. If any minor adjustments are needed in its proposals about the Hindu-Muslim question, which, if met, have a possibility of being accepted by the bulk of the Mahommedans, these may be considered when we reach the stage of finality, I mean in the sense that the stage is arrived at when the representatives of the Hindus, Mahommedans and Government meet and in a spirit of give and take, arrive at a compromise which is *final* and forms the terms of our future Constitution. I refer to this feature of finality, because to me the danger of making any further concessions to Mahommedans at this stage appears to be great. The Government will clearly pick out all these concessions and make them parts of a constitution entirely different from the one of which they were intended to be a part. Hindus then will be regarded as being stopped from raising objections on the ground that the items objected to are a matter of agreement between Hindus and Muslims.

Past experience shows that this fear is not without justification apart from what may have happened at and after the Lucknow Pact of 1916, I will quote a very fresh instance. You will remember that Mr. Jinnah, the Muslim League spokesman at Calcutta, openly claimed that, although the separation of Sind was, in the Nehru Committee's report, conditional on India having the Constitution recommended therein, Mahommedans ought to have the liberty of accepting Separation of Sind, even if Government made it a part of a totally different Constitution. This makes clear the danger I am referring to.

I have good reasons to believe that Muslims will not get from Government any undue privileges this time. A section of that community is therefore anxious to make it appear that the concessions they want have been agreed to by the Congress. Hence the need of caution.

These are a few considerations which I thought it was my duty to respectfully urge on your attention. Perhaps you are yourself well aware of them all.

Offering you my apology for disturbing you in this matter in the present state of your health.

*I am,*  
*Yours sincerely,*  
M.R.J.

MAHATMA GANDHI  
SABARMATI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 407, vi, pp. 149-51  
Courtesy: National Archives of India