

1. NOTES

INDIANS IN FIJI¹

A cablegram from Suva says, "Indian members motion common franchise rejected Council today all three resigned". This means that the Fijian Legislative Council would not have Indians on a common franchise. That would be too much for the white exploiters of Indian labour. The Indian members elected by Indian electors only have really no influence in the Legislative Council. I congratulate the three members on their patriotic spirit in having resigned from the Council by way of protest. I hope that they will on no account reconsider their decision unless a common franchise is obtained. Having resigned however they must not sit idle but continue their agitation for the simple justice to which they are entitled. If the Indian colony in Fiji is well organized, the citadel of anti-Indian prejudice is bound to break down through united effort.

IS IT A SALE OF INDULGENCES ?

A student writes from Lucknow as follows:²

I should be sorry to discover that the students and others who pay to the khadi fund do so not with the intention of using khadi themselves but merely as a salve for their conscience. I have warned audiences paying their subscriptions that their payment of subscription is an earnest of their desire to wear khadi as far as they can. The writer of the letter seems to think that khaddarites do not subscribe. The fact however is that those who wear khadi are the largest single subscribers. If people merely paid subscriptions to the khadi fund and none used khadi, the subscriptions would be perfectly useless, for they are not given as donations to the poor but as a return for work done, and if the fruits of their work are not used by the people, their work becomes useless.

KHADI BUYERS BEWARE³

The Secretary of the All-India Spinners' Association writes:⁴

This is a very serious matter. It is necessary for all buyers of

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Secretary, Fiji Congress", 14-11-1929.

² The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent reported that students considered their duty ended with payment of subscription to the khadi fund. *Vide* also "Speech at Allahabad University", 17-11-1929.

³ A note on the same subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 15-12-1929.

⁴ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had listed names of merchants in Tuni (Andhra) who were passing off mill-yarn cloth as genuine khadi.

khadi to be very cautious about their purchases. of course those who are satisfied with the ordinary khadi that one gets in the different provinces are generally safe, but those who will wear fine Andhra khadi or none at all have need to be most particular about what they buy. The Association has repeatedly warned the public that they should not regard any khadi as genuine which does not come from a certificated khadi bhandar. The list of cerificated khadi bhandars has been already published in the papers and can be had for the asking against an anna stamp from the Secretary of the Association. So much for the public. What is one to say however of those who are selling spurious khadi and thus damaging a vast national movement specially designed in the interest of famishing millions? Even as a butcher may to a certain extent be humane, so should these merchants set a limit to their greed and exempt at least the famishing millions from their fraudulent operations. I shall be glad to learn that this paragraph has caught the eye of these Tuni merchants and that they will cease to sell spurious khadi.

Young India, 21-11-1929

2. HONEST DIFFERENCES¹

Mr. J. B. Pennington whom the readers of *Young India* will recognize as the nonagenarian friend writes under date 6th October:

This is most likely the last time I shall worry you with my despairing efforts, but I must just say that I am glad you declined the Presidentship of the Congress because I suppose it means that you prefer to be independent, and I hope, determined to exercise your own judgment in these critical times, no matter what happens. You never answered my question as to whether you were prepared to be the first president of the Indian republic, perhaps because you thought it was a ridiculous question which it certainly was not; because if you with your unrivalled experience and reputation, are not fit for the job, I don't know who is —and it must be a republic or chaos, if you get rid of us. Is it quite impossible for you to work with the present administration, say, for another 10 years, till you find your feet? Your experience at Bardoli shows that you can influence even the Present Government by ordinary means and once associated with it on equal terms you could easily get all you want *without bloodshed* of which, God knows, we have had more than enough for one generation. Still hoping for the best in India.

I have no doubt the reader will share with me the wish and the hope that Mr. Pennington may live many a long year to send his letters and even to see India reach her cherished goal. Who can withhold admiration for the consistent zeal and industry Mr. Pennington is evincing in the pursuit of what he considers to be the

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to J. B. Pennington", 14-11-1929.

right course? Nor can one deny his downright honesty. That he may not think as we toiling under the British harrow do is a limitation for which he is not responsible. In any case his wonderful zeal, industry and optimism are worthy of imitation by the youth of the country.

And now for the reply to Mr. Pennington's question. I do remember his question about the first president of the future Indian republic. If I must for the time being give up my modesty, I must tell Mr. Pennington in confidence that if there was an Indian republic in my lifetime and the burden was imposed upon me by the simple people of the country, I daresay that it would not break me. At any rate I should make a fair effort to shoulder it. What however I am striving for is not a life of isolation for India but a life of association with the British on absolutely equal terms. Republic or chaos is, in my opinion, an easy thing to get if we would but make up our minds to copy our English tutors and begin to break heads here, there and everywhere without dreading the consequences. That however would not please me, and a republic so gained would not probably find me alive, but if it did, its first duty would be not to install me on the throne but to put me under the gallows. The republic therefore of my imagination would have to be a republic gained by non-violent means, and if the country would continue its choice of non-violence and truth as the method *par excellence* for attaining its goal, it would not need to drive the English out, but it would have converted the English who under that state of conversion would work as willing servants of the country and would deem it an honour to live on Indian sufferance. If such a consummation comes to pass, it would be something of which India will have every reason to be proud and for which the world will be the richer. It may be a dream never to be fulfilled but it is enough for me that it makes me happy. Mr. Pennington will now see why it is quite impossible for me to work with the *present administration*, even for a day, let alone 10 years. Under the present administration equality is an impossibility. It is an administration which, I hold, has proved ruinous to India and is based upon brute force. The fundamental difference between Mr. Pennington and Indian nationalists is that the latter consider that India is fit today for administering her own affairs without the patronizing help of any outsider. If a robber by sheer force of arms has dispossessed me of my estate and holds me as his slave, it does not mean that I therefore consider myself to be unfit to own my estate although I may not have sufficient arms to enable me to dispossess him of the estate unlawfully gained by him. Thirdly, Mr. Pennington's memory surely betrays him when he says that the present Government was influenced by ordinary means with reference to Bardoli¹. It was just the extraordinary means discovered by non-co-operators that were

¹ The Bardoli Satyagraha.

employed by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with consummate skill and absolute faithfulness that influenced the Government, and it is just these extraordinary means which I would like the country to adopt, and I know that it will reach its goal as surely as the simple peasants of Bardoli did.

Lastly, I would like Mr. Pennington to follow up the ideal for which the Association with which he is intimately connected is working. The printed letter-heads which Mr. Pennington uses for his letters are issued from the office of the National Homecroft Association Ltd., whose object is

to promote the development of homecroft settlements; i.e., suburban food-raising areas designed to accommodate working class families in individual homes, erected upon individual crofts, of such size and equipment as will enable the family food to be produced from the family's soil by the family's own off-time labour.

At the bottom of each sheet the following quotation from Ruskin is printed:

But since we live in an epoch of change and too probably of revolution, and thoughts which are not to be put aside are in the minds of all men capable of thought, I am obliged to affirm the one principle which can and in the end will close all epochs of revolution—that each man shall possess the ground he can use and no more.

I hope both Mr. Pennington and the readers will recognize the inconsistency between the mentality which on the one hand tolerates an empire based on exploitation and on the other believes in 'each man possessing the ground he can use and no more'. I wonder if Mr. Pennington thinks that the 100 thousand English men and women who are in possession of India can really use an area 1,800 miles long and 1,500 miles broad. Again, how can the dispossession of 300 millions of people by a nation which has its own home possibly be justified?

Young India, 21-11-1929

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE WHEEL

A friend sends the following cutting¹ headed "A Century Behind the Times" from the *Textile World*:

This is an instance of argument suiting preconceived ideas. The author of the note has evidently not taken the trouble of understanding the implications of what he calls the "Gandhi Movement", meaning of course the hand-spinning movement. The spinning movement aims at restoring spinning to the millions of

¹ Not reproduced here. It described the offer of a prize by the "Gandhi Movement" for a speedier spinning-wheel as an open admission of its basic economic error.

cottages of India from which it was removed by unjust, illegal and tyrannical methods. The movement could not have been started, if somehow or other the cottages which were deprived of this universal supplementary industry had had a substitute provided for it. Unfortunately or fortunately no substitute was provided. Hence sheer necessity compelled the students of village life, after having exhausted all other means, to resort to the spinning-wheel as the only immediate solution for the serious economic distress that had overtaken the millions of India's homes by reason of the extinction of cottage spinning. The moment these millions can have a better substitute, they are at liberty to give up the spinning-wheel, and no one would be more glad than I to see these millions possess a better substitute. No doubt the authors of the movement do think that so far as human understanding can go, there seems to be no hope of finding a better substitute than the spinning-wheel. Indeed their conviction is that, as soon as the existing exploitation of the so-called weaker nations of the earth by the strong nations of the West ceases as it is bound someday to cease, the whole world will have to return to the spinning-wheel. Whether however that event comes to pass or not, unless India becomes an exploiting nation and discovers new nations to exploit, or unless an independent India develops brute strength enough to compel the nations of the West to buy the goods that she may dump down on their soil as India is virtually compelled today to receive goods dumped down on her soil, India must, if she is to rid herself of her economic distress, manufacture the articles of necessity in her own cottages just as she produces her corn, the prime necessity of life, in her own fields. There is therefore no contradiction in the authors of the spinning movement trying to secure a wheel or a machine which would enable the cottagers in their own cottages to spin more or finer yarn in the same given time as the existing spinning-wheel does. The writer of the note should know that this progressive method of improving home machines has been handed down from ancient times. The *takli* or the distaff was displaced by the spinning-wheel. The spinning-wheel itself underwent gradual improvement as one sees even today from the different old patterns working in different provinces. The process of improvement was suddenly arrested when the spinning-wheel went out of fashion. The Council of the All-India Spinners' Association is therefore but following the course that was suddenly stopped by the machinations of the East India Company's agents. The fact is that neither the Council nor I have any objection to machines as such, but we do submit that it is wrong to carry the process of mechanization of industry so far as to kill the cottage industries and concentrate them within a narrow field; in other words,

they are against urbanization of India at the expense of her rural civilization and rural life. The writer in the *Textile World* states that a machine meeting practically all the requirements of the contest was in use in America more than a century ago. The adverb 'practically' is a disturbing factor, but if there is such a machine in America in existence and if any American inventor will take the trouble of so adjusting it as to meet all the requirements of the contest, he will not only receive the prize offered by the Association, but he will earn also the thanks of the dumb millions. But let the critics understand that even if such a machine is not invented and the prize is not won, the spinning movement will still continue its onward march. The Association feels thankful for its ability to serve 1,50,000 women in nearly 2,000-villages of India and through them serve also a number of weavers, washermen, tailors, printers and the like. The Association hopes, too, to cover every one of the seven hundred thousand villages and bring a ray of hope to their cottages where today blank despair reigns supreme.

Young India, 21-11-1929

4. IN THE NAME OF RELIGION

The Secretary of the Youth League, Dharwar, writes:¹

If what is stated in the letter is at all true it betrays a shocking state of things and an undoubted reversion to barbarism. It is a matter for deep sorrow and humiliation that there should be educated men enough in the country who believe that there are gods who can be appeased or conciliated by the sacrifice of animals and if the manner of killing the innocent goats is correctly described by the Secretary of the Youth League of Dharwar, it is an inhuman act done in the name of religion. I should hope that there is exaggeration in the statement made by the Secretary. There is a similar letter from Bengal also in which the writer asks me to condemn the animal sacrifices that go on daily in the name of religion in that great province. If my condemnation of these sacrifices can save a single animal from slaughter it is there with all the force It can command. But there seems to be just now the fashion to encourage such sacrifices and to justify them. A correspondent from Madras sends me papers containing accounts of such slaughter done by learned Brahmins in the Madras Presidency. I wish that Youth Leagues all over the country will rise in revolt against these sacrifices and cultivate public opinion so as to

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had described revival of animal sacrifice by some Brahmins in his district.

make them impossible. I have heard it argued that since the stopping of animal sacrifices people have lost the warlike spirit. There were animal sacrifices enough in Europe before Christianity. Europe does not seem to have lost its warlike spirit because of the stopping of degrading and debasing animal sacrifices. I am no worshipper of warlike spirit, but I know that warlike spirit is not to be cultivated by the slaughter, in a terribly cruel manner, of helpless, innocent, unresisting dumb fellow-creatures.

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5. ILLUSTRATED KHADI CATALOGUE

Sjt. Vithaldas Jerajani has brought out an illustrated khadi catalogue in English in connection with the A.I.S.A. Khadi Bhandar, 396 Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. One finds in that catalogue numberless varieties of khadi and many varieties of ready-made clothing such as banians, half-sleeves *bandis*, shirts in several styles, coats, jackets, caps, hand-spun woollen frocks, jumpers, baby suits, etc. The catalogue enables one clearly to see what evolution khadi has undergone. I would recommend all lovers of khadi to possess a copy of the catalogue whether for themselves or their friends.

Young India, 21-11-1929

6. THE U. P. TOUR-X¹

As the U.P. tour is drawing to a close the programme is becoming more and more crowded if also less eventful. During the past week we passed through Rohilkhand where not much Congress work has been done and where the possibilities are very great. From Brindaban we went to Hathras² taking several places on the way. Hathras having many spinning-wheels and being a good cotton centre could easily have paid much more than it did. From Hathras we passed hurriedly to Etah, thence to Kasganj, thence to Badaun³ and from Badaun we went to Shahjahanpur⁴ where Gandhiji peeped even though it was a Monday into an American Methodist Mission Girls' School which has introduced hand-spinning and weaving with some degree of success. The girls all belonged to the so-called depressed

¹ *Vide* 1st footnote to "The U. P. Tour-IV", 24-10-1929.

² On November 8

³ On November 9

⁴ On November 10

classes. From Shahjahanpur we went to Pilibhit which with its fabulously rich zamindars could easily have paid much more than it did. From Pilibhit we passed through Lakhimpur which was slightly better. From Lakhimpur we reached Sitapur¹ where the energy of Lala Shambhunath of non-co-operation fame and the zealous sacrifice of Pandit Shivaram brightened things a bit. There can be no doubt that wherever some solid work has been done amongst people, some sacrifice shown even by one or two leading lights, the results have been obvious. We found a fairly well-attended national school still going in Sitapur. Everywhere one could see the Biblical saying exemplified "The harvest is indeed rich but the labourers are few." Given a few labourers there is absolutely no reason why we should not show much better results. From Sitapur we went to Sidhauri. There a summons was waiting for Gandhiji from Pandit Motilalji, asking him, instead of going by train as he had intended, to go by car to Lucknow through which he had to pass *en route* to Rae Bareilly. So he went by car in advance of the party, passed an hour with Panditji and went straight to Rae Bareilly.² At Rae Bareilly the perfection of all the arrangements arrested attention of every one of the party. There was perfect order observed from start to finish at the public meeting. No rush was made by the crowds towards Gandhiji although the meeting was very largely attended and was composed of peasants. The platform was made of solid brick mud-plastered, sides of which were painted in yellowish colour, a colour that was in perfect keeping with the surroundings. Broad avenues were kept in order to allow the motor-car to pass to and fro without any difficulty. The decorations also were mild, cheap and effective. There were two arches for ingress and egress. They were made of evergreens. What delighted Gandhiji most was to find that the whole of the decorations had cost no more than Rs. 4 for the simple reason that bricks were lent, labour was given free by the District Board, fencing materials were lent by a dealer and so there was little expense to be incurred. From Rae Bareilly taking Lalgaon and Salon on the way we went to Kalakankar.³ We had made the discovery at Lucknow and it was strikingly confirmed at Kalakankar that the young Talukdars of Oudh were gradually shedding their fear and helping in their own way the national cause. Some of these young men had contributed to the khadi purse and Lalaji Memorial. The Raja Saheb of Kalakankar was anxious for Gandhiji to pass a day or two in his unpretentious ancient well-built

¹ On November 12

² On November 13

³ On November 14

palace just on the bank of the beautiful Ganges. And as we went through this little village we realized what natural beauty there was about the peaceful surroundings of this little palace. Gandhiji and indeed the whole party were quite glad to be away even for 24 hours from the din and noise of eager crowds. But there were also several other things here that added to Gandhiji's happiness. The young ladies of the Kalakankar house do not observe the *purdah*. The Raja Saheb and they are habitual wearers of khadi. But in order to clear his wardrobe of every vestige of foreign cloth the Raja Saheb had devised a foreign cloth burning ceremony as part of the public meeting. There was a new bride who had arrived only eight days ago. She had a fair amount of foreign cloth in her wardrobe. She too gave up its foreign contents for the altar. But the largest and the richest contribution had come from Raja Lal Saheb of Samaspur. Before igniting the pyramid of foreign cloth arranged on the altar in a corner of the meeting well-fenced and well-protected, Gandhiji scanned every article carefully, and we could observe that it delighted him to see heavily embroidered robes, richly decorated fine Parisian lace, very expensive *saris* and the like. As he ignited the pyramid and the flames rose to the skies, there arose also a loud shout of joy from the crowds who now eagerly surrounded the fence and witnessed the ceremony. The handle of the torch which was given to Gandhiji for igniting the pyramid was silver mounted. It was of course auctioned and it was knocked down to Lal Saheb of Samaspur for Rs. 500. I must close this rapid sketch of the events of the past week with a summary of a portion of Gandhiji's speech to the Kalakankar public meeting.

'It gives me great joy,' said Gandhiji, 'to see you all and to see the Raja Saheb dressed even as you are and mixing freely with you. I had the privilege of meeting him in Lucknow when on behalf of the Reception Committee he had housed me in his Lucknow residence. As he was dressed like a volunteer, the members of my party could not distinguish between him and the other volunteers, and he had therefore been unconsciously entrusted with menial duties without the slightest hesitation by one of my party. As if it was perfectly natural for him he performed that duty with alacrity. When a member of the party subsequently came to know who it was who was given menial work he reported the matter to me. Personally I was delighted that the zamindars and Rajas were to be found to delight in rendering service involving menial work. It gives me additional joy to find that the Raja Saheb is living here in the midst of his own ryots just as simply and naturally as I found him living in Lucknow. I hope that the other young talukdars will copy this example, and

if only the rich people whether titled or not will act as I believe the Raja Saheb is acting—that is, as trustee for the people and holding the zamindari as their trustee and protector, they should soon be perfectly happy. The dream I want to realize is not spoliation of the property of private owners but to restrict its enjoyment so as to avoid all pauperism, consequent discontent and the hideously ugly contrast that exists today between the lives and surroundings of the rich and the poor. The latter must be enabled to feel that they are co-partners with their zamindars and not their slaves, to be made to labour at the latter's sweet will and to be made to pay all kinds of exactions on all conceivable occasions. You and they the zamindars should shed mutual fear and mutual distrust, and if both do so, you will also shed the common fear of authority. The Government can do no harm to you or to them if only you both act on the square. You have seen me give up to flames expensive robes and other clothing of zamindars made of foreign yarn. I regard it as a sacred rite. You may not today understand the significance of this *havan* —sacrifice. But I doubt not that this silver-mounted torch will, if it is preserved by its would-be buyer, find a lodgment one day in the national museum which the future national Government is bound to establish for all such collections reminding posterity of the phases that the struggle for freedom went through. This campaign against foreign cloth through khadi and all it means for the starving millions will, I have not a shadow of a doubt, go down in history as one of the most important if not the most important item in the national programme. The burning of foreign fineries means that the owners have from today established a living bond between you and them, and secondly it means that they have discarded the enervating, debasing and unmanly taste for gaudy garments and jewellery and have made up their minds henceforth voluntarily to live as simply even as you are living, perhaps under compulsion.'

Young India, 21-11-1929

7. SOME POSERS

A reader writes:

I have the honour to state that I am a humble servant and a faithful follower of the Congress. In connection with your non-co-operation movement I have also undergone nine months rigorous imprisonment. I hope you will kindly answer the following questions and remove my doubts.

His first question is:

Do you know that . . . has co-operated with the Simon Commission and has sent in a memorandum also notwithstanding the fact that he is a prominent Congressman and wears khadi? With such gentlemen in the Congress do you still expect the country's deliverance through the Congress ?

A country's deliverance does not depend on one man. Everyone whether good or bad, has a right to be in the Congress. If the number of those that follow all the mandates of the Congress is large, then the country's deliverance is certain. So we should not worry about what others do. Let each one ask himself 'what am I doing?'

The second question is:

By encouraging the students to boycott schools and colleges have you benefited the country?

I am thoroughly convinced that those who boycotted schools and colleges have done nothing but good to themselves and to their country. On account of this the colleges and other institutions have lost prestige. The country has gained good volunteers in the few students who left these institutions. It is to the credit of the boycott that today, even though in a small number, there are some national schools in the country that help much in the struggle for freedom. I have already mentioned in the *Hindi Navajivan* how much the Gujarat Vidyapith alone has helped in this struggle. If we evaluate in this manner the work of the other national universities we shall understand, to a certain extent, the importance of the boycott of Government schools and colleges. I have up till now met very few people who find fault with the principle of boycott. People are mostly of the opinion that the country was not prepared for such sacrifice in 1920-21 nor is it even now. This means the country was not prepared for swaraj in those days, nor is it now. If this is true let us stop denouncing boycott and prepare the ground for it.

Here is his third question:

How far is it profitable for each and every person to spin on the charkha and what can he earn from this for his living? In that same time can he not earn more by doing some better work?

This question has been asked several times and the answer has been given again and again. It is that those who ply the charkha for pecuniary gain can certainly give it up if they get a more profitable occupation. The main object of the promoters of the charkha has been to provide occupation for crores who have no other occupation. To those who consider it a sacrifice to ply the charkha the question of gain or loss does not arise. The sacrificer never thinks of his own gain. He considers the good of all as his own good.

The fourth question is:

From the political point of view, how far can the charkha help? In the olden days widows and women of ordinary families used to spin on the charkha. Today why do you force men to ply the charkha?

In my opinion, the political contribution of the charkha is very great; because from the political point of view it is very essential to boycott foreign cloth and this can be successful only with the help of khadi. In such matters there can be no difference between man and woman, between widow and married woman. The charkha sacrifice is universal.

The fifth question runs thus:

Did you and other leaders ever give any help to the workers who have come out of jail? If not, what advice did you give them regarding their future career? What should they do now? Is it proper for a freedom fighter to tell his comrade courting arrest that he should expect nothing from the Congress leaders and that he should be prepared to be left in the lurch as the volunteers of the Congress appear to be left today?

I have not come across even one such worker released from jail who, deserving help, has not received it. I know workers who have received much help. I also know some workers who make fantastic demands and take offence at a refusal.

The sixth question is:

The Congress leaders are entitled to special privileges in jail while volunteers are treated like common prisoners. Have they—the leaders—any right to such privileges? And if they accept these should the public have any regard for them?

In my opinion the satyagrahi prisoners should not ask for any special privilege. They should not even expect any such favour.

The seventh question is as follows:

You collected one crore of rupees for the Tilak Swaraj Fund. Can you kindly say how that money which was collected in the name of the poor is being spent and how the common people benefit from it?

The accounts of the Fund have been published. Even today, copies of it can be had from the Congress office. With this money

the Congress has been able to carry on its work vigorously for nine years.

The eighth question is:

Why was it wrong to sit at a Round Table Conference with the Viceroy after 1921? If so, can you kindly say how it is right to take part in the very same Round Table Conference now? Will you attain swaraj for India only through this Round Table Conference? Did you mean swaraj to be only this? If so, why did you not announce it in 1921 itself? If not, what was the point in non-co-operating with the Government and starting a kind of dreadful war between the King and his subjects, which resulted in the destruction of hundreds of homes? And for obtaining Dominion Status in this way what do we owe to the Congress leaders?

If the Viceroy had accepted the conditions presented to him a second time by the Congress then there was no harm in taking part in the Round Table Conference. But the demands of the Congress were not accepted. Even today because the demands of the Congress have not been accepted, I think it is wrong to take part in the Round Table Conference.

Freedom cannot be secured by a conference or by any outside means. If a conference is called under proper conditions it can certainly be a measure of the people's strength. For this reason, I have already stated that the people should not even think of the Conference. Our work is to consolidate the people's strength; in other words, we must succeed in the boycott of foreign cloth and other constructive activities. His last question is:

You also claim that the Congress is the only body that can give a true picture of the hardships of the country and also redeem it from them.

Do you still have faith in the Congress leaders after witnessing their performance? If so, can you say that the public also has faith in them? If not, can you say what ways you have thought of to reform this body? The Congress has many faults. Nowadays many selfish people have entered the Congress; yet, compared to other bodies, the Congress has more good points; there is certainly plenty of room for reforming it. If it is not reformed the Congress cannot be saved from destruction.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 21-11-1929

8. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

BANDA,
November 21, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

Jamnalalji informed me about your having arrived at Wardha. During your stay there regain your health completely and have no hesitation at all in asking for whatever things you may find necessary for the purpose. While you are there, finish your study of the *Gita*, etc., which you may have planned to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9271

9. LETTER TO MOHANLAL K. MEHTA

KULAPAHAR,
November 21, 1929

BHAISHRI MOHANLAL,

I have your letter. A vow once taken ought not to be given up even though not merely three but three thousand friends urge you to do so and hold out threats against you if you do not comply.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 235

10. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

November 22, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I am writing this in the train which is taking me to Jhansi. I have had no letter from you for some days. The letters must be following me from place to place, or you may not have written any. Chhaganlal seems to have been detained by the Punjab workers. I think that he should stay on. That will give him experience and some rest too from the worries in the Ashram.

You should not carry excessive burden.

When I arrive there on Monday, I intend to go and see

Santok the same night and then proceed to the Mandir. Make arrangements accordingly. That is, Santok should know. She need not, of course, keep awake. Those with the car should know where she is.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4154

11. LETTER TO FULCHAND K. SHAH

KULPAHAR,

November 22, 1929

BHAISHRI SHAH,

I have your topical letter. I appreciate the questions you have discussed in your letter and in the newspaper. I will discuss them in the newspapers if I get the time. But I also fear that I may not be able to do so.¹ Let me therefore give my brief reply here.

Dominion Status means partnership with the British Government on a basis of equality with complete freedom to end the connection. Whether we shall be able to win this type of Dominion Status from the discussions at the Conference² or something else will depend not only on the attitude of the British Cabinet or the Parties but also on our situation here in India at that time.

In the sudden importance given to the Princely states I smell not the fragrance of wise statesmanship but the stink of crafty politics. But we should not be surprised if it turns out in this case regarding to the saying, 'he reaped the fruit of his own folly'. The outcome of this also would depend on us.

Even if the Conference arrives at agreed conclusions, in law the [British] Parliament can certainly alter its decisions. But there is little possibility of that happening. Nobody can give a guarantee that that will not happen and we cannot even ask for such a guarantee.

There is a trap in the stress that is being put on the Act of 1919. The letter from the leaders at Delhi seeks clarification on this point.

There is no need to seek clarification now on the point of economic independence. But if the Conference is held, that clarification will have to be sought. Why do you assume that the

¹ The addressee's questions were, however, discussed by Gandhiji in *Navajivan* under the title "Some Significant Questions", 18-12-1929

² The first Round Table Conference which was shortly to be held

Congress resolution about the debts passed in 1922¹ stands cancelled? If we are going to have a genuine Dominion Status, there can be no question of our having to bear the entire burden of the debts. We cannot ask for a guarantee for such things right now. But persons like you should keep the people alive to such problems, so that the delegates at the Conference do not go to sleep over the issue and forget it. On what ground do you believe that the Haji Bill² will be withdrawn or that all the illegitimate rights usurped by the foreign banks will remain untouched? All these points cannot be included in a letter to Irwin. But they must be included in the draft of the Swaraj Act. What the leaders, however, purposely or under pressure or out of ignorance may omit, God alone can say. It is for you to remove the ignorance. It is my duty to contribute something to create the atmosphere which would prevent the leaders from giving up anything under pressure.

Do not be remiss in doing your duty. If you think that you should write a series of articles on the subject, signed or unsigned and if you have the time and the zeal for it, you may do that too.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/1

12. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

November 22, 1929

CHI. KISHORELAL,

I am writing this after the prayer. As I cannot find my pen I am making do with a pencil. We are camping in a village in a health in Bundelkhand, where there is a khadi centre. On dwelling is an ancient fort. It is said that in 1857 women of the royal household had taken refuge here. But it is not about this I want to write. I want to write about the mischief done by your allopathic doctors. I know only one doctor who would never cheat—though even in this I may be mistaken—and he is Dr. Ansari. The trouble is regarding the substance from which medicines are made. I have tried to ascertain that about the medicines I need. I suggest the same to you. These days doctors have made it a practice to prescribe medicines with non-vegetarian content. But even after acquiring such knowledge and learning to be cautious, we shall have to go by faith.

I had written so far when the workers of the khadi ashram came to see me. I have now returned after travelling 56 miles. It is ten o'clock. I have found my pen. This description will give some idea of

¹ At Gaya; *vide* also "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930.

² Coastal Reservation Bill to reserve for Indians the trade along Coastal ports

my tour. Do not think from this that I am tired. If I were tired, I would not sit down to write to you so promptly. I sleep even while travelling. I therefore remain fresh.

Now the most important thing about medicines is that you should keep as far away from them as possible. But for that purpose you must be acquainted with modern remedies. There is certainly some good in the established medical system. But I have no doubt that on the whole it is devilish. The new discoveries which cultured, religious-minded men are making are godly and morally pure. Hence, though they are often imperfect in their reasoning, they are worth thinking over and adopting. They advise simple natural remedies accessible to all. All this is not unknown to you. But I am stressing this so that you may study the subject for your need and patiently try such remedies. You will be able to examine and ascertain your needs better than others can advise.

Let us understand Bhai Karsandas's mistake. I think Surajbehn has finally remained in the Trust. That is all right. What is she doing now? I am reaching Sabarmati on the 25th and will leave on December 6th morning for Wardha.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 10716. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

13. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

ORAI,

November 23, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

We have just motored from Chirgaon where I got your note sent by hand. It was a clear 51 miles' drive. Ba is preparing hot water. Meanwhile I am writing this to you. It is a somewhat taxing programme today, only half of it is finished. Tomorrow the last day is not very heavy.

You were bound to have cheering company there. Let your study of village life be thorough this time. And you must give yourself enough leisure. There must not be a collapse as on the last occasion. You must procure some privacy daily.

I was sorry I could not correct your pronunciation of those verses. It proved really impossible. I made an effort often. But I saw that I could not put off the work in hand. If Wardhagives me some

leisure, I must try there. But of course you have Balkrishna there to help. But we must see.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This was not posted at Orai. On reaching Amraiya I got your wire. I expect to hear more now at Sabarmati about the new development.

From the original: C.W. 5380. Courtesy: Mirabehtn; also G.N. 9436

14. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ORAI,

November 23, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

It is about ten o'clock just now, but before I leave this place tomorrow, I thought I would dictate this postcard for you. I will write to Chhotelal. At the moment, I do not at all feel inclined to send you to Almora. We will think about it later. I must solve some of the difficulties without your help and I think I will be able to do so gradually one after another. Govind Vallabh also met me in Allahabad¹. I could give him only two or three minutes. I have advised him too, to go to Tadikhet. The Vijapur problem too will be solved in the same way. I see now no reason for worrying. You at any rate, have no reason at all to worry. You will be going when and where I suggest that you should go, or alternatively somewhere else. All you need to do is to keep me informed about your health. What is the name of the dentist? I think in this case, it was like a thief turning round and accusing the police constable. He has charged you two rupees extra for his inefficiency as a dentist. But it was good in a way that you did not question his demand since you believed that the doctor had taken due pains and had committed no mistake of any kind.

Blessings from

BAPU

SJT. PRABHUDAS GANDHI
JAMIA MILIA ISLAMIA
KAROL BAGH, DELHI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33004

¹ On November 16

15. TELEGRAM TO RUCHIRAM SAHNI

[On or after *November 23, 1929*]¹

WHILST I APPRECIATE HONOUR SHALL HAVE NO
TIME SHOULD BURDEN. MOREOVER MY WAY OFTEN
DIFFERENT FROM ORTHODOX REFORMER'S. PRAY EXCUSE.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15574

16. BECOME A CHILD

A four-year-old boy asked: "Father, what do you mean by women?"

Father, disconcerted, said: "Sisters and mothers are known as women."

The boy said: "I see, women are persons who cook, clean utensils and wash clothes, is it not so?"

This is not an imaginary conversation but one which has been selected from many conversations which have actually taken place. The father's definition did not appeal to the child as he had seen women mostly engaged in the tasks described by him.

A friend sent me a collection of such dialogues for my amusement, and, when I read them, I felt that, if we could become innocent like children and derive our meanings from innocent observations like theirs, we could spare ourselves much trouble, many disputes and much waste of time. And our intellect would become increasingly keener. A great deal of argumentation may sharpen our wits but it does not sharpen our intellect. Who has not come across instances of too much argumentation leading to intellectual confusion?

This child is—in fact, all innocent children are—unconscious worshippers of truth and hence they go on advancing. We should, therefore, become children, that is to say, we should shed all fear and worship truth. We should do that which our heart believes to be true. We shall certainly err, but we should put up with the penalty and see to it that such error is not repeated. If we make another mistake, it does not matter; on every occasion we should suffer the penalty and go on rectifying our mistakes.

Whoever errs does not commit a fault. In the case of a fault knowledge is presumed. Knowingly committing a wrong is both a fault as well as sin. If we err unknowingly, that act will not be called

sinful. Punishment may be meted out for both— error and sin—one meted out for the former is welcome, whereas that meted out for the latter is as bitter as poison. Both society and God shudder to punish anyone for the former, but are furious in punishing anyone for the latter.

It is not easy for a person advanced in age to become and continue to be, like a child, innocent and simple and, a conscious worshipper of truth. But it is our duty to do so.

The perfect incarnation of God as conceived by Hinduism is the child Krishna. Jesus said: “Wisdom flows from the mouths of babes and sucklings.” He said to those who desired salvation: “Become like children.”

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1929

17. MY NOTES

GUJARAT'S DUTY

The Viceroy's pronouncement has created such a sensation that the newspapers are full of discussion over it. Likewise, we also come across all sorts of speculation about it. I want that Gujarat should not indulge in any kind of conjectures, good or bad. Whether a conference is held or not, whether it be a round table conference or a square table one, let no one worry about it and let everyone do only his own work. Let no one get entangled in a wordy maze. If anyone gives a poisonous name to a rose, the latter will neither lose its colour nor its fragrance, and a poisonous flower, if called a rose, cannot change its colour or its fragrance. Likewise slavery will not cease to be so by being referred to as independence, and real independence will not become foreign domination by being called Dominion Status. Gujarat is regarded as having practical sense. A practical person is concerned with actual results and never with mere words. Let the administration under swaraj be given any name, but it must fulfil certain conditions. The principal among these is that India should be free to sever its connections with the British Empire whenever it wishes. Another condition, which is included in the first, is that the safety of the Britishers living in India at present must rest, not on their swords, cannons or their frightening forts, but on the fortress in the form of our goodwill and friendship. The third condition should be that the British officials and the so-called Indian officials, who have the same attitudes as the former, should cease to consider themselves as masters and start regarding them selves as true servants

of the people of India. In my opinion, a scheme which would truly fulfil these three conditions implies true independence. At the moment, I do not see here the climate which would bring about such a situation. Hence there is no reason to hope for such a swaraj, but if it comes our way, it should not be turned down. True swaraj can also be established if the attitude of eminent Britishers undergoes a change and they are prepared to be just despite the fact that we have not become strong enough to deserve swaraj. We do not at all ask for any favour. That which has been granted as a favour has never till this day been anywhere recognized as independence. If, however, the sense of justice is awakened in Britishers, a part of our task will become straight and simple. At the root of a peaceful struggle lie the hope and the effort to bring about a change of heart in the adversary. It is my confirmed belief that if India adheres to the path of peace till the very end, the hearts of the most callous of British officers is bound to undergo a change. Hence, if an honourable settlement is possible, I am always ready to accept it. And by adopting this attitude, neither my leaders nor I have ever lost anything. I would, therefore, specially request Gujarat not to let its mind be even slightly affected by all that is being said at the moment but to utilize all its time in completing the programme drawn up by the Congress.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 24-11-1929

18. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

ETAWAH,
November 24, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

Though I did feel sorry when you left, I immediately controlled the feeling as your real duty required that you should go. I got your letter. God will certainly give you the strength to follow the path you have chosen for yourself. I have faith in Jayaprakash too. Tell him that he should write to me, that he should accompany you to Wardha and that even if he is unable to come for some reason, he should make it easy for you to go.

Take care of your health. Recite the Gita verses regularly with attention to their meaning. In reciting the chapter for the day . . .¹

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3352

19. A LETTER

ETAWAH,
November 24, 1929

Your brother has given me news of your husband's passing away. In his letter he has dwelt on your late husband's goodness and vividly described your grief at your bereavement. Your brother writes that you are unable to eat from grief and that when you try to eat under the loving pressure of friends and relatives you throw up the food. I can understand your grief. Please know that I fully share it. But from what I heard about you I believe that you are a sensible and wise woman. You should therefore spiritualize your grief. You are overcome by ignorant attachment. Spiritualizing grief means that you should engross yourself in your husband's work and imbibe and improve upon the virtues you may have seen in him. There is no better memorial than this to your husband and no better way of performing his *shraddha* and of consoling yourself. If you have understood this, you should try to sustain your body if only for your husband's sake and take food as you would take medicine. May God grant you peace.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/14

20. DECLARATION OF TRUST¹

November 26, 1929

1. We, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, age about years 60, Hindu, profession weaving and farming, residing at Satyagraha Ashram, Vadaj, Taluka Uttar Daskroi, District Ahmedabad, and Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt, age about years 31, Hindu, residing at Bhoivadani Pole, Kalupur, Ahmedabad, declare by this Deed:

That in the year 1919 with the object of serving the people we, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and some of our colleagues, together started a printing press named "Navajivan Mudranalaya" in the city of Ahmedabad and with its help began to print, circulate and conduct as an institution for the service of the public, two weeklies, the *Navajivan* and the *Young India*, both of which we had begun to conduct some time before after securing them by buying them from their previous owners and managers with their total rights of ownership and possession. The weekly *Hindi Navajivan* and a department for publishing books under the name "Navajivan

Prakashan Mandir¹” and other activities were carried on afterwards by us through the same institution. The said weeklies, printing press, and the department for publishing books have continued as a public institution for the education of the people under one comprehensive name of the “Navajivan Institution”. When the said Navajivan Institution was started under the name of the Navajivan Mudranalaya, its property was worth about ten thousand, in figures 10,000 rupees. Together with the said printing press and the increase earned through the weeklies the property that belongs to the Institution today without any burden on it is worth about rupees one lakh.

2. The management of the said Navajivan Institution and the use and administration of its property was carried on by Swami Anand for the past several years and is now being carried on for the past two years by one of us Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt on its behalf in pursuance of the aims and objects of the Institution as mentioned in paras 3 and 4 of this Deed. Having declared these aims and objects, we declare by this Deed that the said printing press, weeklies, the publishing house, its rights of publication and goodwill and all other property belong to the said Navajivan Institution; that its management and administration was carried on behalf of the Institution in the name of Swami Anand in the beginning and is now being carried on in the name of one of us Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt as Trustee of the Institution; that we, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Mohanlal Maganlal Bhatt or guardians and heirs of both of us never did have or have any personal share, interest or right in it, and that we have not drawn for our personal profit or benefit or in any other manner any amount of money from it.

3. The aims and objects of the said Navajivan Institution which have been referred to in the previous para 2 are as under:

OBJECTS: To propagate peaceful means for the attainment of Hind Swaraj, i.e., swaraj for India, by educating the people through cultivated and enlightened workers devoted to the Gujarati language who desire to identify themselves with the life of Gujarat through the means of Gujarati and to serve India in this pure manner.

4. For the fulfilment of this object to conduct the *Navajivan*, through it to carry on propaganda for peaceful attainment of swaraj; and particularly

- (a) to propagate the spinning-wheel and khadi;
- (b) to propagate for the removal of untouchability;
- (c) to propagate for unity between the Hindus and Mussalmans and the various communities who have settled in India;

- (d) to present before the people constructive ways for protecting the cow by propagating for starting and managing tanneries, dairies and such other establishments;
- (e) to propagate for ways for the advancement of women such as 1. Opposition to child-marriage, 2. Propagation of the idea of widow remarriage in a restrained manner, 3. Education for women;
- (f) to break the unnatural glamour the English language has gained in the eyes of the people all over the country and to propagate for the establishment of Hindi or Hindustani in its place;
- (g) to propagate by publication of journals and books such other ways as would conduce to the religious, social, economic and political advancement of the people;
- (h) not to take advertisements in the newspapers conducted by the Institution and in pamphlets, books, etc., published by it; nor to accept in the printing press of the Institution such work for printing as is against the aims and objects of the Institution;
- (i) to publish a statement of the activities of the Institution and of its accounts within three months after the end of the administrative year;
- (j) always to insist on carrying on all the activities of the Institution on the basis of self-reliance.

5. We declare hereby that the following persons have been appointed Trustees to carry on the entire administration and management of the Institution in accordance with the said aims and objects:

NAMES OF TRUSTEES

SHRI VALLABHBHAI JHAVERBHAI PATEL

SHRI JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SHRI DATTATREYA BALKRISHNA KALELKAR

SHRI MAHADEV HARIBHAI DESAI

SHRI MOHANLAL MAGANLAL BHATT

6. We declare that the said Trustees have the following rights regarding all the property of the said Navajivan Institution:

- (1) To perform all acts and to take all measures as seem necessary from time to time for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Trust; to administer and use the property of the Trust for that purpose as they deem proper; and to keep the property of the Trust in the names of two of the Trustees.

- (2) To sell or mortgage the property of the said Trust for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Trust.
- (3) To appoint as Trustee by a majority decision another person in the event of one of the Trustees resigning his place or in the event of his demise.
- (4) For carrying on the business of the Trust the minimum number of Trustees is three.
- (5) If deemed necessary to add two more Trustees to their present number by a majority decision.

7. The Trustees will continue the publication of the weekly *Hindi Navajivan* so long as they deem it proper for the fulfilment of the object as mentioned in sub-clause (f) of para 4 of the Deed. The Trustees have the right to run newspapers or publish and propagate books or pamphlets, etc., in other languages when they deem it inevitable for the fulfilment of the aims and objects of the Institution for a definite period but they shall consider such activity as secondary or subsidiary. The Trustees will carry on the same basis the activity of conducting the weekly *Young India* and publication of books in English as at present carried on under the Navajivan Institution and such other activities till they deem it proper.

8. The Trustees have the right to add to or modify the objects of the Trust in such manner as is not opposed to the principles of truth and non-violence.

9. The Trustees have the right to manage and administer affairs of the Institution in such manner as is not in any way detrimental to the aims and objects of the Institution; to form a body of workers who pledge themselves to their work for life and will perform their work in the spirit of pure service and to give the charge of the internal management or the whole conduct of the affairs of the Institution to such a body of workers if they deem it proper; to lay down rules, bye-laws, etc., and to execute them for such a body of workers and for other purposes regarding management and administration.

10. The property of this Trust as mentioned in para 2 of the Deed is at present housed in the building in the Sarkhigarani Wadi in Sarangpur bearing municipal numbers of 5512 to 5521 which has been rented by the Navajivan Institution. Besides, the land described below is situated in the village Achar, Taluka and *Petaturkadi*¹ Uttar Daskroi, District Ahmedabad.

The land is *jat sarkari*²:

¹ Sub-division of a taluk

² Tenure A lands

Survey No.	A.G. ¹	East	West	North	South	Rate of Revenue
13	1-37	47	33-34-11	34	12	7-0-0
34	2-6 <i>Kh.-2</i> ²	45-46-47	15-14	32-35	13	6-11-0
45	2-23 <i>Kh.-12</i>	39-41 <i>Kharabo</i>	34-36	37-35	44	9-0-0
47/5	2-22	48	<i>Lat Hisso</i> ³ 1-2-3-4-5	46	49	9-4-0

We have made this Deed of declaration of our own free will and with sober minds on this the 26th of November of the year A.D. 1929 and is binding on us as well as on our guardians and heirs, our lawyers, managers, administrators, etc.

Ahmedabad

Date: 26-11-'29

Signed

Witnesses

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

SD: SHANKERLAL BANKER

MOHANLAL MAGANLAL BHATT

SD: RATILAL P. MEHTA

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan (Supplement), 1-12-1929

21. TELEGRAM TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

SABARMATI,

November 26, 1929

MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TARA HOUSE

ALMORA

POSITIVE YOU OUGHT STAY WINTER OUT IN ALMORA. GOD WILL
TAKE CARE DECEASED'S⁴ FAMILY.

BAPU

¹ Acre and *guntha*; a *guntha* is one-fortieth of an acre.

² *Kharabo*, wasteland

³ Sub-plots

⁴ Addressee's brother-in-law; *vide* the following item.

22. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SABARMATI,
November 26, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I have your three letters. My weight was found to be 100½ lb. Your last entry¹ shows 89[1b.]15 *tolas*. The increase is therefore 11½ lb. net. Not a bad bargain! Otherwise too all well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

I did not know that there was an address already on the p.c. I hope this reaches you all right.²

From the original: C.W. 5381. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9437

23. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

November 26, 1929

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Make your body strong as steel. The programme of studies, etc., is certainly creditable. If the body requires anything which it is proper to have, we may feed it even while sitting in a public place. It is enough if we are able to exercise control over it. If you feel ashamed of eating thus in the presence of others, you may eat in private for some time. In doing so, you will not be guilty of hiding anything from others, for that is not your intention. You only wish to observe decorum. I expect to leave here on the 6th.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. VASUMATIBEHN
SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM
WARDHA (C.P.)

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9272

¹ The addressee maintained a register of Gandhiji's weight.

² The Bihar address was substituted for the Lahore address on the postcard.

24. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

November 26, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have sent you a telegram today¹. Of course you are grieved by your brother-in-law's death. But in my view you should not go there. The winter in Almora is worth facing and worth enjoying. It is my earnest wish that you should stay there for the period for which you have taken the lodgings. Then the chances of a relapse will be very much reduced.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My pain disappeared long ago. I have gained 11 lb. in weight. I am now 100½ lb.

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TARA HOUSE

ALMORA—U.P.

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

25. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM,
November 26, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Advise Chhotelal after reading the enclosed letter. Write to me. I have written to him that if it was done in the past and if Hari Vallabhji advises that a holiday be declared, he should do so.

Where should I write if I want to write to Bhagirathji at his residence? I should get letters from you regularly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32971

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

26. THE U. P. TOUR-XI¹

From Kalakankar taking Pratapgarh and other places on the way we reached Allahabad on 15th instant, to face a crowded programme and, as in Delhi, a meeting of the Working Committee and the Joint Conference to consider the situation in the light of the events subsequent to the Delhi manifesto. But the strain in Allahabad was less because the hand of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was visible in everything. When all is well arranged, times are kept and noises and rush avoided, the strain is but little felt.

The programme began with a visit to Dr. Sam Higginbottom's experimental farm and agricultural institute. Gandhiji wanted to visit it not for collecting funds for *Daridranarayana* but as a farmer to learn what he could of Dr. Higginbottom's experiment. It was a packed one and a half hours' programme. Gandhiji was hurried through the workshop, cattle-farm, sewage farm, soil reclamation area, etc. Cross cattle breeding is being tried at the farm. Sewage is buried in shallow pits and used with good results on the very spot where it is buried. The liquid manure in cattle shed is treated separately from the solid and is carried in a diluted form to a farm prepared for lucerne-growing and the like. Gandhiji could not help noticing the contrast between this economical and scientific treatment of sewage and the woeful neglect of the Municipal Board which allowed thousands of rupees worth of sewage to be annually wasted and the sacred waters of the Ganges and the Jamna to be polluted at the very spot where they meet and to view which tens of thousands of devotees travel long distances from all parts of India. We had a peep at the little children whom Mrs. Higginbottom is bringing up with a mother's care. Most of these are children born of lepers. This part of the visit finished with a five minutes' function at which the students presented a purse containing earnings from their own labour specially dedicated to *Daridranarayana* and a huge basket full of the delicacies that mother earth had yielded at this farm. From this function Dr. and Mrs. Higginbottom took the party to the leper asylum nearby conducted by them. They seemed to take special pride in this work of theirs and Gandhiji could not help envying Mrs. Higginbottom the spontaneous love that the little children bestowed upon their adoptive mother who with pardonable pride introduced the 'troupe' to Gandhiji as "my children"! The chaulmoogra oil injections are regularly given to the lepers with, it is said, 80 per cent success

¹ Vide 1st footnote "The U.P. Tour-VI", 24-10-1929.

complete or partial in recent cases and less success in advanced cases. But it is claimed that the ravaging progress of the fell disease is arrested even in advanced cases.

From the farm the party visited the Ewing College and School students and received a good purse and address. Thence we went to Crosthwaite Girls' School where the proceedings were protracted though interesting. The girls sang Mirabai's bhajans and some of the little girls danced with admirable rhythm as they sang the famous bhajan of Mirabai:

“ मैं तो हरिगुण गावत नाचूंगी”

(I shall dance as I sing the praises of the Lord) This gave Gandhiji the cue for his address. He asked the girls to sing these sacred hymns with understanding and from their hearts. From the girls' function the party went to Kayasth Pathashala to receive their purse and address. The afternoon was devoted to visiting villages in the district. This was Saturday 16th.

The morning of the 17th opened with a meeting of the University students and professors.¹ It was presided over by the Vice-Chancellor Sjt. Ganganath Jha. The largest purse yet presented by students and professors was presented here. It was over Rs. 3,000 and the address was taken up by the Students' Union at Rs. 357. The tour has been remarkable for the fact, among others, that the students' purses have been rising almost invariably at every stage. Allahabad beat all previous records and came miles ahead of the others.

From the students the party migrated to the Municipal Offices for Gandhiji to receive addressees from the Municipal and District Boards.² Gandhiji drew the attention of the members of the Municipal Board to the question of sewage disposal, and suggested that it was criminal to pollute with the city sewage the sacred rivers at their very confluence. He said that it was the duty of the Board to adopt a wise and scientific system of disposing of the sewage and thereby to replenish their empty treasure chest. The Municipal Board is running a leather manufacture school. Congratulating the Board on having such a school, Gandhiji told the Board that it should begin with indigenous tanning of dead cattle hide of which there must be a considerable quantity available out of the cattle dying in Allahabad. It was possible, he added, to increase the wealth of the country if tanning instead of remaining in the hands of a despised neglected class received a proper treatment.

The afternoon opened with a monster meeting of ladies where little Indira, now rendered famous by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's letters

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Allahabad University", 17-11-1929.

² *Vide* "Speech at Civic Reception, Allahabad", 17-11-1929.

to her, presented a purse containing a cheque for over Rs. 8,000. This cheque represented by far the largest purse presented during the tour by the women.

This was followed by the public meeting where the balance of the collections amounting to Rs. 10,000 was presented. The total for the Allahabad district amounted to nearly Rs. 35,000. This was wholly unexpected. Gandhiji, the most optimistic of the party, never expected it to go beyond Rs. 25,000. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the most diffident. But Shrimati Kamala Nehru, who though only recently discharged from the hospital after a difficult operation had taken up the onerous duty of Secretary of the Reception Committee and had given herself and her co-workers no rest, made the great response possible. Pandit Motilalji had headed the list with Rs. 2,500. From Allahabad the party visited Mirzapur and Chunar. The latter is situated on the banks of the Ganges and is a place of historic importance. But it was visited solely for the fact that it was the place chosen by Dr. Bhagvandas for leading *vanaprastha*¹ life. There, in perfect quiet and beautiful surroundings, he is living not far from his beloved Kashi, the seat of his life-long activities, and yet protected from all noise and bustle of a great city.

From Chunar we retraced our steps to Allahabad *en route* for Bundelkhand the last of the great group of provinces known as the United Provinces.

Taking Fatehpur on the way we passed into Bundelkhand, impoverished through a pitiless visitation of famines. At Kulapahar there is a khadi ashram. Bundelkhand needs more than one khadi centre and many workers. It can give relief to thousands of semi-starved families and enable them to tide over years of scarcity and add to their scanty income even during good years. Years of plenty the Indian peasant has not known for generations. There are in Bundelkhand thousands of families belonging to the Kori class. They are hereditary weavers who do also their own spinning. A family of four having one loom earns no more than from 11 to 12 rupees per month and therefore ekes out a bare living only on an indigenous grain corresponding to *ragi* or *bajri*². They have no milk nor ghee ! It was a sad sight to meet them. There is no reason whatsoever why, like the Raniparaj³ of Bardoli, these men and women should not be transformed in a few years and the winter of their despair turned into the summer of hope through the life-giving wheel.

From Kulapahar we passed to Jhansi and thence to Orai,

¹ The third of the four ashramas of life during which one prepares for complete renunciation

² A variety of millet

³ A scheduled tribe of South Gujarat

Ooraiya, and lastly Etawah where Swami Swarajswarup, a *snatak* of Prem Mahavidyalaya, who has dedicated himself to the country's service, is trying to do village reconstruction work.

The U.P. tour commenced at Agra on 11th September and ended at Etawah on 24th November, i.e., after exactly two months and a fortnight. If one adds the previous three weeks of Almora¹ the tour took three months and one week. Friends will be glad to learn that though the tour was undoubtedly exacting Gandhiji has kept excellent health.

Young India, 28-11-1929

27. NOTES

CONGRESS COMMITTEES BEWARE

The Secretary, F.C.B. Committee, has circulated the following to the Press:²

It is up to the Congress Committees to send the reports required by the F.C.B. Committee. Had they done their duty as Champaran has, the story of boycott of foreign cloth would have been differently written.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

The U.P. tour gave about Rs. 30,000 to the Lalaji Memorial. This would not have been possible without Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon's efforts. But I do not regard this as at all an adequate contribution. The U.P. is well able to give more towards this national memorial. I hope that the collections will continue. Let each province insist on doing its utmost and we shall soon finish, as we ought to, the full five lakhs.

Young India, 28-11-1929

28. SOME THOUGHTS ON U.P. TOUR

The long awaited U.P. tour was by the grace of God finished on 24th instant. Friends had feared a breakdown in my health but the wall of protection that Acharya Kripalani and the other companions had erected round me ensured for me as much comfort and rest as was necessary and possible in the circumstances. The brunt of this

¹ From June 13 to July 2, 1929

² The circular, not reproduced here, requested Congress Committees to send reports of the year's foreign-cloth boycott work,

protection however fell upon the broad shoulders of Acharya Kripalani who was sometimes really angry and more often feigned anger when leaders of places visited wanted more time and more appointments or when people insisted on seeing me or crowding into my car. The result was that he came in some places to be regarded as a fiend without feeling, and without consideration for others. He quietly pocketed all these epithets and went about his way. But as we parted at Agra, his message to me was, "I have neither the heart nor the aptitude for offering apologies. I do my duty as I know how and there my task ends. You should offer all the necessary apologies for me." Acharya Kripalani when I first met him in 1915 was already a seasoned warrior. He was then earning Rs. 400 per month but was a *brahmachari* taking only Rs. 40 for himself and sending the balance to Dr. Choithram who was conducting a *brahmacharya* ashram at Hyderabad. He became my most efficient door-keeper in Champaran¹ when I was besieged by crowds of eager and pressing ryots.

In utter disregard of consequences he threw himself in the thick of the non-co-operation fight and from professor became a khadi hawker and organizer. When the call came from Sardar Vallabhbhai, he responded and gave a new lease of life to the Vidyapith. And now surrounded by a band of faithful workers he is conducting khadi ashrams in the U.P. with a zeal which any young man may well envy. For the sake of his country he has exiled himself from Sind and is equally at home with Biharis as with U.P. men. At the pressing instance of the A.I.S.A. he has become its co-agent with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for the U.P. And it was in this capacity that he supervised the tour. I am sure that those who came under his lash will forgive him his quick temper. I wish we had more workers of the Kripalani type. Their quick temper would be forgotten in the quick and sure invigorating change that their solid work will bring about in our enervating surroundings.

Even the hopes that Acharya Kripalani had to disappoint, I know, sprang from affection of which I had as much abundance in U.P. as in Andhra and elsewhere. Indeed the attention received by me and my companions was often embarrassing. Where one volunteer was wanted, ten were ready. The hospitality was imprudently lavish. And I regret to have to confess that we were not always insistent on refusing such as was unnecessary. My own experience is that a gentle but firm refusal to accept what is not strictly needed for creature comforts is never mistaken for rudeness.

My advice to workers is:

¹ In 1917

2. Take national workers at their word. If, for instance, they say they do not need sweets, believe them and do not provide sweets to them. Know that every rupee spent on unnecessary things is so much taken away from the mouths of the semistarved millions.

3. Keep your appointments rigidly to the minute.

4. Having made promises fulfil them at the cost of your life. Let your word even in small matters be as good as your bond.

There was too much dilatoriness and loose talk among organizers. The result was loss of time, disappointments and vexation of spirit.

I must postpone a consideration of the provincial service and one or two other matters to the next issue.¹

Young India, 28-11-1929

29. PUBLIC FINANCE AND OUR POVERTY

Sjt. Coomarappa, M.A., B.Sc., is a Fellow of the Society of Incorporated Accountants. He has travelled abroad to gain practical experience and is now for the time being at any rate, if not permanently, in the Gujarat Vidyapith. He has written several informing chapters on public finance and our poverty. These being seasonable I propose to publish in instalments in these pages.² The reader will learn as he proceeds that according to Sjt. Coomarappa India spends 93.7 % on debts, military and administrative expenses as against 48.8 % spent by America. The money thus spent by India largely goes out of it; what is spent by America remains in it. Thus the richest country in the world spends about half of what India the poorest country in the world spends on administration. So long as this crushing burden is not removed there is no swaraj whether one knows it by the name Dominion Status or Independence. The reader should carefully study these chapters which contain facts rather than arguments.

Young India, 28-11-1929

¹ *Vide* "Zamindars and Talukdars", 5-12-1929. and "U. P. National Service", 12-12-1929.

² These are not reproduced here; *vide* also footnote to "Letter to J. C. Kumarappa", 14-11-1929.

30. TEMPLES FOR 'UNTOUCHABLES'

Swami Anand who has been leading a valiant fight for the so-called untouchables writes:¹

In the beginning of the movement as I had conceived it on my return from South Africa in 1915, I had thought that it was wholly inconsistent with the movement for removing untouchability to build separate temples or schools for them. But experience taught me that the movement could not proceed upon strict logic and that we Hindus had so much suppressed a third of ourselves that even after the articulate Hindus had with one voice declared for removal the suppressed brethren would for a long time need the helpinghand in a variety of ways. After the theoretical lip-removal of untouchability, if no special effort was made, the vast bulk of them would not readily take advantage of the removal and the ignorant mass would not tolerate them especially when the latter would be naturally clumsy in their deportment or pardonably forward in the enjoyment of long withheld freedom. I am therefore convinced that the two things will have to go hand in hand—perfect freedom to enter ordinary temples and ordinary schools and to use common wells at the same time as erection of model schools and model temples specially designed for the convenience of 'untouchables' but open to the others subject always to priority for 'untouchables'. It was along this line of reasoning that I suggested in the brief note for the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette* that the municipalities could foster removal of untouchability by erecting temples and model schools for the suppressed classes side by side with the attempt to have the existing temples thrown open to these countrymen of ours.

My note may therefore on no account be taken as an excuse for condoning prohibition against entry into temples, etc. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of the manifesto of the Bombay leaders who have advised the removal of the prohibition against temple-entry throughout the Bombay Presidency. I have therefore just read with great joy the news that Ramchandra temple in Bombay has been thrown open to the suppressed classes by Sjt. Thakordas Nanabhai, a trustee of the temple. I hope that there will be no relaxation in the effort initiated in Bombay.

Young India, 28-11-1929

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent, referring to an article by Gandhiji in the *Calcutta Municipal Gazette*, had said that his "plea for building special temples for untouchables is likely to be misconstrued". For Gandhiji's article in the *Gazette*, vide "Khaddar and untouchability: Duty of Indian Municipalities", 12-10-1929.

31. PRINCELY STATES

A gentleman, writing about the many immoral rulers in Central India, asks me why, knowing the facts, I am silent about them. Several of the rulers are aged. Many have several wives but not content with them they keep many women as half-wives or concubines. Do I expect anything even from such rulers?

I expect every human being to be virtuous, because I expect the same thing of myself. In this world no one is perfect. By trying hard all can become virtuous. Some: rulers are immoral, but that is because the subjects are also wanting in morals. Therefore, let us not be annoyed with the rulers. Rather, when we think of the princely system let us not confuse the issue by mixing up in our deliberations the faults of individual rulers. This, then, is a theoretical appraisal of the aforesaid subject. But from this let no one think that according to my belief nothing should be done regarding the princely order or regarding matters like the immorality of the rulers. Whatever efforts are made to wipe out social evils in India must have some impact on the rulers as well. We have no means of measuring this impact. The truth of the matter is that our efforts at social reforms are very feeble. So the pace of social betterment is also very slight. There can be a special way of dealing with immoral rulers and that is the non-co-operation of his subjects with his rule. It is sad that this kind of awakening or strength is almost absent among the public. Not only this; the officials of the ruler, guided by self-interest, give full support to the ruler in his misdeeds.

Lastly, we consider the Indian princely rule. As the Emperor so his vassals. Our Imperial Government is Satanic. Therefore, from 1920 onwards the mighty weapon of non-co-operation is being wielded. When the Imperial Government is replaced by a national government, the rulers also will become virtuous automatically. This is the universal law—an ancient tradition. An agitation against the Indian rulers today only makes the Imperial Government stronger, because the agitation may also amount to inviting the Imperial Government to suppress the Indian States.

I hope, after reading this explanation, it would not be difficult to understand my silence about the Indian States. This silence of mine is part and parcel of non-co-operation.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 28-11-1929

32. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

November 30, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

Messrs Jinnah, Vithalbhai and Vallabhbhai were with me this afternoon. The upshot of the conversation was that if there was an interview with the Viceroy, we would be free to discuss all the terms of the manifesto and that if the Viceroy was sure of our responding to his invitation he would invite us at the instance of Vithalbhai or Jinnah. The Viceroy will be free to see us on 23rd December. The proposal is that if the invitation is received we should meet in Delhi on 22nd December. The party is to be composed of you, Dr. Sapru, Jinnah, Vithalbhai and me. I feel that if the invitation is issued we should respond. If you agree please wire your yes to Vithalbhai at Delhi and to me at Sabarmati up to 5th. I leave for Wardha on 6th.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Motilal Nehru Papers, File No. G-1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

33. TELEGRAM TO DINSHAW MEHTA

[November 1929]

DR. DINSHAW MEHTA

HEALTH HOTEL

POONA CITY

YOUR WIRE, REPLIED LETTER. FOR PRESENT BETTER SERVE COMMON CAUSE AND MOTHER. LOVE TO YOU ALL.

BAPU

From a photostat : G. N. 10513

34. THE WITCH'S LAST BREATH

Sjt. Ramnarayan who is a worker in the cause of the *Antyajias* writes from Mombasa:¹

The residents of East Africa deserve congratulations on

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had given an account of the work he was doing in East Africa.

contributing their share to the fund for the service of the *Antyajas*. People can ask only those persons to contribute who have the means to do so. Hence it is not surprising that those who collect funds go so far as East Africa and such other places. The glory of the philanthropist lies in giving alms only after examining with discrimination the merits or otherwise of each recipient. It is the dharma of the wealthy not to contribute a single pie where the beggar begs merely in order to satisfy his hunger or the wicked does so in order to further his evil deeds. Both good and wicked people are bound to approach them. Their sense of discrimination is to be measured by their capacity to put these persons to the test.

On the basis of the help that he received in East Africa, Sjt. Ramnarayan has concluded that the witch of untouchability is drawing her last breath. To draw such a conclusion merely from the funds received by him is to go too far. However, many symptoms bear witness to the fact that the witch is indeed drawing her last breath. The fact that due to the efforts of Sjt. Jamnalalji, eight famous temples in Jabalpur simultaneously opened their gates to the *Antyaja* brothers and sisters and that respectable gentlemen took part in it, and that in Bombay Sheth Thakoredas Nanabhai opened the gates of the Ramchandra temple to them suggests an epoch-making reform. Some who regard themselves as orthodox Hindus are trying to carry on an agitation against these efforts. However, if the reformers are not indiscreet and if they do not give up their patience and at the same time do not abandon their task, if they do not exceed their limits, the opposition of their opponents is bound to die down.

It is easy to understand the impatience of the *Antyaja* brethren. It is but natural to feel impatient when there are no two opinions about the propriety of one's rights, and where there is a consciousness of the injustice that is being done to one. Nevertheless, where Hindus other than *Antyajas* are making constant efforts on behalf of reformers, if the *Antyajas* have forbearance, it is most likely that the desired result will be achieved sooner. It is understandable that the *Antyajas* would have to take some steps in the matter if no Hindus other than their own community lent support to their cause or that support produced no results. However, there is complete justification for patience in a situation where ceaseless efforts are being made by reformers and where we can actually see the good results achieved in Jabalpur, Bombay and other places.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-12-1929

35. THE NAVAJIVAN TRUST

The reader will recall that in the year 1919, at a time when a fierce struggle was being conducted against the Rowlatt Act, I accepted the editorship of *Young India* and *Navajivan* in deference to the wishes of Sjt. Shankerlal Banker, Sjt. Umar Sobani, Sjt. Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Sjt. Indulal Yajnik. A printing press was set up because everyone clearly felt that the periodicals could only be published in their own press. It was immediately felt that a man of determination and courage was required to run it. We supplied the requirement in bits from the Satyagraha Ashram. However, if it was to prove its worth and become self-supporting, it was necessary to get a worker who would be single-minded in his devotion to it and think only of its welfare day and night. It was not possible to spare such a person from the Ashram who would lend lustre to this post. I thought of Swami Anand and like a soldier he honoured my wishes. As a result, the press became self-sufficient and Navajivan as an institution handed over Rs. 50,000 to Sardar Vallabhbhai for public service. This cannot be regarded as a profit but rather a result of the sacrifice made by those serving on the staff of *Navajivan*. Neither Swami Anand nor any of the other principal office-bearers has accepted a salary. The entire institution has been run to date for the love of public service. Its affairs have been managed on my behalf by Swami and later by Sjt. Mohanlal who was trained by him and was his right-hand man. Everyone had concluded long ago that although this situation was unexceptionable, it could not be regarded as permanent. I had thought out the names of its trustees or guardians. However, due to some extent to laziness and to a larger extent to various other preoccupations, some time elapsed before this deed was legalized and duly registered. Owing to the grace of God and that of a lawyer friend who charged no fees, Sjt. Mohanlal and I became on the 27th relieved of the burden, having affixed our signatures.¹ What was there in the heart was transferred to the public registers. Readers will see that document along with this issue. This institution has always belonged to the reader, those who want to regard it as theirs even more may do so and cherish it as much as they wish. The junior staff of *Navajivan* may be regarding themselves as salaried employees today. It is my hope as well as that of my colleagues that tomorrow they will become its true owners. With this intention, we have bought a small plot of open land near the Sabarmati station. It is our hope that the workers will live there in fresh air, set up an ideal township, be happy, water the plant of service, enjoy its shade and pass it on in their turn to the country. The aims of the institution are all-embracing. In order to

¹ Vide "Declaration of Trust", 26-11-1929.

ensure their success, the organizers, the workers and the readers must give their full co-operation. That co-operation has been there till today more or less. I have not found it cumbersome to run this journal. I have derived immeasurable delight from the kindness of its readers and the unique loyalty of my colleagues. And from it, I have had a glimpse of swaraj and have nurtured hopes of knowing the *atman*. However, just as one who is given the support of the finger hopes for the support of the wrist, I hope for more effective co-operation from the reader. If this bears fruit, swaraj is within our grasp.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 1-12-1929

36. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

December 2, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Since you are not in the Ashram, I do not take the trouble of writing to you every day. But I see from your last letter that you have carried with you the burden of the Ashram. You should lay it aside. You have gone out on Ashram work, leaving your charge to someone else. Why, then, should you carry any burden? Let things happen as they will. We have the example of Janaka constantly before us. Gibbon's history, though beautifully written, is not true history, for it is written with external materials. It is based on imperfect events of the hour. The *Mahabharata*, on the other hand, is based on the timeless and imperishable inner experience, and therefore it alone is true history. We should not, therefore, regard Janaka's example as an ancient one, but treat it as belonging to the present time. Have faith that Krishna, Arjuna and Yudhishtira are talking about the same things and acting in the same manner today, though not under the same names. Is it not through faith that we believe in Gibbon's historical narrative, too? We have, in fact, more reliable evidence to put our faith in the stories of the *Mahabharata* than we have in Gibbon's history. If we understand this simple and plain truth, many of our problems will be solved in no time. Let us, therefore, not regard Janaka's example as a mere brinjal in a book, but believe it to be as fresh brinjal, to be plucked and eaten, as the ones growing in our field.

You will now understand that the resolutions which I have permitted to be passed, or say inspired, in your absence should not make you unhappy. You wanted a clarification of certain matters,

which I procured by patiently discussing them with others and persuading others to discuss them among themselves. Nothing more than this can be done, and nothing less could have been. The thing boils over again and again, but that can be controlled by gently blowing over the boiling liquid or adding a little water. We need not, however, remove the milk off the stove. If we are vigilant, it is not likely to get burnt or to boil and spill over. If it does despite our vigilance, the responsibility is not ours. The *Gita* is our authority for this.

You feel that some of the things are good there and bad here: this is both true and not true, more “not” than otherwise. It is but right, however, that we should magnify our defects. It is only by constantly doing that that we get the proper perspective. I, therefore, believe that you are in the right. This is my reply to your previous letters, as far as I remember their contents.

Now I shall reply to your last letter. If you keep bad health there, I cannot permit you to stay on. Your health has suffered because you have given way to false civility or shame. You ought not to eat imperfectly cooked food. If you cannot get food there according to your requirement, you should, without taking or giving offence, go outside and get what you want. This is real friendship. You cannot eat the dal prepared there; but you can easily live on milk and *roti*, with such vegetables as can be eaten raw, like tomatoes.

I want to be lodged in a tent. That is what I have told Tandonji. It will suffice if the facilities similar to those provided by Vallabhbhai in Ahmedabad are provided at Lahore. And I see from your accounts that they will be. Dr. Gopichand should remember that I shall be accompanied by quite a number of invalids. There should be sufficient space to accommodate them all. In other words, those who undertake to provide me the facilities I need should put up an ashram on a small scale. They should also put up a fencing to imprison me so that I may be protected against crowds wanting *darshan* of me. If this is done, I may not have to give nor they need take more trouble.

Everywhere we come across individual votaries of khadi such as you find there; this is a very hopeful sign. I will certainly remember about the Maganlal memorial. I doubt whether we can look after it in the Ashram. The rule that we can employ only an associate¹ comes in the way of such additions. Nor do I see anything wrong in this. If, however, you are confident enough, though knowing that we shall not get an associate, let me know. We cannot get, or use, the building meant for the doctor. I do not think, moreover, that the ground floor

¹ Gandhiji uses the English word.

is sufficient for the purpose. We have, thus, no choice but to put up a new building for the memorial. I do not think it would be improper to locate it in the Vidyapith or in Jamnalal's farm at Wardha. But I cannot come to a firm decision to that effect just now.

We need give no thought to the objections which Ratilal might raise about water, etc. He is the proprietor. But we are the trustees and, therefore, it is for us to decide independently to what extent and how to use that water. I have explained this to Ramniklal.

You are quite right in reminding me about Sind relief. The matter is not out of my mind. But we shall not have done our dharma by spending the money in a hurry. I have not advised that the money collected for the Malabar Relief Fund should be used for khadi work, but I have taken the freedom to use that money for relief work outside Malabar. The relief was carried out through khadi work, for we have accepted khadi as a means for such relief. In Malabar, much relief work was done through khadi. My conscience is clear in this matter. We have already come to a decision about Sind. It is that we should send the money when Jairamdas or Malkani asks for it. Both of them are planning to organize relief to the distressed through khadi. Malkani has plenty of money with him just now. More than half of what he had has been wasted, and he has been looking on helplessly. I forgot to mention one thing about Malabar. An alternative name for Malabar Relief [Fund] was Southern Relief [Fund]. I had, however, inserted a notice to clarify the matter in order that there might be no misconception among people. The money has been spent for relief in the South. I have not been able to decide about the Assam money. I need Satis Babu's opinion before I can do that. I have been in correspondence with him for one month.

There are two candidates for the honour; one, Dhiraj of Sylhet, and the other, Suresh of Comilla. The only thing to be considered is which of them, or whether both, should get the honour.

Let the account of overseas help stand. I explained this matter to Ramniklal long ago. I am not in a position just now to get the money from Jehangirji. However, if I do not succeed in getting it during my lifetime and if you have not written off the sum and forgotten about the account, you may be able to get the money from him even after my death. Even today, if I spend some time going after the thing, take up the issue seriously and see a lot of people, I may succeed in getting it. But I have no wish to do that at all, nor is it necessary that I should. I am convinced that this account has a claim over the money lying with Jehangirji and that is enough for me. We may get something from Birla next year, we do not know how much. If he and his firm

are safe, we are bound to get something. We should continue to give to the Labour Union what it has been receiving from this fund, as long as Anasuyabehn wishes. She is trying to make some other arrangement.

I may have to examine what look like bad debts. They should, however, be shown separately in our balance-sheet, so that no misleading impression is produced. For I remember right now one or two debts which appear to be bad and which are not likely to become good in future. For instance, Sitla Sahai's and Rupani's.

I am trying to take in Nanubhai. He came and saw me yesterday. He feels shy to live in the Ashram, and will not feel comfortable at Vijapur. He has requested to be posted elsewhere. I do not think that will be possible. I believe, however, that it will be possible to attract him to the Ashram. He asked for more time to think over the matter and went to Vijapur yesterday.

Manji's problem will give no trouble. The mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law may certainly stay as long as Gangabehn has no objection. I have dictated so far by 4.15. To do that, I got up at 2.45. I have done this not to oblige you, but to guide one through whom I have to get work done. This gives satisfaction to my soul.

When I talked to Gangabehn about Krishnamaiyadevi, she told me, "Things are going on well just now, and she has been doing good work." Mauni, too, seems to be working. So long as there is no complaint against her, nothing need be done at present.

I have had no talk with Bhansali. After he saw me in connection with Nanibehn, he has not come again, and I have not been able to go myself. But, I will have a talk with him. I do not like his children going to the Vidyapith. But I reconcile myself to the position with the thought that he lives in a certain manner as a guest. The inmates of the Mandir cannot follow his example and send their children to the Vidyapith. We should tolerate Nayan's and Rupi's going there, since they are being trained not for village-life but for city-life.

I have had a talk with Dinkarrao. I had also called a meeting of the Goshala Committee to consider the matter. I have now to draft rules for a case like his. It is enough if he agrees to observe *brahmacharya* as long as he lives in the Mandir. We or I shall lose nothing by this arrangement. We cannot say that, if a man observes *brahmacharya* for the sake of his moral well-being or service, what he does is improper or is a waste of effort. It should be enough if he does not cheat us. I am sure in my mind that most of the inmates of the Mandir are honestly doing their best. It is possible that there are some who are deceiving us. That does not diminish the value of our rules, nor prove them unnecessary. We can, however, draw this

conclusion from the presence of such persons, namely, that while the world exists, there will also be people in it who deceive others. What we have to consider is whether there are any persons who have found peace under the cool shade of these rules. The reply to this is so clear that no one can have any doubt about it. Maganlal and others came through all difficulties under the protection of the rules. Prabhudas and the other boys and Radha and the other girls are holding on because of the strength they derive from the rules. Dinkarrao does not seem to me to be a person who is likely to deceive us. However, who can ever give a guarantee about anyone? “Man commits sin against his will”¹ is a statement for ever true. I believe that Dinkarrao will keep his word. Parnerkar and the others believe it. At present we should run the dairy subject to the same rules as for the Mandir. It has not reached the stage when it can function as an independent institution. This is the independent view of those people, including Dinkarrao.

I have told them to permit old families which wish to opt out of the common kitchen to do so. Ramabehn² made a start yesterday. I immediately agreed. I complimented her in my mind for her frankness. You need not feel hurt by this, but should be pleased. I have not had a frank discussion with her. Perhaps she would not desire that.

I cannot bring myself to accept a separate kitchen for the girls. We shall know by and by what happens about this.

At present, by “the rules about the girls’ section in the Ashram” we mean Gangabehn. She may bear those other rules in her mind and manage the affairs.

Let us hope that in future we shall be able to do all these things which we cannot do now. If we fail and see our error, we shall correct it.

I look upon Shivabhai as a person with a sense of responsibility. If he falls, he will be going out of the way. Wherever people are required to obey rules, impostors have some scope. What shall we do about that? Darkness always follows the sun. Nothing remains now from your letters to be replied to.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4211

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 36

² Addressee’s wife

37. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

5.30 a.m., Silence Day, December 2, 1929

CHI. MIRA,

I am writing this after having taken the weekly silence. I have all your letters and wire. I have also your notes for *Young India*. One will appear [in] the coming issue.¹ It was crowded out this time.

That you are now keeping normal health gives me relief. I hope there will be no setback now.

Mathuradas has introduced a new method of carding. I am trying to learn it.

Dr. and Mrs. Sherwood Eddy and Mr. and Mrs. Kirkley Page are coming tomorrow. I wish you could have met them. I expect to find them extra-good.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You are likely to meet Mahadev before this reaches you. Then he will give you all the news.

I have read your two notes—railway travelling² and violence³. You have begun the second on the same sheet where the first ends. This is inconvenience for me and the compositor. A separate note should be commenced on a separate sheet. Tom-tom is a drum, a gharri is called and spelt tum-tum. The two notes will go in. In one place I have corrected what appeared to me loose thought, in another an irrelevant mention of events. You will perhaps detect both the corrections. There are a few minor ones. Though the notes are going, they are not for you up to the mark. There is ample room for improvement. Perhaps when you see yourself in cold print, you will realize it yourself. Therefore do not attempt to be regular. Concentrate on what you want to write and rewrite it ten times if you like, till at least you can say to yourself you can make no further improvement. For the time being you must write not to relieve my immediate pressure, but to replace me in future. The pressure is already removed. Valji has given me matter of which I am able to take

¹ Vide "Our Brethren the Trees", 5-12-1929.

² Vide "The Third-Class Carriage", 12-12-1929.

³ Published under the title "The Futility of Violence" in *Young India*, 19-12-1929

for the current week only one-sixth. Coomarappa's and Mahadev's contributions you have seen.

BAPU

[PPS.]

You are quite correct in having decided for yourself about Monghyr.

From the original: C.W. 5382. Courtesy: Mirabeau; also G.N. 9438

38. NOTE TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

*Silence Day [December 2, 1929]*¹

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I saw your nose bleeding. You need not feel distressed about it. Take rest for a while and sip cold water through the nose and bring it out through the throat and splash cold water over the head and at the back of it.

M.K.G.

From a photostat: C.W. 4537. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

39. LETTER TO M. J.

UDYOGA MANDIR, SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
December 2, 1929

BHAI M. J.,

If you use all your money for public good, then you have no longer a duty to give something to the sister. The lapse you committed cannot be undone. The sister has no debts to pay. The debt of which you write is an idea of the mind, and it is not possible to discharge it with money. It can be discharged partly through service to womankind.

Now about you. If you have money, why do you at all draw any money from here? A *jijnasu*² or *mumukshu*³ would never do so without good reason. This, however, is only a general observation. If Bhai Chhaganlal Joshi has committed himself to you in any way, the

¹ Inferred from the addressee's article, "Letters from Bapu", in *Incidents of Gandhiji's Life*, p. 279, wherein he writes this and another note, *vide* "Note to Reginald Reynolds", 3-12-1929 were "evidently written between Gandhiji's return to the Ashram at the end of November 1929 and his departure to Wardha." Gandhiji reached the Ashram on November 26 and left for Wardha on December 6.

² Seeker of knowledge

³ Aspirant for *moksha*, i.e., salvation

commitment is binding on the Udyoga Mandir and on me, so that either Joshi himself may decide whether the money which you are asking for should be given to you, or I may give an opinion in the matter after hearing him. If Bhai Ramniklal or Shivabhai knows the facts the matter can be settled immediately. Even though it may be possible thus to give you the money, the moral question remains unsolved for you.

Regarding your going on leave. This matter is entirely within Bhai Ramniklal's jurisdiction. If he lets you go, you may by all means go. It is certainly necessary for you to go.

I do think it wrong that you should have been given the accounts work. I do not know why it became necessary to give you that work. Generally speaking, my opinion is that, till newcomers have properly mastered the processes leading to and including spinning, no advantage should be taken of their knowledge of book-keeping, etc.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 15839

40. LETTER TO PRABHASHANKAR PATTANI

December 2, 1929

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

I got your telegrams and your letter. I have assumed that you will take what has happened as my reply to them. So thick is the jungle of work around me that I feel suffocated. Had it not been so, I would have replied to you in detail. Just now I can only tell you that I keep in mind what friends like you write to me from time to time. I assure you, however, that I shall be guided entirely by what the *atman* within tells me. Who knows if, because of my evil deeds, that inner *atman* gets frozen and quite another power begins working in its place? How can one know when the inner voice is speaking and when one or more or all of the six inner enemies are speaking? It is only after death, isn't it, that one can know it? My health is quite good. It seems you are on the whole keeping the promise to visit the Ashram once a month.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5911

41. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

Silence Day, Magshar Sud 1, 1986 [December 2, 1929]

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I did not wish to suggest that one should not write long letters even on one's birthday. Your letter is all right. I do send you my blessings. The pain is deep. But Ramanama is not meant for a boil, which can be cured with poultice. Ramanama is meant for making a bridge across the sea, for making paper boats sail, for turning stone into water and water into stone. So, you cling to it with faith and devotion. Do not worry if you can see no results on the surface. You will triumph in the end. Your letter is torn. I do not remember the questions. You find your own answers or ask again. The paper should be such that it does not get torn. I do remember one question. While uttering Ramanama, I do not concentrate on any idol. I do not worship Rama as an idol. Have you not seen that we worship the name? Tulsidas has said that the name of Rama is greater than Rama himself. In other words, the indescribable element which is beyond physical existence is greater than what resides in the body. Utter the name of God kind and do charitable deeds. The significance is not of Rama the king but of the name of Rama. Have you not seen my definition of God? Usually I had been saying and writing that God is Truth. In the new manual I have deliberately improved upon that definition and now say Truth is God. I am here thinking of that Truth which transcends even God. It is not only at prayer time that I have this realization. I may say it is in me while eating and drinking, evacuating, reading, writing this, writing other things, delivering speeches—it is there every moment. In spite of that, there is no limit to my imperfections, because the realization is only awareness; it has not permeated my being. That may not even happen during this life. However, why should I worry about it? It is within my power to make an effort. The result is in the hands of *Satyanarayana*.

This does not give you the complete answer. No matter what lustful thoughts come, it is sufficient if you do not succumb to them and are not defeated. You just sing and dance to the glory of the Lord. Do not feel distressed that lustful thoughts assail you but fight against them. The great quality of a Kshatriya is not victory but not flinching from battle. This is enough. Chhaganlal and Kashi have just arrived. They will be staying at least for two days. Do not worry about them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised the letter. I shall be going to Wardha on the 6th. Tell Devdas not to deprive me to letters.

[From Gujarati]

Ashram Bhajanono Swadhyaya, p. 253

42. NOTE TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

*Silence Day [December 3, 1929]*¹

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I am somewhat troubled about the guests who are coming today. I am most anxious that they should have the necessary creature comforts supplied to them so long as it is within our power to do so. Will you please act as co-host with Sitla Sahai and see that they do not feel strangers in a strange place?

M.K.G.

From a photostat: C.W. 4538. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

43. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

*Wednesday [December 4, 1929]*²

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I very much liked Jayaprakash's sincere letter. His frankness is remarkable. I shall be reaching Wardha on the 7th. Come over when you can. I have no time to write more today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am at the moment sitting in the gathering at Umiya's wedding.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3356

¹ *Vide* 1st footnote to "Note to Reginald Reynolds", 2-12-1929 and "Letter to Mirabehn", 2-12-1929.

² Uma was married to Shankarlal Agrawal on this date, which was a Wednesday.

44. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SABARMATI,
December 4, 1929

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I was delighted to have your letter. I cherish the wish that your marital life may be an ideal one. About Prabhavati's attitude of indifference we shall talk when we meet.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

45. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

December 4, 1929

It might be argued how do an Ashram and the performing of a marriage go together.¹ My reply is that the two are not contradictory of each other. Those who can exercise control over the self should do so; those who cannot, may marry. This is proper. None need think that those who practise self-control are pure and those who marry are all impure. It is possible that a married person may be virtuous and a bachelor a hypocrite. This is why we consider marriage desirable, although a nuisance.

In this marriage we have gone one step further. In Manilal's marriage we broke the caste barrier; in this we blast the provincial prejudices. From Gujarat we have come to Mewar. This is a good sign. This has added to our responsibility. Whichever marriage is performed here, we keep the duty aspect before us and we do it in a religious way. We adopt for ourselves a code of conduct. Considering the present conditions in these troubled times, if we can master the passion it will indeed be good. But we ought not to resort to compulsion. If, therefore, a boy or a girl so desires, a partner should be found, and they should be blessed into wedlock. This is the duty of the Ashram. So far, we have been acting on this premise and the result has not been bad. We perform the wedding without pageantry, in a short time, and with pure minds. This is a matter of joy.

This marriage was precluded by uneasiness and anxiety which have now vanished. All possible precautions were taken. The bride

¹ Shankarlal Agrawal and Umiya were married in the Ashram on this day.

and the bridegroom were both consulted. I have given importance to national interests over personal. Through this marriage one province has been drawn nearer to another. This is the first experiment.¹

You have hundred times more responsibility upon your shoulders than has Umiya. Umiya's courage has pleased me. Keep abreast of her desires and needs. In Hindu society, women have suffered in status. They are regarded as dependent. Give her freedom. You are a scout. It is the duty of a scout to give protection to others. She should not feel unhappy, but should feel that everybody holds her dear. I could not teach her enough Hindi. So put up with this. If all of us realize our duties, the difference between a Marwari and a Gujarati cannot last. Keep duty and tradition before your eyes. I advise both of you to lead a life of restraint and never forget the interests of the country.

Umiya, what should I say to you? I have not time enough to talk to you separately. You have shown courage and shed lustre on the name of the Ashram, the province and the family. Do nothing wrong. I have put small garlands around your and Shankarlal's necks. In my estimation they are big. Do not fail to read the *Gita* every day. When disappointment stares into your face, select a hymn from the *Bhajanavali* and recite it. When you have some leisure, spin on a *takli* and live peacefully. May God make you true servants and grant you a long life. Live in such a way so that I may not have cause for regret.

[From Hindi]

Bapu: Maine Kya Dekha, Kya Samjha? pp. 25-6.

46. OUR BRETHREN THE TREES²

Gandhiji wanted to card some cotton and make slivers before going to bed, even though it was getting late. I went to put the bow, etc., ready and, being in a hurry, I asked a local volunteer to fetch me from the garden some *babul* tree leaves, which one requires for applying to the gut of the bow.

The boy brought me a large bunch, and as he handed it to me, I was surprised to notice that each little leaf was tightly folded up.

I took them to Gandhiji's room. "Do you see, Bapu," I said, "the little leaves have all gone to sleep!"

"Of course," replied Gandhiji, looking up with indignation and pity in his eyes. "Trees are living beings just like ourselves. They live and breathe, they feed and drink as we do, and like us they need sleep. It is a wretched thing to go and tear the leaves off a tree at night when it is resting! And why have you

¹ The following paragraph was addressed to Shankarlal Agrawal.

² *Vide* "Letter to Mirabehn", 2-12-1929.

brought such a huge quantity? Only a few leaves were necessary. Surely you heard what I said at the meeting yesterday about the poor flowers, and how deeply it pains me that people should pluck those masses of delicate blossoms to fling in my face and hang round my neck. Was not it thoughtless to send someone out like that to worry and pain a tree at such a late hour when it had folded its leaves in sleep? We should feel a more living bond between ourselves and the rest of animate creation."

"Yes, Bapu, I know—I understand," said I, hanging my head in shame. "It was very thoughtless of me, In future I will always go myself, and I will endeavour never again unnecessarily to disturb the peaceful sleep of the trees by plucking at their foliage after dark."

And I felt doubly ashamed of myself, as many and many a time have I gained comfort and guidance from our forest brethren. Often have I put my arms round the trunk of an old mighty tree and listened to his hushed words of wisdom and peace.

How could I have been so heartless !

Let not the reader call this sentimental twaddle, or accuse me or Mirabai of hopeless inconsistency in that we swallow a camel when we eat vegetables by the cartload and strain at a gnat because we would not care to pluck a leaf from a tree having its night's rest. 'Even a butcher may be to a certain extent humane.' Because a man eats mutton, he does not slaughter a herd of sheep when they are asleep. The essence of manliness consists in showing the utmost consideration to all life, animal as well as vegetable. He who in search of pleasure shows little consideration for others is surely less than man. He is thoughtless.¹

India has cultivated no small respect for trees and other sentient beings. The poet describes Damayanti going from tree to tree in the wood bewailing her lot. For her companions, Shakuntala had trees as also the birds and beasts. The great poet, Kalidasa, tells us how her separation from them all was painful to her.

Young India, 5-12-1929 and *Navajivan*, 12-1-1930

47. ZAMINDARS AND TALUKDARS

Nothing during the recent U.P. tour pleased me more than the way in which several young zamindars and talukdars had simplified their lives and fired by patriotic zeal were easing the burden of the ryots. I had heard fearful accounts of the alleged atrocities of many zamindars and their mode of levying cesses, legal and illegal, on all conceivable occasions with the result that the ryot was reduced to serfdom pure and simple. The discovery therefore of so many young

¹ *Navajivan*, 12-1-1930, has the following additional paragraph.

talukdars was a very pleasant surprise to me.

But the improvement has to go further and be thorough. There is yet even among the best of them a wide gulf between themselves and the ryots. There is yet a great deal of patronizing and self-satisfaction over the little that has been done. The fact is that whatever may be done is no more than a belated return to the ryots of their due. The hideous caricature of varnashrama is responsible for the air of superiority that the so-called Kshatriya assumes and the status of inherited inferiority the poor ryot submissively recognizes as his deserved lot in life. If Indian society is to make real progress along peaceful lines, there must be a definite recognition on the part of the moneyed class that the ryot possesses the same soul that they do and that their wealth gives them no superiority over the poor. They must regard themselves, even as the Japanese nobles did, as trustees holding their wealth for the good of their wards, the ryots. Then they would take no more than a reasonable amount as commission for their labours. At present there is no proportion between the wholly unnecessary pomp and extravagance of the moneyed class and the squalid surroundings and the grinding pauperism of the ryots in whose midst the former are living. A model zamindar would therefore at once reduce much of the burden the ryot is now bearing, he would come in intimate touch with the ryots and know their wants and inject hope into them in the place of despair which is killing the very life out of them. He will not be satisfied with the ryots' ignorance of the laws of sanitation and hygiene. He will reduce himself to poverty in order that the ryot may have the necessities of life. He will study the economic condition of the ryots under his care, establish schools in which he will educate his own children side by side with those of the ryots. He will purify the village well and the village tank. He will teach the ryot to sweep his roads and clean his latrines by himself doing this necessary labour. He will throw open without reserve his own gardens for the unrestricted use of the ryot. He will use as hospital, school, or the like most of the unnecessary buildings which he keeps for his pleasure. If only the capitalist class will read the signs of the times, revise their notions of God-given right to all they possess, in an incredibly short space of time the seven hundred thousand dung-heaps which today pass muster as villages can be turned into abodes of peace, health and comfort. I am convinced that the capitalist, if he follows the Samurai of Japan, has nothing really to lose and everything to gain. There is no other choice than between voluntary surrender on the part of the capitalist of superfluities and consequent acquisition of the real happiness of all on the one hand, and on the other the impending chaos into which, if the capitalist does

not wake up betimes, awakened but ignorant, famishing millions will plunge the country and which not even the armed force that a powerful Government can bring into play can avert. I have hoped that India will successfully avert the disaster. The privilege I had of meeting intimately some of the young talukdars in the U.P. has strengthened the hope.

Young India, 5-12-1929

48. KHADI AND HONESTY

Sjt. C. R. Rajagopalachari sends me an interesting letter, which with the omission of personal references and one or two redundant passages I publish below:¹

. . . I admit that till now I have been indifferent regarding khadi. But I have now realized that khadi men are men who follow truth. The day before yesterday I went to Coimbatore khadi depot. . . I had with me notes of the value of Rs. 10,000 . . . which I placed . . . on the table. I quite forgot about the money and left the depot. After some time, your manager saw the money and in the hot sun came to Podanur . . . handed over the money to me . . .

This letter shows how unreasoning and illogical we are. Surely there is no necessary connection between honesty and khadi. Even rogues must cover themselves and therefore may wear khadi. I am sorry also to have to confess that not all the workers in the employ of the A.I.S.A. have always been found to be honest. Would that every one of them was incorruptible. But alas! khadi service like every other service has its black sheep. And supposing for the moment that all khadi servants were incorruptible, it is still possible for khadi to be a huge mistake or an economic waste. But I know that many have come to khadi not on the strength of its merits but on grounds irrelevant to khadi, and I knew too that some others have left off using khadi not because it is an error but because they have not liked something some khadi men have done or not done. Whilst therefore I do not mind the adventitious aid such as the possessor of the ten thousand rupees notes promises to give, khadi to be stable must stand on its own unassailable merits. These are fortunately being proved day after day.

The other reflection the foregoing letter gives rise to is somewhat humiliating. Why should anyone run into ecstasies because someone is found to possess the ordinary honesty of not stealing other people's property? Have we fallen so low that a man forgetfully leaving valuables in a shop may not feel as safe about them

¹ Only extracts are reproduced here.

as if they were in his possession? At any rate this letter has a lesson for men and women in khadi service. Their honesty may bring rich votaries to the altar of *Daridranarayana*. And He needs them all.

Young India, 5-12-1929

49. "THE STORY OF BARDOLI"

Mahadev Desai who was the literary secretary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel during the Bardoli Satyagraha campaign wrote some months ago the history of that great and eventful struggle in Gujarati. Sardar Vallabhbhai had intended that an English edition too should be published so that a wider public may be in possession of a faithful record of the events. Mahadev Desai had first-hand and intimate knowledge of most of the stirring events of those exciting times. He has now placed before the public an English edition. In view of the impending upheaval during the coming year, the book should be read by every national worker. The text covers 323 pages and including the appendices and the index extends to 363 pages. It is published by the Navajivan Press at Rs. 2/8 cardboard binding with khadi back. It contains a specially prepared map, fine illustrations and a helpful glossary.

Young India, 5-12-1929

50. OUR DELUSION

Tulsidas says:

Like the appearance of silver in conch shell
And of water in the sun's rays;
Illusions, though ever unreal,
Are impossible to remove.

Every day I experience the profound truth embodied in these lines. Any notion—whether good or evil—is hard to remove once it takes possession of one's head or heart, unless experience destroys it.

So has the delusion in the form of untouchability taken deep roots among the Hindus. Reason tells us that no one is untouchable. People have neither a name nor a definition for an untouchable. If an untouchable conceals his so-called untouchability no one, excepting a few who recognize him, will guess that he is an untouchable. That is why several 'untouchable' brothers can freely visit temples and other places.

If untouchability were a part of religion an untouchable of one province would be treated as such in every other province. In fact, however, the untouchables of Assam are not considered untouchables in Sind. The untouchables of Travancore are not treated as such anywhere else. Not a trace of the untouchability and unapproachability prevalent in Travancore is to be seen in other places.

This delusion of untouchability has assumed monstrous and terrible proportion among the Hindus. Shri Jamnalal is striving hard to eradicate it. His success in getting the temples thrown open to the untouchables is no mean achievement. Events like the opening of the eight temples to the untouchables at Jabalpur and the participation of distinguished citizens, etc., are quite hopeful signs. The best way to remove this delusion of untouchability is that those who have overcome it should by their actions convince others still labouring under it that untouchability has no connection with religion.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 5-12-1929

51. CABLE TO SAROJINI NAIDU

[Before *December 6, 1929*]¹

DEVI SAROJINI NAIDU

NAIROBI

COUNTRYMEN THERE MAY ON NO ACCOUNT COMPROMISE
NATIONAL HONOUR,

GANDHI²

From a photostat: S.N. 15518

¹ The addressee was to preside over the Congress at Nairobi beginning from December 6, 1929.

² This is followed by instructions for his secretary: "Make sure of the address".

52. TELEGRAM TO MOTILAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
December 6, 1929

PANDITJI NEHRU

LUCKNOW

YOUR WIRE¹. I CONSIDER MY PRESENCE WHOLLY
UNNECESSARY DELHI. THINK SITUATION WILL BE EN
TIRELY MET BY YOUR SEEING HIM REPLY
WARDHA IF NECESSARY.²

GANDHI

Motilal Nehru Papers, File No. G-1. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and
Library

53. LETTER TO HARDATTA SHARMA³

[Before December 7, 1929]⁴

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. The second (reason) I gave only for the sake
of completing the truth. The decisive cause was my utter inability to
do justice to anything else than the political situation that will confront
us during the Congress week.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

The Tribune, 10-12-1929

¹ Dated December 5, 1929. It read: "Your letter. Viceroy's invitation to me
personally for twentythird received through Sapru and accepted long ago. Viceroy
intended inviting you also but feared you had no time. He can now be informed you
can meet him. His object is discuss Congress view freely with us. Presence of
non-Congressmen with entirely different views will not help. I think only we two
should interview. Have therefore not wired Vithalbhai. Wire your view."

² Addressee's reply dated December 7, 1929 read: "Your wire. Think your
presence interview indispensable. Meeting Vithalbhai Delhi tomorrow night. Shall
wire."

³ In reply to addressee's request to Gandhiji to explain his inability to preside
over the Social Conference; *vide* "Telegram to Ruchiram Sahni", on or after
23-11-1929.

⁴ *The tribune* report is date-lined December 7.

54. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 7, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

We arrived here at six in the morning.

I had a frank talk with Jugatram about Tara. He is of the view that it would do Tara good if she stays on in Wardha; after she has recovered, she may resume work at Vedchhi. He will give her the work which we have thought about. After the talk, I wrote to you yesterday. I am waiting for a wire today. I enclose with this papers which should be filed with you.

Important changes have been introduced in the Ashram this time. Keep a note of them. We must have a record of lapses due to carelessness on everyone's part. Say, for instance, someone did not do his work in the kitchen in time; in such a case a note should go to the office. Even if no action is taken in the matter, the thing should not remain out of notice of the manager and the chief manager of the department concerned. The registers of all adult students, that is, of students who are above 16, should be complete so that we may know from them which of them attended prayers both times on how many days and did or neglected sacrificial spinning on which days. All of them must hand over their yarn every week. The quantity received from each should be stored separately and khadi be made from it. No one should be asked to give more than 160 rounds of yarn for this.

The work of the sanitary department must become regular. The person in charge of the department should go round all the lavatories every day. Others besides Gangabehn should learn to make bread.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a Photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4155

55. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

WARDHA,
December 7, 1929

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I shall not write much today. If you wish to come to Wardha to attend the meeting of the Spinners' Association or simply to meet me,

and if you can come, certainly do so. But you need not put yourself to trouble in order to come. I will certainly think about the Maganlal memorial. With me are Ba, Pyarelal, Kusum, Bal and Kamala. There are two others who have arrived from Banaras.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5471

56. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

WARDHA,

December 7, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I received your letter as soon as I reached here. I am very happy at your decision. It is my wish that you should stay there till June and if your health remains good, come down to Bombay when it begins to get cooler there. In any case, even there your time is not wasted. Dilip and Tara are getting physical and mental education. Almora is the Himalayas. And in the Himalayas countless sadhus have stayed. Many seekers have found self-realization there. If Tara understands this, it will also mean spiritual education for her. You are always busy doing something or other. Hence it is only desirable that you do not come down from there in a hurry.

My health is fine. Ba, Pyarelal, Kusum, Kamala and Bal are with me. Mahadev is touring in Bihar with Vallabhbhai. Ask Taramati to write to me. I am here till the 20th at least.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

TARA HOUSE

ALMORA

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

57. APPEAL TO AHMEDABAD LABOURERS

December 7, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi has issued an appeal to the workmen following the award of the Umpire, Diwan Bahadur Krishnalal Mohanlal Jhaveri, in which Mahatma Gandhi says that he is grieved, as they might have been grieved, because the Umpire has not fully accepted their demand. Their demand was perfectly proper, but after accepting the principle of arbitration they must accept the decision of the arbitrators or Umpire

whether they like it or not.

The Umpire has accepted one principle which is of great importance from the viewpoint of workers. They have been contending for years that they are not getting even a living wage which they have a right to obtain and from which there can be no reduction. The Umpire has accepted this principle. He agrees that the figures of expenditure which they have produced are legitimate and in comparison with those figures their wages are less. On this ground their demand was bound to be fully accepted. But it is their duty to be satisfied with what the Umpire has given.

This does not, however, mean that they should give up their effort to secure a living wage. That effort will continue to be made by all legitimate means and they will make that demand at the first suitable opportunity. Meanwhile it is their duty to make good use of the increase in wages which they have got by bettering themselves, by giving up their vices and by increasing their efficiency. They should thank the Umpire for the great care with which he has examined their case.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-12-1929

58. MY NOTES

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

I would like to draw the attention of readers to the appeal issued by Sardar Vallabhbhai and Kakasaheb Kalelkar on behalf of the Gujarat Vidyapith. Gujarat is not ignorant of the services rendered by the Vidyapith and the contribution made by it to the non-co-operation movement. Acharya Gidwani, Acharya Kripalani and now Kakasaheb have nurtured this plant. Gujaratis have supplied the required quantities of water to it. More water is required now. The Vidyapith, instead of pursuing a policy of accumulating wealth and building up capital, has relied on the generosity of the public. It is an institution of the people. They should water it so long as they wish. This is one of the best external methods of preserving the integrity of a public institution. Ordinarily, funds are collected from people by going from door to door. This time, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Kakasaheb have expressed a new hope. They expect the people to contribute to the best of their abilities without expecting a visit to their homes. It should not be necessary for the principal organizers to give their time to the collection of funds. Gujaratis should send their contributions, according to their capacity, for the institution which they love. It is my hope that they will fulfil the expectations of Sardar and Kakasaheb. This appeal is addressed not to Gujarat but to Gujaratis. That is to say, it is imperative for Gujaratis living outside Gujarat, whether in other provinces, in Burma, Singapore, Japan, East, South or North Africa, Mauritius, Madagascar or other countries also to send in their contributions.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1929

59. SOME SIGNIFICANT QUESTIONS

A friend has asked some significant questions with reference to the bombshell that the Viceroy has thrown in our midst, the resulting tumult and the hopes entertained in some quarters. These questions must have arisen in the minds of many others too. Hence it is necessary to some extent to express my views on them. I give below the questions and the replies.

1. What is meant by Dominion Status ? Does it imply a genuine partnership and an equal status in the British Empire, or does it mean responsible government under the leadership of the British? Does it imply the Dominion Status as understood prior to 1919 or the status as defined by the Imperial Conference of 1926?

The term Dominion Status has no definite connotation. If the terminology applicable to living beings can be applied to it, it may be said that it has not even attained maturity yet, and hence it deserves to be protected and can be made very healthy if fed on a proper diet. If the atmosphere is unfavourable, there is a possibility of its becoming pale since it happens to be delicate. And it may even be suffocated if it does not get oxygen. Hence the health and vitality of that baby depend upon the country where it is nurtured. If it happens to come to India, its development will depend upon how we look after it. Hence, in my opinion, we have little to do with the definitions given in 1919 and 1926. Its definition will be determined by our ability to obtain it. And when its precise connotation has not been defined, every person can interpret it as he chooses. My definition is this: Dominion Status implies the fullest equality and a voluntary relationship with the British Government in India which either party can freely break off with or without giving reasons for doing so. It does not exist where there is any room whatsoever for the distinction of superior and inferior. Dominion Status means independence.

2. The Indian States may, of course, be invited to the same Conference as British India. But what if the former come in the way of true independence of British India? What guarantee is there that the British Government will not side with them and prevent us from progressing by making their treaty with the Indian States a pretext? Right up to the present day, the States have been deliberately kept aloof from the political activities of British India; why is this policy being reversed today all of a sudden? Even the Butler Committee is opposed to the amalgamation of the Indian States with British India without the former's consent. Why then this sudden reversal of outlook? And what about the subjects of the Indian States? Have their representatives no place whatsoever in the forthcoming Conference?

Whether the Indian States intend to do so or not, they will certainly stand in our way if we—that is, the party demanding

swaraj—lack spirit. I myself have scented some diplomacy in the bringing of the Indian States to the forefront at this juncture. The Empire has earlier used them as pawns in their game. It seems that these pawns have been used this time. The princes are dependent on the Empire for their very existence. Hence they have no alternative but to dance to the tune of the Empire, and if we realized this we shall also know that we shall not be able to derive any advantage by maligning them. We should realize their dependence, regard them as merely the limbs of the Empire and be on our guard, and, knowing that in whatever they say or do on such an occasion they merely echo the words or the deeds of the Empire, we should concentrate our attention upon the latter alone. I entertain no fears regarding the subjects of the Indian States. So long as independence is not secured, many of the evils of the Empire will be found to be magnified in the Indian States. I cannot visualize a form of swaraj in which the Swaraj Party would have bartered away the rights of the people of the Indian States.

3. Supposing there is unanimous agreement at the Conference, does Parliament still have the authority to make changes in its decisions? It has been authoritatively proclaimed that Parliament continues to maintain its independence in this context and even the political parties in Britain are not in any way committed in this matter. Is there not then the possibility of the labours of the forthcoming Conference coming to naught? There should be some guarantee regarding this also—and that too before we agree to cooperate.

This question is an echo of our weakness. From the legal standpoint, Parliament is certainly the supreme body. It can wipe out the work of the Conference. However, there is no need to ask for any guarantee regarding the decision of the Conference, as suggested by the person who has put the question, at a conference which India will be attending by reason of its strength. Moreover, I am also of opinion that it does no credit to us to ask for such a guarantee and that no party in Britain has the right to give it.

4. Why is such great emphasis laid on the policy of 1917 and the Act of 1919? Lord Irwin claims that India will get swaraj as a matter of course according to the policy of 1917. What does the phrase “in the fulness of time” signify? Mr. Benn says, “There is no change, in substance or time, until after the Conference has met.”¹

Do they not appear to be threatening words? And, in all this, there is no reference whatever to the economic rights—economic independence— of India. According to the Congress resolution of 1922, the Indian people are not bound to pay up their national debt. Has that resolution been completely set aside? Will Haji’s Coastal Reservation Bill² also be set aside? Foreign banks have usurped many rights;

¹ The source has the passages in quotes in English.

² To reserve for Indians trade along the coastal ports

shall we ever take these into account ? These points are not included in the clarification issued by Lord Irwin; but could we, for that reason, forget them?

The fact that the Act of 1919 has been stressed gives rise to fear. And even if there is nothing to fear in it, it certainly is an ambiguous statement. It is for this very reason that the leaders who have signed it have been asked to clarify its meaning. I am not unhappy because the economic independence of India has not been mentioned in the official communication issued by Lord Irwin. Anything that does not include economic independence cannot be regarded as swaraj at all. The Congress resolution of 1922 regarding the debt has not been nullified; it still holds good and its consideration is essential in the scheme of swaraj. The same may be said of the Haji Bill and the banks. We cannot expect to find the plan for swaraj to be given in the official communication of the Viceroy. However, it should certainly be made clear that the Congress Party can attend a conference only on condition that each and every question relating to swaraj can be freely discussed there. This has not been clarified in Lord Irwin's communication and in my opinion it is the dharma not only of the Congress Party but of all other parties also to have this point clarified before attending the Conference.

Let me finally say this too. The Labour Government does have the authority but lacks the strength to utilize that authority to its fullest extent. We on our part lack the strength to get our demands accepted. Hence I entertain only a meagre hope of two parties which lack strength getting together and doing any great service to India. My inner voice tells me that if the British Labour Party really wishes to see India gain her independence, it should muster all its strength at present and then carry on a life and death struggle until this independence is achieved. We, on the other hand, should realize our want of strength and keep away from such intricate matters like conferences. However, worldly affairs are not carried on in such logical manner. Hence, we cannot suddenly turn down a hopeful proposal even if it be one from the weak Labour Party. We may attend the Conference, in fact, it should be the dharma of the satyagrahi to do so, provided conditions are granted which would ensure success and an atmosphere is created where we are assured that these will be abided by. A satyagrahi will not let go an opportunity, however small it may be, for any possible compromise.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 8-12-1929

60. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

WARDHA,
December 8, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I hope you are carrying out my suggestions to you regarding daily attendance, etc. Keep me informed from time to time how the work is going on.

Inform me about Motibehn's daily work. See that she writes her diary.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3734

61. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 8, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Anyone who has kept a regular diary for the whole year may, if he or she wishes, get that book. For the present, it will be enough if all the people start using a small notebook like the one I use. Keeping a good diary is an art, and it can be of much benefit to the person keeping it and to the Ashram. One can record one's work for the day in the fewest possible words and give a brief description of the things done.

I had sent a letter for you from Bardoli itself in regard to Tara. I had enclosed it with Apte's¹.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4156

¹ Who had come from Kolhapur to learn khadi work

62. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,

ON THE GRANT TRUNK EXPRESS,

Sunday morning, December 8, 1929

BHAISHRI...¹,

On the last day I got a long wire from Motilalji saying that he had received the invitation² for the 23rd December and that he had accepted it. He also writes that the Viceroy does not wish to meet all the leaders together, but for the present only wants to know the attitude of the Congress. That is why he has invited Motilalji. If I wished to go with him, the Viceroy would certainly invite me. In these circumstances I think it is not at all necessary for me to go.³ For the present it is best that Motilalji alone should meet him. In my opinion it will be useless for you or Mr. Jinnah to go. I think my going can only do harm.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/17

63. A LETTER

WARDHA,

December 8, 1929

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,

I hope the conference will succeed. Day by day I am being confirmed in the views I have expressed from time to time regarding the Princely States.

1. So long as we have not attained freedom, I think true reform in the Princely States is impossible.

2. The evils of the States are never going to be remedied by merely condemning them.

3. Nor is real reform going to take place so long as there is no real awakening among the subjects of the States.

4. Those who are full of anger can never offer satyagraha. Bear in mind these points during your deliberations and give them whatever importance you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/18

¹ The name is omitted in the source.

² From the Viceroy; *vide* "Telegram to Motilal Nehru", 6-12-1929.

³ Gandhiji, however, met the Viceroy on December 23, 1929; *ibid*.

64. LETTER TO V. A. SUNDARAM

WARDHA,
December 9, 1929

MY DEAR SUNDARAM,

Why do you get ill so often? I hope Baby is flourishing as well as I. You may send the bowl through someone minus the coppers. Let them multiply with you.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 3175

65. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[On or after *December 9, 1929*]¹

PRESIDENT PATEL

NEW DELHI

WROTE YOU SATURDAY.² MOTILALJI WIRES THE IS
SEEING YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15579

66. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 9, 1929

SISTERS,

When I was with you this time, there were so many things to keep me busy that I forgot to talk to you about two matters. One of

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on December 9, 1929 which read: "Anxiously awaiting your wire for writing to the Viceroy. Sapru has consented."

² Conveying the contents of this letter, the addressee wrote to the Viceroy on December 11, 1929: "Gandhi now writes to me that he has received a telegram from Motilal . . . that he (Motilal) has already received and accepted an invitation from Your Excellency to meet you on the 23rd of December and that the idea is to discuss the Congress point of view with Your Excellency with *Congressmen alone*. In these circumstances, Gandhi adds that it was wholly unnecessary for me to move in the matter. On receipt of this letter, I at once sent a copy of it to Mr. Jinnah and informed him that the arrangement had fallen through." *Vithalbhai Patel: Life and Times*, Book II, p. 1072

them came to my notice so late that there was no time then to talk about it. The other went out of my mind altogether.

I shall take up the second matter first. Our women do not let themselves be examined by [male] doctors or even be operated upon. This is a false sense of shame and has its origin in an impure state of the mind. In this matter I prefer the practice in Western countries. I do know that at times it has had undesirable consequences. When an unscrupulous doctor has a simple-minded woman patient whose passion is easily aroused, evil results have followed. But this happens all over the world in any conditions. That should not deter us from pursuing good and necessary activities. We should have confidence in ourselves. I, therefore, liked it very much that Santok got herself operated upon by Dr. Haribhai and my belief in her courage was confirmed. In Phoenix we had made this a common practice. When Devdas was born, a male doctor was in attendance. Ba had a complaint of the vaginal canal and required an operation. It was performed by a male doctor. Ba is very brave but simple about such matters. She certainly requires my presence at such times, but that is a small matter. Everyone requires a trusted person by his or her side on such occasion, and that is but right. My purpose in writing about all this is to explain to you that in the Ashram we should cultivate this type of courage and abandon false shame. Hundreds and thousands of women suffer because of such shame. We have before us Vidyavati's example. She would not let her private parts be examined even by a woman doctor. We wish to cultivate the innocence of Shukadevji. We should not, of course, pretend to have it so long as we have not succeeded in acquiring it. There are men whose passion is aroused by the mere touch of a woman, and there are, likewise, women who are aroused by the mere touch of a man. Such persons should certainly force themselves to live as untouchables, even if that means their continuing to suffer a disease. Here I have only suggested that you should give up false shame. Those who are afraid of impure feelings being aroused in them by the mere touch of a man should admit that candidly and behave with due regard to the limitations of their nature. Such a passionate nature is a kind of disease and a man or woman who suffers from it should avoid the touch of a person of the opposite sex. The disease will probably disappear in course of time.

Read this part of the letter several times and try to understand its meaning. If you do not understand it, ask me. Valjibhai, too, will explain it if you ask him. It is, of course, simple enough.

The second point arises from Umiya's wedding. Immediately after the wedding, she started wearing ornaments in her ears and nose. I did not like this at all. The giver and the receiver were both at fault.

What was done was against our practice in the Ashram. Umiya could have started wearing ornaments after she had gone to live with her husband, but the poor girl could not wait till then. I mention this incident not as a complaint, but in order to draw a lesson from it. Let no other girl follow Umiya's example. Poor Umiya, after all, has not been trained in the Ashram. Jaisukhlal has not paid sufficient attention to her. Her mother is a good-natured woman who follows tradition, good or bad. Umiya's fault, therefore, is pardonable. I have drawn Umiya's and her husband's attention to this matter. From him, she has received nothing except a small *choodi*¹. I have, however, mentioned this matter so that no man or girl who knows the rules of the Ashram may act in this manner. I also wish to draw another moral from this. Lustful men have degraded woman. They have taught her ways of dressing and behaving which might please them. They have taught her to adorn herself. Woman did not see in all this her slavery and her degradation. She, too, was attracted by lustful thoughts and, therefore, consented to get her nose and ears pierced, put on fetters on her feet and became a slave. An evil man can easily drag a woman behind him by getting hold of her nose-ring or earring. It passes my understanding how any thoughtful woman can put on such things which make them helpless. Real beauty is of the heart. Let every woman in the Ashram save herself from external adornment and resist being pierced in the nose. Is it not enough that draught animals are so pierced? It is now six o'clock and so I stop here. I remembered you so early in the morning, for I expect much from you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3711

67. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,

Silence Day, December 9, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter.

I am returning Chhaganlal's letter. His view is correct. The tannery is certainly a school. There should be no objection to its becoming self-supporting. There are many such institutions which are self-supporting, and still they are known as schools. Our aim is not trade, but research and service. If, therefore, you can save money, you should do so. Find out and send me the clause stating the circumstances under which the charges cannot be increased. Meanwhile, if this

¹ Bridal bracelet

exemption is possible, secure it.

You are not adding to my work by writing to me long letters. It was certainly necessary to write about Budhabhai.

How is it that Chimanlal's health does not improve?

I have no time now to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4157

68. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

WARDHA,

*Silence Day [December 9, 1929]*¹

CHI. GANGABEHN—ELDER,

I have your letter. I have returned it after correcting the Gujarati. Go through the corrections. You may go on writing as you can. Do not feel discouraged because of my corrections. If you go through the corrections your Gujarati will automatically improve. You must say to yourself. 'I must write correct Gujarati.'

You will have been to Bombay and met Nathji.

Chandrakanta² tell me you did permit her to come. Now her mother wishes to come. She wants to work and earn her living. She says she is good at sewing. But she does not wish to have her meals at the Ashram. I have told her that if she is skilled at serving and will give her full time to the Ashram she can have a room in Budhabhai's house. If she comes, she will have to observe all the Ashram rules and will receive Rs. 25 a pay. She may be willing to do this. She seems to be a nice and good woman. Her husband is well-to-do but he gives away all his money in charities. Let me know what you think of this.

Madhavji is expected to come with his wife. It is not possible to say no to him. His wife is an experienced lady. They have two fine children, they are like Hari and Vimala.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11267; also C. W. 8716. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

¹ From the reference to the expected arrival of Madhavji Thakkar and his wife, Mahalaxmi, who came to Wardha before December 12, 1929; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 12-12-1929.

² Cousin of Sumangal Prakash

69. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

December 9, 1929

CHI. NIMU,

I did not get any opportunity at all to talk to you to my fill. I called you to massage my legs so that I might talk to you but I was so tired that I soon fell asleep. However, I had nothing more to say about Bachu¹ than Idid. You should go out for a walk every day taking Bachu with you. You must get rid of your constipation. Bachu's health will depend on your own.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

70. LETTER TO DAHYABHAI M. PATEL

[December 10, 1929]²

BHAISHRI DAHYABHAI,

I was very unhappy to hear first from Ramjibhai and then from Thakkar Bapa that you scolded and sent back the *Antyaja* workers whom, as you knew, Thakkar Bapa had accepted. I think you have made a big mistake. Thakkar Bapa told me that you asked for his forgiveness. You should have asked forgiveness of the *Antyaja* men and women. If I am unfair to you in this, please correct me.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Your report is not to be published.

From Gujarati: C.W. 2700. Courtesy: Dahyabhai M. Patel

¹ The addressee's first child, a daughter, born in October 1929 and later named Sumitra

² From the postmark

71. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 10, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

There is no post from you today. The manager of every department should inspect it daily and should note having done so in his notebook. You should look into the notebooks when you are free from other work. If we want to remain vigilant and keep a watch over ourselves, we should never neglect such proceedings. We of all people cannot neglect them, for we have attached so much importance to this thing that we sent away Jagannath from the Ashram. We have relieved some others, too, for the same reason. I forget the names of these persons. If there is laxity in observing rules which are easy to observe and if we tolerate it, the Ashram will not only break up one day but I am sure there will also be a blot on its fair name. If deficiencies remain despite our vigilance, the world will forgive us for them. But it will have a right to censure us for what may happen through our remissness.

I have been thinking a great deal these days about such matters. I feel extremely concerned and am becoming confirmed in the views which I expressed when I was there. That is, those who regularly violate rules which are easy for all to observe should be asked to leave the Ashram or should themselves leave it. That will save us from many dangers.

Our Ashram is not an asylum for the infirm and the crippled. There grown-up men and women have come together inspired by a certain ideal. I exclude from this, but only partially, the women who have been there from the beginning. If those who have thus voluntarily come together do not observe the rules which they themselves have made and if we tolerate that, I think we are traitors to dharma and society.

If all of you in the Ashram do not know, you may know by this that Rajibehn, who lived in the Ashram for some time, died of illness in her village. Chandulal had come here and he gave me the news. She was guilty of serious lapses, but she had eaten the salt of the Ashram and it is, therefore, our duty to pay her the tribute of remembrance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4158

72. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

WARDHA,
December 11, 1929

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter. I wonder why you have not received my letters. I replied to every one of your letters. I have informed you of the date of my leaving here. At the earliest I may leave on the 20th. I have received all your letters and I was quite satisfied. With one letter I wrote, I had posted one to Jayaprakash too. Was that also lost in transit? Come as early as you can.¹

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-10: Shri Prabhavatibehnne, pp. 25-6

73. A LETTER

December 11, 1929

Your diagnosis is not correct. The men and women living in the Udyoga Mandir are very happy. They can and do laugh freely. Visitors have often expressed their happiness at seeing these people so happy. The Mandir itself is a club. There is no need for us to set up separate bodies for entertainment and recreation. We can find greater joy in doing well the work which we are doing. It is true, however, that notwithstanding the happiness we seem a little listless. But the reason for it lies in the laziness in our blood and the consequent lack of method in our work. In comparison with other institutions people notice our activity and praise it. But we recognize our failings. I am sure that they will gradually disappear. In any case do not base your pessimism on the views which I occasionally express.

It is not for me to praise such virtues as I may see in the Udyoga Mandir. On the other hand it is my duty to magnify into mountains the defects I may notice and draw your attention to them. We can never see our own faults till we so magnify them.

I think that the children somewhat lack in courtesy. But we need not be upset by this. True courtesy will develop on its own from the present lack of courtesy. We may certainly teach it. As we are teaching equality, it is bound to lead to lack of courtesy for some time. We are

¹ Here follows a note that as Gandhiji was engaged in a competition of spinning on the *takli* and the spinning-wheel, he could not sign the letter himself.

far from feeling ourselves as small as grains of sand. Hence there is no reason at all at present to fear our overdoing it. We have not yet stopped bothering about rights. There are no rights. There are only duties. If we realize that this is rightly so, true courtesy will develop in us on its own, and we shall ultimately learn to become real cyphers.

The C.I.D. is really our friend. Let it watch all our activities that it wants to.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/20

74. NOTES

ANTI-UNTOUCHABILITY CAMPAIGN

The trustees and the others concerned-in the opening to the so-called untouchables of eight temples in Jabalpur and one in Bombay¹ deserve congratulations for their timely action. By it they have rendered a service to Hinduism and India and brought fresh hope to the untouchables who had begun to show signs of impatience. It is impossible to avoid an exhibition of impatience and worse if, after having awakened them to a sense of their awful position, we do not succeed in easing it for them before it becomes too late. They must drink the ozone of freedom just as much as the so-called higher classes expect to do as a result of the mass awakening that has come into being. We Hindus may not expect freedom so long as we hold a fifth of ourselves as bondsmen unfit even to be touched and sometimes even to approach us within a certain distance or to be seen by us.

LALAJI MEMORIAL

Writing from memory on the collection for Lalaji Memorial in the U.P. I said over Rs. 30,000 was collected.² Sjt. Purushottamdas Tandon sends me a reminder and I have now the figures before me that the total collected during the tour was Rs. 42,138-8-9. This is apart from the sums collected before the tour and the sums promised during the tour but not yet realized. But whilst the actual total is more satisfactory than I had thought, my complaint that the U.P. has not done enough justice to the memory of a great patriot stands. I hope that Sjt. Tandon will undertake another collection tour and not rest till the U.P. has paid at least Rs. 1,00,000.

¹ Ramchandra temple. *Vide* "Temples for 'Untouchables'", 28-11-1929.

² *Vide* "Notes", 28-11-1929.

The Principal, Hindu College, Delhi, writes:¹

The amount actually received was duly included in the total for Delhi in the usual columns, and I am grateful for Rs. 800 now received. No doubt no mention was made in the notes even as none was made of several other important and interesting items. It was impossible to take such a detailed notice of all the events. Only the most outstanding items were selected out of the many in a crowded programme in a tour which had to be finished during half the time required for covering such a vast area as that of the United Provinces.

Young India, 12-12-1929

75. U.P. NATIONAL SERVICE

It was a happy idea of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru during my recent tour to ask for funds for forming a national service for the province. Rs. 12,036-15-9 were collected for the purpose. Though the sum is not adequate for the purpose intended, it is a goodly sum as a nucleus. The idea of having a national service is not new. Ever since 1920 it has been before the country. But Pandit Jawaharlal has given it a shape and a habitation. National work must suffer so long as we have to depend upon volunteers who give only a part of their time and that too by fits and starts. Permanent work requires permanent whole time workers. This can best be done by each province establishing its service in accordance with its needs and out of funds collected locally. Feeling hampered at every step for want of trained and tried permanent workers, Pandit Jawaharlal seized the opportunity that the tour gave him of getting funds. I hope now that no time will be lost in framing rules and inviting applications. Untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity, boycott of foreign cloth, total prohibition, national education, etc., can absorb a large number of permanent workers. Indeed our ideal should be to have at least one worker to every one of the seven hundred thousand villages. But apart from the A.I.S.A. we have hardly a worker even for every district. All the provinces will naturally watch the coming U.P. national service organization. Experience teaches that any such service to be truly national and permanent, though a creation of the Congress, must stand outside of its varying politics and must enjoy complete responsible self-government. We

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. While sending Rs. 800, as promised, the correspondent had pointed out that Gandhiji's visit to their college and the sum collected there were not mentioned in the tour account published in *Young India*.

must be able to give an absolute assurance to our workers that they will not be subject to dismissal with the annual change in the elected office-bearers of the Congress. This assurance is possible only under an autonomous board with well devised constitution.

Young India, 12-12-1929

76. THE THIRD-CLASS CARRIAGE

I was a third-class passenger from Allahabad to Patna on 20th November last. . . .

I have travelled thousands of miles in third-class carriages throughout the length and breadth of India during the last four years, and my experience is that ordeals of this kind are of common occurrence.

Such a condition of things would be utterly impossible in any well governed country.¹

Having become a Mahatma, although I have resumed third-class travelling for the past twelve months or more, my experiences of overcrowding that more than resemble Mirabai's can only date back to 1915 to 1917. These were duly recorded in the Press at the time I had gone through them. I had however flattered myself with the belief that as a consequence of these disclosures, overcrowding had been at least made bearable. But I see that I was mistaken. The railway management is no respecter of persons so far as non-Europeans or un-Anglicized Indians are concerned. For Europeans and Anglicized Indians there is no doubt more than needed comfort in third-class carriages. For the 60,17,78,000 third-class passengers who made in 1925-26 payment of Rs. 34,76,45,000 to the railways, they must be content to be 'packed like sardines' in boxes. Though they pay fares as passengers having wants of the same kind as 1st and 2nd class passengers, they are treated as if they were so many parcels to be thrown in a heap into a luggage van. If Mirabai had exercised the privilege of her colour and birth she would either not have gone through the experiences she has, or if she had, her complaint would have been heard in the proper quarters. Let the reader and the other concerned ponder over the following instructive figures for 1925-25:

	Passengers			
	1st	2nd Inter	Inter	Third
Numbers in thousands	11,69	1,04,87	1,40,09	60,17,78
Income in thousands of rupees	1,20,42	1,89,42	1,59,61	34,76,45

¹ Only extracts from Mirabehn's article are reproduced here.

But at present it is of course doubtful whether her article will have any effect on the authorities.¹

We ourselves are one of the causes of this disease. The sayings ‘Only he can sell his goods who shouts their names’ and ‘Not unless you ask will even mother serve you a helping at a meal’ are as true as they are trite and common. Our spirit of tolerance passes all limit, and the result is laziness and painful indifference. Many of the difficulties can be removed if our sense of self-respect is awakened, if we look upon it as our duty to end discomforts which it is not our duty to submit to, and if we gladly suffer the hardships which follow from our doing this duty. Passengers should refuse to go into a carriage whenever they find in it more than the lawfully fixed number. They should be prepared to run the risk of missing their train occasionally, if necessary. If after the matter has been brought to his notice a railway official does not find for the passengers the room required, I think he can be sued in a court of law. Ordinary passengers cannot take that step. They would either abuse or fight. Action which requires patience, firmness and knowledge is only for the educated and experienced passengers to undertake. Whenever they have to face such occasions they ought to take proper steps without fail.

Young India, 12-12-1929 and *Navajivan*, 19-1-1930

77. AN IMPORTANT AWARD²

The award given by the Umpire, Diwan Bahadur Krishnalal Mohanlal Jhaveri, in the matter referred to him by the unofficial permanent arbitration board appointed voluntarily by the Ahmedabad Mill-owners’ Association and the Textile Labour Union is, as the reader will recognize from the text printed elsewhere, an important document. The Umpire’s judgment is a preparation evidencing a careful study of the facts of the case and is a bold enunciation of the doctrine that when ‘the worker does not get enough wages to enable him to maintain a suitable standard of living’, ‘he can ask his employer to pay him wages which would enable him to do so.’ The contention advanced by labour for the past many years and denied by employers that it is entitled to a living wage has been wholly accepted, as I maintain it was bound to be, by the Umpire. It is also worthy of note that he has found as a matter of fact that the average earnings of families of labourers including the lowest paid and the highest paid are not more than Rs. 40 per month and the expenses not less than

¹ This and the following paragraph are from *Navajivan*, 19-1-1930.

² *Vide* “Appeal to Ahmedabad Labourers”, also “Textile Labourers’ Demand”? 15-12-1929

Rs. 50 per month. Now the matter referred to the Umpire was the demand made by labour for full restoration of the cut of 15% made in 1923 by the mill-owners in labour wages. The learned Umpire having granted the contention that labour is entitled to a living wage and that as a matter of fact Ahmedabad textile labour is not getting such a wage, it is not easy to understand why the whole of the cut has not been restored. The reader will note that even the restoration of the whole cut would not send up the wage to Rs. 50 per month. The only explanation I can discover for this discrepancy between the finding on the theory and its actual enforcement in terms of wages is that the Umpire was afraid of his own finding, or that he hesitated to condemn, even by implication, the action of the mill-owners in making the cut in 1923, and that too not by arbitration, but by an arbitrary exercise of their power to coerce labour. For whilst it is quite true that the condition of the mill industry was not as prosperous as it was in the War period, it was a period of merely less profits, not of loss and encroachment upon capital. The question of cut can occur, if at all, only when the wages are so good as to leave a margin after paying for living expenses and when the industry concerned has to face an actual deficit. But the men are wedded to the principle of arbitration and therefore they must cheerfully submit to the Umpire's decision even though they do not get the full restoration of the cut. They must thankfully accept what the Diwan Bahadur has allowed, and perseveringly and peacefully work for the balance. Indeed there can be no rest for them or the employers so long as the living wage is not actually reached and better housing and other ordinary comforts are not secured. But it will be a great gain if strikes become unnecessary and the principle of arbitration is strictly adhered to by both parties. In spite therefore of the partial failure of the men, I tender my congratulations to the Diwan Bahadur for the labour of love that he gave to the task that was entrusted to him and for the prompt and impartial manner in which he approached the difficult question referred to him by both the parties.

Young India, 12-12-1929

78. IMMORALITY IN HOLY PLACES

A resident of Banaras writes:¹

It is likely that this description is exaggerated. But after allowing for exaggerations what remains deserves to be deplored. No one should ignore these evils by saying that such immoral practices are found in the holy places of other religions as well, or in other Hindu

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the various immoral practices in Banaras, its widow-homes, orphanages etc.

places of pilgrimage. In any case, such immorality is reprehensible everywhere, and efforts must be made to remove it. The best method to remove these evils is for those who know them and regard them as reprehensible to purify their own lives and make it progressively purer every day. This is an ancient method. When *adharma* is on the increase, virtuous people practise penance. And penance means purification.

The other and modern method is to organize a movement through young men. These days young men's associations are multiplying. The spirit of service has grown and is still growing among young men. Much can be done if they take up this work. After making a list of all the temples, contacts should be developed with their custodians and priests, and all possible enquiry should be made about the temples against which there are complaints. Pilgrims and other visitors should be forewarned against these evils. Information should be collected about orphanages and other institutions. Much improvement will come out of these efforts. For immorality can thrive only in darkness, not in light.

The lives of young men who take up such work should be pure. Those who want to purify others can have no influence if they are not pure themselves.

A third possible course is to set up a committee of respectable and virtuous people and strive to reform religious places.

These three methods can be adopted simultaneously. We are disheartened at the sight of such immorality. But there is no need to lose heart. Several evils persist on account of our despondency and ignorance. We should have the faith that immorality is a transient thing and it cannot face the dynamic morality of even a few.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 12-12-1929

79. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 12, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. I am not worrying about Padma. What I have written about Budhabhai is enclosed with this. The reply which you have given to Lilabehn is correct. If she wants a separate kitchen for

her mother, she can start one in Budhabhai's house. We keep Bhansali because he is still not a person who may be described as responsible. I think it is our duty to keep him till he regains his memory. Discuss this matter with Surendra and let me know if he sees any error of reasoning in this.

Parnerkar and others came and spent a few hours here. I understand what you say about Mathuradas. He is bound to meet with difficulties.

I cannot say that I enjoy more peace here than I did there if it means that I did not enjoy peace there. What I can say is not that I had no peace there but that I did not enjoy sufficient rest there. I get plenty of it here. There is very little outdoor work and I don't have to take interest in the Ashram affairs.

Mahadev and Mirabehn are expected the day after tomorrow. Pyarali and Noorbanu were here. Madhavji and his wife Mahalakshmi have also come. There are sixteen people in the Ashram here, but at present we are as many as 32. Everyone, therefore, feels cramped for space.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4159

80. LETTER TO HEMPRABHA DAS GUPTA

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

DEAR SISTER,

How are you now? I want you to be perfectly healthy. My own health can be described as pretty good. I am taking milk, curds and fruit only, no cereals at all.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1665

81. LETTER TO MATHURADAS PURUSHOTTAM

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

CHI. MATHURADAS,

The way before you is not without thorns. Read the enclosed letter. I have also written to Ramsahai and advised him to have a talk with you. Show boundless love, keep patience and never lose hope. If you do so you are bound to win in the end. Never feel easily satisfied with your own work and always be generous in assessing another's. Bear with the imperfect work of an honest worker. With the dishonest non-co-operate. Have love for both. That is what is meant by *samabhava*. Giving bread to the hungry, but refusing food to one suffering from indigestion, as both these acts are inspired by love for the persons, such an attitude is called *samabhava* which means treating the ant and the elephant on the same footing.. Do not proceed on the belief that your new method has succeeded outright. The friction will be minimum, if you proceed by persuading and carrying with you those insisting on following the old method. Whether the method adopted is old or new, it should be followed faithfully. Write to me from time to time about the difficulties that arise. Do not feel the least embarrassed in doing so. If on any points you find my inferences based on insufficient information or mistaken, caution me about them. It may be very well to have faith in any principles which I may lay down, but the inferences which I draw from facts can never be a matter of faith, as faith has no place at all in matters belonging entirely to the field of the intellect. Do therefore correct me whenever you find me misinformed about facts and hence mistaken in my conclusions. If you follow this practice, I shall be able to write to you more freely and guide you better.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3735

82. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 13, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. It was good that you wrote to Jayantiprasad conveying permission for his wife to come. Do the same about

Vrajbandhu Mishra's wife. Do not mind if Dinkarrao's wife has left. I believe that when he is absent she will never stay there. We should unfailingly observe one rule about admitting women, and that is that a woman may be admitted only if approved by Gangabehn. Her wishes should also be respected in regard to permitting any woman to stay on as an inmate. This she has a right to demand, and more than that, I believe, she does not desire. Let me state in this connection that Chandrakanta, Sumangalprakash's cousin, has arrived here. I believe that Gangabehn has agreed to her being admitted. The managing committee, too, has given its consent. In my judgment, this girl will bring credit to the Ashram. Though she is only sixteen, she is very wise, and is firm and brave. Her intelligence, too, is sharp. Her character seems to be pure and her thoughts and aspirations are mature. Who can say, though, what kind of a woman she will grow to be? If, therefore, the matter has not been considered there, let Gangabehn think about it and then the managing committee.

The entire amount received from Delhi is to be handed over to the Spinners' Association. I suppose the money received for the Lajpat Rai [Memorial] is also being sent through the Association.

It is desirable that Chimanlal and Sharda should go out somewhere. Sharda needs some control over her. She on her own cannot exercise control over herself. She requires strict supervision. Be that as it may, it will certainly be a good thing for both of them to go out for some time. I shall write to Govind Babu.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4160

83. *LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI*

WARDHA,

December 13, 1929

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Even before I got it, I had sent off a long letter to Bhagirathji. I will spare some time, if necessary, and solve the problem. I have written to him about all the matters. I will reach Delhi on the 22nd. I will be travelling by the Grand Trunk Mail which reaches there at eleven o'clock.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI

JAMIA MILIA

KAROL BAGH

DELHI

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33002

84. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I wired you yesterday in answer to your letter that I shall be with you in Delhi on 22nd. I have since discovered that 23rd is a Monday. I do not know when the appointment with the Viceroy comes off. It must not be in the morning. If it is any time in the afternoon, there will be no difficulty. I would take silence on Sunday at about that hour. But what of our talk before the interview? My train reaches there at 11.28 a.m. If the interview takes place in the afternoon we would easily have some time on Sunday. The other way is for us to meet somewhere on the train and the third is for you to talk and for me, if I have anything to say, to put it down on paper. After all I have not much to say. At the interview you should lead. I do not know what I could say beyond reiterating the four conditions. As a matter of fact we go to listen to what H.E. has to say about our conditions. Now you will direct me.

I observe that your professional engagements keep you fully busy. I shall look forward to a fair share of the spoils. *Daridranarayana's* belly is never full.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/24

85. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

BHAISHRI VITHALBHAI,

I have your letter. So ultimately Motilalji could not go there. He has written to me saying that my presence is very necessary. I will therefore reach Delhi on the 22nd. According to Motilalji the Viceroy wants to meet the leaders of different parties separately. And he also thinks that to be the best course. I would be of only limited use in all this. Nevertheless I will go. Motilalji will have met the Viceroy by then.

Narayan-Narayan from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/23

86. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. The question itself is based on faulty reasoning. Work and rules are not two independent things, just as the elephant and the curb are not unconnected with each other. An elephant which is not properly controlled can be of no service and is actually a danger. Similarly, undisciplined work is also useless. Now tell me yourself which of the two is more important. That the number of labourers cannot be reduced and that they do not mix with us—both these are defects which it is the duty of all inmates of the Ashram to remove. If my view of the matter is correct, a rule should mean that anyone who cannot observe it should leave the Ashram. What you write about the kitchen is true. I see that our activities are increasing, but I do not feel inclined to check them since it is the same activities which are expanding. I think that work has not been properly assigned to Jethalal, Manji and Bhagwanji. At present, however, it is not my job to interfere with the running of the Ashram; my duty is to watch things and offer criticism when necessary. You are right when you say that the necessity for too many rules means that the secretary is weak. The secretary himself knows, and so do we all, that he is weak. But he will do nothing wrong knowingly. It is enough for me, and should be so for all of us, that he strives to do his best. All the questions you have asked are good. Discuss them with me when I return, and we shall then do what we can.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9497

87. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 14, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Nothing else could have been done about Lilabehn. If guests feel hurt, we are helpless in the matter. I understand your difficulty about the rules. It will be enough if you do what you can. I certainly don't like Navin and Kusum and others

being able to run away from the Ashram whenever they wish. I can see disadvantages even in the facilities provided by trains, and besides there are the well-known inconveniences obvious to all. Relations lived at distant places even when there were no trains and mail was carried by runners. But people endured their misfortunes then and did not, could not, run from one place to another for anyone's sake. Even today that is the condition of millions. The rich can run about in all manner of ways. On every occasion like the present one, it hurts me to think that we are in that category. I did not, therefore, like Ba's running up to Rasik. You can draw your conclusions from this. We cannot force our views on others in such matters. Let us know, however, that Ashram-dharma is a difficult one. As on one side the field of service expands, on another it contracts. When we cultivate spiritual bonds, the worldly bonds should progressively lose their force. This seems empty wisdom today and we do not follow it, but it is worth bearing in mind.

I understand what you say about Moti and Totaramji.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4161

88. LETTER TO RAGHUNATH

[After December 14, 1929]¹

BHAI RAGHUNATH,

I wanted to have a talk with both of you but I had not a moment to spare. And neither of you asked for it.

Do not worry over the future. The present duty well performed gives an indication of the future.

There are no objective tests of Truth. What our heart assents to is Truth. In most cases we recognize Truth; but purity of heart is essential for the correct perception of Truth. That is where the *yama*², *niyama*³ and other disciplines come in.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4215

¹ This undated letter is placed after a letter of December 14, 1929 in a series of photostat letters chronologically arranged and preserved by Ramniklal Modi

² Rules of moral discipline

³ External religious observances

89. VIDYAPITH'S APPEAL FOR FUNDS

Those who have in principle approved of the appeal made by Vallabhbhai and Kakasaheb should remember the following Latin proverb: "He who gives in time gives twice." We have the following parallel saying: "There is a great deal of merit in giving immediately." We experience every day the truth of the point underlying this saying. If a doctor or a vaid does not give timely medical help the patient will suffer and there are even cases in which the latter dies. We see every day that if anyone who is bitten by a snake is immediately given medical aid, he can be saved; if not, he dies. Although it is our dharma to feed a hungry person, he who does not do so immediately is guilty of violence towards the hungry individual. This should be regarded as holding good for all acts of philanthropy. There is no generosity in giving alms indiscriminately to anyone who begs. This may imply thoughtlessness, foolishness, or even pride. However, despite knowing that the person who begs is a worthy individual and the cause for which he begs is a deserving one, anyone who contributes his share only after the former has approached him wastes public time and forfeits his own prestige, and thereby misuses the worthiest persons belonging to the institution. Considering the Vidyapith's appeal in this light is a form of education for the people. This appeal is not addressed to people who do not approve of the Vidyapith. Its object is to point out their dharma to those who entertain no doubts regarding its usefulness or the service it has rendered and its object is also to encourage and draw those who are neutral towards it but may contribute if they come to realize its value. At this time of public awakening, no one should, as far as possible, stay neutral. Those who do not stand by their country in its hour of need also help the cause of the enemy. It is the dharma of every individual to make his choice. The Vidyapith is an institution for non-co-operation, that is, one which serves in this time of distress. Its additional advantage is that its usefulness will always endure. However, it was born in the hour of the struggle in order to assist in it. Hence it is my expectation that those who have not arrived at the conclusion that the Vidyapith is a harmful or a useless institution should come to know what it stands for, what its achievements are and what it can achieve in future. It is the dharma of such people to send in their contributions after they have known of and have been convinced about it. Contributions may be sent to the following addresses; Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj, Treasurer, 395-397, Kalbadevi Road, Bombay 2; Gujarat Vidyapith, Ahmedabad; Provincial Committee,

Ahmedabad; Navajivan Karyalaya, Ahmedabad and Udyoga Mandir, Sabarmati.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

90. A PERPLEXED HUSBAND

A perplexed husband writes:¹

I do wish to console him; but in such matters if a person does not himself find consolation, others will hardly be able to give him any. However, a person can derive some solace from an intellectual discussion. Let us, therefore, analyse the problems faced by this young husband. One can see that the power exercised by tradition lies at the root of his problems. It seems that in his heart of hearts, the husband desires to exercise the authority vested in him by virtue of his being lord and master. If this is not the case, and if the husband regards the wife as a friend, there will be no cause for despair. We reason with patience with a friend and, if he is not convinced, we neither feel disappointed nor use force. If the husband has a right to entertain any expectations of his wife, will not the latter also entertain some of the former? What do many wives who regularly go to temples to have *darshan* of God do when they do not approve of the modern habits of their reformed husbands? They would not even dare to persuade their husbands. Hence, I would first of all advise this husband and others in similar predicament deliberately to give up the right of exercising authority over their wives. In order to serve and educate their wives, they should suppress all physical desire during the period of education and later patiently explain to the latter that false superstitions, faith in the priests of temples, visits to so-called places of worship, etc., are not only futile but may also prove harmful. I have not the slightest doubt that if the husband's love is pure, the wife will surely be convinced. Mango trees do not bear fruit quickly. If a tree like the mango tree requires to be tended for a number of years, how much tender care will a woman require who is like a tree and who has been kept ignorant for so long? It has been my experience that both satisfaction and success lie in such daily care and tending. One should not give up one's efforts if, after having told a person once, the latter is still unconvinced. One should have faith that such daily care will finally lead to a change of heart. Hence I am unable to advise either

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had described the feeble understanding of his wife whom he had been forced to marry in early childhood.

that one should put up with one's lot or abandon one's wife. To try in the above manner to rectify the error made by one's parents in arranging such a marriage is a truly manly effort. It is easier to be happy by abandoning one's wife; but that is not true happiness; it is not a truly manly effort and hence it is not dharma. Anyone who is aware of the poverty-stricken state of his country does not, therefore, abandon it but, on the contrary, tries until his death to free his country from the grip of poverty, puts up with many hardships and finds happiness in doing so. Once we understand this, we shall behave towards our wives accordingly. The gentleman himself admits that there are others who are faced with the same difficulties as himself. If all such husbands abandon their wives, what will be the plight of all these women in our country? Who will look after them if not their husbands? Perplexed husbands should realize that the incompatibility that is found between husbands and wives today is also a symptom of the present plight of our country and adopt a path accordingly. Moreover, by solving such problems, they will readily learn the correct way of solving the difficulties that lie in the way of attaining swaraj and this will be an additional advantage both to themselves and to the country.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

91. MY NOTES

TRUTH BOWS BEFORE AUTHORITY

A young man writes:¹

This is a good question. Peace is possible only where truth is pursued. Truth can be returned only by truth. Just as a person who sells the most valuable object cannot expect to get something even more valuable in return, similarly, what more than truth can a truthful person expect? I do not wish to belittle Harishchandra but it is erroneous to say that he and Dharmaraja² had been unhappy. They had regarded misery as happiness, so that they welcomed that which we regard as sorrow. It is for such reasons that the poet-devotee has sung:

The path of God is the path of the courageous; here cowards have no place.

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had said that one does not get peace of mind by following the path of truth.

² Yudhishtira, eldest of the Pandava brothers

Just as the sun radiates heat and also sustains life so does truth. If the sun stops radiating heat even for a fraction of a second, this universe will become lifeless; a similar result will follow if the sun in the form of truth ceases to radiate heat even for a moment. It is a fact that we come across untruth in the world, but that is like the dross within coming out. We should never be oblivious of the fact that crores of individuals by their very nature employ truth. My own experience, without exception, suggests that no one has been able to misuse till the end whatever purity there may be in me. As against this, those who have come forward to misuse my single-minded devotion to truth have suffered loss of prestige and even much else besides. I have had to face difficulties for the sake of my adherence to truth in thought, word and deed, but I have never suffered on that account. I have derived only total happiness and peace from it. I have put before the world an instance of my untruth. So long as it was within me, it was eating me up. I gained peace only when I purified myself by ridding myself of it. I can also recall many other similar instances in my own life. So far as I am aware the world has accepted that the satyagraha in South Africa ended in nothing but triumph. It appears that the gentleman who has raised the above question has no knowledge of the events in South Africa. The experience of the world as well as my own teaches me that it is incorrect to hold that truth bows before authority. On the contrary, the latter has always to remain a servant of the former.

KHADI CATALOGUE¹

I would request all lovers of khadi to obtain a copy of the catalogue issued by Shri Vithaldas Jerajani as a supplement to the *Khadi Bulletin* on the 1st of this month—(December). This catalogue is a new edition of the original one. Just as a great deal of improvement can be found in the new one as compared to the old one, similar is the case of khadi too. Beautiful new illustrations have been included in the new edition. We also find here descriptions given of a shopping-bag, a school-bag, a Bardoli-bag and a Burma-bag. The illustrations regarding the incorrect and correct methods of washing a khadi-cap are worth seeing. By following the correct method its life can be increased and it will always maintain its proper shape. If anyone who wears a khadi-cap does not keep it clean and allows it to become dirty, his own prestige as well as that of khadi will suffer. On looking at the picture it becomes quite obvious that to wash a khadi cap is a very simple matter. While on the subject of khadicaps, let me

¹ A shorter note on the subject appeared in *Young India*, 21-11-1929; vide "Illustrated Khadi Catalogue", 21-11-1929.

also add that I find the method discovered by Sjt. Dayalji, which consists in making as and when necessary a cap from the required length of khadi without sewing it up, to be the best one. I have requested that a description of it be given in the next issue of the catalogue. Moreover, this would facilitate washing and save on tailoring charges. However, the most attractive part of this catalogue is the assurance given in it. I give it below:¹

The guarantee given here is not a false one as in the case of guarantees carried in many advertisements. I know of cases where people have been refunded the amount when khadi was purchased in this manner. Apart from this, many other informative items worth knowing will be found in this catalogue, e.g., the method of making old Kashmiri cloth look like new. Such other informative items and hints regarding the washing of woollen clothes and the method of preserving them will be found in this catalogue.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

92. TEXTILE LABOURERS' DEMAND

I am both grieved and surprised that the Umpire, Sjt. Krishnalal Jhaveri, has been unable fully to accept the demands of the textile mill workers. I am grieved at their non-acceptance, as I continue to hold the opinion that their demands should have been fully accepted and I am surprised as I do not find any reasons for their non-acceptance in the verdict of the Umpire. However, the Umpire has fully accepted the principle put forward by the Majoor Mahajan, namely, that labourers have the right to receive and demand wages which are needed for their livelihood. Moreover, he has also accepted the figures given by the Majoor Mahajan. Sjt. Krishnalal Jhaveri states that the average monthly income of a labourer's family does not exceed Rs. 4D, while his expenditure does not fall below Rs. 50. He also admits that in the figures of expenditure given by the Majoor Mahajan, some necessary items of expenditure such as those involved in ceremonies concerned with birth and death have not been included. Moreover, the Umpire admits that the mills have suffered no loss of capital.

In my opinion, any amount that has to be withdrawn from the capital should be regarded as a loss. No loss is incurred if there is less profit. A fall in profits should never be a reason for decrease in labourers' wages. Such a situation can arise only when labourers

¹ This is not translated here.

become owners in the same manner and to the same extent as shareholders. If we are not narrow-minded, we shall immediately realize that labourers should have a greater right to ownership than shareholders. All that shareholders do is to pay money whereas a labourer contributes the sweat of his brow every day and, if he happens to be a loyal worker, will not desert his work at all. A mill can be run without shareholders but it is impossible to run it without labourers. Someone may say that as the labourer is not an intelligent person, the mill will be ruined if he becomes its owner. This contention also is without any foundation. All shareholders are not intelligent persons. No one examines their hearts and their heads. Nevertheless, they have a right to vote, and the mills continue to function. In my opinion, they will function better if the labourers are given ownership rights. The experience of certain multi-millionaires in the United States of America who are experimenting on these lines lends support to my views. If labourers are given wages which exceed their bare cost of living and provide room for improving or bettering their condition, one can certainly conceive of situations in which they can be reduced. Just as it will be regarded as improper to touch the capital of the capitalists, similarly it is improper to touch the wages of the labourers which barely provide them with a livelihood. A happy state of affairs will be the one in which an arbitrating body will annually determine the wages sufficient to cover the cost of living in accordance with the price of foodgrains, and just as shareholders receive dividends, labourers should, similarly and in the same proportion, receive an increase in wages every year. I would regard it as wholly proper that this increment should vary in proportion to an increase or decrease in dividends. However, here I have digressed from the original subject-matter.

The Umpire has arrived at the conclusion that the mills are making larger profits than they did in 1923. Hence not a single valid reason can be found for not making good the percentage of the wages that was cut in 1923. Yes, the Umpire has indeed made one observation. He has stated that it was not fair to have regarded the cut effected in 1923 as improper. At that time, the mills were in a condition much worse than that during the War. That has not been repudiated on behalf of the labourers. However, during that year the mills did not have to draw upon their capital. Just because conditions prevailing in a particular mill may be proved to have been so bad, the same cannot be said to hold good of the industry as a whole. Hence, in my humble opinion, there was no reason for the Umpire not to have resolved to restore in full the fifteen per cent cut after having accepted the principle that wages should be sufficient to cover the cost

of living and concluded that the wages paid fell short of this. We should bear in mind that even if the fifteen per cent cut is fully restored, the emoluments will not amount to a living wage. The Majoor Mahajan has shown good sense in not demanding a living wage for the present.

Although I believe that full justice has not been done to labour, I have nothing but congratulations to offer to Sj Krishnalal Jhaveri. The labours that he put into this task were in an honorary capacity. And yet he exerted himself to the maximum. He examined the entire case carefully, there has not been a single day's delay on his part, and his efforts have left on me an impression of nothing but impartiality. In other words, he has dispensed nothing but what he has regarded as justice. None can expect more than this. It is beyond the capacity of human beings to satisfy everyone equally. All that we can do is to make an attempt to do so, and we can clearly see an attempt in this direction in the award of the Umpire.

Hence, the labourers have done well in gratefully accepting the decision of the Umpire. I have already indicated in the leaflet¹ addressed specially to them what their duty is. As the Umpire's award has been acceptable to both the mill-owners and the Majoor Mahajan, it is the dharma of both the parties to honour it fully in thought, word and deed.

I would, therefore, like to congratulate the mill-owners on having resolved to accept the award of the Umpire. I find that they have expressed dissatisfaction. I do not understand this. I am also unable to understand how this will have an adverse effect on the textile industry. Even if the mill-owners agree in principle to wages being equal to the cost of living—and they are, in fact, bound to do so—they should be happy realizing that they have been saved a sum of about Rs. 20 lakhs. And they should make preparations right from today to increase the wages at the first and earliest opportunity so that they are sufficient to meet the cost of living. They should realize that a demand from labour for an increase to that extent is bound to come up at the proper time. It would redound to their credit if they agreed to the increase and offered the increased amount even before it was demanded. If the figures arrived at by the Umpire, viz., Rs. 40 as the average wage and Rs. 50 as the average expenditure, are not acceptable to them, it is their duty to go deeper into the matter and examine these figures. If they take the very first step rather unwillingly, the gap between the two sides will widen instead of the friendship between them increasing as it should do.

¹ Vide "Appeal to Ahmedabad Labourers", 7-12-1929.

An acceptance of the principle of arbitration should lead to an increase in friendship and mutual confidence. And in order to foster them, both the parties should implement the award of the Umpire not by harbouring any secret grievance but wholeheartedly. If the labourers are careless even to the smallest extent in this matter, they should correct their attitude. It is a publicly known fact that the mill-owners have been indifferent to this. Although they have agreed to make provision for water, overhead cover, etc., nothing has yet been done in these matters in many mills. Although there are awards relating to such matters already given by arbitration boards, the capitalists display an attitude of unconcern. I hope that these drawbacks will be rectified in good time.

There is another matter which needs to be resolved without any delay. Both Sheth Mangaldas and I are fit to retire. I see old age approaching me, hence I conclude the same about my colleague as well. I now see the necessity to appoint other arbitrators. As I have to do a lot of touring, Sheth Mangaldas, the mill-owners, and the Majoor Mahajan have been kind enough to meet my convenience. I also had to ask the Umpire to grant me that concession. So far as I was concerned, this was indeed a pitiable condition for me to be in. I am aware that it was my dharma to suit the convenience of the Umpire and go wherever he happened to be; but he realized my awkward position and himself bore the inconvenience. However, this cannot be done every day. Even the petty grievances of labourers should be heard regularly and immediately. And for this purpose, there certainly ought to be local arbitrators. The already existing board may be continued for the sake of formality or as a court of appeal. It is not even necessary that two persons should be present. It should not be difficult to find a single, impartial person from Ahmedabad. I believe that it is better to appoint somebody on a salaried basis if a man or woman cannot be found who can devote this amount of time in an honorary capacity. I do not believe that it is essential to have only a man as an arbitrator. Fortunately for Ahmedabad, we have such educated women here who have the capacity to serve, who can remain impartial, and can understand the problems. I believe that one of them can easily be chosen. At the moment, I put all this by way of a suggestion before both the parties. So far as the industry in India is concerned, Ahmedabad is second only to Bombay. Hence, if the industry in Ahmedabad is put on a stable basis, if a healthy relationship can be established between capital and labour, between owners and workers, it will be worthy of imitation by the whole of

India. It is the mill-owners who have to play the principal role in this matter. Will they do so?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

93. *PLIGHT OF WOMEN*

A gentleman from Kathiawar who has given his name and address has given some account of the plight of two women. I abridge his letter as follows:¹

So many details have been included in this that there is no danger of any exaggeration. It is an important question as to what women who are in such a pitiable plight should do. In a majority of cases, such women are in a sense helpless, that is to say, they are not aware of their own rights, and even if they are, they do not know what can be done in the matter. Perhaps even if they knew what was to be done, they are unable to do it. Hence they can be saved only if their relatives and friends help them. The article² to which the above correspondent has referred is meant for intelligent and brave women. So far as these two women are concerned, legal assistance should be enlisted and local public opinion should be cultivated, if possible. There is no need to be awed by wealth or the power of the authorities. There are at present in Gujarat ashrams for women which offer shelter to such women. These two should be taken there, educated and an attempt made to make them self-supporting too. Very often, such injustices are shielded for fear of public criticism. I regard this as unnecessary and improper. Many unjust and immoral acts cease being perpetrated once they become known.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

94. *INCORRECT NEWS*

A reader of *Navajivan* has sent the following cutting from a magazine and writes:³

¹ This is not translated here. The correspondent had described the plight of two deserted wives. For a contradiction of this, *vide* "To Contributors and Correspondents", 23-2-1930.

² *Vide* "Position of Women", 17-10-1929.

³ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to comment on the report that Kasturba touched the feet of holy men.

Although, both my wife and I belong to the Vaishnava sect ever since we entered public life, that is, for about thirty-five years now, neither of us has the slightest recollection of my wife ever having gone for *darshan* of a maharaj¹. I fail to understand how the writer could have gathered the courage to publish such news. I myself do not have faith in touching anyone's feet. Even if this sentiment is worth nurturing, it will only be worthy of those individuals who are known for their integrity and character. I have never been able to convince myself that all persons born in the family of traditional maharajs are like gurus.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

95. TO WEARERS OF FINE KHADI

I am very sorry to say that a good deal of deceit is being practised with regard to the fine khadi from Andhra which has become famous. Just as the priests in temples are not afraid of stealing the temple property, the custodians of the poor do not hesitate to misuse khadi which is like God's blessings to the poor. They are not ashamed to sell fine cloth made of foreign yarn by passing it off as khadi. The Charkha Sangh has taken drastic measures after this fact came to its notice. However, it is necessary for those who wear fine khadi to help the Charkha Sangh. They should not even touch a bolt of khadi which does not bear the stamp of the Charkha Sangh or one which has not come from a bhandar that has been certified by the Sangh. Those who wish to obtain a list of certified bhandars can do so by sending a one-anna stamp to the Secretary of the Charkha Sangh. It is the dharma of those who wish to wear pure but fine khadi to take this trouble. Those who do not wear khadi for the sake of outward show but for the sake of swaraj and for the sake of those who are dying of starvation should not rest satisfied until they have convinced themselves of its genuineness. Such men and women should also make themselves familiar with the method of discerning genuine khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

¹ Priest of a temple

96. DISEASES IN VILLAGES¹

In the consideration of public education, knowledge of the alphabet takes a subordinate place. It can be said that knowledge of the alphabet has no place at all among the important aspects of life. *Moksha* is for us the final state to be desired. Who will deny that knowledge of the alphabet is not necessary for *moksha* here and hereafter ? If we have to wait until crores of people have gained a knowledge of the alphabet in order to win swaraj, attainment of the latter will become almost an impossibility. Moreover, no one has claimed that the great teachers of the world like Jesus Christ had this knowledge.

Knowledge of the alphabet has been given the least important place in this series of articles. It is a means and not an end. It is a well-known fact that as a means it is very useful. However, when considering the type of knowledge that is required for crores of farmers who are engaged in their occupations and have reached a mature age, we find that there is much else that they should be taught before being given a knowledge of the alphabet. We find the same thing in Mr. Brayne's book from which I have given summaries of some parts.

We have already considered the sanitation of villages from this standpoint. Farmers can readily acquire a knowledge of the improvements mentioned in the earlier chapters. It is the dearth of good volunteers and the lethargy of farmers that come in the way of their acquiring this knowledge.

Today we shall consider diseases which are commonly found in villages. It has been the experience of all my colleagues who have lived in villages that fever, constipation and boils are the most common ailments. There are many other diseases, but they need not be considered at the present moment. The above three are the ones that come in the way of the farmer carrying on his profession. It is very necessary for him to know the household remedies for them. By ignoring these complaints, we suffer a loss of crores of rupees. And yet these maladies can be cured very easily. The eradication of these ailments was of course included in the work that was begun in Champaran under the supervision of the late Dr. Dev. The volunteers there had no more than three medicines with them. Later experience also leads to the same conclusion. However, this series of articles does not envisage a knowledge of how those

¹ This appeared in *Shikshan ane Sahitya* supplement.

treatments are to be carried out. That is a separate and interesting subject. What is to be pointed out here is that the farmers should be taught how to treat these three ailments in a scientific way and that this is an easy task. If sanitary conditions are maintained in the villages, some diseases will just not occur. And every vaidya knows that prevention is the best cure. Constipation can be prevented if one can prevent indigestion, fevers are prevented if the atmosphere of the village is kept free from pollution. Boils can be prevented if the water in the village is kept clean and if one takes bath with clean water daily. Fasting is the best remedy if any of these three ailments occurs and a hip-bath and sun-bath are useful aids during fasting. This has been discussed in detail in “General Knowledge About Health”. I would request every volunteer to go through it.

I find everywhere a feeling that a village should have a hospital, if not that, at least a dispensary. I have, however, not seen the need for it at all. It would be nice if such an institution existed in the vicinity of several villages. However, this is a matter that does not deserve to be given much importance. Wherever there is a hospital, it is bound to be filled up with patients. From this, it should not be concluded that it would be a great boon to the villagers if there were seven lakh hospitals in the seven lakh villages. The village school should serve as a dispensary, and its reading-room should also be located there. Diseases are there in every village, a reading-room should be there in every village and a school is also needed there; but if one thinks of having separate buildings for each of these three institutions, one will realize that taking all the villages into consideration crores of rupees will be required for it and also it will take a long time. Hence, while considering the problem of public education and village improvement, there is no alternative for us but to keep the country's extreme poverty in mind.

Had we not borrowed our ideas on such matters from a nation which has enriched itself by robbing foreign countries and, had there been a true awakening amongst us, the face of our villages would have altered long ago.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 15-12-1929

97. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 15, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

After reading the *Ashram Samachar* I had asked you to write about certain matters; I had the news concerning them read out to me yesterday. The note about the changes is a good one. I see from the news that Velanbehn has started a separate kitchen. All right.

Mirabehn has arrived. Prabhavati is likely to come, accompanied by her husband and Mahadev.

A Marwari merchant who sells pure ghee in Bombay was here. He sells cow's ghee too. The rate is one and a quarter rupees for a pound, but he promised to sell it to us at one rupee a pound whenever we required it. His name is Khemraj Agrawal. Address: 192 Kalbadevi Road, Bombay. He is known as 'ghee merchant'. I have sent these particulars for your information thinking that they may be useful to us when we need it.

I dictated the foregoing after the morning prayer. I have now received today's mail, which contains a letter from you too. Did I write to you and tell you that Madhavji and his wife are here? Pyarali and Noorbanu also are here. I think it is necessary to note in the diary particulars about every kind of work done. If, however, someone does not wish to write about work done in addition to eight hours' work or about social duties outside the Ashram, we cannot force him or her to do so. I would, however, say that such a person does not even know how to think. However, this is only about khadi students. You and I can claim no hour as private. To keep aside an hour as private or to think a private thought is certainly as much personal possession as money can be, but it can be personal possession of even a worse kind. Frightful instances of this occur to me even as I dictate this. Really speaking, the diary should contain notes about everything done from four in the morning to eight in the evening. If it is a sacred duty for the Ashram to maintain a daily cash account, it is equally a sacred duty for all to maintain a diary. Metal is not the real money; time is. The Lord has said: "Of reckoners, I am Time"¹ and he who does not keep an account of his time is a prince

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, X. 30

among deceivers.

Perhaps I too would not understand the meaning of the sentence: “We should tell anyone who does not attend prayers—if you do not come, leave the Ashram.” But what I wished to say was this: “We should tell those who have agreed to join in prayers or any other compulsory duties and yet do not take part in them, that they should leave, for if they break their word in one respect they are likely to do so in other matters too.” Is not this as clear as light? But you will not be able to carry out this all at once, even after you have realized the necessity of observing rules, for we have been lax for quite a long time. At present, therefore, you should merely wake up the people. After I return, I shall, if all of you agree, take upon myself the responsibility of acting upon my suggestion.

It is not as if I do not understand Tara’s love for me even in her refusal to come. I have a beautiful letter today from her too.

I can readily say what lesson we as a body can take from the Ashram at Wardha. The peace, the respect for rules and the sacrificial work done here have appealed to me very much. By peace I mean absence of noise. Respect for rules means doing everything, from prayer onwards, at the fixed time so that the outward life of the Ashram may go on in an orderly manner. In the sacrificial work, everyone is bound to spin yarn of not less than 30 counts. A sari of eight and a quarter yards length and fifty [inches] width has just been made. The Ashram inmates themselves wove it. Weaving it took 24 hours. The yarn is excellent. All cloth of such fine count is sold. The inmates of the Ashram themselves do not wear khadi of more than eight or ten counts. Since all work is done according to rules, I don’t see anyone who worries. One of the reasons for this condition here is of course that the number of inmates is small. I have merely replied to your question.

I send with this letters received from Umiya and her husband. They should be read out without fail at the women’s prayer meeting. Convey the news to others.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4162

98. *LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJEE*

WARDHA,
December 16, 1929

DEAR RAMANAND BABU¹,

I received your letter of 26th November only today. You want me to give you 1000 words. It is like drawing 1000 live teeth at present. And you wanted this for your Xmas number. Does it not mean I am too late? But if I am not, to find time for writing out something of the size you want, is physically impossible. Every minute is premortgaged.

I have forgotten all about the promise but I would gladly fulfil it if you can wait and send me a reminder, if you find that I am still not resting somewhere near Yeravda in January.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9282. Courtesy: Santadevi

99. *LETTER TO K. S. NARAYANA IYER*

WARDHA,
December 16, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

In wishing the Conference success I do hope that Travancore will wipe out the curse of untouchability and unapproachability and the like.

Yours,

K. S. NARAYANA IYER
THE ALL-INDIA HUMANITARIAN CONF[ERENCE]
TRIVANDRUM

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/27

¹ Editor, *Modern Review*, Calcutta

100. LETTER TO V. THARAI SWAMY PILLAI

WARDHA,
December 16, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

I am sorry I have not been able to overtake your letter earlier.
My message is:

In all you do always think of the old country and her starving millions.

Yours,

V. THARAI SWAMY PILLAI
'ALCOVE', TURRET ROAD
COLOMBO

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/25

101. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [December 16, 1929]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have received both your letter. Do not mind if your language is not grammatically correct. If the grammar of thought is correct, what need for the grammar of words? None the less, practice will improve the grammar of words too.

I do not feel embarrassed to address some women as '*Chi.*' in spite of their being grown up in age. As you made me feel like this towards you, I found it natural to use '*Chi.*' in addressing you. I am returning one letter of yours after correcting it. I would correct even more if I had the time. Do not be disheartened by my corrections. One who has made herself as daughter to another should not feel ashamed on any defect of hers being known to the latter. One who is ashamed of his or her defect being known cannot overcome it.

Make your body strong and sturdy.

Janakibehn expects you to come here after the condition of your vow is fulfilled.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11268

¹ From the contents this letter appears to have been written after the letter to the addressee dated December 9, 1929. The first silence day after this date fell on December 16.

102. LETTER TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

Monday [December 16, 1929]¹

CHI. VITHALBHAI,

Many telegrams have been exchanged since your letter and there is therefore no need to write anything. I am now only waiting for the wire from Delhi. I shall leave for Delhi after I get it. If I do start I will reach there on the evening of the 21st². You are of course dragging me there, but I do not know what I shall be able to do at present.

I am returning the letter you had asked for. I have not shown your letters to anyone to read; but I had to give the substance to my associates. It is for you to decide whether by doing that I have disobeyed your order.

So far everybody has been acquitting himself creditably.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

[PS.]

I have just received the wire from the Viceroy. I will reach Delhi on the 21st.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: Vithalbhai Patel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

103. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

WARDHA,
Silence Day, December 16, 1929

SISTERS,

Having written to you a sufficiently long letter last time, I wish to be brief today. I have many other letters to write, and the time at my disposal is up. I may write about all manner of things, but you may accept from my letters only that which you can digest. You can leave the rest. Strive hard to act upon what you understand and accept.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3713

¹ From the contents

² The source has "1st", which could be the result of some confusion in deciphering, for the letter is clearly concerned, with the meeting with the Viceroy on the 23rd; *vide* also "Speech at Khadi and Village Industries Exhibition, Lucknow", 28-3-1936.

104. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

Silence Day, December 16, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Tell Budhabhai that he can certainly make in the document the change which he suggests. I shall see Chhotubhai when he comes.

My view about [attendance at] prayers will be clear from what I wrote yesterday. If Mathew has a religious objection, we may respect it, though, according to the rule, such persons too should remain present. My attitude, however, is that those who have accepted the rule should not remain absent.

I have already informed you that Madhavji and his wife are here. They are thinking of renouncing everything and devoting themselves to service. For the present, they wish to join the Ashram to get some experience. I believe that, if they come, we should permit them. I have said this in my letter to Gangabehn. You and the managing committee should also think about this. I think the husband and the wife are good in every way and have respect for rules.

The question about Chandrakanta's mother is altogether different. She is a capable lady. I have no time just now to go into the whole case. She will probably be reluctant for some time to have meals in the common kitchen. She wants to be selfsupporting and live near her daughter. I have told her that she should give all her time to the Ashram and do the work assigned to her, and that she will be paid Rs. 25. She will have to live in a room in Budhabhai's house and cook her meals there. She will probably accept this suggestion. She says that she knows tailoring well. I think, if she does work of that type, she will not be a burden on us. If, in addition, she observes the other rules, I think there should be no difficulty in permitting her to stay with us. Think about this case too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4163

105. LETTER TO M

December 16, 1929

BHAI M,

If you do everything thoroughly, after careful thinking, the next steps will suggest themselves to you and you will find contentment.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4216

106. LETTER TO M

December 16, 1929

CHI. M,

It is not wrong to refuse to undertake a task, but it is altogether wrong to leave off a task once begun. Now that you have vowed to write the diary, it should not be discontinued. As spinning is a sacrificial activity for us, we ought to learn it properly. Write to me from time to time.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4217

107. LETTER TO C. RAMALINGA REDDY

WARDHA,
December 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

My recollection is that Deshbandhu did insist on the release of prisoners but he was satisfied even if the Fatwah prisoners were excluded. This time we have to mount many steps before we come to the question of release.

Your sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. R. REDDY
VICE-CHANCELLOR
ANDHRA UNIVERSITY
BEZWADA

From a copy : C. W. 11337. Courtesy : Dr. N. Rama Murthy and C. A. Reddi

108. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 17, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter. Let all the people think further, and afresh too, about the note which I dictated. We shall think about it again when I return there in January. In the mean time, it is necessary that everyone should think about it from his or her own point of view.

I do not mind the permission which has been given to Santok to cook her meals in a separate kitchen. I have adopted a neutral attitude in this matter. I shall be satisfied if we do not go down further still. I understand the suggestion about going to Wardha too, and have agreed with it. I do not remember about Calcutta, nor do I wish to. I shall, however, think about the matter when I go over there. I shall not let it happen that you are obliged to take the responsibility upon yourself.

The Ramachandra lift has tried our patience well enough. The *Gita* is almost finished. I intend to leave this place after I have completed it and dispatched the proofs from here.

Jawaharlal Nehru arrived today. He will be here for two days.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4164

109. A LETTER

WARDHA,
December 17, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

My recollection is that Deshbandhu⁴ did insist on the release of prisoners but he was satisfied even if the Fatwa prisoners were excluded. This time we have to mount many steps before we come to the question of release.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/29

110. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 18, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have been trying to come into close contact with Bhai Madhavji. I have formed a good opinion about the couple and have high hopes of them. They have been voluntarily observing complete *brahmacharya* for a year and a half. The desire for service has awakened in Madhavji for quite some years. He is full of enthusiasm. He is a capable businessman and we shall, therefore, be able to utilize his ability. I have advised him to understand the work of all the departments. My advice to you is that you should give him work so that he should at any rate become proficient in all the processes up to spinning. He will require agricultural work for at least some time daily. I also believe that he will be able to look after the store. And he is bound to know bookkeeping. His wife is a fine woman, but how she acquits herself there the future alone will show.

Chandrakanta and her mother are-getting ready. Now the mother, too, has agreed to take her meals in the common kitchen, so that there will be no problem of a separate kitchen for her and of paying a salary to her. I had a letter from Chandrakanta, which I am sending with this to be filed. I will send. her mother's letter too.

I will leave this place on the 21st., 22-23 in Delhi and 24 in Lahore. Letters intended to reach me on 22-23 should be addressed C/o Lakshminarayan Gadodia. You should get this letter on the 20th.

Post letters on that date to Delhi, as also on the 21st. From the 22nd onwards, to Lahore.

Do not mind if Lilabehn has started cooking her meals in Budhabhai's house. I believe that Bhansali will certainly not stay on after he has recovered. Since Lilabehn has started cooking separately, I should not be surprised if he goes and lives in Budhabhai's house.

I did not see any letter from Ayodhyaprasad. Carry out what you have suggested about him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4165

111. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

WARDHA,
December 18, 1929

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I am glad that you have come home. Manilal will certainly go to Lahore. As for Sushila, Ramdas says in his letter that Ba desires that she may also be permitted to go. I am certainly not against her going. I have merely given advice. Ba believes that Sushila may wish to see the Congress session. If this is true and she wishes to go, she may do so provided Sita's health is all right and Sushila herself has regained her physical strength. In short, you two are no longer children; you are grown-up persons and free to decide for yourselves. That you nevertheless ask my permission is an act of courtesy on your part and a voluntary limitation of your freedom out of respect for me. I, therefore, wish only that you may do as you both like.

Whether Manilal ought to return within four months, we shall discuss when we meet.

I have decided to return to the Ashram before January 11.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4764

112. A MILITARY PROGRAMME¹

George Joseph has been one of my dearest comrades. When I was having rest in Yeravda, he was editor of *Young India*. Before that at my instance he was editor of the now defunct *Independent*. He had sacrificed a lucrative practice for the sake of the country. He went to jail for the same cause. He is an earnest and honest worker. He is therefore entitled to a respectful hearing, the more so when such a man differs from you and rejecting the old recommends with the fervour of a convert the adoption of a new policy. George Joseph has done it. One of his old associates sends a cutting from a newspaper containing Joseph's enunciation of his new policy and marks it 'George Joseph's confession of faith'. Another man, an unknown admirer of George Joseph, copies out from the report the whole of his

¹ Another article on the subject appeared in *Navajivan*, 29-12-1929 under the title "Khadi v. Khaki".

criticism of the khadi programme. He writes in a most distracted mood and insists that I must take notice of the remarks about khadi.

There is no cause for distraction, grief or alarm. It would be surprising, if, in a great national upheaval, we did not find men honestly recanting old views and enunciating new. Change is a condition of progress. An honest man cannot afford to observe mechanical consistency when the mind revolts against anything as an error. We must therefore patiently try to understand what George Joseph has to say and not hesitate to accept what appeals to our reason even though it may mean a sacrifice of some cherished ideal.

It is, I hope, in that spirit that I have endeavoured to study Joseph's speech. He condemns khadi, he is 'quite satisfied that the removal of untouchability is not primarily a problem of statesmanship'. His programme in one simple sentence is: 'Militarize India'. Here is an extract from the speech:

We cannot all become soldiers. There is not enough room for us. But it should be possible for us to set about the idea of training about 5,000 men every year in this Presidency in urban units. The men will go to drill two or three times a week, go out to camp three weeks in the year. Such training should be made available not only for the students who are at college but also for men of sufficient social and educational status, the educational standard being the membership of the School Leaving Class. If you see in every street such people going about in khaki, there will be a new element in our life. This kind of training would make people to stand straight, to think straight and to speak straight. It will be a great enrichment of our life.

My experience teaches me differently. I have known men in khaki rolling in gutters instead of standing straight, I have seen a Dyer thinking crooked and speaking not straight but nonsense. I have known a commander-in-chief being unable to think at all, let alone thinking straight. Let those who are enamoured of military training have it by all means, but to suggest it 'as a new constructive programme' betrays impatience and hasty thinking. There is not much danger of 'the new programme' taking root in the Indian soil. Moreover it is against the new order of things that is coming into being even in the West which has grown weary of the war-god. The military spirit in the West bids fair to kill the very humanity in man and reduce him to the level of the beast. What is wanted and what India has, thank God, learnt in a measure undreamt of before is the spirit of unarmed resistance before which the bayonet runs to rust and gunpowder turns to dust. The vision that Joseph puts before us of an armed Government bending a minority to its will by a clatter of arms is a negation of the democratic spirit and progress. If that is the promise of the new programme, we have the armed coercion even now

not indeed of a mere minority but of an overwhelming majority. What we want, I hope, is a Government not based on coercion even of a minority but on its conversion. If it is a change from white military rule to a brown, we hardly need make any fuss. At any rate the masses then do not count. They will be subject to the same spoliation as now if not even worse. When George Joseph has lived down his impatience, I know him to be too honest not to retrace his steps and become the fine democrat that to my great joy I had discovered him to be on the Madras beach in 1919.

Let us then turn to what he has to say about khadi:

As long as I was within the fold of the Congress, the only thing the constructive programme represented was khaddar, removal of 'untouchability', and in later years prohibition. Now I must frankly tell you that I have come deliberately to the conclusion that not one of these goes to the root of the fundamental need of this nation. Khaddar does not. I think it will not survive the creator of the movement, Gandhiji. I have come to that conclusion, because of the fundamental economic defect which is attached to khaddar. It costs far too much to produce and to buy, and is, consequently, unjust to the consumer. Khaddar which costs about a rupee a yard will not stand against the cloth produced by the machine industries costing as. 6. My experience of khaddar is that it results in injustice to the producer also. The women, the spinners, who are at the root of khaddar, working for 10 hours a day, have got to be content with a wage of as. 3. I suggest that an industry based on the payment of as. 3 wages to the fundamental producer thereof cannot succeed, because it amounts to sweating of labour. The sweating of labour consists essentially in paying to the labourer less than is sufficient for her physical maintenance. It is no answer to say that the country is stricken with famine, that there are millions of people without occupation, and to say that for these as. 3 is better than no income whatever. I refuse to accept that argument. That cannot be an argument which can appeal to any human employer of labour, or any statesman with a forward looking view, in reference to the affairs of his country. It is no consolation to be told that I shall be right in offering as. 3 wages a day, when I know as a matter of economic necessity that the wages would not be sufficient to maintain the worker, much less her family. That is to my mind the hopeless ineradicable and inexorable vice that attaches to khaddar. That is why today, in spite of 7 or 8 years of labour by Gandhiji, and in spite of lakhs of money poured like water into the organization of the industry, the production of khaddar is infinitely small compared to the magnitude of the problem that has got to be solved, that is, to produce clothing for the whole of India and to put an end to the importation of Rs. 60 crores worth of cloth every year.

Here George Joseph's impatience for reform has betrayed him into lapse of memory. For he brings no new argument in support of his summary rejection of khadi but quotes as facts what he himself used to refute as fallacies. Arguments may be revised on further

consideration, but facts may not be unless they are proved to have been false.: Khadi as conceived for the use of millions does not cost more than foreign cloth for the simple reason that the millions must, if khadi is to be used by them, be their own manufacturers and consumers. These pages have shown that in Bardoli, Bijolia and several other places khadi is being so manufactured and consumed even as in millions of homes people cook and eat their own food. It is possible to demonstrate, in terms of metal, that rice or bread cooked in a few factories would cost less than they cost today in the millions of homes. But nobody on that account would dare suggest that the millions should cease to cook and should send their raw rice and wheat to be cooked in centralized factories.

Again it is not true to say that women spinners work ten hours per day. Whatever spinning they do is done during their spare hours and what they get is not a day's wage but in the majority of cases a substantial addition to their daily earnings from their daily avocation. The earning from spinning is waste turned into wealth and not the price of 'sweated labour' as Joseph puts it. And let me correct Joseph by saying that no spinner even working for 10 hours per day can earn 3 annas per day. Spinning has never been conceived as a full day occupation. Lastly it is untrue to say, that "lakhs of money have been poured like water into the organization of the industry". No organization on a nationwide scale has been known to cost less in organizing than this has. What is true is that a paltry 25 lakhs have been invested as capital for organizing this great and daily growing cottage industry which brings water to thousands of parched lips. Joseph must think cheap of his countrymen when he prophesies that an organization which employs at least 1,500 willing workers in 1,500 villages, an organization which brings daily relief to nearly 1,50,000 women, an organization which commands the self-sacrificing labours of a Mithubai Petit, the Naoroji sisters, of a Banker, a Jamnalal, a Rajagopalachari, an Abbas Tyabji, a Venkatappayya, a Pattabhi, a Gangadharrao, a Vallabhbhai, a Lakshmidas, a Rajendraprasad, a Jairamdas, a Mahadev, a Kripalani, a Satis Chandra Das Gupta, a Suresh Banerji, aye a Jawaharlal and a host of others, lawyers, doctors, merchants and laymen too numerous to mention though known to fame, will die after the death of one man. It will be a tragic miracle if all these men and women find the morning after my death that khadi was a 'huge blunder'.

And the pity of it all is that Joseph does not suggest an alternative. Not even if every educated Indian was dressed in khaki and knew how to shoot straight, would the problem of the growing poverty and the forced partial unemployment of millions of the

peasantry be solved without a special programme devised for the purpose. For better or worse khadi is that programme till a better is evolved.

Young India, 19-12-1929

113. THE DUTY OF CAPITALISTS

Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla, presiding the other day at the Maharashtra Merchants' Conference (Sholapur), delivered a speech that was noteworthy for the freedom with which he expressed his opinions. He would have no distinction made between English cloth and other foreign cloth in the matter of protection. He said:

What I want to tell the Government is that while the country would not tolerate any duty based on principle of differentiation¹ even in the interests of the cotton industry, it is vitally essential that an extra uniform *ad valorem* protective duty should be imposed. I maintain that the Bombay cotton industry requires protection not only against imports of cheaper goods but also against imports of finer goods.

Speaking on the duty of capitalists he presented an ideal which it will be difficult even for a labour man to improve upon. Pleading for unity among the merchant class he said:

But let me make it clear that the unity which I propose for the businessmen should be unity for service and not for exploitation. The modern capitalist has been much abused of late. In fact, he is being looked upon at present as belonging to a separate class. But in the days of yore the situation was something quite different. If we analyse the functions of the Vaishya of the ancient times, we find that he was assigned the duty of production and distribution, not for personal gain but for common good. All the wealth that he amassed, he held as a trustee for the nation. Capitalists, if they are to fulfill their real function, must exist not as exploiters, but as servants of society. No Communism or Bolshevism can thrive if we know and discharge our duty. If I may say so, it is we who provided a fertile soil for the development of Communism and Bolshevism by relegating our duty to the background. If we knew our duty and followed it faithfully, I am sure that we could save society from many evils. I have mentioned that our true function is to produce and distribute.... Let us produce and distribute for the service of the community. Let us live and be prepared, if it comes to that, to sacrifice ourselves for the common good.

Young India, 19-12-1929

¹ Presumably the reference is to the Cotton Textile Industry (Protection) Bill which was passed by the Legislative Assembly in March 1930.

114. TO WHOM DOES CONGRESS BELONG?

During my tour of the U.P. someone asked me a few questions and requested me to give the answers through the columns of the *Hindi Navajivan*.

One of them was:

Is the Congress a joint organization of the Hindus and Muslims? If the answer is 'yes', can Congress workers who are responsible for Hindu-Muslim clashes be called Congressmen and have a following ? When such a situation arises what is the man in the street expected to do?

Congress, of course, belongs to Hindus and Muslims but it is much bigger than that. The Congress belongs to every citizen of India—Hindu, Muslim, Parsi, Sikh, Christian, Jew and others. Men and women who accept the ideals of the Congress Party can become its members. If any Congress member becomes the cause of Hindu-Muslim clashes, such a person can be expelled from the Congress. He, who, being a Congress member, causes discord between the two communities, is an enemy not only of the Congress but of the country as a whole.

This is only a bare answer to the above question. But when I myself am not satisfied with this much of an answer, how can I expect the questioner to be content with it? The sad fact, however, is that hatred between the two communities already exists and there is no need to create it. This state of affairs affects Congress also to some extent. How can such mutual hatred be removed? The questioner must have had this problem in mind though he has not put it into words.

In order to eschew hatred, purity of mind is necessary. Courage should be generated in the minds of both. Today we are afraid of each other. If this fear could be replaced by mutual trust all hatred and enmity would soon vanish. The best way to get over such weakness is not to follow anyone in this matter but to shed fear and suspicion from our own hearts. If even a few such men could rise today, then the Congress would come out unscathed. Yes, I do realize that there is an endeavour to create such an atmosphere and, knowing this, I cannot give up my own hope and faith.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 19-12-1929

115. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 19, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I had a letter from Somabhai. Since you have made no reference to him, I infer that you have not read the letter. Let me know if what he has stated as facts are such. You will realize that many questions arise from what he has stated. Ask Surendra to write to me and tell me what he had said to Somabhai. It is but proper that I should not discuss anything relating to that letter till I have heard from you.

Dr. Mehta will probably land in Bombay on the 23rd. Write to Manilal Kothari about the kitchen and get it vacated and cleaned. I do not know where Manilal is at present. In any case I am sending from here a wire to him at his Wadhwan address. If the key of the kitchen is with you, make a list of his things and put them away in a safe place and then get the kitchen swept and cleaned.

Chandrakanta will start tomorrow and reach Ahmedabad on Sunday morning. She will be accompanied by her parents. Her father, too, seems to have the spirit of self-sacrifice in him. I have, therefore, suggested to him that he himself should accompany Chandrakanta to the Ashram, see the place for himself and live there for a few days, so that I may feel less worried on her account. The husband and the wife wish to have separate arrangements for their meals for the present. If the mother decides to stay in the Ashram for some time at least, she will certainly take her meals in the common kitchen. At present, lodge the husband and the wife in any vacant rooms in Budhabhai's house. Nanibehn is not there, nor Parvatibehn. Hence some rooms are bound to be vacant. The two may stay in them and cook their meals as they wish. Supply them provisions from the store against their names. Give them a bill if they ask for it. If they do not, keep the amount pending in the department's account, and consult me about it after I return.

Chandrakanta will of course stay in the women's wing. The parents are thinking of staying there till my return. Do not get confused because I thus give you new information about this in every letter. I have no time to narrate the whole case. If I could do that, you would easily understand the indecision of this couple. I cannot say positively yet when Madhavji will come. If he decides to come after I have left this place, he himself will write to you and let you know the date.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4166

116. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

DEAR FRIEND,

You attribute to me powers I know I do not possess. There are no-changers and pro-changers nowadays. It would be wrong on my part to interfere with the discretion of co-workers in matters outside the operations which keep them in touch with me. If there is any specific thing against any of them, I shall gladly go into it.

But whether I can be of any service or not I wish you could find a way out of this unseemly wrangling.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. G.
SUBHAS BOSE

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/32

117. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

I have your letter. I cannot but feel extremely unhappy in refusing to accede to your request. But, frankly, I shall be quite out of place at such a meeting¹. The very list of names frightened me. What place can I have in such a meeting, and what would I do there? Sir Purshottamdas or Sir Dinshaw Petit will certainly fill the place with honour. Personally, I would advise you to think of no other name.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4794. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

¹ Condolence meeting on the addressee's father's death

118. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

December 20, 1929

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter. I had also expected you to give in it an account of the Bal Mandir and a description of the state of things there. May I expect them still?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, p. 6

119. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

WARDHA,
December 20, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have always been indifferent about Dattajayanti¹, etc. I am not moved by such things. But I do not feel repulsion towards such things either. I do not, however, wish that the public should come to know about the temple and that people from outside may even come to worship there, for I visualize the evil consequences which are likely to follow. I cannot easily imagine any beneficial results from such a development. Those in the Ashram who wish to use the temple for devotional purposes may do so, but I wish that we should not go further than that. Let Panditji also read this.

I, too, would have decided as you did about Premabehn. I missed mildness in your decision. It is desirable that we should not attend marriages. But we have not adopted a rule that no one may attend a marriage at any time. Of course, I do feel that we should not spend the Ashram money for such a visit and that we should dissuade those who would listen to us.

I have already written to you about Somabhai in my letter of yesterday. If he and Hasmukhrai have settled the matter between them, the problem is solved. If it is necessary to write to me further about this, do so.

I wrote to you about Chandrakanta yesterday. There is no question now of paying Rs. 25. If I like a certain idea from a distance,

¹ Birth anniversary of Lord Dattatreya

it does not follow that you or anybody else should approve of it. My view may be wrong. Now Kanta's parents are also accompanying her as guests. I have come to regard *Antyajās* and the common kitchen as two shields which protect us. I see every day that without them we would be blown up.

Send the sums mentioned by Chhaganlal Gandhi. They are earmarked for such purposes. A note about this is also filed in the office there. If we don't have a list of all such papers, we should have one, and on the page on which the account of an earmarked sum commences the conditions for its use should be mentioned, or the serial number of the document in which they are mentioned should be quoted. If that is done, anyone who takes charge of the work will be able to find the necessary information the moment it is required; our method of maintaining accounts should be thus clear.

If Kashinath is there, tell him that I could not follow what he says about his widowed sister. He may, however, consult Gangabehn and they two may decide about the matter as they think fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4167

120. A LETTER¹

WARDHA,

December 20, 1929

CHI. . . .

I have announced during the morning prayer at the Ashram that Chi. . . . has violated the vow of *brahmacharya*. . . . I have also written a detailed letter to the Managing Committee. You will get a copy from there. Chi. . . . has fully atoned for his sin. I do not see any need for you to step down as . . . of the Managing Committee. Today Chi. . . . is with me. Most probably I will not bring him there.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/30

¹ Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

*121. TELEGRAM TO PRIVATE SECRETARY TO
VICEROY*

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]¹

PRIVATE SECRETARY

VICEROY'S CAMP

YOUR WIRE². SHALL GLADLY WAIT ON HIS EXCELLENCY AS
DESIRED MONDAY NEXT FOUR THIRTY.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15587

122. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]³

PRESIDENT PATEL

NEW DELHI

YOUR WIRE. PRAY EXCUSE. SHALL EXPLAIN WHY I MAY NOT
STAY WITH YOU.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

¹ The addressee's telegram was dated December 20, 1929.

² It read: "His Excellency has received intimation that you along with Pandit Motilal Nehru Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru Mr. Patel Mr. Jinnah would be glad if invited to meet him and place him in possession of your views on his recent announcement. He would therefore be very pleased if [you] would come to see him at Viceroy's House, New Delhi at four thirty on afternoon of Monday December Twenty-third. Kindly confirm by telegram. His Excellency has been in communication with Mr. Patel who I understand is writing to you in this connection."

³ Presumably this was sent after Gandhiji's decision to meet the Viceroy; *vide* the preceding item. The drafts of this and the following three telegrams. are found on the same sheet of paper,

123. TELEGRAM TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI

SURAT

EXPECT LETTER POSTED TODAY. GOD BE WITH US.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

124. TELEGRAM TO LAKSHMINARAYAN GADODIA

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]

GADODIA

DELHI

WILL THANKFULLY STAY WITH YOU PARTY DEVDAS.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

125. TELEGRAM TO D. B. KALEKAR

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]

KAKASAHEB

GUJARAT VIDYAPITH

AHMEDABAD

YOU MAY ANNOUNCE CONFERENCE¹ DATES.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

¹ Presumably the All-India National Education Conference held on January 13, 1930.

126. TELEGRAM TO MANILAL KOTHARI

[On or after *December 20, 1929*]¹

MANILAL KOTHARI

JORAWA[R] NAGAR

DOCTOR MEHTA EXPECTED 23RD. KITCHEN SHOULD BE
VACATED.

From a photostat: S.N. 15576

127. TELEGRAM TO VITHALBHAI PATEL

December 21, 1929

YOUR WIRE. HAVE ACCEPTED INVITATION. STAYING GADODIA².

GANDHI

From a copy: Vithalbhai Patel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

128. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI³

WARDHA,

December 21, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have not written again about Chi. . . . That episode will certainly not be discussed. There should be no mention of it just now in the *Ashram Samachar* also. We have to draw from it the proper lesson and therefore have to take every step with caution. Whatever may have been. . . 's error, he needs no persuasion to atone for it, as Chhaganlal Gandhi did. The latter's secret remorse was great. But as he was in ignorance as regards his lapse, so was he in regard to atonement. I do not think it is so in the case of . . . , and I am actually observing that he is fully atoning for his error in the right manner. If he emerges successful in his atonement I would consider that his test

¹ Drafted on the reverse of the sheet containing the drafts of the preceding four telegrams; *vide* also "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 19-12-1929.

² Lakshminarayan Gadodia; *vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 18-12-1929 and "Telegram to Lakshminarayan Gadodia", on or after 20-12-1929.

³ Omissions in the letter are as in the source.

had been light. I am testing myself, too, for . . . has not left it to himself what he should do; he has left the decision to me.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/31

129. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL GANDHI

WARDHA,
[Before *December 21, 1929*]¹

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. I can understand what Shankerlal has told you. The idea behind the activities in Vijapur is different. Bear in mind that we are not obliged to women. If they really need the work, they will do it. There can be no comparison between a *bidi* and a spinning-wheel as there can be none between liquor and *Gangajal*. Let those who make *bidis* go on making them gladly. You should carry on your work without any fear. Make any improvement you can think of. Write to me when the time for sending khadi to Calcutta is at hand. *Kundi* can be made there. I have seen hand-made *kundi* at Mir[pur] Ashram. Krishna has reached. . . .² We should be satisfied with what . . .³ of his can be tolerated.

I expect that you will be able to cope with the land affairs provided Subani is keeping a close watch over it. Keep me informed.

You have done the right thing in paying a visit to Talwalkar. That was one debt to be repaid. Giving the . . .⁴ does not settle it, but we have derived satisfaction from it. True debt we have to repay by rendering outstanding service to the society. I will leave here for Delhi on the 21st. From there to Lahore on the night of the 23rd.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32884

¹ From Gandhiji's itinerary mentioned in the last para; in 1929, he reached Delhi on December 22 and Lahore on December 24.

² The source is not clear at these places.

³ *ibid*

⁴ *ibid*

130. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

December 21, 1929

I have your letter. I never knew that in spite of your company Taramati would believe herself to be in prison. Moreover, the silent companions there—the natural scenery—make any company superfluous. But I was glad that all of you went there. More so because you all stayed there so long. So you may gladly come down at the end of January. I am leaving for Delhi today. Just now it is five o'clock in the morning. Have to meet the Viceroy. I am not going there with any hopes.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, p. 97

131. LETTER TO SHIVABHAI PATEL

ON THE TRAIN,

December 21, 1929

BHAI SHIVABHAI,

I have your letter. The get-up of *Ashram Samachar* is fairly good. Very probably, I know the stuff on which you have printed it. I shall be able to tell when I see it.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9492

132. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

December 21, 1929

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I am writing this reply in the train which is carrying me to Delhi. I have understood your reasons. I will, therefore, say nothing for the present. If I get some peace, I will go deeper into the matter in January. The women's class must be going on very well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-9: Shri Narandas Gandhine, Part 1, p. 56

133. WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR FARMERS?

A young man who has mentioned his name and wishes to see me but has forgotten to give his address writes:¹

The desire expressed by the father of this young man is shared by many other parents today. Those young men who have been infused with patriotism and who are prepared to undergo any amount of hardship on account of this sentiment will certainly not like to serve the Government or a State after graduation. Parents should accept this fact. They should give up their insistence upon forcibly guiding along boys and girls who have reached the age of maturity, and young men like the one who has posed the above question should, with humility but with equal firmness, place their ideas before their parents and put them into practice. However, how who are ready to do so should also be prepared to renounce their parents, wealth. A son or daughter who is looking forward to receiving, or is actually receiving, an inheritance from his or her father has no right to disregard his or her parents' wishes. The question as to what should be done about the poor people or the farmers now takes a subordinate place. Anyone who has the strength to give up politely and for the sake of serving the country the shelter afforded by his father will find hundreds of ways of serving the poor farmers. One can make a beginning by living like a farmer. This naturally suggests to me the spinning-wheel. But to whomsoever it does not, may not start serving through the spinning wheel. If he goes and settles down in any village, a number of ways of serving it in accordance with his capacity will strike him. If however, anyone poses the question as to what is to be done there for the sake of one's livelihood, the answer to it is that all such persons should join an institution like the Charkha Sangh, accept an adequate salary and work there. All readers of *Navajivan* are aware of the fact that hundreds of young men are working in this manner at present. Hence the way is dear for all those who truly wish to serve. For all those who have the enthusiasm to serve, but not the training to do so, there are available today means whereby they can acquire this knowledge. However, very often it is found that there is not the same amount of understanding as the fervour that is found behind the patriotic urge. Some young men believe that this fervour is by itself sufficient. However, just as vapour without control is useless or sometimes proves harmful, similarly, such thoughtless fervour is also futile and may even at times prove harmful. Those young men who wish to serve the

¹ The letter is not translated here.

farmers should possess a great deal of patience, self-confidence, physical strength, capacity to withstand heat, cold, etc., and the willingness to get training.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1929

134. WOMEN AND ORNAMENTS

I have never been able to understand our rajas' and maharajas' fondness for ornaments. Or I may say that the rajas heavily laden with jewellery have reminded me of women. I do not wish to malign women by comparing the rajas with them. Even women would not appear beautiful to me if they looked like men. Every person looks well in his or her rightful place and can make a useful contribution only by remaining there. He loses his status if he tries to go above it and we also say that he does likewise if he attempts to climb down from it. This is what is meant when it is said that better one's duty bereft of merit, than another's well performed.¹ However, after having spoken of the ornaments of the rajas, I wish to speak of those of women. The former may not even be reading *Navajivan*. Even if they do, they will not pause to ponder over such matters. And even if they wish to do so, the Emperor will not permit it. These vassals derive their lustre from the latter. They are not self-luminous; if they give up their ornaments, perhaps they may also have to give up their thrones. They themselves say that it will be regarded as an insult to the Emperor if they do not deck themselves with ornaments on State occasions, and the Emperor will be displeased with them. Whether they desire it or not, they have no alternative but to possess and wear expensive ornaments and attend such functions. Hence there is no point in raising at present the question of the rajas. The planets will automatically find their proper places once the sun finds its own. These rajas are like the planets. They do not at present have any independent powers of doing good or evil. They can react independently to what they are told only when they can escape from the Emperor's clutches or free themselves from his influence.

But what about women? The uplift of women is one of the principal aims of running *Navajivan*. During my tour of the U.P., I was very much irritated at the sight of the ornaments worn by rich and poor women alike. At that very time, I read Mr. Brayne's book. I was largely convinced by his criticism of ornaments. He has held the men

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, III. 35

folk too responsible for this fondness for ornaments. I believe that men are or were responsible for this; their responsibility may now have decreased, but the women's responsibility for this fondness is no less. I was unable to convince many women to give up their ornaments.

How and whence did women develop this fondness? I do not know its history, hence I have only made some conjectures. The ornaments which women wear on their hands and feet are a sign of their bondage. Some of the ornaments worn on the feet are so heavy that a woman cannot walk fast, let alone run. Some women wear such heavy ornaments on their arms that they prevent them from fully utilizing the latter. Hence I regard these ornaments as fetters on the hands and feet. I have found that by means of the ornaments which are worn by piercing the nose and ears, the men lead the women as they wish. Even a child, by firmly taking hold of a nose or ear ornament of a woman, can render the latter helpless. Hence I have looked upon these principal ornaments as mere symbols of slavery.

I have found even the designs of these ancient ornaments ugly. I have beheld no true art in them. I have seen and known them as objects which harbour dirt. A woman who is loaded with ancient ornaments on her hands, feet, ears, nose and hair cannot even keep these parts of her body clean. I have seen layers of dirt collected on those parts. Many of these ornaments are not even removable every day. When some women gave me their heavy anklets and bangles, they had to call in a goldsmith to have these removed from their hands and feet. When these were taken out, they left a good band of dirt on the hands and ankles, and the designs carved on the ornaments were full of layers of dirt. These women too felt as if they were rid of an age-old burden.

The modern woman is oblivious of this origin of ornaments and, regarding them as objects which beautify her gets delicate ones made for her. She has them made in such a way that they can be readily worn and removed and if she happens to be very wealthy, she has them made of diamonds and pearls instead of gold and silver. They may gather less dirt, it may well be the case that they are regarded artistic, but they have no utilitarian value and their capacity to beautify is also imaginary. Women of other countries would not wear the ornaments worn by our women. Their idea of adorning themselves is different. Ideas of adornment and artistic beauty vary from one country to another; hence we know that in such matters we have no absolute standards of beauty or art.

Why is it then that many reasonable, educated women still

continue to be fond of ornaments? On considering the matter, it seems that as in other matters, here too tradition reigns supreme. We do not find reasons for all our actions and do not even stop to consider whether they are proper or otherwise. We do them because it is customary to do so and later we like them independently. This is called thoughtless life.

However, why should all those women who are awakened, who have started thinking for themselves, who wish to serve the country, who are taking or wish to take part in the *yajna* of *swaraj*, not exercise their discretion with regard to ornaments, etc.?

If the origin of ornaments is what I have imagined it to be, they are fit to be renounced, however light or beautiful they may be. Fetters, though made of gold, diamonds or pearls, are fetters only. Whether in a small dark room or in a palace, men and women imprisoned in either will be regarded as prisoners only.

Moreover, wherein lies the beauty of a woman? Does it lie in her ornaments, her mannerisms, her new clothes which she changes daily, or in her heart, thought and action? The cobra which has a precious stone on its hood has poison in its fangs. Hence, despite the fact that it wears a crown of precious stone, it is not considered worthy of *darshan* or of being embraced. If a woman realizes that this 'artistic device' leads to the downfall of countless men, why should she garner these ornaments although they may possess any amount of artistic value? This is not a matter of individual freedom, nor is it a question of the rights of an individual; it is merely a wilful act and hence fit to be renounced, because it involves cruelty. It is the *dharma* of every thoughtful and compassionate man and woman to see what effect his or her actions have on others and to desist from them if they are not otherwise proved to be useful and produce a harmful effect.

Finally, in this poverty-stricken land, where the average daily income of a person is seven pice or at the most eight pice, who has the right to wear even the lightest of rings? A thoughtful woman who moreover wishes to serve her country, cannot ever touch ornaments. Looking at it from the economic standpoint, the gold and silver that we lock up in making ornaments causes threefold harm to the country. The first harm is that where there is a shortage of food, we increase it by wearing ornaments. It should be borne in mind that our average daily income is seven or eight pice. As those whose daily income is a thousand rupees are also included in these calculations, even if we leave the destitutes aside and take into account only the poorer classes, their income would amount to one or two pice. Hence the amount spent on jewellery is something that we have taken

away from the poor. The second is that these ornaments do not yield any interest, hence we prevent an increase in the national wealth to that extent. The third is that a large portion of these ornaments finally wears off or, in other words, that amount of wealth is lost for ever. Just as if an individual throws away some of the gold bars in his possession into the ocean, his wealth will decrease to that extent, almost the same can be said of a woman who invests her money in ornaments. I use the word “almost”, as some ornaments are sold in straitened circumstances and hence they may be regarded as having been put to some use. The loss that they have suffered through wear and tear before their sale is of course there; moreover, anyone who buys them can never recover their original value when reselling them, and the loss suffered thereby is also there. Therefore, any woman who wishes to keep aside ornaments as her own property or as property which may be useful in times of distress should put their equivalent in cash in her name; either her parents or her partents-in-law should open an account in a bank and give her the pass-book. Such times may well be far off. However, if thoughtful women, who wish to render service, give up their love of ornaments, I would regard this article as having fully served its purpose at least for the time being.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1929

135. MY NOTES

THE LATE JAIKRISHNA INDRAJI

A reader of *Navajivan* writes ¹

I had become acquainted with Sjt. Jaikrishna in Porbandar and that very time I was astonished by his diligence in trying to excel himself in his own field and by his simplicity which matched his diligence. In trying to discover new plants, he had often roamed the hills of Barda and as a result of his vast experience, he had also written a beautiful book. In his own house, too, he had built up a collection which included many botanical specimens and he showed it with pride to anyone who visited him. He thought of nothing but of making discoveries in the field of botany. He felt his spiritual well-being in this world as well as the next to lie in this only. Hence I always regarded him as an ideal student. During my tour of Kutch, I

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had informed Gandhiji of the death of Jaikrishna Indrajai.

renewed my acquaintance with him. His passion for planting new trees increased rather than decreased with advancing age. Men with such single-minded devotion to their subject are indeed rare. Sjt. Jaikrishna Indrajī was one of them. He has now left us after fulfilling his duty; hence his soul is of course at peace. Let us all emulate his single-mindedness and his self-confidence.

LABOUR AND CAPITAL

Nowadays labour and capital have formed two distinct camps and it is found that the two are generally opposed to each other. A sect has arisen in the world which believes that the capitalist class should not exist at all, or that everyone should belong to the class of owners. In my opinion, such a state of affairs will never come about in the world. What is possible, and what should happen, is that instead of mutual distrust and enmity, there should be trust and love between them. Just as a sect has arisen which aims at destroying the capitalists, today in the West another has arisen which believes that it is possible to create trust and love between the two. If such a situation is possible, it is primarily the responsibility of the capitalists to bring it about. This is so not only because theirs is the stronger side, but also because it is their class which will have to make the requisite sacrifices. Labour has no privileges on its side, or the only privilege that it does enjoy is the one to feel aggrieved, that is to say, to offer satyagraha. That, however, is not the special privilege of labour. All human beings enjoy it. Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla had recently made a speech in Sholapur¹ in which he has accepted the fact that capitalists should make this type of sacrifice. In it, he had clearly stated that it was against the dharma of the mill-owners to misuse or make anything in order to earn profits, that their dharma was to produce goods and sell them only in order to serve and benefit the public. And he has also expressed the view that if mill-owners do not do so, they cannot continue to survive in the long run. If all mill-owners act in this manner, all disputes will be banished and an atmosphere of trust will be created between them and the labourers and along with it, the two can be united by a bond of love. In the language of the old times, this is known as conduct in accordance with one's dharma and in modern language it is known as just conduct. While judging the matter by these very standards, Sjt. Ghanshyamdas has also expressed the opinion that they should not abandon what is important in order to reap a minor benefit or, in other words, if the temptation arises to levy an import duty on foreign cloth other than that manufactured in

¹ *Vide* "The Duty of Capitalists", 19-12-1929.

Britain, they should not yield to it. Sheth Ghanshyamdas Birla had delivered this speech as President before the business community of Sholapur; and it has not been reported that anyone raised any objections to it. However, it is one thing not to object to such ideas, and quite another to put them into practice. What is essential is to act in accordance with such ideas, because even the best of ideas have ultimately no value if they are not put into practice.

HAJAM OR 'VALAND'?

A gentleman from Palitana writes:¹

The contemptible implication underlying the word *hajam* is actually directed towards that profession. This word is used with reference to persons whose profession is to shave or cut the hair. If this word is not approved of, I shall only use the word '*Valand*' in *Navajivan*. However, it is my confirmed opinion that this is no remedy for the basic problem. The real remedy consists in ending the prejudice against those professions which are essential but are concerned with the removal of dirt. Thereafter, we can remain indifferent to names that may be used to indicate them. What can we do when 'a boy fondly named Hari dies at an early age'? We should not, therefore, look upon the word Hari with contempt. The prestige of words increases or diminishes in the world with that of persons and it will continue to do so.

In this age of reforms, everyone has learnt to shave himself and the sting in the barber's profession will easily disappear—it has already half disappeared. For me, words like *Valand*, Bhangi Chamar, Dhed, etc., have no repugnance. I myself do the work of all those professions and inspire others to do so and I find pleasure in it. My advice to those of my brothers who follow the above professions is that they should disregard the contempt that society has for these professions, that they should become adepts in their trades, purify their own thoughts and actions and enhance their own prestige as well as that of their trade. Although I can shave myself well, through these very same motives, I avail myself of the services of a barber clad in khadi wherever I happen to find one and try to lead him to do national service. As we wish to win swaraj which is untainted, it is necessary that we should take the help of all those who are engaged in such professions and also try to improve their lot. We have had

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to use *Valand* instead of *hajam* to denote a barber because the latter word had become a term of contempt.

Chamars, weavers, cobblers and Dheds, etc., among us who had attained the highest knowledge and had become *bhaktas*. Should it then be surprising if one of them, by virtue of the strength of his services, becomes the President of the State? Persons who follow such a profession can maintain the highest degree of integrity in their conduct and can also sharpen their intellect. The sorry part of the story is that when persons who practise such trades happen to be intelligent individuals, they are ashamed of their professions and finally give them up. The President of my imagination will be one who while earning a livelihood by practising a barber's or a cobbler's profession, will also be guiding the ship of the State. It is possible that because of the burden of national work he will be unable to ply his trade regularly but that is a different question.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 22-12-1929

136. A LETTER

[Before *December 23, 1929*]¹

I have your letter. I shall try to do whatever I can for political prisoners. It has never happened that I kept quiet out of fear. Even with regard to political prisoners, I would consider it improper to do anything for those who are in prison for crimes of murder. I shall not argue the point. I shall of course do my utmost for Bhai Vinayak Savarkar.² But as I have said earlier anything I can do will be inconclusive. In any case Pt. Motilalji will be the chief spokesman. I shall only be a witness. I suggest everything should be submitted to Motilalji in writing.

What you said was certainly irrelevant to some extent. But that was because of the fever. The realization made me sad. I hope you are now better.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/28

¹ From the contents this letter appears to have been written before Gandhiji met the Viceroy on December 23, 1929.

² Vinayak Damodar Savarkar had been sentenced to two consecutive terms of transportation for life on charges of treason and spent ten years in the Andaman Jail. In 1921 he was brought to India and was released in 1924 on the condition that he should not leave the Ratnagiri district and should not take part in politics.

137. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

DELHI,
December 23, 1929

SISTERS,

I am writing this in Delhi after the morning prayers. It is severe cold, so severe that Mirabehn's feet have become stiff. She has slipped back into bed and is lying near me. Lahore, of course, is even colder than Delhi.

But I do not wish to write to you about the cold. I wish to write about our duties. Just now I shall say only this, that those among you who are thinking about their selfish desires are bound to fall. Those who devote themselves to their duty, when can they have the time to fall? It has always been my experience that those who fell had remained, or become, indifferent to truth. A sinful act requires the cover of darkness. It is always done in secret. We certainly see persons who have abandoned all sense of shame and act sinfully in the open. There are even people who regard sin as virtue. We are not talking about them. One reason why progress in many of our activities is held up is the selfishness I have mentioned above. In that selfishness lies the danger of our fall and that of society. Think over this, fix your mind on it and let each one examine her life in the light of it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3712

138. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

DELHI,
Silence Day, December 23, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have your letter.

Mahadev is here. Vallabhbhai, too, is here.

You were right in sending Henry's¹ wire by post. In such matters, you may decide for yourself and do what you think best. No one rule can be laid down which can be followed in all cases. Our aim should always be to save money.

¹ Polak

Your reply to Manilal Kothari was correct.

Budhabhai is our neighbour. I intervened in his affair. If, now, we do not accept the deposit, our service will remain incomplete. The burden on us will not be much. If Budhabhai and Nanibehn are innocent, we should keep the money. If they are guilty, we cannot but know that by this means. In this complex world, who can say which man or woman is pure and which impure? To me it seems our clear duty to accept the deposit and to maintain relations with both. It is not we who have to provide a room to Nanibehn. She is to be given a room in Budhabhai's house. If she comes and lives in the Ashram, she will of course live as the other women do. More about this when we meet.

If the Thana land can be disposed of for Rs. 9,000, nothing will be better than that. Pyarali separated from us from Wardha. Write to him at his Bombay address,

We have to meet the Viceroy at 4.30.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Giant;: G.N. 4168

139. SPEECH AT SERVANTS OF THE PEOPLE SOCIETY, LAHORE

December 24, 1929

Mahatmajī speaking on the occasion¹ said he considered it a privilege that immediately on his entry into Lahore, he should be called upon to perform the opening ceremony of the Lajpat Rai Hall.

He said he did not like to say many words of praise about Lalaji and his Society because they were well known to all Punjabis. He was a Bania and he had always acted Bania-like. From the report read by Mr. Purshottamdas Tandon he found that the full amount of five lakhs appeal for the Lalaji Memorial Fund by Pandit Malaviya, Dr. Ansari and Mr. Birla had not been subscribed yet. He hoped the Punjabis would subscribe the amount remaining to be realized.

He knew fully well the capacity of the Punjabis for public work but he had not been able fully to realise the Punjabis' love for Lalaji, because the Punjabis, in the midst of whom Lalaji lived and did, had not yet paid their share towards this appeal. He hoped the full amount would be subscribed by the people of the Punjab before the end of the present year and he would be relieved of the anxiety on that account.

He had tried his best to collect as much money as possible during his tours in different parts of India, but he had not been able to collect the total amount. He appealed to all men and women present at the gathering to give him as much money

¹ Anniversary celebrations of the Society

as they could for the Lalaji Memorial Fund.

He said he had a mind to come to the Punjab long before, but as the Congress had been invited in the Punjab and Congressmen were busy raising subscriptions for Congress, he postponed his visit

Mahatmaji said he had heard that Punjabi women were very fond of silk and ornaments, that they used many foreign articles and foreign scented oils. This pained him much. He said until India got swaraj no woman should wear ornaments and whatever ornaments they had they should hand them over to him.

Addressing the assembled men, Mahatmaji; said they always raised loud shouts of *Vandemataram* but when they were asked to do solid work they refused to do it. He had been repeatedly asking them to wear khaddar, but they would not wear it. He asked them to save all their money by curtailing useless expenditure and give it to him.

Mahatmaji then asked the volunteers to go round the men and women sitting at the meeting and collect money for the fund....

Mahatmaji congratulated all on their response to his appeal. He said they had, by their action, fulfilled his hopes. He was satisfied with what he had collected.

The Hindustan Times, 26-12-1929

140. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA SUPPRESSED CLASSES CONFERENCE, LAHORE

December 24, 1929

Mahatma Gandhi while delivering his presidential address at the Suppressed Classes Conference declared:

Freedom can never be attained by exploding bombs on an innocent man. I regard it as a most outrageous crime.

He said no other power on earth could prove a barrier against the attainment of freedom, but our own weaknesses were our greatest enemy. Continuing, Mahatmaji urged the untouchables to remove all social evils, to give up drink and meat of dead animals. He laid stress on sanitation, education, etc. He paid a tribute to Rishi Balmiki, their ancestor and author of the *Ramayana*, and exhorted the untouchables to follow him.

Referring to the question of temple-entry, Mahatma Gandhi said entering temples by force was not satyagraha. They should learn satyagraha from him. He cited the example of the satyagraha at Vykom in South India five years back. He said compulsion whether by the British or by Indians was a crime. They must not compel high caste people for temple-entry. He said they could not see God by force. God was present within their hearts and not in temples and mosques. He advised the untouchables patiently to undergo sufferings and pray that high caste cruelty may come to an end.

Continuing, Mahatmaji said a large section of people in India had resolved to put an end to untouchability under the lead of the Congress Anti-untouchability Committee under the guidance of Pandit Malaviya and Sheth Jamnalal Bajaj. If they could not remove untouchability and attain real Hindu-Muslim unity, swaraj for the

masses could not be attained. Concluding, he declared:

The key to swaraj was not in London nor with the Viceroy but in the hands of Indians themselves.

He then appealed for the Lalaji Memorial Fund.

The Hindustan Times, 27-12-1929

141. NOTES

A VICIOUS INFERENCE

The estimated drink and drug bill paid by Madras in 1928-29, according to the statistics collected by Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari, was Rs. 16,83,00,000, i.e., seventeen crores in round figures. The revenue got out of this was Rs. 5,10,00,000, i.e., a little over five crores. The net waste was therefore say 113 crores. This is more than the land revenue by over four crores. These figures are startling enough to make a reformer think. But the worst is yet to follow. The same vigilant eye has observed that the drink bill increases year after year as also crime against Abkari¹ laws. From these statistics the Madras Government is reported to have drawn this vicious inference:

The continued increase of crime against Abkari laws and its appearance in all parts of the Presidency must give pause to any immediate drastic action in the way of cutting of the supply of licit liquor lest the result should prove more serious to the general morality than are the present conditions.

This is the same as saying that because the crime of thieving is on the increase there should be a progressive relaxation of the laws against thieving. The inference is based on the assumption that drinking intoxicating liquors is not a disease or an evil in the same sense as thieving. The fact however is that the drink habit has been demonstrated to be a parent of thieving as of many other crimes. The proper inference to be drawn from the increasing crime is that the existence of liquor shops is a fatal trap for poor humanity and that therefore the true method is forthwith to declare total prohibition without counting the cost. Crime there will still be against the prohibition laws as there is and always has been against laws prohibiting thieving, etc. If there is no licensed thieving, there may be no licensed drinking. For an unsophisticated mind that is the only inference possible and that is the straight and simple logic. A Government which wants a revenue anyhow to run an expensive foreign administration manufactures logic to suit its evil purpose.

¹ Excise

“SEVEN MONTHS WITH GANDHIJI”

This is the title of two volumes brought out by Sjt. Krishnadas who was with me as my valued assistant during the stirring non-co-operation days whilst I was touring through Assam and elsewhere¹. He recorded the events of those days in his diary chiefly meant for his guru, Sjt. Satischandra Mukerji who had lent Krishnadas’ services to me when Mahadev was wanted by Pandit Motilalji. The volumes are chiefly extracts from that diary and have been before the public for some time. Satish Babu having received inquiries from foreign friends as to the authenticity of the facts narrated in the volumes asked me whether I would read the volumes and testify. Krishnadas himself was anxious to know my opinion of his volumes. I have gone through them. And the facts appear to me to be correctly set forth and exhaustively dealt with. For the inferences and opinions drawn from and based on the facts I can say nothing. We know that different minds applied to the same facts draw different inferences. We know too that the same mind by efflux of time and maturer experience draws opposite inferences from the same facts. So far as these volumes are concerned, whilst the pen is that of Krishnadas, the directing mind is that of his master and guide Satischandra Mukerji. The volumes are the only narrative we have of the seven months with which Krishnadas deals. The first volume is published by S. Ganesan, Triplicane, Madras, and the second is published by Babu Ram Binode Sinha, Gandhi Kutir, Dighwara (Bihar).

Young India, 26-12-1929

142. DEFINITE SUGGESTIONS

During the U.P. tour I received the following letter² from Allahabad students:

Though I dealt with the matter in one of my addresses to students and though a definite programme has been placed before students in these pages, it is worth while reiterating and perhaps more pointedly the scheme adumbrated before.

The writers of the letter want to know what they may do after finishing their studies. I want to tell them that the grown-up students

¹ In 1921.

² Not reproduced here. The students had complained that Gandhiji’s article “What May Youth Do?”, pp. 108-9, was vague, and wanted some definite outline to be clearly chalked out

and therefore all college students should begin village work even whilst they are studying. Here is a scheme for such part time workers.

The students should devote the whole of their vacation to village service. To this end, instead of taking their walks along beaten paths, they should walk to the villages within easy reach of their institutions and study the condition of the village folk and befriend them. This habit will bring them in contact with the villagers who, when the students actually go to stay in their midst, will by reason of the previous occasional contact receive them as friends rather than as strangers to be looked upon with suspicion. During the long vacation the students will stay in the villages and offer to conduct classes for adults and to teach the rules of sanitation to the villagers and attend to the ordinary cases of illness. They will also introduce the spinning-wheel amongst them and teach them the use of every spare minute. In order that this may be done students and teachers will have to revise their ideas of the uses of vacation. Often do thoughtless teachers prescribe lessons to be done during the vacation. This in my opinion is in any case a vicious habit. Vacation is just the period when students' minds should be free from the routine work and be left free for self-help and original development. The village work I have mentioned is easily the best form of recreation and light instruction. It is obviously the best preparation for dedication to exclusive village service after finishing the studies.

The scheme for full village service does not now need to be elaborately described. Whatever was done during the vacation has now to be put on a permanent footing. The villagers will also be prepared for a fuller response. The village life has to be touched at all points, the economic, the hygienic, the social and the political. The immediate solution of the economic distress is undoubtedly the wheel in the vast majority of cases. It at once adds to the income of the villagers and keeps them from mischief. The hygienic includes insanitation and disease. Here the student is expected to work with his own body and labour to dig trenches for burying excreta and other refuse and turning them into manure, for cleaning wells and tanks, for building easy embankments, removing rubbish and generally to make the villages more habitable. The village worker has also to touch the social side and gently persuade the people to give up bad customs and bad habits, such as untouchability, infant marriages, unequal matches, drink and drug evil and many local superstitions. Lastly comes the political part. Here the worker will study the political grievances of the villagers and teach them the dignity of freedom, self-reliance and self-help in everything. This makes in my opinion complete adult education. But this does not complete the task of the village worker.

He must take care and charge of the little ones and begin their instruction and carry on a night school for adults. This literary training is but part of a whole education course and only a means to the larger end described above.

I claim that the equipment for this service is a large heart and a character above suspicion. Given these two conditions every other needed qualification is bound to follow.

The last question is that of bread and butter. A labourer is worthy of his hire. The incoming president is organizing a national provincial service. The All-India Spinners' Association is a growing and stable organization. It furnishes young men with character an illimitable field for service. A living wage is assured. Beyond that there is no money in it. You cannot serve both self and country. Service of self is strictly limited by that of the country and hence excludes a living beyond the means of this absolutely poor country. To serve our villages is to establish swaraj. Everything else is but an idle dream.

Young India, 26-12-1929

143. THAT CRUEL CUSTOM

Sjt. Gangadharrao Deshpande writes as follows¹ on the practice of animal sacrifice prevalent in Karnatak and reported in these columns :²

How I wish public opinion moved fast enough to stop this inhumanity altogether and now ! How can we who value freedom deny it to our fellow creatures and practise unthinkable cruelties on them and that too in the name of religion?

Young India, 26-12-1929

144. 'GOANS'

The editor of the *Voice*, a Goan organ, writes:³

I wish the editor of the *Voice* had imagination enough to know that if we are worth our salt, the India of the future will not be British but Indian. British India is a contradiction in terms. India is the name of the country where Indians live. But for the slave habit which we

¹ The letter is not reproduced here.

² *Vide* "In the Name of Religion", 21-11-1929.

³ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had enquired about the status of Goans in "the British India of the future".

have never questioned, we would refuse to use any such term as British or other India. The India of the future will be India under swaraj, not Britain. In India under swaraj 'Goans' will pride themselves in being called Indians. Why should they even now call themselves 'Goans' when they are born in India? India will not always remain vivisected into British, Portuguese, French, etc., but will be one country although its parts may be under different systems of government. In any event India free cannot deny freedom to any son of the soil. It gives me both pain and surprise when I find people feeling anxious about their future under a freed India. For me an India which does not guarantee freedom to the lowliest of those born not merely within an artificial boundary, but within its natural boundary is not free India. Our fear paralyses our thinking powers, or we should at once know that freedom means a state at any rate somewhat better than the present for every honest man or woman. It is exploiters, money-grabbers, pirates and the like who have to fear the advent of freedom.

Young India, 26-12-1929

145. THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE

Although all people theoretically admit that Hindi alone can be the national language, yet the requisite love for the Hindi language is not apparent among young men of the provinces where the mother tongue is Hindi. Whatever literature is being published in Hindi is mostly translation. If, however, some original piece does come out it is found to be insignificant. It might be argued that a Rabindranath is not born every day and Tulsidas is one among millions. Nevertheless, all of us can at least create a climate for the advent of poets like Tulsidas and Rabindranath, namely, a sincere zeal among young men. As their devotion to Hindi grows so would Hindi pervade the environment, leading to a flowering of a few genuine poets as well.

Today neither the fervour nor the endeavour is manifest in the language of the young men having Hindi as their mother tongue. The grammatical errors occurring in the Hindi of the young men of U.P. and Bihar are not at all to be seen among the Bengalis and Maharashtrians. No doubt the national language is being propagated in provinces like Madras, etc.; but I have seen that Hindi teachers are not easily available. They are not energetic and their capacity for self-sacrifice is very limited. There ought to be innumerable young men ready to dedicate themselves exclusively to the propagation of Hindi; but I have not come across such persons, if any. Undoubtedly

young men are available who are eager to serve at subsistence wages, but they are not equipped to teach Hindi.

If young men will it, this shortcoming can be overcome. With the initiative of a single young man this work can make progress. If one loses heart and rests on one's oars in face of a distressing situation in a certain field, the situation deteriorates further. It is the duty of a devoted person to try to relieve the distress without delay and not sit with folded hands fearing obstacles on the way. Every school should have an association for the promotion of Hindi. It would be the duty of such associations to make progressive use of Hindi in all fields, to evolve new technical words, never to use a foreign language in politics, etc., to make a sound study of abstruse books, to provide Hindi teachers wherever necessary and to organize volunteer Hindi teachers for honorary work, etc. Even if a single young man in every school is fired with this zeal he will not stay inert but will sprout into an association and will induce his fellow-students to join it. The only way to keep up the awakening among the young men today is for them to utilize every moment of their lives for some sort of social service.

It is to be noted that in this article Hindi also means Hindustani. To me a language which deliberately discards Arabic and Persian words is not Hindi.

[Form Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 26-12-1929

146. DRAFT RESOLUTIONS FOR A.I.C.C., LAHORE¹

[December 26, 1929]²

1. This Congress deplores the bomb outrage perpetrated on the Viceregal train and warns those who believe in violent activities that such action is not only contrary to the creed of the Congress but results in harm being done to the national cause, and congratulates His Excellency the Viceroy, Lady Irwin and the nation on the fortunate and narrow escape Their Excellencies and party had on that occasion.

2. This Congress, whilst endorsing the action of the Working Committee in connection with the Manifesto signed by party leaders, including Congressmen, in connection with the Viceregal announ-

¹ According to the Free Press of India, the resolutions were circulated among the Congress Working Committee members for consideration. Gandhiji drafted the resolutions in consultation with Motilal Nehru and other leaders.

² The report is date-lined "Lahore, December 26, 1929".

cement of 31st October relating to Dominion Status and appreciating the efforts of His Excellency the Viceroy towards peaceful settlement of the national movement for swaraj and having considered the result of the meeting between the Viceroy and Pandit Motilal Nehru and other leaders, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference, and, in pursuance of the resolution passed at the Calcutta Congress last year, declares that swaraj in Congress creed shall mean complete independence; and therefore, further declares the Nehru Scheme of Dominion Status to have lapsed and hopes that, now that the communal question drops out of the purview of the Congress, all parties in the Congress will devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of complete independence, and hopes also that those whom the tentative solution of the communal problem suggested in the Nehru Report has prevented from joining the Congress or actuated them to abstain from it, will now Join or rejoin the Congress and zealously prosecute the common goal, and as a preliminary step towards organizing the campaign for independence and in order to make the Congress policy consistent with the change of the creed, declares complete boycott of Central and provincial legislatures and calls upon Congressmen to abstain from participating, directly or indirectly, in future elections, and calls upon the present members of the legislatures to tender their resignations and also calls upon the nation to concentrate attention upon the constructive programme of the Congress and authorizes the All-India Congress Committee, whenever it deems fit, to launch the programme of Civil Disobedience, including non-payment of taxes whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary.

3. This Congress congratulates the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, the Anti-Untouchability Committee and the Prohibition Committee on the vigorous prosecution of programmes entrusted to them, but notes with regret that the response from the nation has not been as adequate as the Congress had a right to expect. The experience gained by these Committees and by the All-India Spinners' Association show that far more effective work becomes possible through autonomous organizations created for specific activities and this Congress, therefore, hereby declares the foregoing Committees to be permanent, with complete autonomy and without any control or interference from the Congress and with powers to add to their number, to frame their respective constitutions and to raise funds, provided, however, that Congress reserves to itself full authority to disown or to disaffiliate any of these bodies when and if they

appear to the Congress to be acting contrary to national interest.

4. In order that the Congress may become a swift-moving and more efficient organization, it has become necessary to separate its spectacular, as distinguished from its practical and businesslike function, and to make it a more compact body, the Congress hereby resolves to reduce the number of delegates to under 1,000 and the A.I.C.C. to under 100, and hereby authorizes the A.I.C.C. to incorporate the necessary changes in the constitution and to make the necessary redistribution.

5. Inasmuch as the annual Exhibition in connection with the Congress is intended to be predominantly and progressively of an educative character and to further the programme of the boycott of foreign cloth through khaddar, this Congress authorizes and appoints a permanent Committee, composed of, or alternatively the A.I.S.A. with powers to co-opt local men to manage and conduct the whole of Exhibition and to raise funds for the purpose.

6. Inasmuch as the Congress is intended to be representative of the poor masses and inasmuch as holding of the Congress at the end of December involves very considerable expense to the poor people in providing for extra clothing for themselves and is otherwise inconvenient to them, the date of the Congress session is hereby altered to February or after, according to the convenience of the province concerned.

7. This Congress wholeheartedly endorses the idea propagated by the President of organizing Provincial National Services, and advises all provinces to initiate such services and to that end appoints permanent committees, with autonomous powers in the manner indicated in Resolution 3 regarding Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee and other committees.

The Hindustan Times, 28-12-1929

147. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

LAHORE,
December 26, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I have kept your letters for replying to them. Having some free time now, I am dictating this. Your argument against my suggestion regarding the use of Budhabhai's house appeals to me. It is correct. You have done right in lodging Chandrakanta's parents in the room adjoining Valjibhai's.

Our ideal, of course, is that a husband and wife should, having overcome desire, live either separately or together for the sake of service and adopt a mode of life which suits the nature of the work, exactly as two friends may do. But so long as such relationship has not been cultivated and the two can save themselves from the power of passion only with great difficulty, it is best—and it is a duty—to live separately. I think this answers all your questions. If you think, however, that any point is left out, please write to me.

Bhansali's idea certainly seems erroneous. But we tolerate it because he is a fine man, is frank of heart and says what he believes. He lives as our co-worker, and, moreover, is at present attacked by a disease. We should, therefore, tolerate him as long as we can.

I am not bound to Budhabhai by any promise. But it was I who drew him to the Ashram kitchen. I was happy when he said that he had taken a vow to have his meals in the Ashram kitchen for one year and told him that it was a good idea. This is all the binding there is on my part. But I don't look upon the thing in the nature of a binding. If he accepts my advice and goes a step further in the same direction, I would welcome it. This should not be interpreted to mean that I have bound myself by any promise. If, therefore, you and the managing committee come to an independent decision, I will get it accepted.

The consideration in favour of my view is that I have regarded . . . bhai¹ and . . . behn² as innocent, and still regard them so. Even if my belief is erroneous, I can discover my error only by taking their innocence for granted. If, however, my action has not produced a good effect on others in the Ashram, you should do what they think proper. For, a group that harbours suspicion about a person will not accept him. That is, they cannot behave frankly towards him. But this raises another issue, namely, if I believe a person to be innocent and you or others do not agree with me, they should not respect my wishes in regard to that person. It is morally wrong, untruthful, to respect them. I, on the other hand, can keep aside my own view in the matter and act upon the view of the group. I have done so in the past, and that is what duty requires. This raises no question of principle. It is a question of our experience, of our likes and dislikes or of error of judgment. If all the others regard the two as innocent, it becomes our duty as neighbours to accept both. If you have not followed this whole argument, note it among the points to be discussed with me.

It is very cold here. I believe that it would have been better if

¹ The name has been omitted.

² *ibid.*

some of those who have come had not done so. No one should have come besides those whom duty required to come.

I believe that I shall be able to return there earlier than I had expected. The necessity of having to stay here after the Congress has disappeared by itself. Do not, therefore, be surprised if I leave on the 30th.

According to me, we need do nothing about Mahadev. He will live on the same terms with us as at present. I am trying to arrange that he should live in the Ashram itself. I will write about other things if I get time.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have not revised this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4169

148. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.¹

LAHORE,
December 27, 1929

The first part of the resolution deals with the Delhi Manifesto² and it is based on political necessity, or wisdom as you may choose to call it. I and Pandit Nehru tried to get Dominion Status for the country and I must confess in spite of the best possible efforts we have been unsuccessful. I would like to mention one thing in this connection. I do not think the Viceroy is to blame in any way for this failure. We must praise his efforts to come to some agreement. But considering his point of view, I cannot lay any blame upon him. He was very courteous all through the interview we had with him and his manners were attended with sweetness. After all that has happened, I must say that no good can be expected of the Congress being represented in the Round Table Conference. So thinking about the question from all its aspects, we feel that no good can be had for the country by the Congress sending representatives to the Round Table Conference. I hope there will be no amendment to this part of the resolution.

The second part of the resolution is regarding the change of

¹ Gandhiji spoke in Hindi on the resolution on complete independence; *vide* Resolution 2, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

² *Vide* "All Parties Leaders' Joint Statement", 2-11-1929.

creed of the Congress. This again is nothing but the logical conclusion of the resolution passed in the Calcutta Congress last year.¹ The Madras Congress² had set up the ideal of swaraj within the Empire if possible and without it if necessary. And by the exigencies of circumstances, we are now compelled to declare that the Congress wants complete independence and fixes it as its “swaraj”. The Madras Congress did not actually change the objective of the Congress. The Calcutta Congress too did not take up definitely any attitude in regard to this matter. But now we are going to change our objective into definite form of complete independence.

Today, I do not want to say swaraj within Empire is possible at all, and we say clearly that swaraj means complete independence.

The third part of the resolution deals with how to work up this new creed of complete independence. The first step as suggested by the resolution is for boycott of legislatures and local bodies, or in other words we want that the legislatures both provincial and central should be boycotted by Congressmen. Not only that, the Congress further wants the boycott of local bodies such as municipalities, local boards, etc. It is no doubt a great step. But for the attainment of that great ideal of complete independence, we must have to take up such rather drastic steps. We must be now prepared for great struggles ahead. We must cease to have any more internal difference and dissensions. Another thing I want to make clear before you. Now that the Nehru Report on the line of Dominion Status will be declared to have lapsed, there cannot and should not be any further fighting over it and I hope the Sikhs and Muslims and all other sections who had one or other grievances against the Nehru Report will see no objection to join the Congress and unite within its fold for the battle of independence. Even if you have got unavoidable dissensions, still we should act unitedly within the Congress. If Mussalmans cut the throats of Hindus let them cut it. But the consolation there must be, that we have got freedom. Or if the Sikhs have got any quarrel either with the Hindus or Mussalmans, let them sink all such differences and unite within the Congress.

I never thought of going to the legislatures and I am glad that the same feelings are being entertained by other leaders regarding these legislative bodies. Now it is being widely felt that no good can be brought to the country by taking part in them and today we want to decide to leave them. As regards municipalities and local bodies, I

¹ *Vide* “Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-III”, 31-12-1928.

² In 1927

should like to say that the desired amount of good cannot also be had from these institutions, however self-governing they might be characterized. For example, I may mention that our President did yeoman service in the Allahabad Municipality. But at last he felt disgusted with it and left it. So, Babu Rajendra Prasad did much in the Patna Municipality and he too was disgusted in the long run and left it. If we want independence for the country, if we sincerely desire to have independence, we cannot afford to go inside these institutions which cause such distraction of our energy.

Therefore we should now have no hesitation in deciding that no longer do we want to go to the legislatures and local bodies.

It is clear that the non-payment of taxes is the final stage of the national fight and I admit we have not reached it. It is also clear that either you must do this work or that. Either you must choose to go to the councils and local bodies and stop to talk of civil disobedience or you must choose to boycott those places and concentrate all your energy for civil disobedience. There is no good in saying that both these things can be done side by side. If you like to take part in the legislatures and local bodies, I must frankly tell you that civil disobedience is an impossibility. Civil disobedience undoubtedly requires much discipline, much vigour and, most of all, absorbing concentration. If you go to the councils, you cannot work up all these absolutely requisite conditions for civil disobedience. If you want to do what has been done in Bardoli,¹ you should now cease to think about things such as the legislative councils, the Assembly, etc. It must be admitted that the country is not at present prepared for civil disobedience and the country must be prepared for it. If you want me to conduct the civil disobedience movement, I would conduct it. But you must be soldiers of the battle and you must acquire all that is required for civil disobedience.

In conclusion, Mahatmaji asked all not to vote for the resolution because he had moved it and said:

I want you to think about the whole resolution in all its aspects and implications properly and then to vote as you think best.

The Hindustan Times, 30-12-1929

¹ Bardoli Satyagraha.

149. DISCUSSION WITH SIKH LEADERS¹

December 27, 1929

It is understood that Mahatmaji placed before the Sikh leaders the text of the Working Committee resolution withdrawing the offer of Dominion Status. Mahatmaji, it is said, told them that he did not think it best to give the Sikhs special protection under the Nehru Report.

Since the Sikhs are not satisfied the Congress is prepared to review the question; but the situation has changed now and with the Working Committee withdrawing the offer of Dominion Status, the Nehru Report has automatically lapsed and no review of the question is called for.

Mahatmaji also made it clear that in an independent India the right shall not be apportioned on a communal basis; but, if at all communalism is made the basis of political rights, he shall see that satisfaction is given to the Sikhs.

The Bombay Chronicle, 28-12-1929

150. DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIDYAPITH

Kakasaheb is writing about what Gujarat Vidyapith has done and what it is trying to achieve. There is one bit of criticism, however, to which he cannot reply. Some say that the Vidyapith has met with disaster since he took charge of it. If it has been ruined, I am responsible for it, not Kakasaheb. This is because so long as the people are enamoured of me or are fond of me and largely accept my advice, I am responsible for the changes that have been made in the Vidyapith. I was primarily responsible for the boycott of Government schools and for formulating a policy for national education. This I must humbly say or admit. It was I who brought over Acharya Gidwani and it is I who asked him to step down. Kakasaheb was connected with the Vidyapith ever since its inception. Again, it was I who took him away from the Vidyapith. During Acharya Gidwani's term of office, the Vidyapith attracted students, land was bought for it and buildings were erected. Perhaps the Vidyapith would not be there if there were no Acharya Gidwani. He had promised me twice that he would readily come over whenever I summoned him. I received Vallabhbhai's telegram in Bhiwani in which he had suggested that Acharya Gidwani should take charge of the Vidyapith. He immediately agreed to do so. And in a few days, the first

¹ An informal conference between the Sikh leaders including Sardar Kharag Singh, Sardar Bahadur Mahtab Singh, Sardar Tara Singh and Sardar Amar Singh on the one side and Gandhiji, Motilal Nehru, Dr. Ansari, Dr. Satyapal and Sardar Sardul Singh on the other.

non-co-operation university in India was launched. The treaty that was made between Gujarat and Sind by bringing him over to the former place is still there. I withdrew Acharya Gidwani because of a difference of opinion that arose in the Vidyapith. That did not imply any slur on anyone. It is my conviction that even today, Acharya Gidwani belongs to Gujarat. He went over to Prem Mahavidyalaya because Gujarat sent him there. And today he is in Karachi, only as a delegate from Gujarat. At all the three places, it is hoped, the national viewpoint will be fostered. At all the three places, there will certainly be propaganda for khadi.

Acharya Kripalani was borrowed from the Kashi Ashram, which is his own creation. I relieved him as I had promised to do so. Under his leadership, too, the Vidyapith has not taken a retrograde step. At the time of the students' strike, we saw that he had stolen the hearts of the students. Acharya Kripalani was a second gift that Sind gave to Gujarat. Even today, he belongs to Gujarat. In my opinion, under his leadership also the Vidyapith has progressed. Although all may have a common ideal, there is naturally a difference in the work and character of every man. And, it is in accordance with this that an institution which is in charge of a particular person develops and takes on a distinct colour. However, in regard to the Vidyapith, I have felt that this variety has been as beautiful as the variety in the colours of a rainbow. Whereas one principal has strengthened one aspect of it, another has done the same for another aspect of it. The result has only been good. At present the rudder is in the hands of Kakasaheb. He has been moulding the Vidyapith. The Vidyapith has not crumbled; it is going ahead. So long as Kakasaheb is at the helm, all that needs to be said with regard to it is that anyone who has any doubts about it should go there and inspect it. Just as all the three principals have been complementary to one another, the periods to which they belonged also stand in the same relationship to one another. As all the three are fruits of the same tree, there is a continuity hidden behind their work. Not even one of them has wiped out what had been achieved before, but has added to the sum total of its achievements. The present state of the Vidyapith itself bears testimony to this. At the very inception of the Vidyapith, I had suggested a test for judging it; that holds good even today. The Vidyapith is going to be judged neither by its buildings nor by the number of its students, nor again by the knowledge of English that its students possess. It is going to be judged by the patriotism of its students, by their capacity to give to others the knowledge of the subjects which they have learnt, by their knowledge of Hindi, by their knowledge of the science of the spinning-wheel, by the strength of character of its students and

teachers, and by their turning towards the villages. Judged by these standards, it is my confirmed belief that the Vidyapith has taken forward strides and anyone who wishes to ascertain this can do so by going over to examine it. Just as a tree is judged by its fruit, the Vidyapith can be examined in a similar manner. It is not a distant institution about which an investigator would need a testimonial from me or from anyone else. Moreover, it is fair to scrutinize a thing personally, wherever this is possible and where such a scrutiny is necessary. After conducting this inquiry if it is felt that the Vidyapith has made continuous progress and has augmented its capacity to serve, it is only fitting that contributions should flow in to its doors.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 29-12-1929

151. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.¹

LAHORE,

December 29, 1929

The President has commanded me to address you to the amendments that have been moved. Mr. Kelkar has reminded me that I had said in my first speech that I did not want to speak again on the resolution. He is partially correct. What I said was that I would like to be silent as I do not want that at the time of voting you should be influenced by any appeal I might make to you. I wanted you to vote according to your conviction judging the resolution on its merits and leaving out of your mind considerations for me personally. But if you desire to hear me so that I may explain to you my views on the amendments and on the debate, it is your right to demand it and my duty to comply with.

VOICES: Mahatmaji, kindly address us.

I shall do so. Let me first apologize for my brief absences yesterday when the debate was continuing. I left only to meet nature's needs. I have listened with great care and attention to the speeches made on the resolution.

I would first utter a word of caution. The resolution submitted to you is a resolution proposed by the Working Committee. On dealing with the amendments to the resolutions you should be careful that the Working Committee has been appointed by you and they are your servants. You must have confidence in your servants that they would not press on you any resolution if they did not consider

¹ Gandhiji spoke first in Hindi and then in English.

it absolutely necessary after taking into consideration all aspects of the question. I would, therefore, urge you not to press any amendment unless you are very certain that the Working Committee is in the wrong and it is your duty to press the amendment.

This is also a rule which is observed in all well conducted and responsible organizations.

I shall not refer to the words 'in the existing circumstances' which has made several speakers to smell some loophole. I quite agree that it would not be correct to think that all doors for negotiations would remain closed for all times. There is bound to be a round table or a square table conference at some time or other. Many say that once we declare independence as our goal, there will be no conference for us. Even if you have violence as your creed there will have to be a peace conference. The only question is what will be discussed at that conference. I can tell you that now that Congress is declaring independence it would not be right for any Congressmen to go to any conference to discuss Dominion Status. Congressmen can enter any conference only to discuss independence.

Now a complaint has been made that we have not disclosed the conversations that took place between the Viceroy and Nehru and myself and other leaders in the agreed statement which has been published in the Press. Whatever you had the need to know, whatever you had the right to know has been conveyed. Nehru went to that meeting with the Viceroy as your ambassador and he ought to be relied upon. In view of what had been published regarding the conversations with the Viceroy the word 'in existing circumstances' are quite intelligible.

Pandit Malaviya and Mr. Kelkar have pleaded for postponement of the decision. I have great respect and affection for them. They have pleaded for the revival of the All-Parties Conference. Let me tell you that I have no regrets about the All-Parties Conference. It has done very valuable work. It has brought the Congressmen and the leaders of other parties together. It has enabled them to understand one another. It has brought about co-operation between them. It has brought the Liberals and other friends nearer to us. Therefore, I am fully alive to the very useful work done by the All-Parties Conference.

My reply to our friends like Pandit Malaviya and others is that we of the Congress have got our duty to perform. We have to chalk out our programme. The Viceroy's refusal to give an assurance that we wanted and non-fulfilment of other conditions makes our course of action clear.

At Calcutta I pleaded for the grant of two years' time. I would

have been glad if that had been granted. That would have given us more time to be prepared but to meet the wishes of our youth who wanted the pace of progress to be increased, I agreed to the reduction of the period from two years to one year. I must keep to my pledge. I believe that once the nation makes a resolve it ought to adhere to it whatever may be the consequence. Otherwise, it would be degrading. That is why I want you to declare for independence and keep your resolve. There are amongst us those who believe that we are not yet ripe to declare independence. If you are of that opinion and if you think that it is a wrong move to declare independence do not hesitate to say so. It is urged that we should postpone the declaration for independence until inter-communal unity has been attained. I do not agree with that view. Nations must, having once resolved, adhere to their resolves whether they have the support of only a handful or of millions. Of course, we must try to secure the support of the largest number of our countrymen.

Now I shall refer to boycotts. I have been asked why the boycott of courts and schools has been omitted. I may tell you frankly that I am never in favour of omitting any of the triple boycott. In fact, I want a fivefold boycott, but that is another matter. I am certainly for the triple boycott. That is my view. But are we ready for it? As one of the nation I must keep pace with the nation. I have therefore included only the boycott of councils and local bodies because of the feeling that time has not come for calling on the lawyers and the students. If you think the time has come to make that call and that call would be answered, do so.

I have been reminded in the discussion of council boycott of the valiant actions of President Patel. I yield to none in my admiration of President Patel's achievements. I recognize that he had enhanced the prestige and status of India and Indians, but neither President Patel nor the resolutions in the Assembly or the councils can give us independence. They would not get us Dominion Status either. The Working Committee was unanimous in adoption of boycott of councils.

As regards local bodies and municipalities I want to tell you that I had not included them in my original draft, but I do not believe that local bodies can do any good to national work. The experiences of Pandit Jawaharlal who was the Chairman of the Allahabad Municipality, of Babu Rajendra Prasad who was the Chairman of the Patna Municipality and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel who was the Chairman of the Ahmedabad Municipality confirm my view. I have no personal experience. I can however tell you that if Sardar Patel had not relieved himself from the Chairmanship of the Ahmedabad

Municipality there could have been no Bardoli campaign. I have not seen any local body having strengthened the people. I want the villagers to be strengthened. We ask for independence, but we are not prepared to forgo even the small benefits. We must be prepared to forgo small benefits. We must retain only those which would help us attain our goal. But these are my personal observations. The decision rests with you.¹

We can only non-co-operate step by step. Please do not tamper with the resolution as it is one united whole. But do not talk vaguely. Vote my resolution down if you do not believe in it or, amend it. I did not include the boycott of law-courts because I was not sure of response.

I shall now deal with the objections raised to the preamble of this resolution, namely, endorsement of the Delhi Manifesto and the appreciation of the Viceroy. The preamble is quite necessary. The leaders acted in obedience to the Calcutta Resolution in holding themselves in readiness for any conversations for the attainment or guarantee of Dominion Status. As regards appreciation of the Viceroy, Pandit Motilalji as well as myself feel that we have in the Viceroy a genuine person whose sincere aim is to secure peace. I think I can say it of the Viceroy. That is my impression as the result of my contact with the Viceroy. That is also Nehru's view.

I shall now come to the doubts expressed that independence cannot be attained by non-violence. I do not agree with that view. If you do not agree with me and if you do feel that violence should not be eschewed from consideration say so and change the creed. Do not stay your hands out of consideration for me. Do as your convictions tell you. Let me however tell you my conviction that if the nation carried out the non-violent programme loyally, there need not be any doubt about the attainment of our goal. Where is room for misgivings if we do not fill the Government treasury with our tax moneys, if our soldiers decline to serve and withdraw, if our lawyers boycott the courts, if our students boycott the schools? Where is the necessity for violence? For our nation with its three hundred millions of people there is no call for violence. But I do not want to say more to you on the efficiency and efficacy of non-violence after you have given this non-violent creed a trial for all these years. Now it is ten years and you have not been convinced about its potency. What can I say in its defence? Review the course of the last ten years. Look at the national awakening, at national assertion, at the freedom of opinion, association and action shown by the people. Are these not the fruits of the

¹ The paragraph which follows is from The Tribune.

working of the non-violent creed? But if you are not of my opinion, do not hesitate to vote against the non-violent creed but do not mean one thing and say another thing. Be frank, courageous and vote according to your convictions.

Mahatma Gandhi next spoke in English traversing the ground covered in his Hindi speech. He emphasized that his regard and affection for Malaviyaji and Mr. Kelkar and other friends could not possibly deflect him from the course which suggested itself to him as being in the interests of the nation. The step he and Pt. Motilal took at the meeting with the Viceroy as representatives of the Congress with the Calcutta resolution in view [was the only step they] could have taken and it was impossible for them today to recommend any other resolution. He knew that they had unanimity behind the All-Parties Conference but unanimity would be too great a price to pay if they had to sacrifice immediate Dominion Status. If they had broken that unanimity, they did so only to come together again, but not now on Dominion Status but on the platform of independence. He knew they would come in for a great deal of condemnation here, in England and elsewhere but they must run the risk in the interests of the nation.

As for that part of the resolution relating to the boycott of legislatures, Mahatma Gandhi declared himself still a believer not in the triple boycott alone but in fivefold boycott programme which he originally enunciated. But he could go only so far as the nation could go. There was no question of principle and when he saw that most valued associates and friends could not see eye to eye with him he loyally accepted their decision and went as far as he could with them in associating himself with the programme of entry into the legislatures. But when he found to his joy that their experience as they told him was that nothing more could be achieved through the councils than what had already been done, he put forward the idea of the boycott of legislatures. He could not say likewise in regard to the boycott of law-courts and schools but when the time came for it he would be glad to submit that also for consideration. But now as far as he could sense the opinion in the country there was yet no atmosphere for these two boycotts.

As for the boycott of local bodies it was adopted by the Working Committee on the suggestion of one member of it. This house was to judge whether these should be boycotted or not. But his view was that independence could not come through local bodies and the less they looked up to these agencies which were a creation of the Government and which had still to derive sustenance even to certain extent from the Government the better.

Much had been said about boycotting insurance companies, banks, etc. He for one would certainly try to give up every activity with which the Government was associated, but that had been an impossibility even for him, the author of non-co-operation. He was ashamed of having to make that confession but there it was.¹

As for the preamble to the resolution Mahatma Gandhi emphasized the creed of non-violence necessarily carried common courtesy.

If any Englishman meant well by India then this house would be unworthy of

¹ What follows is from *The Tribune*.

its trust if it did not show courtesy to him. He did not want to vindicate the independence by harming Englishmen. It would do Englishmen good if they retired from India, but he did not want to make them retire by firing a single shot.

Mahatma Gandhi proceeding explained that he had more effective means of making Englishmen retire from India. That was to cease to salaam them and to cease to pay tribute. The moment they all did that Englishmen would cease to be slave-holders. The last word was imperfectly heard. But there was no doubt that the impression which the Viceroy gave him and Pandit Motilal was that he was a sincere man.

Lastly Gandhiji addressed himself to the amendment that complete independence should be attained by all possible means and not necessarily by peaceful means. He said the nation had shed a large part of fear by the non-co-operation movement. If they had no trust in non-violence and truth vindicating not merely Dominion Status because that was buried once for all but even independence, then he asked them to respect it.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 31-12-1929 and *The Tribune*, 31-12-1929

152. LETTER TO ASHRAM WOMEN

LAHORE,
Silence Day, December 30, 1929

SISTERS,

I am writing this simply to let you know that I remember you on this Silence Day. I hope to arrive there on the 5th. It is very cold here. There is noise all around me. I am sitting in a meeting and shall not, therefore, try to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3714

153. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

LAHORE,
December 30, 1929

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

Though it is my Silence Day, Jawaharlal has dragged me to the Subjects Committee. Sitting in the meeting, I am writing letters. There is nothing special to write about to you. But wherever I happen to be on the Silence Day, I remember you all. That is why I write this.

I think we shall be able to start from here on the 3rd. A situation has arisen which does not permit me to go away.

It is very cold. Everyone feels it.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Everyone must have been introduced to Dr. Mehta. He must have been carefully looked after.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4170

154. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA R. VYAS

LAHORE,

Silence Day [December 30, 1929]

CHI. KANTA,

I was expecting your letter. I hope you, your mother and father are well. Now we shall be meeting very soon.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

155. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.—I'

December 30, 1929

With the President's permission I would refer to one matter before I speak on the resolution. Mr. Harisarvothamarao appealed to me on council boycott amendment² to omit the council boycott after having seen the strength of the feeling on the subject, seeing that it would result in fraternal war. Now Mr. Raja has appealed to me to delete the preamble³ to the main resolution seeing that the amendment has been retained by one vote only.

Mr. Harisarvothamarao has reminded me how I stayed my hands in Allahabad and asked me to do the same now. Now let me tell you that I would withdraw my proposal for the council boycott not once but hundred times if it was in my hands and also if I had hands and also if I thought it was in the interests of the country. I have

¹ Gandhiji spoke in Hindi.

² Which was lost, 116 voting for and 117 against

³ Moved by N. C. Kelkar and lost, 113 voting for and 114 against. The amendment sought to delete from the resolution the mention of appreciation of the Viceroy's services towards peaceful settlement of the national struggle.

placed the main resolution before you not on my behalf but on behalf of the Working Committee. If it had been left to me alone I would have placed before you a triple boycott. As regards an appeal to me to accept the amendment which has just been lost by a strength of one vote let me remind you that we claim to work under democratic constitution. One vote has today meant that the amendment has been lost, but one vote the other way could have easily meant the retention of the amendment. What you have to consider is whether the country would suffer by the loss of the amendment.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-12-1929

156. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C. –II

December 30, 1929

This Congress congratulates the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee, the Anti-Untouchability Committee and the Prohibition Committee on the vigorous prosecution of the work entrusted to them, but notes with regret that the response from the nation has not been as adequate as the Congress had the right to expect. Experience gained by these Committees and by the All-India Spinners' Association shows that far more effective work becomes possible through autonomous organizations created for specific activities. This Congress, therefore, hereby declares the foregoing Committees to be permanent with complete autonomy and with powers to add to their number, to frame their respective constitutions and to raise funds, provided that they shall follow the general policy of the Congress and further that the Congress reserves to itself full authority to disown any of these bodies when and if they appear to the Congress to be acting contrary to the national interest.¹

Mahatmajji then spoke.

As regards the resolution which has been submitted to you several questions have been asked. It has been asked: 'Is it intended to create an empire within the empire?' My reply is in the affirmative. Even they say *imperium in imperio*. I want you to give these Committees, which it is proposed to create, dominion status. You have given dominion status to the All-India Spinners' Association and the result is that they are carrying on work in 1,500 villages and the prestige of all the work which is done goes to the Congress. If the All-India Spinners' Association ever becomes anti-Congress in its tendency, then you can withdraw the permission that you have given them to use your name. Today the Congress is for khaddar. But we

¹ The resolution was placed before the Subjects Committee by Jawaharlal Nehru on behalf of Gandhiji. For the draft by Gandhiji, *vide* Resolution No. 3, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

have amongst us a school of thought which is against khaddar and works against it. Then we have also a school which believes that production of khaddar alone will not effect a complete boycott of foreign cloth and that mill-cloth also should be included in the Congress programme. The All-India Spinners' Association believes that khaddar would give us swaraj. If tomorrow the Congress fails to believe in khaddar and is of opinion that the policy of the Spinners' Association is against the policy of the Congress, it has only to pass a resolution at a general meeting and to disown that body. The Congress should, when such conflict arises, non-co-operate with that body.

Then it is asked what about the prestige, authority and strength the Spinners' Association would have attained during the time that it had the use of the name of the Congress. Yes, there is that risk. But you must be prepared to take risk. You must have the self-confidence that as long as the Congress works on lines of truth it alone will remain as the supreme body and that no subordinate body can ever usurp its authority or prestige. In history there are instances where such usurpations have taken place. But you must be willing to take that risk. There is no compulsion in this matter. This is one way of getting work done. To those who have a special taste for one kind of work the Congress says go forward and do good work in our name and with our approval. It results in good work being done and the Congress prestige and authority is enhanced thereby. In this connection I am reminded of the Chirala-Perala example. Duggirala Gopalakrishnayya, when he started the Chirala-Perala satyagraha¹, consulted me. I told him and when I went to Chirala-Perala I told the people that they must not take the name and authority of the Congress for their movement. They must do it on their own responsibility. If they succeed the Congress will get the credit. If they failed they would take the odium.

Here I am proposing to you something reverse. Under this resolution work will be done and the Congress will get the credit. But it would not give money. It would not exert itself. It is open to you today to wind up the Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee as also the Prohibition Committee and the Anti-Untouchability Committee. For the last two years I have been trying to do anti-untouchability work through Jamnalalji.

Not much work could be done for long years. Meanwhile the Calcutta Congress² passed a resolution appointing the Anti-

¹ *Vide* "Chirala-Perala", 25-8-1928.

² In 1928

untouchability Committee and the work was entrusted to Jamnalalji who was able to achieve some result and the credit for it went to the Congress. It is not the main work of the Congress to take full responsibility for social work. It should at the same time promote it. The Congress is a political body in which there are bound to be frequent differences of opinion. I would urge to have a far-sighted vision and to create these Committees and to let them do good work by organizations which are of their own making and with money which they collect.

I am your servant. I am bound to your service. Let me tell you frankly. What is the good of ignoring facts? It is not easy to get all the money which the Congress would want for all these purposes. In the name of the Congress I can tell you so. From my experience in my wide travelling I note and observe many things. In Andhra and in the United Provinces I had to face several questions regarding the Congress fund. They ask what happened to the Tilak Swaraj Fund? Who spent it? And how did you spend it? Where is the account? Then they also say, 'We will give you money in your name. We will give it to you but not to the Congress.' I tell them give it to me in any name. I shall render you account for every pie and I now ask you let me spend this money on the objects which the Congress approves today. But in return I ask you to grant these Committees dominion status. As regards the Congress we ought to know what response we get for our appeals for funds. We levied a tax of one per cent on the income and to our shame we know how few have paid the levy. These Committees want from you no money, no men but only permission to work in your name. But you who cannot find money or men say: 'No we must have control.' I tell you that you have no right to it. If you had that right you would not be granting to these Committees dominion status which I beg of you to give to them. There it is. Give these Committees dominion status or do not. But let there be no misconception. I tell the foreign Government that independence is my right. But I tell you, I beseech you, I beg of you to give me dominion status or freedom for these Committees. But do as you think right.

But let me make one appeal to you in connection with the main resolution. You have tried your strength with me for two days. You are free to do so in the open Congress also on that resolution. I am prepared to meet you and fight with you. But please do not be obstructive in respect of other resolutions. Show that you have the sense of value of time. Please be businesslike. You refuse to be businesslike. You take two days over one resolution. You give no time to the Working Committee and then you take it to task for not supplying copies of the resolution to you. Is that right? Is that

workable? I read in the papers recently that the annual meeting of the Bank of England which is concerned with the management of crores of rupees was over in thirteen and a half minutes. Let us learn from them. I appeal to you to decide as you like, but to be businesslike and to have less of speeches. Ask questions to get information, but do not argue because it would be an expenditure of time.

Replying to Dr. Rahim, Mahatmaji said that these Committees were proposed on the principle of specialization of work. Mahatmaji instanced the work which Dr. Hardikar was doing through the Hindustani Seva Dal in the name of the Congress, but under an autonomous constitution. Continuing, Mahatmaji said:

If the Congress wants to keep everything in its hand then there would be no doing of work and no progress. There are some people who have a taste for one kind of work only and who are prepared to give their time and energy for specific purposes. They should be mobilized in the service of the objects which the Congress has in view and which would also enhance its prestige.

Replying to Mr. Ramanarayan Singh, Gandhiji said that it was true that in certain cases khaddar had to be popularized on the basis of its economic appeal only. Khaddar had both economic and political aspects. In Rajputana as also in some other States khaddar was 'red rag' to the rulers. In such cases khaddar was presented in its economic aspect. Gandhiji said:

I went the other day to one Chief Justice and asked him for money for khaddar. He said it is political. I said it may have political effects, but you have nothing to do with it. It's humanitarian.

Replying to Mr. Aney, Gandhiji said that once the Committee was created the Congress would have no voice in its personnel.¹

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1930

157. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C. –III

December 30, 1929

I know you have just now thrown out one resolution moved by me and you may throw off this resolution too. But because you like to overthrow some resolutions, the Working Committee and myself cannot stop our work. The members of the Working Committee are your servants and they must perform their work whatever decisions

¹ The resolution was then put to vote and defeated by an overwhelming majority.

² Gandhiji spoke after moving the resolution on reduction in the number of delegates to the A.I.C.C. For the text, *vide* Resolution No. 4, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

you may make upon their work. Since you seem to have lost your confidence in your Working Committee I think you should elect a separate Working Committee of yours. Since the Nagpur Congress¹ I have been urging upon this important change in the Congress constitution. I am confirmed in my belief that delegates are too heavy for the Congress to proceed with its work smoothly, promptly and in a businesslike manner. I also believe that 350 members for the All-India Congress Committee are also too heavy. I feel it my duty to place before you a programme for your work and it is for you to decide it. You must fully realize what your work is. I would like to urge upon you that if you do not pass this resolution today you will have to pass it tomorrow or the day after. If you so . choose you may elect another Working Committee of yours. But so long as this Working Committee is there you should see that whatever is placed by it is passed. I am convinced that the demonstrative part of the present-day Congress should be separated. It means a lot of waste of money and energy. This resolution means concentration of the Congress force. If you have not got so many members in the Assembly why should you think it proper that the All-India Congress Committee should have such a number of members? You talk of National Parliament. You should then realize what should be the size of your National Parliament. If the Congress wants to spread away all over the country it should concentrate on its programme. You want civil disobedience. But you can never expect civil disobedience to be a practical thing with such an unwieldy national body which is to set to the work: I am living for civil disobedience and if need be I will carry on civil disobedience separately. You can never think of civil disobedience with such indiscipline as exists there today. I do not want to say more on the resolution. Now you are to decide in any way you like.²

The Bombay Chronicle, 1-1-1930

158. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION , LAHORE-I

December 31, 1929

Mr. M. K. Gandhi . . . moved the following resolution:

This Congress deplores the bomb outrage perpetrated on the Viceroy's train and reiterates its conviction that such action is not only contrary to the creed of the Congress but results in harm being done to the national cause. It congratulates the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party including the poor servants on their fortunate and narrow escape.

¹ In 1920

² The resolution was declared lost by 111 against 101 votes.

After speaking in Hindustani Mr. Gandhi continued:

MR. PRESIDENT AND FRIENDS,

I have been asked to give you in English the substance of what I have said. In my opinion, it will be a good beginning if our resolutions dealing with the task before the Congress are passed unanimously. In appearing before you I have realized my responsibility in the matter to the fullest and my certain conviction is that the Congress will fail in its obvious duty if it does not record this resolution. You find the reason for it stated in the resolution itself. So long as the Congress creed remains what it is, namely, that we want to attain swaraj, not by any means, but by peaceful and legitimate means, it is our bounden duty to take note of anything that happens in India in breach of that condition. You might be told, as I dare say you will be told, that when people who do not belong to the Congress organization and are not connected with it in any shape or form do particular acts which may be contrary to our creed, we are in no way and in no sense responsible. Those who think like that have, I say in all humility, little sense of the tremendous responsibility that rests on their shoulders; and they have little sense also of the great status that belongs to the Congress. We either claim to represent the thirty crores of Hindustan or we do not. If we claim to represent them, as I, a humble Congress worker, most certainly do, and as I hope, you also do, then it is our duty to consider ourselves responsible for anything that any single person born in Hindustan may do and it does not matter to me in the slightest whether that person is a reasonable human being or whether he belongs to the C.I.D. I hope that you consider the C.I.D. Indians also to be our kith and kin. Every Indian we expect to convert by our deeds to our creed and use his services in the attainment of our goal. Not only that, but the resolution states, and I hope you believe it, that such acts do great harm to the national cause.

I do not wish to take up your time by drawing your attention to the various landmarks in the history of the Congress, which would enable you to prove to your own satisfaction that each bomb outrage has cost India dear. You may say, if you wish to, that the reforms that were obtained could not have been obtained without bomb outrages or without violence. Let me tell you that every one of these reforms has cost far more than you would care to pay. We have paid millions in exchange for mere toys.

The Congress Resolution also congratulates the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party including the poor servants. In my humble opinion it is a natural corollary to what has been said in the previous

part of the resolution, that we congratulate the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party. We lose nothing by using common courtesy. Not only so; we would be guilty of not having understood the implications of our creed if we forget that those Englishmen, whether in authority or not, who choose to remain in India are our charge, that we who profess this creed of non-violence should consider ourselves trustees for the safety of their lives. We have a tremendous military burden which is crushing the starving millions who are living in the 700,000 villages of India. That military burden is really not due to the necessities of frontier defence, but let me assure you, that burden is due to the fact that thirty crores of people are held bond-slaves by a few thousand Englishmen coming all the way from England. If we would get rid of this military burden at any stage, it would be a necessity of the case that we hold the lives of those whom we may even consider our enemies as a sacred trust. That is the clearest possible implication, in my humble opinion, of the creed of non-violence for the political salvation of India, and if you hold with me, then it is not only a matter of courtesy on your part, but it is a matter of duty to tender our congratulations to the Viceroy and Lady Irwin and their party including the servants, and tender congratulations, if you will, to ourselves also. I hope that after having listened to everything that might be said against this resolution you will pass it unanimously and heartily.¹

BROTHERS AND SISTERS,

I know I have spoken enough on this resolution and the less I speak now the better. But strong faith in some particular thing sometimes impels one to speak on in its favour in the hope that it might convince others. This impulse has drawn me here again.

Your Congress is about to undertake a major task. It is in the offing. All of you have assembled here in this Congress with great hopes, namely, to define swaraj as complete independence. To my mind we can be completely independent only when we preserve the liberty of different communities residing in India. In the light of what I have told you—provided you consider it right—what is our duty today? We should be able to assure each and every Englishman, even a child, that his safety is the sacred concern of those Indians who seek independence. We do not say this out of any fear. It is quite possible that in the heat of excitement you may not follow my viewpoint but I am sure later on you will also be persuaded to it.

¹ A debate on the resolution followed in which M.A. Ansari, Swami Govindanand, Purushottamdas Tandon and others spoke, What follows is translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

Several friends have opposed this resolution. In the opinion of Swami Govindanand and Dr. Alam this resolution is unwarranted. Let me tell you that if we oppose this resolution it means we are not true to the creed of non-violence—and Dr. Alam claims to be a votary of non-violence. Whatever we do, we should be able to say unhesitatingly, “Yes, we have done it.” The atmosphere, however, has changed lately. It is being suggested that no note should be taken of a recent violent outrage. The argument advanced is: “Let us go our way and let them go their way.” But I can assure you that this is not the way to attain independence. When we claim that the Congress is the largest organization in India, nothing should deter us from registering the views of the Congress regarding such incidents in the country.

If you want to reject the resolution, do so by all means. If you desire to discard the creed of the Congress, you are welcome to do so. But if the Congress creed remains what it is, then you cannot but adopt this resolution. One thing more—it has pained me to hear that the youth would be enraged at the adoption of this resolution by the Congress and they may leave the Congress. What does this mean? It is not as if I do not know the younger generation. I have come in contact with young men by thousands . . . even in Europe. I claim that not one of them has opposed me in anything. Even here they come to confer with me. If I emphatically proclaim in the Congress what I consider the truth, I daresay that not a single young man would desert me. Granting, however, that young men are not happy about it, even then, at the risk of their displeasure we shall continue doing our duty in the best interests of the country. May God endow us with strength to follow the better course. The moment I forsake my duties in apprehension that others might abandon me, I shall consider myself unworthy of being a servant of the Congress. If you have faith in the Congress, then your duty is to do what you consider right.

You are votaries of independence. You are going to undertake major tasks—do national work—but I would submit to these friends that they lack the strength for all that. They are trying to cover up their weakness. They aspire to attain independence, whether they have the strength or not. They are trying to talk big. But I wish to tell them that we ought to cleanse our hearts if we decide to launch the new programme.

It is being alleged that this resolution smells or rather stinks of cowardice. I would like you to consider which part in this resolution amounts to flattery of Englishmen. Nothing here can be called flattery. Congress has abandoned all forms of flattery. May I request you to give up the suspicion that we are airing independence and flattery in the same breath. That man is a coward who gives up his

duties. Why should a person, who is not afraid of anyone except God, fear the partisans of the bomb? I for one have faith in nothing but our duties—and our creed. There may be persons who have no faith in the creed of the Congress and pay it only lip-service, but the Congress must express its opinion on acts of violence or terrorism. Even at the cost of displeasure or rage of the persons concerned, the Congress must voice its opinion. Whenever this was done, people have become infuriated. May I hope that the young men have grasped my viewpoint? I simply want you to bear in mind that you have come here as delegates. You have taken a pledge, you believe in God, you believe in Truth and if you believe in the Congress you must decide now whether you adhere to it or not. If you have faith in God then with God as your witness take the right step. If, however, you come to the conclusion that the resolution is not correct, then reject it by all means.¹

Report of the 44th Indian National Congress, Lahore

159. SPEECH AT CONGRESS SESSION, LAHORE—II

December 31, 1929

This Congress endorses the action of the Working Committee in connection with the manifesto signed by party leaders including Congressmen on the Viceregal pronouncement of the 31st October relating to Dominion Status, and appreciates the efforts of the Viceroy towards a settlement of the national movement for swaraj. The Congress, however, having considered all that has since happened and the result of the meeting between Mr. M. K. Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru and other leaders and the Viceroy, is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. This Congress, therefore, in pursuance of the resolution passed at its session at Calcutta last year, declares that the word “swaraj” in Article I of the Congress constitution shall mean complete independence and further declares the entire scheme of the Nehru Committee’s Report to have lapsed, and hopes that all Congressmen will henceforth devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of complete independence for India. As a preliminary step towards organizing a campaign for independence and in order to make the Congress policy as consistent as possible with the change of creed this Congress resolves upon a complete boycott of the central and provincial legislatures and committees constituted by Government and calls upon Congressmen and others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating directly or indirectly in future elections, and directs the present Congress members of the legislatures and committees to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the nation zealously to prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress and

¹ The resolution was then put to vote and declared carried.

authorizes the All-India Congress Committee whenever it deems fit to launch upon a programme of civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary.¹

MR. PRESIDENT, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Please tell me whether or no you are able to hear me. (No, no.) I hope now you can hear me. Please be kind and listen to me. (Laughter) If you do so, you are likely to gain but if you do not, I don't mind. (Laughter) I shall read out the second resolution copies of which are already in your hands.

If you will kindly permit me I would like to omit reading the resolution. Since you have the resolution in English I hope you must have understood to some extent. With your permission, therefore, I shall not read out the resolution but only explain its purport in Hindi. In the first place, it is a lengthy resolution constituting the very basis of future Congress programme. That is why I wish that all of you must have a clear conception and a firm conviction as regards this resolution.

We have tremendous tasks lying ahead of us. I submit that we should strive to carry on our programme. The first part of the resolution states that the Congress approves the action of the Working Committee regarding the manifesto signed by our leaders replying to the Viceregal announcement of the 31st October, and laying down specific conditions for attending the Round Table Conference.

In the second part it is said that the Congress appreciates the Viceroy's efforts towards a settlement of the national movement for swaraj.

The third part of the resolution states that notwithstanding the appreciation mentioned above, the Congress, having considered the outcome of the meeting between Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Jinnah, etc., and the Viceroy, considers that nothing is to be gained in the present circumstances by the Congress being represented at the Round Table Conference. The Congress delegates, therefore, ought not to attend the Round Table Conference, if there is one. Many others may go but we have to decide what we ought to do.

In a resolution passed at last year's Congress session at Calcutta, swaraj was defined, in political terms, as complete independence.

¹ For the draft of the resolution by Gandhiji, *vide* Resolution No. 2, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929. What follows is translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

Henceforth it becomes our immediate objective. That is why the Congress wants to declare that Nehru Report, which we wanted the British Government to accept, has lapsed since the time-limit fixed for its acceptance at Calcutta has come to an end. As the British Government has failed to accept it within a year the Nehru Report ceases to exist for the Congress. All this is covered in the resolution. The Congress, therefore, expects that all the organizations working under it shall do their utmost for the attainment of complete independence. The resolution goes on to say that since the Congress has subscribed to complete independence we have to work in consistence with that creed. Accordingly, the Congress now resolves not to participate in the Assembly and Council elections, and has enjoined upon the present Congress members of the Assemblies and Councils to resign their seats. The Congress has hereby made a vigorous appeal to the nation—to the masses—to devote themselves with zeal and vigour to the constructive programme of the Congress, viz., khadi, removal of untouchability, etc. Moreover, the Congress is empowering the All-India Congress Committee to launch a programme of civil disobedience—including non-payment of taxes—whenever and wherever it finds conditions favourable. I would like to tell you that this resolution authorizes total civil disobedience.

I do not want to speak any more on the resolution at present. You must have noticed that some ten or twelve amendments have been moved to it. I shall not take up your time any longer as I wish to give some rest to you as well as to myself. Please listen carefully to whatever is being said in opposition to this resolution. One word of caution I must utter. The first part of the resolution is just a statement—in no way does it amount to flattery of the Viceroy. In fact it is something separate. Another matter to be considered is the proposed resignations from the Assemblies and Councils. I would like you to listen to the debate bearing these things in mind. Actually this lengthy resolution is one organic whole and it should be discussed as such. The resolution seeks to implement the decision taken by the Congress at its Calcutta session. I leave it to you, having heard the arguments, to accept what is good and reject the rest. (Laughter)¹

MR. PRESIDENT, SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

I hope the loudspeakers now work properly. (Laughter) Are they all right?

[VOICES]: Yes, yes.

¹ Then followed a debate in which Motilal Nehru, Madan Mohan Malaviya, N. C. Kelkar, S. C. Bose and others spoke. What follows is translated from Gandhiji's speech in Hindi.

To begin with, I owe an apology to you all. I could not be present here to hear the debate on the resolution, on the refutations and the amendments. It might be considered a discourtesy on my part, but I am sorry I could not help it. Since I was feeling very exhausted I retired with the kind permission of the President. Moreover, you know, one cannot resist nature and I had to attend nature's call. I have come back on being summoned. I am a little sorry that I could not listen to what my friends had to say on this subject. Nevertheless, as I have read all the amendments and heard these friends argue in the Subjects Committee, I can imagine what they must have spoken.

Moreover, I do not believe in arguing and answering. If I simply say what I wish to convey that in itself serves my purpose to a considerable extent. When I said that the resolution should be read out my venerable friend, Pandit Motilal, explained it in Hindi and also gave its genesis. The President asked me to address you in English to enable the Tamil and Bengali friends also to follow me. I told the President that I had nothing new to say. As is already known to you, we had gone to the Viceroy as your message-bearers; and now I stand before you with his response. The Working Committee's reaction was put before the Subjects Committee and now it has come to you.

You must have noticed that this resolution consists of three parts—no doubt they could be further sub-divided. I wish to comment on all the three parts. The first part is the preamble or introduction. It reiterates 'complete independence'. The moment has arrived for realizing the resolve made earlier. The next part gives the reasons behind this reiteration. It spells out what the Viceroy did and how the Working Committee reacted. You must all have a clear grasp of the whole story. This resolution is like an edifice. If a brick is removed, the structure is weakened; if a wall is taken away the edifice collapses. It means that if you reject a part of this resolution you disfigure it—you topple its whole structure, you mutilate its form. If you understand this I ask you to kindly reject all the amendments.

Let us consider one point. Every year you appoint a Working Committee whose duty it is to decide what should be done in the interests of the Congress all the year round. It is left to the discretion of the Working Committee to frame an issue and thereafter place it before you. If the ultimate responsibility is left with the Working Committee it might result in harm. Hence it is open to you to amend its decision as you desire. The Working Committee places the resolution before the Subjects Committee and only after being scrutinized there it is brought to you. That is why I would request you not to make any change now in the resolution which is being moved in the names of Panditji and myself.

Let us see the issues posed here. One is in respect to the Viceroy. I emphatically say that votaries of independence will never renounce their fundamental principles, viz., their steadfastness, valour and courage. Courage does not mean arrogance. You ought not to oppose this part of the resolution. A truly courageous person will not hesitate to pay a compliment even to his enemy. Granted that being a representative of the British Empire the Viceroy is our enemy—as we regard the British Empire our enemy so we do its representative—nevertheless even enemies are after all human beings. It is, therefore, a gesture which we owe to humanity as such—but the Viceroy wields authority and rules the nation. It is, however, our duty towards any and every human being. It is true that the Viceroy works for the interests of the Empire. Still whatever good efforts he has made have been appreciated here. Since this topic was discussed in the Subjects Committee I have spoken a few words here also on it.

I would like to speak on other amendments as well. According to one of them the phrase ‘existing circumstances’ should be deleted. In this respect I shall state most humbly that I do not imagine that our delegates need ever go to the proposed Conference. Whenever England is constrained to call the Conference we have in mind, it might become imperative for us to attend it, but not under the existing circumstances. I would like to clarify that such an eventuality can arise and our delegates may then attend a conference. If you take away the phrase ‘existing circumstances’ you will leave a void there. It is, therefore, not open for you to delete it.

Another issue discussed in the Subjects Committee was in regard to the Councils. My friend Jamnadas Mehta has argued that Gandhi has not said that Councils should be boycotted. To this I shall have to say that you are free to do what you like. However influential a person may be, he cannot issue commands. Who am I? Considering myself a humble servant of the nation, I only draft resolutions. Hence what authority do I have to issue commands? I can only offer advice. Of course, I tender it with all the good intentions and only after having gone into the pros and cons of the matter. I agree that you can gain as much as you desire from the Councils and the Assemblies for your near and dear ones and not only for them but for your country as well. You can have grants amounting to thousands of rupees for the schools. People keep domestic animals like dogs and bullocks, so were slaves kept at one time. These animals do get something to eat; even slaves are fed. But mind you, an animal is after all an animal. No doubt some benefit or other can be had from the Councils but if you aspire to attain complete independence what can you achieve there?

I for one have faith in the boycott of schools and courts as well.

I believe in the boycott of many other things. But as I can only give my advice, I try to co-operate with others, hence I wish to take up only those steps which are approved by others. For example, Pandit Motilalji has gained some experience by working in the Councils. His achievements there have done some good to the nation. He, if not others, has today turned against the Councils. You are aware that at one time these friends resolved to enter the Councils and I agreed as I thought that since they were so keen about it they should have their way. But now they have had enough of it. You have assembled here in thousands. If from your experience you conclude that Councils are essential and but for them the attainment of swaraj will be delayed, then give up the council boycott by all means; but if your experience proves otherwise then please think it over. I believe that the Councils will not be of any good to us, so does Pandit Motilalji. Moreover, he has come to this conclusion after his own experience. Therefore if you are convinced of it please reject the amendments and retain the boycott.

Now let us come to the schools. It is being proposed why not boycott the schools also. I do desire that all the young boys should sacrifice themselves on the altar of the nation. At least those above sixteen should enter the arena, but do we have the atmosphere? I say it is not there. What sort of education are our boys receiving? Of what avail could that education be which is financed from the 25 crore rupees of the revenue derived from liquor and opium? But is it possible today to convince people about this? Years have rolled on and we have seen things for ourselves. Do you think that lawyers would boycott the courts and break stones or spin? Not a single lawyer would do so. Everyone wants to have good food, and money to spend. These lawyers argue that if they boycott the courts they would not be able to pull on. In 1920, when a call was given to boycott the courts, Pandit Motilal and Deshbandhu Chitta Ranjan Das responded, but not the other lawyers. The conditions are not ripe for undertaking these boycotts simultaneously, hence this omission. We do not say that it would be wrong on the part of the lawyers if they would leave their practice and proceed to the villages to participate in the constructive programme but we do feel that the requisite atmosphere has not been created yet.

Besides these, there are other amendments too, but I do not want to go into all of them. One topic, of course, is there, viz., civil disobedience. You want it and I also want it. I would like to say a few words about it. It has been suggested that civil disobedience should be launched throughout the length and breadth of India. I wish I could do so but I think the time is not yet. This task has

been delegated to the All-India Congress Committee but I do not consider that even the All-India Congress Committee will be able to initiate it under the present circumstances. For that you should be peaceful and calm—should have faith in the Congress creed. It is alleged that persons violating laws are criminals, but I declare that mere disobedience of laws does not constitute sin or crime; on the contrary it can have some virtue. But, mind you, only that person is entitled to disobey law who is calm and collected—who believes in the Congress creed, approves it and acts upon it. Today I find that everyone is for division. We do see nothing conducive to civil disobedience. Today I do not see the environment wherein we can challenge the Empire within a month or so. God willing we may do so. His power is great. But perhaps He knows that we are in error at the moment.

The young men who desire to overthrow the Empire by simply waving red pamphlets and flags will be of no help to us. To attain freedom we must cultivate strength. Several persons are of the opinion that strength is generated by drawing the sword, not by remaining peaceful. I prefer to say that we should calmly face the enemy's assault. Brave were those Sikhs who got themselves massacred in 1921, 1922. I admit and believe that cool courage is mightier than the sword. Cool courage can very well implement civil disobedience. If one thinks that complete independence cannot be achieved through peaceful means, it implies that he has no faith in cool courage. The moment we acquire cool courage, complete independence will be ours.

After all what does independence mean? Independence means freedom of the 7 lakh villages. Therefore I ask you to reject the amendments and pass the resolution.

Another amendment suggests the continuation of the *status quo* till February; let no decision be taken just now, it says, let an All-Parties Convention be summoned. I do not approve of this and I feel that it would produce no results. According to another amendment it is being proposed that along with civil disobedience we may set up a parallel government to frighten this Government. This amendment has been moved by Subhas Chandra Bose. At Calcutta too this proposition was mooted. I have great regard for Subhas Chandra Bose. But he considers me just an old man of sixty. It is true that I have grown weak and he can physically lift me up if he desires to. But I claim I am still young at heart. (Laughter) I can outdo younger men. That is why I claim that notwithstanding the belief that

one becomes Senile after sixty, I do not feel so at all. I think even today I can control young people. Supposing today I am offered a horse to ride, I shall gladly accept it—I shall not ride the horse myself (Laughter) but I shall lead it; for holding the reins Jawaharlal Nehru is there. (Laughter) Today the reins of the nation are in the hands of the youth. It is up to them to strive unitedly for the independence of the country. Let them not say afterwards that the opportunity was not offered to them. It is being alleged that I think too much of Jawaharlal. I do not deny it. I find that he is keen on work. It would be highly detrimental if you do not unite to work. The programme of parallel government will yield no benefit. We are not yet prepared for parallel government. We ought not to bite more than we can chew.

You have to carry on propaganda in 7,00,000 villages. So far nothing has been done there. It is hard to find even 7,00,000 Congress members in those villages. Our villagers are not even familiar with the name of the Congress. Under such circumstances instead of talking of parallel government we should work in the villages—should educate the villagers. Only after having accomplished this much can we think of parallel government. The hour is not ripe for it today.

Friends, I have had my say regarding the amendments. And having analysed the resolution I have made it clear to you what ought to be accepted. That is why I earnestly say that you are welcome to reject the resolution if you desire to do so but for heaven's sake do not mutilate it. It is far better to kill a handsome man than chop off his nose or ears. It is not decent to chop off ears and noses. (Laughter) It is wrong to do so. Do not try it. The thing has been placed before you; you may keep it if you like it or reject it if you don't.¹

Now a few words to the friends from the south and to the friends from Bengal. Twice I got a note as I was coming here, from one of the delegates, that now it was high time that, in the Congress at least, nothing but the Rashtra Bhasha, Hindi or Hindustani, was spoken and heard. That is really a counsel of perfection. Years have rolled by and yet even delegates have not fitted themselves for conducting the proceedings in the national language. I hope that next time when we meet we will all come prepared to understand everything that may be said here in Hindustani; but today let us face facts as they are and understand that there are some who do not understand Hindustani, and for their sake I will say only a few words.

With reference to the amendments that have been moved in

¹ Gandhiji then spoke in English.

connection with this resolution, I want to use the same simile that I have used in Hindustani that this resolution has got to be considered as a whole, as a building or as a whole picture. He who destroys a part of the picture or a part of the building destroys the whole of it. You take off a few bricks here or a wall there from the building and it is bound to topple; it has become shaky; it is not the building that had been conceived by the architect. Similarly with a picture. You paint a picture and any interference with a part of it destroys the whole of the picture. The Working Committee gave all the skill that they were capable of commanding to the framing of the resolution. Then it went into the Subjects Committee and there it was sought to make it undergo all sorts of changes and now it has come to you. Now, it is really for you either to reject that proposition *in toto* or to accept it *in toto*, but not to interfere with it or disturb it. There are amendments, for instance, to strike out the phrase 'in the existing circumstances'. I assure you that it has a definite place there. It is time that we realized that some day or other we shall have to meet in conference with the enemy for the establishment of independence. The phrase is necessary. But it is equally true that that phrase makes it incumbent on the Congress not to be represented in a conference where independence is excluded.

Similarly there is the appreciation of the efforts of the Viceroy in connection with the swaraj settlement. Either you believe the testimony of your two chosen representatives or you reject that testimony. If you really believe that your representatives have told you the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth when they say: "The Viceroy seemed to us to mean well; he was courteous throughout; he patiently went through the whole thing as if two friends had met"—if you accept all this testimony, does it not behove you, is it not a matter of common courtesy, is it not your bounden duty to appreciate that effort, if, as I say, you believe their testimony? If, on the other hand, you do not believe their testimony, then you must hound them out of the Congress. It is not a sign of courage that one should be ashamed of saying what one feels; but it is a sign of decided courage when a man openly admits the good that even his enemy does. As a matter of fact a people that are pledged to the creed of non-violence will always go out of their way to perform an act of courtesy to the enemy, to think well of the enemy and to see hope where there seems to be utter darkness, because a man of truth and non-violence is always filled with hope. Hope begets hope, hope begets courage and hope therefore begets decisive action. Therefore as men pledged to a creed of this character it is your double duty to accept this statement in the original resolution and summarily to reject

the amendments that have been moved.

Then there is the question of boycott of the legislatures. I can only say with reference to it that it is supported by the testimony of some of those who went into the legislatures with high hopes, and amongst these towering above all is Pandit Motilal Nehru. When he who did brilliant work in the Assembly and commanded the respect even of his opponents says that we can make no further progress in the legislatures his testimony is final for me as it should be for you also. I have no personal experience of these legislatures, but I have got the fixed immovable conviction that what I used to say about the legislatures and the rest in 1924 applies even today, if possible with greater strength.

Again it is said that if you boycott the legislatures, why not boycott the schools and the law-courts? It is a perfectly consistent and logical proposition, but mankind is not governed always by logic and consistency alone. Sometimes mankind gets illogical; it vindicates its weakness as also its strength by being frankly and even brutally inconsistent. Inconsistent we are in boycotting the legislatures and not boycotting the schools and the law-courts and the post office and the railways and what not. But there comes our wisdom in understanding our limitations and the Working Committee did understand those limitations; and although the proposition was contested in the Subjects Committee, the majority of the Subjects Committee have come to the conclusion that we may no longer go to the legislatures, and that we have got strength enough to remain outside the legislatures. There is one stock argument, I know, that no matter what you do your places will never remain vacant; but it is not the idea that the places should remain vacant. If there is an opium den and if you imagine that fifty thousand people go there including yourselves, will we hesitate to empty that opium den because somebody else will go and occupy that place? I am quite certain that we will not. If we believe that the legislatures are played out for the nation and for the Congress, then it is wisdom for us to stay out. That others will occupy our places is not a relevant consideration. The relevant consideration is this: can we or can we not, in terms of complete independence, go to these legislatures or hasten our progress towards our goal by entering or remaining in the legislatures? If you feel that we can hasten our progress towards independence by going into these legislatures, by all means go there. I will not talk to you now about the oath that has got to be taken in the legislatures, though for a man like me that also

becomes a conclusive argument.

As for the boycott of the schools and law-courts, as I have told you, I do not see today the atmosphere about us necessary for such boycott. If there is no such atmosphere, what is the use of putting in a clause which is not going to be operative, which is not going to be acted upon by the very people to whom it is addressed ?

Then there comes the question of civil disobedience. Civil disobedience is a thing which I swear by because I possibly cannot conceive India winning her freedom by criminal disobedience; and criminal disobedience means the bomb and the sword. I can conceive of freedom and independence being achieved by and on behalf of the starving millions scattered over the length and breadth of India, in the seven hundred thousand villages, by legitimate and peaceful means only. Disobedience to be absolutely effective has got to be always civil, that is always non-violent; and if you want that civil disobedience should come in the near future you will have to transform yourselves. You will then not have jugglery of thought; you will not then deceive yourselves and, unconsciously it may be, deceive the nation also into the belief that the bomb and non-violence can run on parallel lines. In a place like India where the mightiest organization is pledged to [non-] violence, if you really believe in your own creed, that is to say, if you believe in yourselves, if you believe in your nation, then it is civil disobedience that is wanted; and if it is civil disobedience that is wanted, then, you must observe the strictest discipline, you must see that no passion arises at least amongst ourselves, no ugly demonstrations of the sort that we have seen here and that we saw in the Subjects Committee; we must be calm, cool, collected, courageous, brave; and we must speak to the point, never obstruct. It does not matter a bit if every one of my propositions is lost; I must have toleration for those who have moved and supported these amendments. Then only shall I be able to vindicate my faith in non-violent organization. And so, if you really want civil disobedience in the near future, it is necessary for you to conduct the proceedings of the Congress and of the Subjects Committee in a manner behoving peaceful men. If you have got real love for freedom, then there is no room for irritation, mutual jealousies, quarrels; but there is room only for united, brave, calm and collected action. Hence I ask you with all the strength that I can possibly command to carry this resolution with acclamation because this is the central resolution of this session. Let it not be said in the world that we, who today pledge ourselves to

independence, pledge ourselves with divided counsels, that we are a house divided against itself and therefore bound to fall. Let us go forth to the whole world that we rose to a man to vindicate our freedom and that we pledged ourselves to attain that freedom by the quickest possible manner. Hence I ask you to reject summarily the resolution of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose also. I know that he is a great worker in Bengal; he has shone in many a field; he was the commander-in-chief of our forces in Bengal. He has moved a proposition which is not an amendment, it is really a substantive resolution to be substituted for the original resolution. It is a good proposition, I do not deny that; but it goes far beyond my resolution. It suggests a parallel government. If you think that you can have a parallel government today then let me tell you that the Congress flag does not at present fly even in one thousand villages. All honour to those who favour this amendment but it is not bravery, it is not prudence, it is not wisdom. You cannot establish freedom by the mere passing of a resolution. You will establish freedom not by words but by deeds. Therefore, consider whether you can establish a parallel government today, whether you can carry out all the boycotts mentioned in that resolution. We are not declaring independence, mind you. In Madras we declared independence as our goal. Here we go a step further and say that independence is not a distant goal but it is our immediate objective. But Subhas Chandra Bose wants you to go a step further still. I would like to follow him through and through if I considered parallel government a present possibility. Parallel government means our own law-courts, our own schools and colleges, etc. If you think that we have the ability to do today all the things enumerated in Subhas Babu's resolution you should pass it and reject my proposition. But I suggest to you that we have not that ability today and therefore I ask you to think with me that the step suggested by the Working Committee is the longest step that we can take today; a step further and it lands you in a pitfall. That is my certain conviction and hence I urge you with all the strength that I can command to carry this resolution without the change of a comma.¹

Report of the 44th Indian National Congress, Lahore

¹ The resolution was put to vote and carried.

160. LETTER TO BIJON KUMAR SINHA

[1929]¹

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

The books I can recommend are: Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of Heaven Is Within You*, *What to do*, Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial*, Max Muller's *What Can India Teach Us?*

If you have not read *Ramayana* you should read it too.

Yours,

BIJON KUMAR SINHA
UNDER-TRIAL PRISONER
BORSTEL JAIL
LAHORE

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/26

161. A LETTER

[1929]

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter. I cannot endorse the appeal you propose to make for a new journalistic venture. I do not know how *Liberty* is being conducted. But if it is not well conducted the remedy is persuasion and not a counter-enterprise. In my opinion we have too many newspapers in the country at present. Such being my opinion please put me out of your mind.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/134

162. LETTER TO RUSTOMJI

[1929]

BHAISHRI RUSTOMJI,

I do not believe that the observance of *brahmacharya* in one's relations with one's wife is necessary in order to build character. I do believe, however, that for one who wants to dedicate himself

¹ This and the following items have been placed as in the source.

completely to service, such extreme *brahmacharya* is essential. For the purpose of building character, ceaseless search for truth and non-violence and following them in practice are sufficient. Everything else is included in that.

Every human being has or should have only one aim, and that is the knowledge of his Creator or realization of the Self. Service of the country is not an independent aim, but without it realization of the Self is impossible.

I find great peace in observing silence. My work becomes cleaner and easier. I can be more introspective. Silence is very helpful in controlling anger.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/12

163. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[1929]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have not corrected the whole of your letter as there was no time. Shouldn't the letter for you be dispatched on Monday?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 11269

164. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

[1929]

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Herewith the common letter¹, and your letter after corrections.

The *sh* at the end of a verb indicating tense is always palatal. You will improve your handwriting quickly if you write slowly with your pen and write big letters.

Do no grudge the expense on thing that may be necessary to improve your health. Do not be impatient either.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 11271

¹ For the Ashram women

165. A LETTER

[1929]

Our aspiration is to reach the state of nothingness. Unless we destroy the 'I' in us, where will 'He' come and sit? How can two occupy one place?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/81

166. A LETTER

[1929]

I hope you have calmed down now. You have to live long and serve and through service have to realize God. Remember the words of Arjuna: "My delusion has gone and I have regained knowledge of my true self."¹ When you also gain full knowledge of your self, delusion will pass away and, instead of trying to conquer your body by fasting, you will have faith and realize the self by serving and also be of great help to others in their quest for self-realization.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/76

167. A LETTER

[1929]

CHI. . . . ,

You need not apologize. It will be enough if we realize that such mistakes are an indication of our state of ignorance. No one is wholly free of this ignorance. All we can do is to try to free ourselves of it.

I understand the change. It will be enough if you do everything after careful thought. Do not let your improved health have a set-back. Remember what I have told you. You should not do any service which causes you mental suffering. Even out of fear of hurting my feeling you should not take up any burden beyond your capacity. I am not easily hurt and whatever pain I feel is only momentary. Even that I should not feel.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/53

¹ *Bhagavad Gita*, XVIII, 73

168. LETTER TO JAGAT NARAIN LAL

[1929]

Krishna was the servant of His servants. He was always immersed in work of service without the least slackness. No task was too small for Him. One can truly worship Him only by following Him.

PT. JAGAT NARAIN LAL

‘MAHAVI’, PATNA

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai’s Diary. S.N. 32577/119

169. LETTER TO GOVIND BALLABH PANT

[1929]

DEAR GOVIND BALLABHJI,

I have your letter. As for Sitalakhet, I shall find out about it when I have some leisure. There is no hurry.

As regards the Prem Vidyalaya, I have sent a draft for Rs. 2,000 to Bhai Har Govind Pant, as I had said I would. I had intended to send it to you; but I sent it to Har Govind because you are mostly touring and away from the Prem Vidyalaya, while Har Govind is at hand. I assume that the conditions I have sent to the press will be conveyed to you by Har Govind. After seeing those conditions, you may do what you consider proper. I hope you will visit the Prem Vidyalaya now and then and take more interest in it. On that assumption alone I have sent the money.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai’s Diary. S.N. 32577/130

170. A LETTER

[1929]

It is not proper for a man devoted to duty to be disheartened in any situation.

We must consider death as our friend. Why should we grieve when our dear ones embrace a friend? We have got to give up fear of death.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai’s Diary. S.N. 35277/72

171. A LETTER

[1929]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. All is well if you are content at heart. I am afraid of being disappointed by being hasty in Sodepur. We shall find an opening by proceeding slowly.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/59

172. A LETTER

[1929]

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. I want to see you restored by whatever means. Do not work beyond your capacity.

I shall try to regard Sodepur as I do Sabarmati. I do not yet so regard it because I doubt if the experiments that have to be conducted at Sabarmati and Wardha can be conducted at Sodepur. I do not intend ruining Sodepur by carrying on those experiments there. Sodepur exists for khadi; Sabarmati is meant for experimenting with truth, etc. This should not give you the idea that Sabarmati is superior. I have merely pointed out the fields of activities of both. I do hope that the experiments at Sabarmati will also be carried out at Sodepur. But all that depends on God. Whatever happens at Sodepur I regard you as an inmate of the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32577/56

173. A LETTER

[1929]

I have your letter.

A devoted wife serves her husband best by being perfect and free from blemish.

You cannot save from your scholarship and send the amount to

your in-laws. But you can earn something by doing some work in the Ashram and send it to them.

You have done well in having stopped visiting Raghunath. You should not even mentally desire to meet him. Such restraint cannot be forced.

From a copy of the Hindi: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32578/73

174. LETTER TO JAMNADAS GANDHI

AHMEDABAD,
[1929]¹

CHI. JAMNADAS,

I have committed a great blunder. Driven by a particular thought I just said that you should go to Calcutta. By all means, go to any place where you can find your peace of mind. I have had long arguments with you. I have prevented you from doing many things. We must give up the habit of indulging so much in arguments. In that state of mind I just told you to go to Calcutta if you so wished. But I cannot give you such a permission. It is one thing if you wish to go and go. But it is another if I happily permit you to go. Not only am I not in favour of your going to Calcutta, but I am against it. Considering my view, take an independent decision. It would not hurt me in any way. My reason for opposing your going to Calcutta is as under :

I have believed that there is no other city in India as wicked as Calcutta. The atrocities that are perpetrated in Calcutta can hardly be witnessed in any other city of the world. This comparison may be somewhat exaggerated. My knowledge about other cities is incomplete. But I have no doubt at all about the cities of India. In Calcutta, thousands of innocent lambs and goats are slaughtered in the name of religion. Such a thing is done nowhere else in India. Everyone, big and small, the learned and the foolish, are a party to this slaughter. No one stops to think about it even for a moment. The enlightened Calcutta does not even protest against it. And in this so-called age of reform, this cruel act is being performed day after day. Stand anywhere in the Bhawanipur area of Calcutta early in the morning and you will see flocks of sheep around. I have witnessed that sight with my own eyes. Right from that moment, I had decided that I would never agree to any suggestion of my settling down at Calcutta. Again, in Calcutta, cows and buffaloes are milched after

¹ From the contents. In 1929 Gandhiji returned to Ahmedabad from Calcutta.

blowing. This process of blowing is so cruel that I cannot even describe it. This time I witnessed that too with my own eyes. Such cruel things always go on in Calcutta. The very thought that you should spend your life in that city and waste your time by engaging yourself in futile business is terrible for me. It seems to me that you cannot chalk out an ideal life from it. Only some divine creature may remain unaffected in spite of living in such hell. I do not take it for granted that you belong to that category. Think a thousand times about what you wish to do in life and then decide. This is all I wish to say.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati : Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy : Sabarmati Museum, Ahmedabad

175. LETTER TO RAMDAS AND NIRMALA GANDHI

Silence Day [SATYAGRAHASHRAM,
1929]⁴

CHI. RAMDAS AND NIMU,

You may forget me, but not Ba. She is deeply grieved and crying out her heart. She imagines all kinds of fearful things to have befallen you: 'Could Nimu be ill, or something have befallen Ramdas?'

When I, a baby in the cradle;
Started crying, who came
running to soothe me?⁵

Blessings from

BAPU

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

176. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.-I

January 1, 1930

Mahatma Gandhi, in supporting the resolution¹, said:

I have travelled throughout the country more than anybody else.

MR. JAMNADAS MEHTA: I think except Seth Jamnalal Bajaj.

MAHATMAJI: I do not think there is any exception.

MR. JAMNADAS MEHTA: But Jamnalalji claims that.

MAHATMAJI: I refute this charge. I have travelled throughout the country in the third class and have mixed with the poor more than anyone else and I have seen with my own eyes how the poor suffer in winter. This proposal has been placed before you after the most careful consideration of all the months of the year. During the month suggested there is no rain, no malaria or any other epidemic or diseases. It may be said that we get railway concession during the Christmas. But I think it is immaterial. And we hope to be in control of the railways before long. (Laughter) Similarly the question that we will not get students as our volunteers seems to be also immaterial, because besides students there are lakhs of people who are non-students and I hope these poor men will take part in the Congress. The months of February and March are the best months for the poor from the point of view of convenience and cheapness. I very much realize the remark that we are Xmas politicians. Henceforth: we want to dispose of our business most promptly and I think I need not speak much on this resolution.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1930

¹ Which read: Inasmuch as the Congress is intended to be representative of the poor masses and inasmuch as the holding of the Congress at the end of December involves a very considerable expense to the poor people in providing for extra clothing for themselves and is otherwise inconvenient to them, the date of holding the Congress session is hereby altered to some date in February or March to be fixed by the Working Committee in consultation with the Provincial Committee of the Province concerned,

177. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.-II

January 1, 1930

Mahatmaji then moved the resolution of the Working Committee repudiating the national debt and declaring that at the time of final settlement of India's national debt a tribunal would be appointed to judge which debt India should pay and would pay according to the decision of that tribunal.

This Congress is of opinion that the financial burdens directly or indirectly imposed on India by the foreign administration are such as a free India cannot bear and cannot be expected to bear. This Congress, whilst reaffirming the resolution passed at the Gaya Congress in 1922, therefore records its opinion for the information of all concerned that every obligation and concession to be inherited by independent India will be strictly subject to investigation by an independent tribunal, and every obligation, every concession, no matter how incurred or given, will be repudiated if it is not found by such tribunal to be just and justifiable.¹

The resolution was unanimously passed.

MR. SANYAL: May I know who would constitute this tribunal?

Mahatmaji, amidst loud laughter, said:

If you want this information you may correspond in the matter. I cannot interpret it. Independent India would do that.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1930 and Young India, 20-2-1930

178. SPEECH AT SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, A.I.C.C.-III

January 1, 1930

Mahatmaji in replying to the opposition said:

I believe you will realize the real significance of this resolution². You all know Pandit Motilal Nehru had come to Lahore

¹ The resolution is reproduced from *Young India*, 20-2-1930.

² It read: In view of the lapse of the Nehru constitution it is unnecessary to declare the policy of the Congress regarding communal questions, the Congress believing that in an Independent India the communal question can only be solved on a strictly national basis. But as the Sikhs in particular and the Muslims and other minorities in general had expressed dissatisfaction over the solution of communal questions proposed in the Nehru Report, this Congress assures the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution thereof in any future constitution will be acceptable to the Congress that does not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.

some days before this National Week and he came here only for two reasons, namely, for clearing the misunderstanding entertained by the Sikhs and for deciding the Punjab Congress dispute. To clear the misunderstanding, Panditji, myself and Dr. Ansari had been to see Sardar Kharag Singh, the Sikh leader, about it. Their grievance was that they were not properly treated in the Nehru Report. We discussed with the Sikhs¹ and gave them the assurance that in future if any national problem is solved on the communal basis we shall satisfy them and other minorities. At the same time I say that in an Independent India every problem is to be solved on a national basis and not on a communal basis. Still since these brothers of ours have been offended by the Nehru Report I want to satisfy them and bring them into our fold. I do not say that the moment we pass this resolution this pandal will be full with Sikhs and Muslims. If they come let us welcome them, and if they do not come still we are to carry on our battle for independence. Even if there are only five men, still we five are to attain independence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 2-1-1930

179. INTERVIEW TO THE PRESS

[LAHORE,
January 1, 1930]²

What is the difference between the Non-co-operation Movement of 1921 and the present movement?

The present movement is directed towards independence, whereas that of 1921 was directed towards the redress of the Khilafat and Punjab wrongs and the attainment of swaraj within the Empire if possible and without if necessary. The boycott is confined this time only to the legislatures, but civil disobedience including the no-tax campaign is common to both, as also truth and non-violence.³

The civil disobedience will be of the Bardoli type?

You mean the satyagraha of 1928? Yes, somewhat of that type; only in Bardoli the people fought for the redress of a specific local grievance.

How about the other boycotts?

It may not be necessary to resort to them if we can place civil

¹ Vide "Discission with Sikh Leaders", 27-12-1929.

² A report in *The Statesman*, 5-1-1930, giving portions from the interview, says it was given just before Gandhiji left Lahore, that is, on January 1, 1930.

³ What follows appeared also in *The Statesman*, 5-1-1930.

disobedience on a proper basis.

When do you expect to succeed?

It is more than a human being can say.

Assuming that there is Chauri Chaura again, would you call off civil disobedience ?

I am trying to conceive a plan whereby no suspension need take place by reason of any outside disturbance—a plan whereby civil disobedience once started may go on without interruption until the goal is reached.

Have you any such plan?

I have nothing concrete before my mind at the present moment. But I think it should not be impossible to devise such a plan. I am going to leave no stone unturned. It is likely that although one may take all the safeguards that it is humanly possible to do, an outbreak may occur. The plan I am trying to think out is to prevent a discontinuance in case such an event happens.

But supposing you see your mistake?

Well, then, I shall have strength enough to atone for it.

But if you cannot hit upon a plan such as you are thinking of, what would you do?

If I do not succeed in discovering such a formula, and if there is a recurrence of Chauri Chaura, I should not hesitate to stop the movement.

Young India, 30-1-1930

180. SILENCE-DAY NOTE TO MIRABEHN

[On or after *January 1, 1930*]¹

What are your impressions of the A. I. C. C. meeting?

Considering the revolutionary character of the two resolutions,² the criticism was restrained and the voting showed an extraordinary sense of responsibility and appreciation of facts. The attendance too was quite good.

From the original: C.W. 5440. Courtesy: Mirabeen. Also G.N. 9442

¹ From the reference to “the revolutionary character of the two resolutions” which were adopted during the A.I.C.C. meeting held in Lahore from December 26, 1929 to January 1, 1930

² *Vide* “Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore”, 26-12-1929.

181. THE CULT OF THE BOMB

There is so much violence in the atmosphere immediately surrounding us, politically minded part of India, that a bomb thrown here and a bomb thrown there causes little perturbation and probably there is even joy over such an event in the hearts of some. If I did not know that this violence was like froth coming to the surface in an agitated liquid, I should probably despair of non-violence succeeding in the near future in giving us the freedom which we are all violently-minded and non-violently minded people yearning for. Happily I have a certain belief based upon ceaseless experience during my tour in the heart of India for the past twelve months very nearly, that the vast masses who have become conscious of the fact that they must have freedom are untouched by the spirit of violence. In spite therefore of sporadic violent outbursts such as the bomb explosion under the Viceregal train I feel that non-violence for our political battle has come to stay. It is because of my increasing faith in the efficacy of non-violence in political warfare and the possibility of its being practised by masses of people that I propose to reason with those who may not be so much saturated with violence as to be beyond the pale of reason.

Let us think then for a moment what would have happened if the Viceroy had been seriously injured or killed. There certainly would have been no meeting of 23rd ultimo and therefore no certainty as to the course to be adopted by the Congress. That surely would have been, to say the least, an undersirable result. Fortunately for us the Viceroy and his party escaped unhurt, and with great self-possession he went through the day's routine as if nothing had happened. I know that those who have no regard even for the Congress, who hope nothing from it and whose hope lies only through violence, will not be affected by this speculative reasoning. But the others, I hope, will not fail to realize the truth of the argument and to put together several important deductions that can be drawn from the hypothetical case put by me.

Take again the net result of political violence practised in this country. Every time violence has occurred we have lost heavily, that is to say, military expenditure has risen. As against this, I am willing to put the Morley-Minto reforms, the Montagu reforms and the like. But an ever widening circle of politicians is now beginning to realize that they have been like toys given to us against heavy economic burden. Whilst paltry concessions have been made, a few more Indians have

found employment under Government, the masses in whose name, and for whose sake, we want freedom, have had to bear greater burdens without having any return whatsoever therefor. If we would only realize that it is not by terrorizing the foreigner that we shall gain freedom, but by ourselves shedding fear and teaching the villager to shed his own fear that we shall gain true freedom, we would at once perceive that violence is suicidal.

Then consider its reaction on ourselves. From violence done to the foreign ruler, violence to our own people whom we may consider to be obstructing the country's progress is an easy natural step. Whatever may have been the result of violent activities in other countries and without reference to the philosophy of non-violence, it does not require much intellectual effort to see that if we resort to violence for ridding society of the many abuses which impede our progress, we shall but add to our difficulties and postpone the day of freedom. The people unprepared for reform because unconvinced of their necessity will be maddened with rage over their coercion, and will seek the assistance of the foreigner in order to retaliate. Has not this been happening before our eyes for the past many years of which we have still painfully vivid recollections?

Take now the positive side of the argument. When, that is in 1920, non-violence came to be part of the Congress creed¹, the Congress became a transformed body as if by magic. Mass awakening came no one knows how. Even remote villages were stirred. Many abuses seemed to have been swept away. The people became conscious of their power. They ceased to fear authority. The system of *begar*² vanished like mist in Almora and several other parts of India, wherever the people had become awakened to a sense of the power that lay within themselves. Such as it was, it was their freedom that they had attained by their own strength. It was true swaraj of the masses attained by the masses. If the march of non-violence had not been interrupted by events culminating in Chauri Chaura, I make bold to say that we would have been today in full possession of swaraj. No one has been found to dispute this proposition. But many have shaken their heads as they have said, 'But you can't teach non-violence to the masses. It is only possible for individuals and that too in rare cases.' This is, in my opinion, a gross self-deception. If mankind was not habitually non-violent, it would have been self-destroyed ages ago. But in the duel between forces of violence and non-violence the latter

¹ Vide "Speech on New Congress Creed, Nagpur", 28-12-1920.

² Forced unpaid labour

have always come out victorious in the end. The truth is that we have not had patience enough to wait and apply ourselves whole-heartedly to the spread of non-violence among the people as a means for political ends.

We are now entering upon a new era. Our immediate objective and not our distant goal is complete independence. Is it not obvious that if we are to evolve the true spirit of independence amongst the millions, we shall only do so through non-violence and all it implies? It is not enough that we drive out Englishmen by making their lives insecure through secret violence. That would lead not to independence but to utter confusion. We can establish independence only by adjusting our differences through an appeal to the head and the heart, by evolving organic unity amongst ourselves, not by terrorizing or killing those who, we fancy, may impede our march, but by patient and gentle handling, by converting the opponent, we want to offer mass civil disobedience. Everybody owns that it is a certain remedy. Everybody understands that 'civil' here means strictly non-violent, and has it not often been demonstrated that mass civil disobedience is an impossibility without mass non-violence and without mass discipline? Surely it does not require an appeal to our religious faith to convince us that the necessity of our situation, if nothing else, demands non-violence of the limited type I have indicated. Let those who are not past reason then cease either secretly or openly to endorse activities such as this latest bomb outrage. Rather let them openly and heartily condemn these outrages, so that our deluded patriots may for want of nourishment to their violent spirit realize the futility of violence and the great harm that violent activity has every time done.

Young India, 2-1-1930

182. HINDI IN THE CONGRESS

It is our strange misfortune that we are not as familiar with the name "Mahasabha" as we are with the name "Congress". When the name Mahasabha is mentioned some take it to mean the Hindu Mahasabha and others take it for some other organization. During my tour of the United Provinces when I used the word Mahasabha for Congress I was told no one would recognize Mahasabha as the Congress. This is the influence of habit. We have got into the habit of using an English word; therefore when someone uses a Hindi word we find it difficult to understand.

Therefore, even though it is a rule that only the Hindi language

should be used in the Mahasabha, it is English that is largely used. The Mahasabha notices are generally printed in English. In the Mahasabha office too English is generally used. Correspondence is carried on in English. In the lanes of Lajpat Nagar¹ wherever one looked, one found only English signboards. All this is lamentable. But the remedy for this malady is not rigorous enforcement of the rules. The remedy is love for the national language in the masses and the resultant effort. If the public wishes, it can insist on all the business of the Mahasabha being transacted in Hindi. The fact is, there is neither sufficient awakening nor enthusiasm nor love for their language in the masses.

There is one great practical difficulty in running the Mahasabha office in Hindi. President Jawaharlal Nehru has drawn the attention of the members to it. As I have already written last time,² in the United Provinces, Bihar and other Hindi-speaking provinces there are very few people who are willing to take up this work. Those very few who are or who can, are engaged in their own work. Be it in the Mahasabha office or in offices elsewhere, very few Hindi-speaking people are available for national work. In these circumstances it is not surprising that the work of the Mahasabha is done mostly in English only in spite of the rule about the use of the national language.

Ten years ago all the work was done only in English. Now there is considerable change in the desirable direction; even then, much remains to be done. All debates and discussions in the Mahasabha should be conducted only in the national language. And there should be no need for their English translation. Two difficulties crop up in achieving this. One is that, members from Bengal, Tamilnad and other such provinces understand very little Hindi and the second is that, the speaker who wants to say something wishes to explain what he means to all. If he knows both the languages he gains his end by arguing in both of them. To overcome these difficulties there are two ways. One is that, when any member begins to speak in English, he and the President should be reminded of this. Secondly, the Bengali and Tamil brothers and sisters should declare that they have no need for English. Their duty is to learn Hindi or get the sense of the proceedings from their neighbours. The change of heart in the Bengali, Tamil and other brethren depends entirely on the love, determination and courtesy of the Hindi-speaking people. Without courtesy no work can be done. Force and compulsion will not secure for Hindi its rightful place.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 2-1-1930

¹ The venue of the Congress session in Lahore

² *Vide* "Letter to a Friend", 2-2-1921.

183. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

Thursday [January 2]¹, 1930

CHI. MANI,

I have your two letters. I am writing this in a moving train. Do resolutely whatever you can. If the situation referred to in your second letter arises, you should go to Vile Parle or to Wardha. If you come and see me, I will explain this more fully and you will be comforted. Come on Tuesday or Wednesday, so that you will be able to bring more news from that end. Do what you can with the help of even a few women as co-workers.

Blessings from
BAPU

CHI. MANIBEHN PATEL

NADIAD

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Manibehn Patelne, p. 70

184. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

DELHI,
January 3, 1930

DEAR MOTILALJI,

In Lahore there was no time to talk or to read the newspaper or to think of anything else but the next hour's work. Here, in Delhi, on a cattle farm five miles away I saw the *Hindustan Times* and the Kelkar manifesto. It struck me immediately that it was absolutely necessary to have from you a brief statement to show why the boycott of Legislatures is an absolute necessity. The sooner you issue it to the Press, the better it would be. Jawahar surpassed all expectations. Even the critics were silenced. If we can but take some decisive step and come to grips this year it will be a fitting finish to the presidential year so well begun.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/35

¹ This was the only Thursday on which Gandhiji travelled by train before his arrest in 1930.

185. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 3, 1930

DEAR SUBHAS BABU,

You are becoming more and more an enigma to me. I want you to live up to the certificate that Deshbandhu once gave me for you. He pictured you to me as a young man of brilliant parts, singleness of purpose, great determination and above pettiness. Your conduct in Calcutta¹ therefore grieved me, but I reconciled myself to its strangeness. But in Lahore² you became inscrutable and I smelt petty jealousy. I do not mind stubborn opposition. I personally thrive on it and learn more from opponents than from friends. I therefore always welcome sincere and intelligent opposition. But in Lahore you became an obstructionist. In connection with the Bengal dispute, in your writings to the Press you were offensive and the discourteous, impatient walk-out nearly broke my heart. You should have bravely recognized the necessity and the propriety of your and other friends' exclusion. It was not aimed at you, Prakasam³ or Srinivasa Iyengar. It was meant merely to strengthen the hands of the young President by providing him with a cabinet that would be helpful in carrying forward the national work.⁴

There was no question surely of distributing patronage, of placating personal interest, however high they may be. The question was one of devising measures for achieving independence in the shortest possible time. How could you, having no faith in the programme, or Prakasam, with philosophic contempt for the present programme, or Srinivasa Iyengar, with his unfathomable unbelief in Jawaharlal and Pandit Motilalji, forward the nation's work? But all the three could help by becoming sympathetic critics offering sound suggestions along their own lines. There was certainly no undemocratic procedure. If the putting of the names *en bloc* did not

¹ In 1928.

² In 1929.

³ T. Prakasam

⁴ For the Working Committee two independent lists had been prepared, one by Motilal Nehru in consultation with Gandhiji and the other by Jamnalal Bajaj. The addressee and Srinivasa Iyengar, along with a few others, staged a walk-out against this procedure as they wanted the Working Committee to be formed by election.

commend itself to the Committee, the Committee could have so expressed its opinion and that would have been also a fair measure of the strength of your party.¹ But I do not want to continue the argument. I simply write this to ask you to retrace your steps and otherwise also prove to me and those whose co-operation you would seek, the truth of the certificate issued by Deshbandhu. I do not want to change your view about anything, but I do want you to change your conduct in enforcing those views.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/37

186. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

AS AT THE ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

January 3, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I was deeply distressed over your walk-out and the whole of your uncertain behaviour. Uncertainty there always has been behind your acts, but I had not detected before any unworthiness about them. When we first met your sincerity and high aspiration attracted me towards you. That attraction was increasing with closer contact. How is it that it has been decreasing of late and reached almost the ebbing point? I do not mind difference of opinion, but it would cut me if my regard for you were to be diminished. Please correct me if I have erred. If I have not, I would have you retrace your steps and be what you were when I first knew you. Political life need not debase us.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 10754. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ After the Congress session at Lahore the addressee and S. Srinivasa Iyengar announced the formation of a new party, the Congress Democratic Party.

187. LETTER TO SHAUKAT ALI

DELHI,
January 3, 1930

MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER,

I see that we are definitely moving in opposite directions, but that should not mean any breach of friendship, though it was born of political co-operation. You must therefore not empty your pocket of me altogether and I want you to make me a promise always to write to me in the frankest manner possible whenever you feel I am wrong in my views or in the expression of them.

Yours sincerely,

[PS.]

Please pass it on to Mohd. Ali.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/38

188. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

AS AT THE ASHRAM,
SABARMATI,
January 3, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

It would be wrong of me to conceal from you the grief which I have expressed to others over your highly ungentlemanly, unpatriotic and uncalled-for conduct on the 1st instant at the A.I.C.C. meeting.¹ I do not mind opposition even though it may be merely destructive, but I do mind want of manners, which I am afraid you were betrayed into on the very day when you would be expected to be restrained and helpful, even though you did not believe in the programme or even the procedure.

Yours sincerely,

S. SATYAMURTI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/39

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 13-11-1929.

189. LETTER TO SHUAIB QURESHI

AS AT THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 3, 1930

MY DEAR SHUAIB,

I was grieved that you did not have the chat to which I had looked forward in Lahore. You must now go even out of your way, if necessary, and come to Sabarmati and have at least a day there. I was delighted at the news Mohd. Ali gave me.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/40

190. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

DELHI,
January 3, 1930

CHI. MATHURADAS,

I have your letter. The situation is such that Jamnalalji cannot go there for the present. But if at least ten acres of land¹ with water on it was available near Almora things could be managed. I hope all of you are well.

What could I write about Lahore? I am dictating this at Delhi.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI
TARA HOUSE
ALMORA, U. P.

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

¹ For Gandhi Seva Sangh

191. YOUNG JUDGE

A young judge has put me the following question:¹

This question refers to the time when Gujarat was ravaged by floods and a large number of young men and other volunteers were working hard under Sardar Vallabhbhai's guidance. That a man reaps as he sows is an immutable principle which admits of no exception. The above extract is an example of how the principle can be misinterpreted. Many persons think in this way, and the question deserves consideration because I know that the correspondent has not advanced his plea merely for argument's sake. The maxim "Reap as you sow" is true for all times. Holy books in Sanskrit state the same thing, and so does the Bible. Nowhere does the maxim imply that we are to inflict on the doer what his deed deserves. The present correspondent, however, has put such a construction on the original sentence, and that has led to a terrible misunderstanding of its meaning. When we say 'man reaps as he sows', we mean that God will bestow on him his due and not that any of us might sit in God's place and mete out justice to the doer according as he thinks of the latter's deed. If we had the right to judge a man's deed and reward or punish him as the case may demand, there would be nothing left for anyone to do for anyone else. In that case, the idea of service would lose all meaning. If that idea should disappear, the world would perish. But the fact is that the world has not perished. Countless men have been rendering service to one another, correcting one another's mistakes and even forgiving one another. From this we see that the meaning of the great maxim in question is not what the correspondent conceives it to be, but it is what I have suggested above.

We do not fully know how to judge a man's action. With limited experience, we can only draw an inference about a given action. Each one of us often draws a different inference. The seven blind men in the fable came each to his own conclusion according to the elephant's limb that he could feel. Thus, though each was true in respect of his own experience of the elephant, all the seven remained ignorant and none could form a correct idea of the elephant. Similarly, the justice we mete out is the justice of the blind and is therefore imperfect. Hence, it is our religious duty always to hunger after service and find fulfilment in only serving one another. To reward or punish is God's

¹ This is not translated here. The correspondent had objected to relief work in Gujarat.

exclusive right, for He sees the past, the present and the future. There certainly exists some sentient Power that pervades this world, to whose tunes we dance, no matter whether we call the Power God, or Lord, or describe him as a principle, or whether or not we apply any epithet to it. That Power alone rewards or punishes us as our actions might deserve. In any case, we are not the Power; and so, instead of saying 'Let us give a man what he deserves', we say 'A man gets what he deserves.' It was from the realization of man's imperfection that there arose the family of virtues, such as service, generosity, love, forgiveness and non-violence. We do not, therefore, know whether the calamity suffered by Gujarat was the result of people's sin or goodness in this life or another. But certainly, those who participated in the alleviation of the suffering have done their duty and found self-fulfilment to the extent they did so. If they had put a wrong construction on the law of karma and kept to their homes with hands folded, they should have shown themselves ignorant of duty.

I hope the correspondent will now see that his statement was not merely one-sided, but was entirely mistaken, and will take care not to commit such a mistake again.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 5-1-1930

192. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

January 6, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

We arrived here on Saturday night¹ without any mishap during the journey. Write and tell me how you are keeping. Is Lakshmidasbhai's dietetic experiment still going on? How is Jivandas? Has he returned? If not, where is he? Ba will leave tomorrow for Vijapur. Nimu is there, and so is Manu, as also Kashi. She is therefore keen to go there. Manilal has gone to Akola. He will return with Sushila in a few days.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

193. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 7, 1930

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

. . .² and . . .³ had a long talk with me and said all that they wished to say. There is little worth in . . . I did not form a good opinion about . . . About . . ., I formed a better opinion. . . . admitted that they had become, and remained, fairly enslaved by physical attraction for each other. That is their condition even now.... says that they felt attracted while helping each other with innocent motives. ... kept silent on this subject. She agreed to let herself be medically examined. But I doubt very much if, when produced before a doctor, she would not run away from him. . . . says that they did not go as far as the ultimate act, being held back by shame at the thought of their guilt becoming known to you and me. I met . . . 's father. I infer from my talk with him that he may not be aware of this illicit relationship. I did not, however, think it necessary to ask him about it and make sure. I was not much impressed by him. I see from one of your articles that you believe it as proved that he is not . . . 's father. In the second article, I see that you have changed your opinion. . . . says that he is

¹ On January 4, 1930, after attending the annual session of the Indian National Congress at Lahore

² The names have been omitted.

³ *ibid*

her father. I have given my decision below after considering all the facts.

1. . . . should go and live as . . . 's wife.
2. If she does not wish to do that and if she can keep herself pure, she may observe *brahmacharya*.
3. If she cannot overcome the desire for sex-gratification, she may marry some other young man.
4. Her relation with . . . ought to have been kept pure till they were married. Though both of them have claimed that their relation has remained pure, I do not believe that it is moral. If, however, the two cannot control their desire for gratification, they may openly have relations with each other. But they will not have my blessings or my consent if they adopt this course. Nor can they remain in any institution with which I am closely connected. I am afraid . . . will not be able to live without . . . I believe that she gets hysteria because of her craving for sex-gratification. . . . 's touch being impure, it increases her hysteria.

You may now act as you think best.

I have not revised this after dictating.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6069. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

194. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 8, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have a letter from you after many days. Even though I am in the Congress, I can sleep over not only postcards but even letters from my sons and daughters. What is your weight? How is your health? If you are not regular in writing your diary, try to be so and also describe in it your thoughts and feelings. One who does not conceal one's good or bad thoughts from oneself deserves compliments. One who conceals them certainly violates the vow of non-stealing. If you do not understand this idea, ask Vinoba to explain it. Tell Kamala to write to me. She, too, should write a diary. My health is fine. I have worked hard and even feel fatigued, but my health has not suffered.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9273

195. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

BHAISHRI NAUTAM,

Doctor¹ arrived here last evening. Immediately on arrival, he told me that he wished to have Chi. Maganlal's² marriage, like Ratilal's,³ celebrated in the Ashram, and that I should write to you for that purpose. Women everywhere look forward to a wedding and wish to enjoy the occasion in various ways. If, however, you have regard for Doctor's wishes, entreat the women on my behalf and win them over. I am sure you will agree with me that, if rich parents have a truly religious ceremony for the marriage of their sons and daughters, they serve the good of the community and provide an example to the poor. I, therefore, hope that you will obtain the consent of the women and let the marriage be celebrated here. Probably you know that there is no music and dancing and no feasts on the occasion of a wedding in the Ashram. The celebration consists entirely of the religious ceremony and the dresses of the bride and the bridegroom are all of khadi.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2583

196. LETTER TO ANANTRAI PATTANI

SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

TO PATTANI SAHEB,

I had got the letter of recommendation you sent with the two Japanese gentlemen. But I am writing this letter to make you a request. You will no doubt have been pained by the resolutions passed at Lahore.⁴ But when did I ever shrink from causing pain to friends? If I please friends like you by suppressing my conscience I may earn

¹ Pranjivandas Mehta

² Pranjivandas Mehta's sons

³ *ibid*

⁴ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore-I & II", 31-12-1929.

their congratulations for a while, but ultimately they will have to leave me. Would it not be better to inflict momentary pain and preserve real friendship? I assure you that neither the main resolution¹ nor any other resolution was passed to please the public. I drafted the resolution only according to my understanding of the good of the people.² I therefore wish you not to be pained by my action.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/42

197. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

BA,

I am sending herewith a letter from Ramdas. If I sat down to write myself, I would have to stop the spinning for that time. That would be so much loss to the country. Is it not better that I dictate this letter?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/43

198. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 8, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,³

I got your letter. I am sending it on to Ba. I am writing to her to keep herself ready to let Nimu leave whenever you desire her to be with you. For myself, I do approve of your wish. I quite understand Nimu's desire. I should like that from their very childhood, Sumitra, Savitri, Rumbha and Bachu should grow up with you and according to your manner of living and, therefore, I am wholly with you in the suggestion you have made. Ba is simple-hearted and will immediately agree. Keshu⁴ being ill, has been sent away to Devdas in Calcutta. He is better now. Santok and Radha, too, had left this place without consulting me. If I had known of their intention to leave, I would have asked Devdas not to go.

Dr. Mehta arrived last night with Manekbai. He will be here for

¹ About complete independence

² *Vide* "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

³ The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting.

⁴ Keshav, Maganlal Gandhi's son

four or five days. And I myself having arrived, the place is beginning to get crowded. You did well to send the invitations. I am keeping perfectly well. A diet of milk, curds, and fruits is suiting me very well. That you are keeping well these days is good news to me.

Blessings from

BAPU¹

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

199. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARAMATI,

January 8, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

How did you manage to fall ill ? You must have of course known that I was opposed to your going to Lahore. You should for the present avoid going after new adventures and even resist the temptation of seeing new places. Your duty is to be content with what you can think and do without moving about and to live according to a fixed schedule. When Devdas arrives there and relieves you, you may certainly go to Vijapur.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI

JAMIA MILIA

KAROL BAGH

DELHI

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33006

200. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 8, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. I was expecting to see you even today. Prabhudas must be all right by now. I hope you continue writing your

¹ The subscription is by Gandhiji.

daily diary. It must not be interrupted now. Fix the date of departure for Wardha and let me know it. Are you keeping up carding?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2371

201. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[About January 8, 1930]¹

CHI. PRABHUDAS,²

I read your letter to Chi. Jamnadas. I did not like it. You cannot be considered fit for a pilgrimage to Badrinarayan. Though I have sent Shantilal to be your companion, it does not mean that he should spend his time in sight-seeing. A man who loves work, will engage himself in some work anyhow. It would be proper for him to help in the weaving work or some other similar work. If you also wish to take up some responsible work, I should like you not to think of going to Badrinath, etc. It would be another matter if you thought of the pilgrimage when a suitable occasion arose, provided that your health was good enough and provided also that your work there had been properly set going. Or, again, there would be no harm in going to Badrinath if you had stayed on there purely for the sake of your health and had taken up no responsible work. Moreover, I am not at all certain that a trip to Badrinath will not harm your health. It would be better to be content with the improvement in your health which has already taken place. I am of opinion that, for the present, you should hold back your desire for sight-seeing. If Jamnadas can go and does go, let him go by himself. But I wish that none of us should forget that we wish to compete with the beggars of India.

Blessings from

BAPU³

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33010

¹ From Gandhiji's advice to the addressee to withhold his "desire for sight-seeing", it appears that this letter was written about the same time as the preceding one.

² The letter is in Mahadev Desai's handwriting.

³ The subscription is by Gandhiji.

202. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

[Before January 9, 1930]¹

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I did not answer your last telegram. What instructions can I give from this distance? There can be nothing lacking in your attention. I am aware that Keshu² needs some comforting. To that end I am sending Devdas. I have little faith in medicines. But I do not interfere in the treatment of those away from me. Hence there was no need for any instructions in response to your telegram. My treatment is quite well known—fasting or fruit juice, sun-baths, sleeping at night in a well-ventilated room and enema in case of constipation. Many patients like Keshu have been cured by this treatment. But I do not wish to practise my theories from a distance. You can do whatever you like. Medicines should not be suggested to Keshav unless he asks for them. I hope Keshav will be out of all danger by the time this reaches you.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6179. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

203. STATEMENT TO “THE NEW YORK WORLD”

[Before January 9, 1930]³

The world should realize that as Congressional representatives, Pandit Motilal Nehru, leader of the Nationalists in the Legislative Assembly, and I could only treat the Viceregal pronouncement about Dominion Status in India as a response to the Calcutta Congress resolution of 1928.⁴ We were bound, therefore, in pursuance of that resolution to press for a clear declaration that the proposed Round Table Conference would consider only ways and means of framing a scheme for a Dominion Status constitution and no other. This the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, could not do. While, therefore, we appreciated his good efforts and his difficulties, we had no course left open but to decline to have Congress represented at the proposed Conference. The

¹ From the contents it appears this letter was written before the one to the addressee dated January 9, 1930; *vide* “Letter to G. D. Birla”, 9-1-1930.

² Maganlal Gandhi’s son, Keshav

³ The statement was published in *The New York World*, 9-1-1930.

⁴ *Vide* “Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress”, 28-12-1928.

Conference, so far as Congress was concerned, having miscarried, the independence resolution¹ need frighten nobody. I had repeatedly declared that for me, as for all other Congressmen, Dominion Status could mean only virtual independence; that is partnership at will for mutual benefit and to be dissolved at the instance of either partner. It only clears the issue, especially after Secretary of State for India, Wedgwood Benn's unfortunate statement that India already had a Dominion Status in action.

The real cause for satisfaction to lovers of peace consists in the fact that through the full debate Congress supported methods of non-violence and truth, to the exclusion of other methods. Civil disobedience is a dynamic expression of non-violence. It is undoubtedly fraught with great danger and difficulties, but infinitely less so than the present danger of unbridled but secret violence breaking out in many parts of India, owing to understandable and pardonable impatience on the part of many youths. Responsibility for initiating civil disobedience rests on me and I am not likely rashly to embark upon it. At the same time I must confess that I shall not hesitate to run a certain minimum of risk which is inevitable in any struggle for freedom. The risk for prolonging the present agony caused by the realized slavery here is any day much greater than I am ever likely to run.

The boycott of legislatures is also part of the programme for enforcing the national demand. This was a natural corollary to the independence resolution, and I am glad to say it is finding an adequate response from Congressmen. A constructive programme such as removal of untouchability, communal union, liquor prohibition, and the boycott of foreign cloth remains. These have tremendous social and economic value and also bear great political consequences. The Nehru constitution, with its tentative communal solution, naturally lapses.

Congress, therefore, will concentrate on solving the communal question, not on differential lines, but on strictly national lines. There was also a resolution on financial obligations.² It need not disturb any foreigner who has a legitimate interest in India. It should be remembered that there are always, under any foreign Government, obligations incurred and concessions granted that are in no way in the interest of the country concerned, and are indeed often hostile to it. These can never be acknowledged by successors who are free to examine every such obligation and concession. Congress has offered

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore- II", 31-12-1929.

² *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930.

investigation of these by an independent tribunal. Lastly, the door against a conference purposely convened to satisfy national aspirations, that is, to frame a scheme of independence has been left open.

The Hindu, 25-3-1930

204. NOTES

THE LATE MAZHAR-UL-HAQ

Mazhar-ul-Haq was a great patriot, a good Mussalman and a philosopher. Fond of ease and luxury, when Non-co-operation came he threw them off as we throw superfluous scales off the skin. He grew as fond of the ascetic life as he was of princely life. Growing weary of our dissensions, he lived in retirement, doing such unseen services as he could, and praying for the best. He was fearless both in speech and action. The Sadakat Ashram near Patna is a fruit of his constructive labours. Though he did not live in it for long as he had intended, his conception of the Ashram made it possible for the Bihar Vidyapith to find a permanent habitation. It may yet prove a cement to bind the two communities together. Such a man would be missed at all times; he will be the more missed at this juncture in the history of the country. I tender my condolences to Begum Mazhar-ul-Haq and her family.

PROHIBITION CAMPAIGN

At the Temperance Conference in Lahore one of the resolutions adopted was as follows:¹

It is a matter for sorrow that in a country like India, where drink is almost universally admitted to be a vice, there are respectable newspapers enough to be found to take advertisements for the sake of spirituous liquor whilst their editorial columns favour total prohibition. I hope that the resolution of the Conference will move the newspapers concerned to stop taking the offending advertisements. There may be the question of contracts made with advertisers. Since the proprietors of the newspapers concerned have wronged the nation in taking the advertisements, it is not too much to expect them to part with a portion of the ill-gotten profits in paying for such damages as may be necessary for ending contracts before their times.

Young India, 9-1-1930

¹ The resolution is not reproduced here. It demanded immediate ban on the display of liquor advertisements in public places and newspapers.

205. THE CONGRESS

PRESIDENT

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru more than justified the choice of the people. His address brief and to the point was bold, extreme in conception but moderate in expression. It bore evidence of a man capable of viewing things with complete detachment. A confirmed socialist, he wants for his country only what the country can manage. He is a practical statesman tempering his ideals to suit his surroundings: But for himself he is an idealist who would ever strive to live up to his ideals.

As in his address, so in the chair. He was strong, yet accommodating. His wit came to his rescue on many an awkward occasion. He never hesitated when action was required. His tireless energy and entire self-forgetfulness, his natural simplicity and affability captivated everyone. No Government that is at all anxious to do what is right can have any reason to fear Jawaharlal Nehru. A wicked Government would soon feel the strength of a stalwart who counts no price too dear to pay for ridding the country of wicked rule.

The youth of the country has every reason to be proud of their representative, the nation may well rejoice to find in Jawaharlal Nehru such a noble and worthy son. May God's blessings descend upon him and may the nation reach her destination during Jawaharlal's year of service.

INDEPENDENCE

The resolutions¹ of the Congress strictly followed the trend of the Presidential address. Let us first consider the central resolution². In strict accordance with the Calcutta resolution³ and owing to a combination of circumstances undesigned by anybody, Dominion Status gave place at the stroke of midnight 31st December 1929 to complete independence as the immediate objective of the Congress. Swaraj in article 1 of the Congress constitution is now to mean complete independence. It is as well. Apart from the Calcutta resolution, Mr. Benn's statement that India already had

¹ *Vide* "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

² *Vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore- II", 31-12-1929.

³ *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-II", 28-12-1928.

Dominion Status in action made that phrase impossible of acceptance to convey the nation's meaning. If representation, at important functions, of India through representatives chosen by the British Government, means Dominion Status in action, Heaven help India. The Congress means something totally different from it. For the Congress, Dominion Status meant complete independence plus voluntary partnership with Britain as it might be with any other nation for mutual good. Lastly it has been of late loudly whispered that independence was illegal, and a resolution replacing Dominion Status with independence would mean the death of the Congress. This threat made it a sacred obligation for the Congress to incorporate complete independence in the Congress creed. The Congress would not be worthy to represent the nation if, for fear of consequences, it hesitated to enunciate the nation's birthright. If *swaraj* was a doubtful word, it becomes unequivocal by becoming *purna swaraj*.

‘PEACEFUL AND LEGITIMATE’

But the Congress rejected by an overwhelming majority any change in the description of the means. They still remain ‘peaceful and legitimate’. There were members in the Subjects Committee who suggested that independence would not be vindicated by non-violent and truthful means. Violence there undoubtedly was in the air. But I feel that those who flock to the Congress session year by year have a living faith in non-violence as the only possible means for India at least to regain her lost freedom. Non-violence and truth are the vital need for India if the stupor of the millions is to be removed, if the warring communities are to be welded into one. A foreign power must be a necessary factor for any community that will coerce any other or the others into submission to its will. But the Congress must perforce remain non-violent if it will represent, as it claims to represent, all communities. Whether therefore it takes a year or ages to reach political independence, non-violence and truth are in my opinion the shortest way to it. Complete independence of the Congress is no menace to a single legitimate foreign interest or the presence of a single Englishman who will live as a friend willing to submit to the rules applicable to the whole of independent India.

This is clear from the condemnation of the bomb resolution and the clause in the central resolution appreciating the efforts of the Viceroy to arrive at a peaceful solution of the national problem. Both the bomb resolution and the clause were hotly contested, but the Congress accepted both, the one by a substantial majority ascertained after a division and the second by an overwhelming majority. I am sure that by passing the resolution and the clause the

nation has conformed to its creed, and risen in the estimation of the world, as it would have denied its creed and lost in the world's estimation if it had refused to condemn the bomb outrage and perform the common courtesy of recognizing the good even in a representative of a rule which we seek to destroy.

BOYCOTT OF LEGISLATURES

To the constructive programme the Congress has added boycott of legislatures. This was in my opinion inevitable. Those who would have independence have to work outside the legislatures and among the people. That no single seat will remain vacant because of Congressmen withdrawing from the legislatures is no reason for opposing the boycott. Let those who believe in the legislatures by all means go there. It is enough that Congressmen employ themselves otherwise and cease to give those bodies any prestige through their presence there. For me the decisive opinion of Pandit Motilalji in favour of boycott was enough to incorporate it in the resolution.

The programme would have been undoubtedly strengthened if law-courts and Government schools were also boycotted. But the atmosphere was absent. The Congress is not an organization to enunciate theories, but to anticipate national wants and wishes, and forge practical sanctions for their fulfilment.

Local bodies stand on a different footing. They were included in the original draft. But as opinion was sharply divided, I did not press for their retention in the boycott clause. Let no one however run away with the idea that it is now any Congressman's duty to seek election to or capture these institutions. On the contrary it is the duty of every Congressman to retire from or avoid them, if they take away best workers' attention from better work or if they mean continuous wrangling, dissensions or worse. They are at liberty to remain in them or seek election thereto when they are convinced that by their presence there, they can promote not merely some legitimate interest but national independence.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The greatest and the most effective sanction however is civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes. Whilst the task of choosing the time and the method of it has been nominally and properly left to the All-India Congress Committee to decide, I know that it is a duty primarily devolving upon me. I must confess that I do not see the atmosphere for it today. I want to discover a formula whereby sufficient provision can be made for avoiding suspension by reason of Chauri Chaura. A time must come when there may be a fight

to the finish with one's back to the wall. With the present temper of many Congressmen, with our internal dissensions, with the communal tension, it is difficult to discover an effective and innocent formula. It may be impossible to offer civil disobedience at this stage in the name of the Congress, and it may be necessary to offer individual civil disobedience without the Congress *imprimatur* and apart from it. But just now every thing is in the embryonic state. I can only give the impatient patriot the assurance, that I am concentrating all my powers on discovering a workable formula. He can help me materially by assisting to promote a non-violent atmosphere and to push forward the constructive programme. I know that many have refused to see any connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience. But for one who believes in non-violence it does not need hard thinking to realize the essential connection between the constructive programme and civil disobedience for swaraj. I want the reader to mark the qualification. Constructive programme is not essential for local civil disobedience for specific relief as in the case of Bardoli. Tangible common grievance restricted to a particular locality is enough. But for such an indefinable thing as swaraj people must have previous training in doing things of all-India interest. Such work must throw together the people and their leaders whom they would trust implicitly. Trust begotten in the pursuit of continuous constructive work becomes a tremendous asset at the critical moment. Constructive work therefore is for a non-violent army what drilling, etc., is for an army designed for bloody warfare. Individual civil disobedience among an unprepared people and by leaders not known to or trusted by them is of no avail, and mass civil disobedience is an impossibility. The more therefore the progress of the constructive programme, the greater is there the chance for civil disobedience. Granted a perfectly non-violent atmosphere and a fulfilled constructive programme, I would undertake to lead a mass civil disobedience struggle to a successful issue in the space of a few months.

‘IN THE EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES’

Whilst thus the central resolution lays down the country's objective and the methods for its attainment in no uncertain terms, it does not rule out the idea of a conference in every circumstance. It merely and most properly says, that ‘in the existing circumstances’ no good purpose can be served by the Congress being represented at the proposed Conference. What are then the conceivable circumstances in which the Congress may be represented at such a conference? I can mention at least one such circumstance. If the

British Government invites the Congress to a conference, that is to discuss and frame not any scheme but a scheme definitely of independence Government, and fulfils the other conditions suitable for such a conference, I take it that the Congress leaders will gladly respond. Indeed a conference there must be at some stage or other. It can take place as the proposed Conference was expected to take place out of Britain's good grace our land pressure of world opinion, or out of pressure from us as we hope it will be if we develop sufficient strength. Whether such a time is to be far or near depends upon how we utilize or waste this year of grace.

OUR FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Next in importance and almost part of the central resolution must be deemed the one dealing with our financial obligations.¹ Everyone who knows anything of public finance knows how extravagant this Government is and how heavy is the load of debts that is crushing the nation. Everyone knows also what concessions have been given to foreigners in utter disregard of the national interest. These cannot demand, dare not expect recognition from independent India under the much abused name of vested interests. All vested interests are not entitled to protection. The keeper of a gambling den or of a brothel has no vested interest. Nor has a corporation that gambles away the fortunes of a nation and reduces it to impotence. The Congress at Gaya² therefore passed a comprehensive resolution repudiating certain debts. The last, whilst reaffirming the Gaya resolution, laid down that obligations or concessions pronounced to be unjust and unjustifiable by an independent tribunal shall not be recognized by the independence Government to come. No exception can, in my opinion, be possibly taken against such a reasonable proposition. To shirk the issue is to invite disaster.

COMMUNAL QUESTION

Equally important is the communal resolution³. Though it was adopted for the sake of the Sikhs, it was necessary other wise too to enunciate the principles underlying it. Independent India cannot afford to have communal representation, and yet it must placate all communities if the rule of independence is not based on coercion of minorities. But the Congress has now to cultivate a spirit of common nationality and refuse to resort to camouflage or expedience in a matter so vital as the communal question. In the Congress we must

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930.

² In 1922

³ *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-III", 1-1-1930.

cease to be exclusive Hindus or Mussalmans or Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews. Whilst we may staunchly adhere to our respective faiths, we must be in the Congress Indians first and Indians last. A good Hindu or a good Mussalman should be a better Hindu or a better Mussalman for being a lover of his country. There never can be any conflict between the real interest of one's country and that of one's religion. Where there appears to be any, there is something wrong with one's religion, i.e., one's morals. True religion means good thought and good conduct. True patriotism also means good thought and good conduct. To set up a comparison between two synonymous things is wrong. But if the Congress is ever forced to consider a solution based on communalism, the resolution binds it to reject any that does not satisfy the parties concerned. In order however that the Congress may never be faced with a situation demanding a communal solution, it should now be joined in large numbers by Mussalmans, Sikhs and others who will have India as one indivisible nation. I for one would welcome the Congress passing into Mussalman, Sikh, Parsi, Christian, Jewish hands rather than that it should be in any sense a sectional organization. Anyone who has the spirit of service in him can capture the Congress. It has the most democratic franchise. Its doors are ever open to those who would serve. Let all join it and make it a mighty instrument for gaining complete independence for the poorest, the weakest and the most downtrodden. I must defer the consideration of other resolutions and the other matters relating to this remarkable Congress to a future issue¹, if not the next.

Young India, 9-1-1930

206. MR. PENNINGTON THE EVERGREEN

My remarks on the Congress² are a fitting answer to this letter³. We must be the judges of our own wants, not Englishmen, however well-intentioned they may be.

Young India, 9-1-1930

¹ *Vide* "What Not to Do?", 16-1-1930.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ Not reproduced here. Referring to Gandhiji's article "Honest Differences", pp. 192-5, Pennington had written that the evils of British rule had been exaggerated and immediate independence for India was an impossibility.

207. JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Jawaharlal¹ Nehru has proved to be a jewel of India. In his address lofty thoughts are couched in sweet and courteous language. Several topics have been dealt with thoroughly and yet the address is short. The splendour of the soul shines in every sentence. The apprehension that lurked in many hearts disappeared after the oration. As was the address, so was his deportment. During the Congress session he did all his work independently and impartially. And since he worked incessantly and strenuously everything was completed on time and without any hitch.

If under the Presidentship of such a brave and righteous young man we can achieve nothing it will greatly surprise me. But if the ranks are unworthy, what can the brave captain do? Therefore, we should do some introspection. Are we fit to be under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru? If we are, then the outcome must be propitious. Liberty cannot be secured merely by proclaiming it. An atmosphere of liberty must be created within us. Liberty is one thing, and licence another. Many a time we confuse licence for liberty and lose the latter. Licence leads one to selfishness whereas liberty guides one to supreme good. Licence destroys society, liberty gives it life. In licence propriety is sacrificed; in liberty it is fully cherished. Under slavery we practise several virtues out of fear; when liberated we practise them of our own free will. A slave will not steal out of fear, will not quarrel with anyone, will not lie and will appear honest. He will be protected from dacoits and others by his master. A slave does not exercise his free will in whatever he does. A free man's thoughts and actions are identical. Whether for good or for evil he acts of his own free will. Therefore, a free man reaps the full benefits of his good actions, and when this happens society progresses from day to day. A free man will not fail in his duty of protecting others.

Therefore, if we have understood true freedom, we will shed communal fear. Hindus and Muslims will cease to fear one another. If both could shed fear at the same time all the better; but a free spirit should not expect the help of others to cast off fear. If the other side violates justice, even then he would not seek the help of a third party. He will depend only on his own strength, and if he loses, he will try to augment his own strength. To die fighting is itself victory, it is one's duty. To run away from the fight is slavery and humiliation. Real freedom is impossible without the spirit of a true Kshatriya. Therefore,

¹ Literally, 'jawahar' means jewel

the unique quality of a Kshatriya is considered to be his determination never to shrink from a battle. For this reason we too, in everything we do, must never run away from the battlefield.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 9-1-1930

208. LETTER TO KHALIQUZZAMAN

SABARMATI,
January 9, 1930

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

Even before the Independence resolution¹ Congress chairmen of local boards have refused to give addresses. I am quite clear that you should not present the address and therefore should resign the chairmanship.

KHALIQUZZAMAN
LUCKNOW

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/45

209. LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 9, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I received your cheque for Rs. 345. The sum will be used as desired by you. I hope both of you keep good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7543

¹ The resolution on complete independence called upon the Congress members of Central and Provincial legislatures and Government Committees to resign their seats; *vide* "Speech at Congress Session, Lahore- II", 31-12-1929.

210. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 9, 1930

BHAISHRI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

Your letter has arrived. Devdas writes that Keshu is receiving loving attention from you all. So writes Radhabehn too. What more can I say in this matter? The treatment too conforms more or less to what I would have wished. Enough; it would be discourteous to write anything further on this subject. I am free from all anxiety.

The Lahore resolutions are very much to my liking. And my opinion is further strengthened by the current happenings. Go through what I have written in *Young India*¹ and offer whatever comments you think fit. You have every right to express your views and offer advice.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6180. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

211. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

January 10, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Here is my draft resolution or declaration² for 26th instant. I have nothing as yet from anybody. But I thought I would not now wait till the last moment. You will cut it up or extend and amend it as you like. The shorter the sweeter.

Ever since we have separated at Lahore, I have been evolving schemes of civil disobedience. I have not seen my way clear as yet. But I have come so far that, in the present state of the Congress, no civil disobedience can be or should be offered in its name and that it should be offered by me alone or jointly with a few companions even as I did in South Africa if you have studied the History of Satyagraha. If you have not, you should. If I do finally see my way clear, I shall think out what part the Congress can play in that event. All this, however, I have no time to discuss through correspondence. If I make

¹ Vide "The Congress", 9-1-1930.

² Vide the following item.

further progress, I shall let you know. If you have any remarks to offer, please let me know. In any case prepare yourself to come here a day or two earlier than the Working Committee meeting day. Of course you can come earlier still . . .¹ before 26th inst. if necessary.

I hope father is going to Bengal on the appointed day.

I am most anxious to come to grips during your year of office, but that strictly according to my lights. Please therefore feel free to criticize whatever I say or suggest. I want to do nothing that would cross your purpose or thwart your plans, if you have conceived any independently. The more I think, the more convinced I feel that it was a happy thing for the country that I did not become President. I would have felt hampered in maturing plans in complete detachment. As it is, I cannot conceive a more favourable opportunity for me for making my experiment than when you are the helmsman of the Congress.

Yours,

BAPU

[PS.]

Since writing this, I have your letter². In view of what I have said above, I must not go out. The one who may travel through a few places with effect is father. The weight that he can carry in the matter of the councils boycott is not to be rivalled by anybody. Can he go?

After reading your notes³, I did think it necessary to alter my draft.

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ Illegible

² Which read: “. . . I shall expect your statement and resolution for the 26th in a few days. Could you also add some directions for the observance of the day? . . . I enclose a letter from Rajagopalachari. I think there is something in what he says. There are so many statements and counter-statements in the Press that the issues are likely to be clouded. Personally I dislike touring on a big scale but if you think I should rush about I shall do so. Rajagopalachari's idea that we may get some of the non-Congress members out of the legislatures seems to me to be amazingly optimistic. . . . But even apart from the council boycott it seems desirable to make the country feel that we are in earnest. If we remain quiet for some weeks it may have a bad effect. . . .” (S.N. 16335)

³ On exploitation of India by England (S.N. 16335)

212. DRAFT DECLARATION FOR JANUARY 26¹

[January 10, 1930]²

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain *purna swaraj* or complete independence.

India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven pice (less than 2 pence) per day. The taxes we pay are 2.5 pies per day and of these the land revenue derived from the peasantry is 20% and the salt tax, which falls heaviest on the poor, is 3% of the total.

Village industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports and customs revenue from these, which ought to have been used to lessen the burden of taxation on the masses, is 44 times lighter in India than it is in Russia and 44³ times and 24⁴ times, respectively, less heavy than it is in the United States of America and Germany. The arbitrary manipulation of the exchange ratio has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.⁵

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have

¹ For the final declaration, *vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930.

² *Vide* the preceding item.

³ For the correction of these figures, *vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 16-1-1930.

⁴ *ibid*

⁵ All the figures quoted in this paragraph relate to the year 1904. For the changes made by Gandhiji, *vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1930.

to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. No reform has given real political power to the people.

Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.

Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

We hold it to be a crime against men and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions, issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing *purna swaraj*.

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

213. LETTER TO DR. SYED MAHMUD

SABARMATI,

January 10, 1930

DEAR DR. MAHMUD,

I have your touching letter. This death¹ at this time in our history is a blow indeed. I hope my wire was received by Begum Saheba. Tell her please that she must not grieve. We must all bravely bear an event which is the common destiny of all life.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5074

¹ Of Mazhar-ul-Haq; *vide* "Notes", 9-1-1930.

214. A LETTER

SABARMATI,
January 10, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have a letter from Abbas Saheb. I do feel that if you can possibly avoid attending the Governor's function, you should do so.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a microfilm: MMU/XXII/66

215. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SABARMATI,
January 11, 1930

DEAR SUBHAS,

I like your letter though it does not satisfy me. I wrote¹ and did as I felt. I cannot tax my memory as to . . . ² now about the details. The exhibition I remember vividly. But there of course our ideals differed. I do not believe in the showy part in connection with what is intended to be a pure education for the masses. But I should have a battle royal with you on these things if you had leisure. I assure you I have no partiality for khadi workers. They naturally engage my attention because they have so much in common with me. I would love to have the same contact with you. But I cannot have that privilege as our methods and outlook on life seem to differ. I do not mind these differences, what I mind is bitterness. But do let me have your second letter. I am anxious to come nearer to you.

I should be sorry to think or to discover that I do not know young Bengal which I love and adore.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/46

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Ramniklal Modi", 13-11-1929.

² Illegible

216. LETTER TO S. SATYAMURTI

January 11, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I thank you for your letter. We must agree to differ.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

S. SATYAMURTI
2/18 CAR STREET
TRIPPLICANE
MADRAS

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

217. LETTER TO DUNICHAND

January 11, 1930

DEAR LALA DUNICHAND¹,

I thank you for your letter. I shall certainly bear in mind what you say.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 5580

218. SPEECH AT GUJARAT VIDYAPITH CONVOCATION

January 11, 1930²

Sjt. Narendra Dev just told you, "You are eager to serve the nation. You are pure in heart, brave and self-sacrificing. Being eager for national service, you will prove your mettle one way or another upon entering worldly life." I wish that all his praise should be well deserved. But my experience leads me to ask you to be pure and remain pure. Let not the vow you just took remain on paper, but inscribe it in your hearts and let the people's money and the teachers' energy spent after you be fruitful. My blessings of course always go with the students.

¹ Advocate, High Court, Lahore

² From Bombay Secret Abstracts

Sjt. Vallabhbhai and Kaka Kalelkar are holding forth their begging bowl before the public. Their appeal for contributions is not to be seen in any of the English papers, for their aim is to see how Gujarat views its special duty to the Vidyapith. My hope was that by now all the sixty thousand asked for would have been collected. If this national work is to progress speedily, people should set our national workers free from anxiety in the matter of money. The citizens of Ahmedabad by themselves can do this if they mean it. If this is done, the teachers can give their whole attention to their proper work. In the Vidyapith we require ability more than numbers. Behind the introduction of the civil disobedience and behind the resolution as a whole, lay the confidence that some students at least would play their part well and bring us success.

The Congress at its Calcutta session had resolved that if the Dominion Status of Pandit Nehru's scheme was not granted within a year's time, a resolution demanding independence would be passed even at the risk of incurring the world's censure. If the choice is between independence and Dominion Status, even a person like me would prefer independence.¹

You will naturally expect me to say something about the independence resolution passed at the Lahore Congress, especially the civil disobedience part of it, and you will want to know what is going to be your share in the struggle. Well, as I have often said here, we rely not on numerical strength, but on the strength of character, and the civil disobedience resolution was moved more because I had faith in a few men sacrificing themselves for the cause than in the number of men coming forward in response to the call. You know that the Calcutta resolution pledged us to changing the first article of the Congress constitution and preparing for a programme of civil disobedience, provided Dominion Status was not forthcoming by the end of 1929. This not having been fulfilled, there was nothing for us but to carry out the pledge even at the risk of adverse criticism and misrepresentation. Events that have happened after the resolution have added force to it. Earl Russell² has given us plainly to understand that India's Dominion Status is something different from what we have always believed it to be, viz., a status allied to that of Canada, New Zealand and Australia. These, the noble Earl admits, are virtually independent. I never had anything else in mind when I talked of Dominion Status for India. What Earl Russell says is tantamount to

¹ This and the preceding two paragraphs are translated from the Gujarati in *Prajabandhu*, 12-1-1930. What follows is from *Young India*.

² Under-Secretary of State for India

saying that instead of being in the iron chains that India has been in for years, she may now have the choice of changing them for golden ones. And some of us seem to hug the proposal. We are so very much fear-stricken that a severance of the British connection means to us violence and chaos. Well, I want to make myself clear once more. Votary as I am of non-violence, if I was given a choice between being a helpless witness to chaos and perpetual slavery, I should unhesitatingly say that I would far rather be witness to chaos in India, I would far rather be witness to Hindus and Mussalmans doing one another to death than that I should daily witness our gilded slavery. To my mind golden shackles are far worse than iron ones, for one easily feels the irksome and galling nature of the latter and is prone to forget the former. If therefore India must be in chains, I would they were of iron rather than of gold or other precious metals.

The spectre of an Afghan invasion is raised in certain quarters the moment we talk of independence. Well I don't mind the invasion when we have severed our slavish connection with Britain. But I am an incorrigible optimist, and my faith in India winning her freedom by a bloodless revolution is unshakable. We have a helmsman like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and I do not think we are ever going to have a better young man as our President. Would that weachieved our goal whilst he has the reins of our affairs in his hands. And I think it is quite possible, if you will be true to your pledge. I would like to see the graduates of this Vidyapith in the front in any campaign for swaraj. I want you to visualize what is coming. You have a harder ordeal than going to jail. Robbers, dacoits and murderers also can go to jail, and they make themselves thoroughly at home there. But they do not serve the country by going to jail. A mere jail going man does not help the country. What I want from you is the preparedness to offer yourselves willing and pure sacrifices in the struggle. There is a lot of violence in the air, and you will have to immolate yourselves in the flames, if there are violent outbursts when and if I am put into jail. If you are true to your pledge of truth and non-violence, you will not hide yourselves in your houses whilst violence or incendiarism is going on, nor will you be active participators in it, but you will go and rush into the conflagration with a view to extinguishing it. For surely that will be expected of you. Even the votaries of violence will expect that and nothing else from you. Vice pays a homage to virtue, and sometimes the way it chooses is to expect virtue not to fall from its pedestal even whilst vice is rampant round about.

You will be ready of course to march to jail, but I do not think you will be called upon to go to jail. The higher and severer ordeal I

have just now pictured to you awaits you. I do not know what form civil disobedience is to take, but I am desperately in search of an effective formula.

If you have become indifferent to constructive work, overcome your indifference. Get rid of any violence and untruth that may be present in it. We must do something and show concrete results this year, and the responsibility for this rests on me in the country. All expect that I shall succeed in the task. I also have the faith that I can do so. I am saying this not to fill you with enthusiasm, but in order to wake you up. Rest assured that tomorrow will see something achieved.¹

I am impatient to reach the goal if we can through non-violence and truth. I have infinite patience to wait, if we cannot reach the goal without the sacrifice of non-violence and truth. Both spring from my unshakable faith in the supremacy of non-violence and truth. I know that however long the route may appear, it IS in my opinion the shortest.

Young India, 16-1-1930 and *Prajabandhu*, 12-1-1930

219. WELLS AND PONDS²

As in the past, so in the present also a person wanting to found a village would first look for water. If there exists no proper facility to obtain water or it is not possible to create it, he would give up all thought of founding a village at the place. In South India we come across dry, though otherwise beautiful, regions where no villages can be founded for want of water. Man's first elementary need is air, for which one does not have to go in search. The next is water. Though it cannot be obtained as easily as we get air, the getting of water does not involve the amount of labour needed for producing grain. However, the water we use has to be as clean as the air or food we take in.

We all know that the villagers are ignorant of this requirement, or are indifferent to it though they know it. Education in the uses of water, therefore, has an important place in the programme for rural education entrusted to the *gramsevak*s³. Imparting education in the subject will test the *sevak*'s patience. It is not to be expected that the villagers would of themselves take pains to think out or employ ways

¹ This paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Prajabandhu*, 12-1-1930. What follows is from *Young India*

² This appeared in the *Shikshan ane Sahitya* supplement.

³ Workers engaged in village uplift

and means of keeping the water clean. Slowly we should teach the villagers the advantages of keeping water clean and the rules to be observed for doing so. We should also get their assistance in this work. In several places, it happens that none of the inhabitants comes forward to help though the work is for their own benefit. In such circumstances, the only way open to the *sevak* is to work hard by himself and, by doing single-handed as much as he can, to induce in the villagers a feeling of shame for their unhelpful behaviour.

Let us now go a little into the details of what we might do. Many of the villages have only one pond, where the cattle drink and people bathe or wash, cleanse utensils and wash clothes, and people fetch the water for drinking and cooking from the same pond. Experts on hygiene have demonstrated through numerous experiments how poisonous germs are born in such water and diseases like cholera result from drinking it. With a little care, it is possible to keep such ponds clean. The village pond should be enclosed so that no cattle can approach it. Of course there should be a provision for them to drink water. For that purpose there should be built a separate drinking trough near the pond as we find done near many of the wells. If everyone in the village makes it a point every day to fetch and add to it a potful of water from the pond, the daily requirement of the cattle would be met without much difficulty.

Never should utensils be cleansed or clothes washed in a pond from which drinking water is drawn. There are two ways to ensure this. Everyone should do the washing at home with the water fetched for domestic use. The other way is to have a water tank just near the pond. Everyone should fetch and put into the tank his share of the water needed for this kind of work. Then the tank water may be used for washing and cleansing by the village population. This would be possible only if there exists among the villagers a spirit of co-operation and mutual service. If it is not feasible to get the tank and the drinking trough filled through personal labour in the way I have described, this could be done by incurring a little expense on that account. As water is bound to get spilt and spread at a washing place, the immediate open space around should be paved so that no mud gets formed there. Before any utensil is dipped into the pond of drinking water, it ought to have been cleansed outside the pond. Moreover, there should be an arrangement so that the feet of the person fetching water do not have to wade through any part of the pond. This is about the villages that have one pond only.

In some villages there are, or it is possible to have, more than one pond. At such a place the pond for drinking water should be set apart for the purpose.

In the third category of villages there are wells. The water in these wells ought to be kept clean. With that view, the place should have an enclosure built around it and no mud should form there. From time to time the well water should be cleaned to remove the dross at the bottom. To get all this done by the village inhabitants, the *sevak* should himself be prepared to do it. This is cheap, true and necessary education.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 12-1-1930

220. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I omitted to reply when I wrote to you¹ to your important question about 26th instant. I think there should be nothing mentioned about processions. We do not want the people to hold processions under licences, nor do we want them to hold them without. The only thing, therefore, they should do is to hold meetings and devote the day, if possible, to enlisting members. I do not think that speeches are necessary or advisable. I am anxious to avoid anticipation of a crisis. I would value perfect calm for ushering in civil disobedience. I am writing about this in *Young India*.²

I hope you received my draft declaration in good time.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

221. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

This is to ask you if you can depute someone to go to South Africa and take charge of *Indian Opinion*. Manilal is here with his wife. They would both like to be in India now. Manilal is by no means

¹ On January 10, 1930; *vide* "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-1-1930.

² *Vide* "Independence Day", 16-1-1930.

a brilliant or even passable editor. Devdhar¹ was at one time thinking of sending someone. If you think that the proposal is at all feasible, please let me know.

I do hope you are not over-angry with me for my doings in Lahore. I have but followed the inner voice. I saw no other honourable way out. Russell's speech² has justified the decision, i.e., in my opinion of course. But I know that we can love one another in spite of sharp differences of opinion.

And how are you now in body?

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

Letters of Srinivasa Sastri, p. 189

222. LETTER TO JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

MY DEAR JAIRAMDAS,

I have your letter.

Yes, you may bring your draft resolution for the Working Committee's³ consideration. It will be a great step if we can avoid the scandal of one province sending as delegates the wastage of other provinces.

I like too your idea of inviting a few friends outside the Working Committee. Will you make up a list?

I am concentrating hard on finding a civil disobedience formula. I hope to find it soon. I feel that we must do something during the year consistently with non-violence. We must run the boldest risks. But of this more when we meet. You will come a day or two earlier please.

Choithram must keep his health. He must not get excited as he did when he was inviting the Congress to Karachi.⁴

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/49

¹ G. K. Devdhar of the Servants of India Society

² He was reported to have said at a Labour Party meeting at Cambridge that none knew better than Indians themselves how very foolish it was to talk of complete independence.

³ Which was scheduled to meet at Ahmedabad from Feb. 14 to 16, 1930

⁴ Karachi was selected as venue of the next Congress session.

223. LETTER TO RAMI PAREKH

SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

CHI. RAMI¹,

I suppose I should not expect any letter from you. Ba yearns to see you. I, on the other hand, get no time even to think about you all. But I too wish that you should come and pay a visit, if Kunvarji permits you and you feel inclined. Just now Ba has gone to Vijapur. She will return in a few days. Manilal is here, and Sushila too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9713

224. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL,

I got your letter. I showed it to Doctor. He was happy. I hope you will succeed in your effort.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

SJT. NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI
JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2582

225. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 12, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. If Prabhudas and Uttamchand are fit to travel, escort them here *via* the branch line and then proceed to Wardha. Devdas says that Prabhudas need not be detained there till his arrival.

¹ Harilal Gandhi's daughter and wife of Kunvarji Parekh

Assure Prabhudas that there is no harm in continuing with the powders prescribed by the vaidya.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2372

226. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,

January 13, 1930

WIRE IF TEXT CELEBRATION DECLARATION¹ RECEIVED AND
APPROVED. WISH PUBLISH FORTHCOMING YOUNG INDIA. IF
MANY CHANGES MADE WIRE TEXT TO REACH TOMORROW
MORNING.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

227. SPEECH AT ALL-INDIA NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD²

January 13, 1930³

The Vidyapith owes its origin to the non-co-operation movement, and, as I said some years ago, the object of the Vidyapith is the attainment of swaraj. All those studying in national educational institutions and connected with them must do all the things that the country has to do, and must go through the same discipline as the country has to go through for the attainment of swaraj, so that they may be ready to offer themselves willing sacrifices when the time comes.

Ours is a movement of self-purification. There are some who think that morality has nothing to do with politics. We do not concern ourselves with the character of our leaders. The democracies of Europe and America steer clear of any notion of morality having anything to do with politics. Bad characters are often great intellects, and they can manage certain affairs well enough by the force of their intellect. The private character of some of the leading men of the House of Commons will not bear examination. We too have often

¹ Vide "Draft Declaration for January 26", 10-1-1930.

² Published in *Young India*, 23-1-1930, under the caption "Not a Policy But Creed"

³ From *The Bombay Chronicle*, 14-1-1930

carried on our political movement in the same fashion, we did not concern ourselves with the morals of the Congress delegates or leaders. But in 1920 we struck an entirely new departure and we declared that since truth and non-violence were the sole means to be employed by the Congress to reach its goal, self-purification was necessary even in political life.

Today there is not much open opposition to the idea, though there are many who secretly believe that politics should have nothing to do with morality. That is why our progress is so slow and in some respect even nil. If we had acted up to our creed of 1920, we should not have taken nine years to arrive even at the present stage. If swaraj was not meant to civilize us, and to purify and stabilize our civilization, it would be nothing worth. The very essence of our civilization is that we give a paramount place to morality in all our affairs, public or private. And as one of the functions of the Vidyapith is to civilize us, the battle of swaraj calls for the greatest sacrifice from the national educational institutions.

I want you all to realize the implications of our creed. If you think that truth and non-violence constitute not the *creed* but the *policy* of the Congress, I do not know where I should be. But if you are convinced that they are your personal creed, I need not expatiate on them. The very fact that a person belongs to the Vidyapith should be sufficient guarantee of his truthfulness and non-violence. The first thing therefore that this national educational conference and those who are attending it should do is to ask themselves whether all their doings have been in consonance with that creed. If you have gone about your work, following truth and non-violence as a policy, there will come a day when you might be tempted to alter the policy. For instance my friends the Ali Brothers accepted truth and non-violence as a policy, and they never made a secret of it. They always said that they could not accept them as a creed. There are many others of their way of thinking, and they undoubtedly have their place in the service of the country, but for you, students and teachers of national educational institutions, that attitude will not suffice. You must accept both the principles as your creed and they should be part and parcel of your being. If all make of ahimsa a policy, and I remain the only votary of it as a creed, we can make very little progress. Let us therefore ask ourselves once again, and make sure, that we will in no circumstances harbour untruth and violence for the attainment of swaraj. Then everything will be well.

The constructive programme has sprung out of the creed of truth and non-violence. Let us examine every item of it. Hindu-Muslim unity will be impossible so long as the Hindu cherishes

violence against the Mussalman and the Mussalman against the Hindu. The Congress resolution at Lahore on the communal question was a corollary to the creed. The Sikhs wanted bare justice, but the resolution, as you will have noticed, has gone further, and it is meant not only for the Sikhs but for all the communities of India.

Then take the removal of untouchability. While talking of this question, some think of removing physical untouchability, some talk of the removal of the so-called untouchables' disabilities as regards the use of public wells, schools and temples. But you should go much further. You should love them even as yourselves so that the moment they see you they might feel that you are one of them. Then and then only will you be able to have their co-operation in the constructive programme.

The same is the case with prohibition. Also with the khadi programme. But need I talk about it here? This work is so concrete and tangible that a man who maintains a regular diary of his day's work can give a clear account of how much he has added to the national wealth. If we had approached the task in that spirit we should have made considerable headway by now. The Foreign-Cloth Boycott Committee has told us what we have been able to achieve even by means of our very little work of last year. To my mind it is trifling, but if all of us had done the thing with a will and an active faith, what would have been the result? We badly need true and efficient workers. But I know that even amongst you there are quite a number of men in whom the will and therefore the capacity are both lacking. We have toshed our inertia, our want of faith, and the capacity will follow as a matter of course.

I have told you what to do. I shall tell you now something as to what not to do. Literary training, scholarly research and linguistic pursuits, study of English and Sanskrit and fine arts had better take a back seat. All our national schools ought to be converted into factories of our national ammunition, viz., constructive work. There are millions of children in India today who have to go without any education, much less national education and the other big things I have mentioned. Why then can't *we* do without them until at any rate we have won our freedom?

The Working Committee has appealed to the country to enlist members and volunteers. Why should there be any other organization necessary for this work? You can all be members and volunteers and take charge of the work. Think what the students in Europe did during the great War. Are we prepared to make the sacrifices that they made? If deep down in us is the conviction that we may not even

breathe in peace until we have freedom, we will live and move and have our being in carrying out the constructive programme.

Lastly, may I sum up in a word what is expected of you? Even as we have to be pure, let us shed the fear of death. An Englishman has recently told us that though Gandhi may think that India will be none the worse if Englishmen left India, he has no doubt that not a rich man's property will be safe and not a virgin will be inviolate the moment his countrymen leave India. That shows what a low opinion he has of us Indians. But how can it be otherwise? We are so fear-stricken today that we have to maintain the services of hired men for the defence of our property and our honour. The moment we shed the fear of death, we shall escape from this wretched plight. I expect every maiden studying in the Vidyapith to wake up and muster sufficient moral strength to withstand even the touch of a wicked individual. I want you all to shed the fear of death, so that when the history of freedom comes to be written, the names of the boys and girls of national schools and colleges may be mentioned therein as of those who died not doing violence but in resisting it, no matter by whom committed. The strength to kill is not essential for self-defence; one ought to have the strength to die. When a man is fully ready to die he will not even desire to offer violence. Indeed I may put it down as a self-evident proposition that the desire to kill is in inverse proportion to the desire to die. And history is replete with instances of men who by dying with courage and compassion on their lips converted the hearts of their violent opponents.

In reply to a question at the end of the speech, Gandhiji said:

If I am so keen on the students' share in the struggle, why did I not press for the boycott of schools and colleges, you ask. I say there was no atmosphere. But I hope you will not retort that if there was no atmosphere, what can even these students do? They can do a lot. Had their devotion to their mission been intenser than it has been, they would have created an atmosphere that would have compelled the students of Government schools and colleges to leave them. What they have not been able to do hitherto, they can do even now.¹

Do not be agitated because I have said this. On the one hand, you must be prepared to die, while on the other hand you must bury yourselves in your present duties as if you were immortal and would never perish.

Young India, 23-1-1930 and *Navajivan*, 19-1-1930

¹ The following paragraph is translated from the Gujarati in *Navajivan*, 19-1-1930.

228. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 14, 1930

CHI. RAMDAS,

Manilal and Sushila left for Vijapur yesterday. Manilal said he would return in two or three days bringing with him Ba and Nimu from there. If you wish, I can arrange for Nimu to be sent with somebody. Someone or the other keeps going from here to Bardoli. I write this only from the point of view of saving expense. If you are thinking of coming here just to take Nimu with, it is not at all necessary to do so and it will save so much of your money. I am not very eager to see you so that you need come here on that pretext for, how am I to find time even to have a look at you, let alone talk with you? I will be satisfied if I know that all of you are living in peace and contentment, and are doing your duty wherever you are. For my part, I am furiously thinking about some way of starting the fight.¹ If the government lets me remain free this year, something big is bound to happen. If, on the other hand, they arrest me, would not that by itself count for something?

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI RAMDAS GANDHI
SWARAJYA ASHRAM
BARDOLI, 'VIA' SURAT

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

229. INDEPENDENCE DAY

It was easy enough to pass the independence resolution at Lahore. It is difficult enough to achieve it even by 'peaceful and legitimate means'. The first essential is to let the masses know, understand and appreciate the message of the Congress. They must know what independence means and what it is likely to cost. And so the Working Committee whose business is to make the Congress live in the daily life of the people has fixed Sunday, 26th instant, as Purna

¹ That is, the civil disobedience movement contemplated by the resolution passed by the Indian National Congress on December 31, 1929, at its session in Lahore under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru

Swaraj (Complete Independence) Day when a declaration¹ approved by the Working Committee will be made by those present. It is intended to be complete by itself. No speeches are therefore necessary. They are inadvisable, because the idea is abroad that people may indulge in loose talk when independence is in the air. These should understand that loose irresponsible talk is not independence, it is licence; it is not energy generated by love of freedom, it is froth to be thrown away as useless and harmful, whereas 26th instant is intended to be one of complete discipline, restraint, reserve, dignity and real strength. It would be good, if the declaration is made by whole cities, whole villages even as happened on that ever memorable 6th of April 1919. It would be well if all the meetings were held at the identical minute in all the places. In order that these meetings may be numerously attended, there should be house-to-house visits, there may be also leaflets circulated among the people. The villages may follow the customary method of advertising the time by the drumbeat. Those who are religiously minded may as before begin the day by ablutions and concentrating on the task before the country and the means for its fulfilment. They will therefore pass the day in doing some constructive work, whether it is spinning, or service of 'untouchables', or reunion of Hindus and Mussalmans, or prohibition work, or even all these together, which is not impossible. Thus a Hindu may get hold of an 'untouchable' and invite a Mussalman, a Parsi, a Christian, a Sikh to join in a spinning competition for a stated time, and then they may all go together for say one hour to hawk khadi which they can together buy to resell and then devote an hour to visit the neighbouring liquor shop and speak to the keeper about the evil of gaining a livelihood or making money by such means. They may also speak to the visitors to such places and wind up the day by attending the celebration. It should be remembered that Sunday is also the flag-hoisting day. The day may be well begun by attending the flag-hoisting ceremony.

If the Congress Committees and Congress workers are serious about the resolution, I hope they have already begun enlisting new members and inviting old ones to pay their subscription for the current year. In doing so, they, the old and the new ones, should be informed of the change in the creed and its implications. And if Congress Committees begin methodical work, they will materially help in reorganizing the Congress on a solid foundation, and the people who may then attend the celebration on the 26th will be not merely curiosity-mongers or idlers, but men and women gathered together

¹ *Vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930.

with a fairly full knowledge of what they are about and determined to fulfil their common purpose. It ought to be possible to make the demonstration universal and yet ensure perfect orderliness throughout the whole length and breadth of India. Nothing untoward or unintended should happen on this Independence Day. In order to enable the central office to gauge the strength of the movement and the Congress organization, it is as necessary to send an absolutely accurate account of the day's doing in each village or locality as it is to have the celebration itself. A full and faithful record of the day's happenings will enable the Working Committee that is to meet on the 14th February to shape its future course.

All this work requires whole-timers, in other words, permanent paid volunteers. Part-time workers are good and valuable only when and where there is at least one whole-time worker. I have already suggested that there should be a permanent Provincial Service Board formed for the U.P. which should draw up a workable constitution and immediately set about enlisting recruits. Let us hope that there will be no time lost in bringing into being this very desirable organization. If it works efficiently and honestly it will serve as a model for the rest of the provinces.

Young India. 16-1-1930

230. WHAT NOT TO DO?

In my opinion it was a very wise thing the Lahore Congress did in shifting the time for holding the Congress session from December to some time in February or March.¹ December is no doubt a fine month for the leisured and well-to-do class. For the poor who flock in ever-increasing numbers to the Congress, December is a trying month in most parts of India. They sleep anywhere in the open with the scantiest clothing, and succumb to influenza or the like. The railway concessions during Christmas holidays benefit the poor but little. The Reception Committees are always hard put to it to make the delegates and the visitors comfortable. And lastly it was necessary to break the spell that December had cast over Congressmen. It was originally chosen for the sake of lawyers and others who were connected with the administration of the country and therefore its exploitation. It was therefore but meet, that with the passing of the independence resolution the unbecoming tradition was broken. The Congress has been generally regarded as a pantomime, a holiday show. If independence is to be achieved, it must cease to be a show, it has to

¹ *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-I", 1-1-1930.

become a stern reality.

It was therefore unfortunate that the Subjects Committee refused to reduce its own number or that of the delegates.¹ But I do not wonder. Even the Congress has become a venue for coveting office, distinction and worse. There is so much scramble for office in the various committees, that election disputes have become a painful feature in our national organization. A coach and four is sought to be driven through every section of the Congress constitution in order to seize office. Well has it therefore been said, that reduction of the organization may work contrary to the expectation, and may even increase the corruption instead of removing or decreasing it. I am fully aware of the danger, and am also aware of the fact that what is needed is not external remedies but internal purification. It behoves us however to use every legitimate external means to purify the Congress, and make it an efficiently working irresistible organization which it undoubtedly can become if it honestly works up to its creed.

I am looking forward to Karachi² with great hope. It may be that by that time I may be in a better place, it may be that the whole face of the land will be changed by the time the Congress meets. But I must review the past for the sake of the future as we may expect in the ordinary course.

Though the reduction of the number of delegates is not in the hands of the Sind workers, there are many other things that they can do to make the next session less unbusinesslike and much less expensive. A city of tents is an expensive affair for this country. Open grass sheds with half walls 10 feet apart for comparative privacy are likely to be the cheapest contrivance. Nothing of the material to be used for the purpose will be valueless after use. The ground chosen should be levelled and well laid out, and open squares may be given on hire for the use of delegates and visitors who may make their own arrangements if they so wish. A small committee of experts should set to work now to consider the best and the cheapest method of building a temporary city. No kitchen should be run by the Reception Committee, but licences may be issued to selected patriotic caterers who would serve meals according to provincial tastes and at pre-arranged rates both *a la carte* and *table d'hôte*. We waste much effort and more money in trying to do things in amateurish fashion, and what is more, we lose each year the experience gained in the past.

¹ *Vide* Resolution No. 4, "Draft Resolutions for A.I.C.C., Lahore", 26-12-1929.

² Which was selected as venue of the next Congress session

Had it not been so, at the end of forty-five years of experience, the holding of the annual assembly should be child's play, and the arrangements should be a pattern of perfection. As it is, the Reception Committees in their respective cities where the session is held have a most anxious time, and thank their stars if everything goes tolerably well. Sanitation, waterworks, medicine, ambulance, catering, building should all be departmentalized and done through honest, nationalist, licensed contractors. Thus alone could corporate national life be built up. The nation's representatives must be able to deliberate and transact national work in perfect peace and quiet.

The exhibition too should not be a side-show to defray the expenses of the Reception Committee which should easily pay its expenses if it did its work in a businesslike manner. The contractors I have in mind should, through the licence fees they would pay, defray all the expenses of the central office which under the plan suggested by me would only have to do the work of inspection of the several departments and general management. The exhibition must be entrusted to an expert body. I have suggested the A.I.S.A. But if there is prejudice against that body, some other agency may be chosen. To be of real educative value it must satisfy the following conditions:

1. There should be no games and pantomimes. These are amply provided during festivals and by other agencies.
2. Nothing but swadeshi goods should be admitted. Only that may be called swadeshi which is wholly made in India by indigenous skill and for predominantly Indian shareholders where the concern is controlled by a company. Thus a harmonium whose parts are imported and only put together in India is in no sense swadeshi, nor is cloth woven from foreign yarn swadeshi, nor cloth manufactured by a company whose shareholders are principally foreigners.
3. Not all swadeshi goods may be exhibited. Only those should be exhibited that are struggling for existence and that are of real benefit to the nation. Thus cigars, indigenous intoxicating liquors and drugs, obscene indigenous literature, patent medicines, mill-cloth, etc., will be excluded.
4. The spinning-wheel and khadi will be the centre round which all the other exhibits will find place.

Such an exhibition will be of the greatest value to the nation, and if it has a permanent organization behind it, it would provide education of the highest economic value to the masses. Let the Sind workers profit by the mistakes of the past. They have more than twelve months in front of them. Let them not suspend their thinking or their action because something untoward or serious

or grand is going to happen. It is a sign of panic to suspend ordinary and necessary business in anticipation of an uncommon event. We may hold ourselves in readiness for it even as we do or ought to for the supreme event, death, without interrupting the even tenor of life. If the Congress is to be the instrument for achieving independence, it must be disciplined, compact, united and responsive to the needs of the dumb millions.

Young India, 16-1-1930

231. POSERS

A political science student of the Benares Hindu University has asked the following questions¹.

This student's questions are just the ones that used to be asked in 1922. But they do not surprise me. Very few readers besides the questioners themselves go through answers to questions. Out of them only a few are satisfied. Many others forget these questions and answers. Therefore every time such questions are asked it is the duty of the editor to go on answering them.

The first refers to the lack of a spirit of sacrifice. This is true and at the same time not true. True, because in the immediate environment of the questioner the spirit of sacrifice is not apparent, and, for this reason, he assumes that the spirit of sacrifice is lacking in the whole country. It is not true, because, if the spirit of sacrifice were entirely absent, any national work would have been impossible. Even admitting that there is plenty of room for the growth of the spirit of sacrifice, my experience tells me that the spirit does exist in the country and it is ever growing. There is not the least doubt that in order to achieve complete independence the spirit of sacrifice should be more intense. Regarding the wearing of khaddar the commercial attitude, which the student speaks of, must progressively make room for a benevolent and altruistic outlook.

Regarding the triple boycott, I see more of ignorance in what the student has written because the Congress has not revived the boycott of schools and courts. I do believe, however, that these three boycotts are necessary. To say that someone or the other will go to the Councils, then why should Congressmen not do so, is not right.

¹ Not translated here. The correspondent had argued that the triple boycott expected a degree of sacrifice which the people were not prepared to make, that even if successful, the boycott was not going to overthrow the Government and that the earlier satyagraha movements seemed to succeed because they did not challenge the very existence of the Government.

Liquor shops will not remain empty, so must we enter them too? If we consider the Councils useless or harmful, why should we attend them? Now take the case of the schools. I see dangerous self-deception in the view that boys will remain uneducated by quitting Government schools. Boys did not remain uneducated before the advent of the British rule. It is a fact that before the British rule was established in India, primary education was much more widespread than it is today and higher education too was imparted in a great measure. Have we fallen so low today that by ending Government-sponsored education our education will come to an end? This student should know that national schools exist in India today and thousands of youths are receiving national education there. Even if all the boys boycott Government schools they need not remain uneducated. Yes, they will certainly not have grand school buildings built with the money soaked in the blood of the poor nor will they receive an education that destroys independence.

Regarding the boycott of law-courts it must be admitted that it is a difficult task. The attachment to them that is evident today is harmful to the interests of the country. We have to rest satisfied only by trying to remove this attachment as far as possible. But it must not be forgotten that the courts are the main refuge of every Government. Therefore, the more lawyers, plaintiffs and defendants shun them, the better. We should lower the prestige of the courts day by day.

In the end, it should be remembered that any institution or person rests on its or his own prestige only. The Government gains prestige through the Councils, schools, courts, etc. Boycott undermines prestige. Therefore the Government's prestige is lowered by the preaching of boycott. This is most natural. No Government can remain stable on the strength of the gun alone.

To say that the people of Bardoli earned less and lost more on account of the satyagraha is not the truth. They themselves know that they gained immensely by the satyagraha. If one wants tangible proof of this one can visit Bardoli and see for oneself even today. It is true that a hard struggle will have to be waged for attaining freedom; but this is neither regrettable nor surprising.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 16-1-1930

232. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 16, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

RECEIVED WIRES. FIGURES RETESTED. FOUND ACCURATE. YOU
MAY ADD SHORT RESOLUTION IF NECESSARY.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

233. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 16, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU
ALLAHABAD

YOUR LETTER RECEIVED AFTER DESPATCH WIRE. RESOLUTION
DRAFTED BY YOU WHOLLY UNNECESSARY. REVISED DECLARATION
SHOULD BE CIRCULATED. TARIFF RATIO SHOULD READ TWENTY-
FOUR TIMES AND EIGHT TIMES RESPECTIVELY LESS HEAVY
THAN IN UNITED STATES AND GERMANY.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

234. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

January 16, 1930

BHAI GHANSHAYMDASJI,

I have both your letters. I am so busy these days that there is no time to answer letters. I shall make my comments after going through the speech. I too had a talk with Malaviyaji Maharaj. Things can improve much if he inculcates tolerance in the other party. Do whatever you can in this direction.

We shall discuss your health when we meet.

I have no anxiety on Keshu's account.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6181. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

235. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,

January 17, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

READING THREE O'CLOCK THIS MORNING PARA REGARDING
CUSTOMS CURRENCY. DO NOT LIKE IT. IF DECLARATION NOT
SENT PRESS PARAGRAPH REFERRED SHOULD READ QUOTE
CUSTOMS AND CURRENCY HAVE BEEN SO MANIPULATED
AS TO HEAP FURTHER BURDENS ON THE PEASANTRY. BRITISH
MANUFACTURED GOODS CONSTITUTE BULK OF OUR IMPORTS.
CUSTOMS DUTIES BETRAY CLEAR PARTIALITY FOR BRITISH
MANUFACTURES AND REVENUE FROM THEM IS USED NOT TO
LESSEN BURDEN ON THE MASSES BUT FOR SUSTAINING HIGHLY
EXTRAVAGANT ADMINISTRATION. STILL MORE ARBITRARY HAS
BEEN MANIPULATION OF EXCHANGE RATIO WHICH HAS RESULTED
IN MILLIONS BEING DRAINED AWAY FROM THE COUNTRY
UNQUOTE.¹

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 16-A, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ This was substituted in the final declaration; *vide* "Things to Remember for 26th", 23-1-1930.

236. LETTER TO S. SRINIVASA IYENGAR

SABARMATI,
January 17, 1930

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The prayer bell is just ringing 4 o'clock early morn. Preoccupations compel me to burn after-midnight oil. I can no longer delay acknowledging your angry letter. Though I have an answer to every one of the statements you have made I must restrain myself. I can only give you my assurance that my affection for you is no more diminished because of political differences than for Malaviyaji for the same cause. But this I cannot prove by words. Future conduct alone can prove the truth of my assurance. I did not write my letter to hurt your feelings. I wrote in order to be true to you, a friend and associate, and to myself.

We shall know each other better when the mists have rolled away.

Meanwhile I anticipate your forgiveness for offence given utterly unconsciously.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: S. Srinivasa Iyengar Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

237. SPEECH AT HOSTEL BOYS' CONFERENCE, AHMEDABAD¹

January 17, 1930

My idea of a hostel is that it should be like a family. The superintendent and the students living in the hostel should live as members of one family. The superintendent should take the place of the mother and the father of the students. If the superintendent's wife is also staying there the husband and wife together should discharge the functions of mother and father. Right now the conditions prevailing in the country are pitiable. Unless the superintendent observed *brahmacharya* his wife can never function as a mother in the hostel. She may not be even approving of her husband working in the

¹ Delivered at the request of hostel superintendents who wanted to know Gandhiji's views on an ideal hostel for students

hostel. She may be putting up with it just because he earns a certain amount as salary. Even if he stole some ghee from the hostel, his wife would be happy that her own children would have a little more ghee to eat. This is not to suggest that all superintendents belong to this category. But our whole society today is in a state of disintegration.

There are not many ideal hostels such as I have described either in Gujarat or in India. If there are, I have not come across them. India has very few such institutions outside Gujarat. Students' hostels are a special product of Gujarat. This can be attributed to many causes. Gujarat is a land of businessmen. It is natural for those who earn money from business to be prompted to build hostels for the students of their community. It was much later that these institutions acquired the big name of hostels. Those poor creatures called them just "Boardings". They did not aim at anything more than providing for the boys facilities of food, etc. When cultured superintendents came to be associated with these institutions, they began imbuing idealism into them.

Personally I consider hostels more important than schools. A great deal of knowledge which cannot be acquired in school can be acquired in a hostel. A school may be imparting some formal education. But the student is not able to digest what he learns in the school though he may retain something in his mind in spite of himself. At the moment I am picturing only the dark side of schools. The strength of mind that can be developed in boys and girls in a hostel can never be done in a school. In the final analysis my idea is that the hostel itself should be the school.

The hostels which the rich businessmen built turned out to be of a different type. Having established the hostels, they kept themselves aloof. The superintendents too felt that once the boys had taken their meals and gone to their schools or colleges their work was done. Had the businessmen and superintendents taken sufficient interest, the hostels would not have remained as they are. We must now study their conditions and find out what measures could be taken to improve them. We can completely transform this institution if we are keen about it. We can accomplish through the hostels much that cannot be achieved in the schools. Let the superintendent not confine himself to looking after the accounts. Let him also keep himself in touch with what the students learn at school, and look after them with care like his own children or disciples. Today the conditions are such that in many places the superintendent is not even aware of what the students eat or drink.

A serious form of moral indiscipline prevails in our hostels. I

specially want to draw your attention to it. The thing is usually winked at. The superintendents are hesitant and hide it thinking that it would spoil the name of their hostel. They feel that they cannot expose the misconduct of the students and do not inform even their parents. But the superintendent never succeeds in keeping it a secret. The superintendent may be thinking that nobody knows anything about it. But the stink spreads in no time. Experienced superintendents must have understood what I am hinting at. I caution the superintendents in this regard. They must be vigilant and realize their duty thoroughly. Those who cannot keep the hostels pure must resign and relieve themselves of this work. It is a reflection on the fitness of the superintendents if, by staying in hostels, the students become cowards, their strength of character is destroyed, their thinking becomes disorganized and their intellect becomes sterile.

I can cite many instances in support of my statement. I receive heaps of letters from students. Many of the letters are anonymous and I consign them to the waste-paper-basket. But I do take in the substance of these letters. Many simple-hearted students give their names and addresses and ask me to suggest solutions. When the new habit is being formed, they are not comforted by the superintendents and helped to fight against it. On the contrary they are encouraged. Later when they awaken they find themselves wanting in will-power. They have no control over their minds nor the strength to follow the advice from someone like me.

Some persons who can handle the work of a superintendent quote high prices for themselves. They have widowed sisters to be supported and children to be married. Such superintendents, even if they are worthy, are unacceptable to us. There are others who think that they are meant for this very work. They would not be attracted by any other work. And some have come forward who are ready to work getting in return just enough for their subsistence.

It should be clear from what I have said that a superintendent should be almost a perfect man. Only such a man who can impress the students and enter into their hearts can become a superintendent. To collect boys together in the absence of such a superintendent would be a terrible thing.

So much for the superintendents. Now something for the students. If the students forget themselves and look upon the superintendent as their servant and believe that all their work should be done by servants and they may do nothing themselves, they are making a mistake. The students should realize that the hostel is not meant for their pleasure. Let them not think that they are paying for

their stay in the hostel. Whatever they may be paying is not sufficient to meet the expenses of the hostel. The donors who have built the hostels are under the impression that students benefit by being pampered, that they would be doing their duty by providing them comforts. Under such a belief they provide comforts to the students; but quite often this results in violation of dharma rather than observance of dharma. The students, on the contrary, are spoilt and tend to depend on others. Let the students who can use their brains calculate the rent of the hostel premises and the salaries of the servants and the superintendent. All that is not recovered from the students. They pay only for their board. In some hostels, even food, clothes and books are provided free. The businessmen would be doing well if they took an undertaking from the boys that they would serve the country after completing their studies. But they are so generous that they do nothing of the kind. But the students should realize that if they do not do something in return for what they have been getting, it is like enjoying stolen wealth. I had learnt a poem by Akho Bhagat when I was a young boy:

“Enjoying stolen wealth is like eating unprocessed mercury.”

Students will not become brave by enjoying stolen wealth. They will become miserable. Let all of you here resolve that you would not eat the food that is offered as charity. You may well take advantage of the facilities provided for you. But when you have gone back from here you should give notice to the superintendent that all the servants should be relieved forthwith. Or, if you feel pity for the servants, let them be continued; insist on doing all your work yourself. Resolve to do all the work yourself, including the cleaning of lavatories. Then alone will you become householders and will be able to serve your country. Today people do not even have the strength to support themselves and their wives and mothers by any honest occupation.

Anyone who believes in his pride that since he has secured employment he is following an honest occupation should consider why he is getting Rs. 75 as a clerk in the mill and that a worker with a large family gets only Rs. 12. If he examines this carefully he will know that he does not deserve a higher salary and that it is not an honest earning. All of us in the cities eat stolen food. We are all commission agents working for a giant gang of plunderers. Ninety-five per cent of what we collect from the people we send away to foreign countries. Any earning from such an occupation is, as good as no earning at all.

If you have faith in what I have told you today start practising it immediately.

A hostel is like a hermitage. All those who live there must be *brahmacharis*. Even those who are married should have renounced their family life. If you spent some 5 to 10 years in such ideal conditions you would be able to do for India whatever you might wish to do. The sacrifice for freedom has begun. But what can anyone depending on charity contribute towards it? Someone like me would be ready. But I would be carrying with me bread made from *jowar* or *bajra* while you will want spicy food every evening! Some of you may be proud enough to say that everything will be done when the time comes and that there is no need to worry right now. I have seen many people talking in this vein. But when the time comes they hang back. We have already had the experience of how people behave in jail after they are arrested. It is well known to everyone how the people who had gone to jail during 1920-21 had created a row over food and what practices they had resorted to. We had all been put to shame by it. Do not be under the impression that you can learn to make sacrifices all at once. It can be learnt only after long training. Anyone who is eager to make a sacrifice but has not tried to overcome his subtle craving for pleasures is betrayed by them at the critical moment. This is proved by experience. If you students would but understand you would find that what I have said today can be easily put into practice,

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-2-1930

238. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM*¹

[On or after *January 17, 1930*]²

I am glad that you all want me to speak to you on the meaning of and the necessity for prayer. I believe that prayer is the very soul and essence of religion, and therefore prayer must be the very core of the life of man, for no man can live without religion. There are some who in the egotism of their reason declare that they have nothing to do with religion. But it is like a man saying that he breathes but that he has no nose. Whether by reason, or by instinct, or by superstition, man acknowledges some sort of relationship with the divine. The

¹ This was mainly addressed, after the evening prayers, to hostel boys who had participated in a students' conference at the end of the National Educational Week. They sought Gandhiji's advice on the necessity of making congregational prayers compulsory, a proposal which was earlier rejected at the Conference.

² The National Educational Conference concluded on January 17, 1930.

rankest agnostic or atheist does acknowledge the need of a moral principle, and associates something good with its observance and something bad with its non-observance. Bradlaugh, whose atheism is well known, always insisted on proclaiming his innermost conviction. He had to suffer a lot for thus speaking the truth, but he delighted in it and said that truth is its own reward. Not that he was quite insensible to the joy resulting from the observance of truth. This joy however is not at all worldly, but springs out of communion with the divine. That is why I have said that even a man who disowns religion cannot and does not live without religion.

Now I come to the next thing, viz., that prayer is the very core of man's life, as it is the most vital part of religion. Prayer is either petitional or in its wider sense is inward communion. In either case the ultimate result is the same. Even when it is petitional, the petition should be for the cleansing and purification of the soul, for freeing it from the layers of ignorance and darkness that envelop it. He therefore who hungers for the awakening of the divine in him must fall back on prayer. But prayer is no mere exercise of words or of the ears, it is no mere repetition of empty formula. Any amount of repetition of Ramanama is futile if it fails to stir the soul. It is better in prayer to have a heart without word than words without a heart. It must be in clear response to the spirit which hungers for it. And even as a hungry man relishes a hearty meal, a hungry soul will relish a heartfelt prayer. And I am giving you a bit of my experience and that of my companions when I say that he who has experienced the magic of prayer may do without food for days together but not a single moment without prayer. For without prayer there is no inward peace.

If that is the case, someone will say, we should be offering our prayers every minute of our lives. There is no doubt about it, but we erring mortals, who find it difficult to retire within ourselves for inward communion even for a single moment, will find it impossible to remain perpetually in communion with the divine. We therefore fix some hours when we make a serious effort to throw off the attachments of the world for a while, we make a serious endeavour to remain, so to say, out of the flesh. You have heard Surdas's hymn.¹ It is the passionate cry of a soul hungering for union with the divine. According to our standards he was a saint, but according to his own he was a proclaimed sinner. Spiritually he was miles ahead of us, but he

¹ Where is there a wretch
So loathsome and wicked as I?
I have forsaken my Maker,
So faithless have I been.

felt the separation from the divine so keenly that he has uttered that anguished cry in loathing and despair.

I have talked of the necessity for prayer, and therethrough I have dealt with the essence of prayer. We are born to serve our fellowmen, and we cannot properly do so unless we are wide awake. There is an eternal struggle raging in man's breast between the powers of darkness and of light, and he who has not the sheet-anchor of prayer to rely upon will be a victim to the powers of darkness. The man of prayer will be at peace with himself and with the whole world, the man who goes about the affairs of the world without a prayerful heart will be miserable and will make the world also miserable. Apart therefore from its bearing on man's condition after death, prayer has incalculable value for man in this world of the living. Prayer is the only means of bringing about orderliness and peace and repose in our daily acts. We inmates of the Ashram who came here in search of truth and for insistence on truth professed to believe in the efficacy of prayer, but had never up to now made it a matter of vital concern. We did not bestow on it the care that we did on other matters. I awoke from my slumbers one day and realized that I had been woefully negligent of my duty in the matter. I have therefore suggested measures of stern discipline and far from being any the worse, I hope we are the better for it. For it is so obvious. Take care of the vital thing and other things will take care of themselves. Rectify one angle of a square, and the other angles will be automatically right.

Begin therefore your day with prayer, and make it so soulful that it may remain with you until the evening. Close the day with prayer so that you may have a peaceful night free from dreams and nightmares. Do not worry about the form of prayer. Let it be any form, it should be such as can put us into communion with the divine. Only, whatever be the form, let not the spirit wander while the words of prayer run on out of your mouth.

If what I have said has gone home to you, you will not be at peace until you have compelled your hostel superintendents to interest themselves in your prayer and to make it obligatory. Restraint self-imposed is no compulsion. A man, who chooses the path of freedom from restraint, i.e., of self-indulgence, will be a bondsman of passions, whilst the man who binds himself to rules and restraints releases himself. All things in the universe, including the sun and the moon and the stars, obey certain laws. Without the restraining influence of these laws the world would not go on for a single moment. You, whose mission in life is service of your fellowmen, will go to pieces if you do not impose on yourselves some sort of discipline, and prayer is a necessary spiritual discipline. It is discipline

and restraint that separates us from the brute. If we will be men walking with our heads erect and not walking on all fours, let us understand and put ourselves under voluntary discipline and restraint.

Young India, 23-1-1930

239. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 18, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. I understand what you say. You may write your diary in any manner you think proper. It is very strange that you have not yet been able to overcome your constipation. Do you have to take pills? I think your handwriting has improved a little, but there is room for further improvement.

This place has become overcrowded.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9274

240. LETTER TO MATHURADAS TRIKUMJI

January 18, 1930

The description which you give of the site is beautiful indeed, but the lack of facility of water is in my eyes a serious drawback. Even if the supply of water was assured, I do not wish to start anything new this year. The plan of the struggle that is taking shape in my mind is of a fight of such magnitude that no one can say how it will end. It is also possible that ultimately I do not succeed in thinking out an effective plan and decide to do nothing. But 75 against 25 the chances are that my inner voice will prompt me to fight and not to drop the plan.

When you return to Bombay, where do you intend to stay? You can maintain the improvement only if you take a small bungalow in a suburb and live there. Would you not like to take a small house on the outskirts of a fine village and go there to live? And serve the village in every way you can ? . . .

[From Gujarati]

Bapuni Prasadi, pp. 98-9

241. LETTER TO BARJORJI BHARUCHA

January 19, 1930

BHAISHRI BHARUCHA,

Here is the message for the *Kaiser-e-Hind*¹: ‘No sincere Englishman need be afraid of free India.’

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai’s Diary . S.N. 32579/54

242. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,

January 18, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Now build up your body and make it quite sturdy. I, on my part, had written to you advising you to go to Vijapur at the earliest but you did not get the letter in time. It was good that you came over. Ramdas wants Nimu to be sent over soon. You also must have received a similar letter. We have here somebody who can escort her. You may therefore write and suggest to me if Nimu can come here by herself, you would let her do so, or you would arrange for somebody to accompany her here or, whether Manilal should be sent from here to bring her. Write whichever alternative suits you best. Write to me regularly telling me how you are keeping. Kashi must be quite fit.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI PRABHUDAS GANDHI

UDYOGALAYA

VIJAPUR, “VIA” KALOL

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33005

¹ Gujarati daily on Bombay

243. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

January 19, 1930

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

At present I do see no need to make any changes in the profession and the treatment of immigrant Indians. Moreover, a discussion would serve no purpose.

I am fully informed about the anti-Andrews happenings in America.

Yours,

MOHANDAS

SJT. BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

CALCUTTA

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2561

244. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

January 20, 1930

DEAR SATIS BABU,

Either a p.c. or none. I have yours. It is well you are now going thoroughly into the Utkal khadi business. When I was in Utkal, I had spoken to the workers about their laziness and ignorance in the presence of Niranjana Babu. I hope both of you are well. Have you not sent Rs. 2,500 to Abhoy Ashram? Have you got the amount? I have a reminder from the AA¹.

Yours,

BAPU

SJT. SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

KHADI PRATISHTHAN

SODEPUR

From a photostat: G.N. 1614

¹ Abhoy Ashram

245. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM,
January 20, 1930

MY DEAR C. R.,

I had your letter. But I am so immersed in work that I have no time to attend to correspondence to my satisfaction.

I cannot agree that any purpose can be served by my touring. And what matters if those who believe in Councils enter them? We shall not prevent them even if we entered upon a hurricane campaign. It is for me and should be for you enough that the Congress is no longer interested in the legislatures. Touring for that purpose can only create bad blood. Vallabhbhai too agrees.

What I am doing is to think hard about civil disobedience. I have some idea of what I want to do. This much seems to me to be clear that civil disobedience must not be started under the Congress aegis, it must be started by me. Further I have not yet been able to see. I want you to come here a few days before 14th Feb. I am asking Jawaharlal to do likewise.¹

I hope you are keeping well in health.

[PS.]

Mahadev is taking 7 days' fast for peace of mind and Durga for health. They are both doing well.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/55

246. LETTER TO MOTILAL NEHRU

SABARMATI,
January 20, 1930

DEAR MOTILALJI,

I have your letter. I did not realize you were so bad. In the circumstances there is no occasion for touring. After all we have said our say. Let those who wish seek election.

I do not think they will begin arrests so soon. But if they do, all the better. They are not likely to take all of us at the same time. If they do and if they put us all together, we shall have a rare time of it.

¹ Vide "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 10-1-1930.

I am giving careful hints in *Young India* and *Navajivan*.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I am not writing to Jawaharlal today. The messenger is being detained for the time being.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary, S.N. 32579/57

247. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

SABARMATI,

January 20, 1930

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

Vallabhbhai shares with me your letters to him. About the Chamber let it be what it will. Bomanji has wired to say that he is coming on Friday.

I am writing this letter with regard to your suggestion for a tour. I do not think it would do any good to undertake a tour to campaign against the legislatures. If anything, I think it might do harm. It would certainly lead to more bitterness. Those who are keen on entering the legislatures will do so in any case. Let them. Such a campaign was necessary in 1920-21 because the idea was new then. The aim then was to get those who were in the legislatures to leave those bodies. This time everybody has decided that they should leave legislatures. Since the Congress is free from that bother it has rid itself of the corruption.

My task is to organize civil disobedience. I am thinking how to plan it. I cannot do that if I undertake a tour. I have got to be in the Ashram for that purpose. I have already made some decisions. The whole picture is not yet clear.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary, S.N. 32579/56

¹ *Vide* "Independence Day", 16-1-1930 and "Posers", 16-1-1930.

248. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

January 20, 1930

BHAI HARIBHAU,

I got your letter. If meetings are prohibited, I think it would be best not to hold them in Indian States or in localities in which they are prohibited.

What can we do about the report in *Arjun*? What do you suggest ?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 6071. Courtesy: Haribhau Upadhyaya

249. NOTE TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [January 20, 1930]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Tell me about the following things either at mealtime or during the afternoon or in the evening whenever you get time.

To whom did you give the bangles on the *Rentia Baras*² day? Why did you give them?

To whom are biscuits served in the afternoon? What is the quantity served if the persons concerned do not eat ghee and sugar?

Does anyone supervise the children's spinning class? If no one does so, somebody should be asked to do it from today. What is the duration of the class and when does it commence?

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6: G.S. Gangabehnne, p. 34

¹ As in the source

² *Bhadarva Vad* 12, Gandhiji's birthday according to the Gujarati calendar, celebrated as Spinning Day

250. LETTER TO SHARDABEHN SHAH

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 21, 1930

CHI. SHARDA,

Your original name becomes you best. A Sharada¹ would understand through a mere hint why a well-wisher forbids a thing. One reason for doing that is provided by you three sisters. You have all said the same thing in your letters, but instead of signing the same letter you wrote three separate letters and thereby wasted your time and money, which really belong to the people. A satyagrahi's time or money is not his own. He has offered up everything to the Lord. The second reason is that.² a woman of careful habits does not write important letters with a pencil. I had to stop in this letter at the point where my handwriting starts, and complete it today, the 21st.

The real reason is that I think it desirable that you should wait for some time. It is not necessary for everyone to join a struggle. This being my view, I do not send a wire.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 2840. Courtesy: Fulchand K. Shah

251. LETTER TO DEVCHAND U. PAREKH

January 21, 1930

BHAISHRI DEVCHANDBHAI,

I have your letter. I do believe that, if the Thakore Saheb of Morvi offers to use his good offices to settle the dispute, they should slacken the satyagraha. I don't understand why Manilal is so impatient. Moreover, Fulchand, too, is there to help them. Write to me from time to time. If possible, you should even run down to Malia.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 5724

¹ Goddess of learning

² From here the letter is in Gandhiji's handwriting.

252. LETTER TO KUNVARJI PAREKH

Wednesday [January 22, 1930]¹

CHI. KUNVARJI,

Rami and the children arrived here quite safe. I got your letter after the train for Viramgam had left. I have not, therefore, been able to send anyone there. Write to me from time to time and keep me informed about your condition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9714

253. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

Wednesday [January 22, 1930]²

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I was happy to read the letter written by you three sisters. Write to me like that from time to time. Instead of my going there, why should not you all come here? How are your studies progressing? You ought not to give up spinning. How could you ever think of that?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7462

¹ From the postmark

² From the G.N. Register

254. LETTER TO BENARSILAL BAZAJ

January 22, 1930

CHI. BENARSILAL,

I have a letter from Jamnalalji and another from Rukmini's paternal grandfather. *Phalguna Shukla 2* is an auspicious day. It falls on Sunday, March 2. Regard this date as fixed for the wedding which will be solemnized in the Ashram. I hope it suits you. If you wish to write anything please do.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRIYUT BENARSILAL

NEW SWADESHI MILLS RAILWAY PURA

AHMEDABAD

From Hindi: C.W. 9301. courtesy: Benarsilal Bazaj

255. INTERVIEW TO "THE DAILY EXPRESS"

AHMEDABAD,
January 22, 1930

The great trial of strength in this country is at hand. Events now depend entirely on the British Government, for we shall not in any circumstances, now or in the future, participate in any conference unless it is called to consider our complete secession from Great Britain. The day has passed when we could accept anything less than that.

We are engaged, as the world must know, in a struggle for the absolute severance of the present British connection and we shall not rest until that aim has been achieved.

We have begun now. You shall find in every section of the land millions of our men and women in their cottages spinning hour after hour. This means a nationwide boycott of foreign-spun cloths, and in time must mean the end of British predominance in an industry which is the principal reason for the presence of your British troops in this country.

Asked to outline the details of his plans for the execution of his crusade of civil disobedience, Gandhiji replied:

I am not yet sure of the form it will take. I have come here and in my seclusion I hope to evolve a plan of civil resistance which will

not cause destruction or involve bloodshed, but which will be large enough to make the impression I desire. That is all I am doing here, otherwise, as you can see, I am spinning.

He lapsed here into a long theoretical explanation of the necessity for careful preparation. He was not certain that the precise moment had arrived which would ensure the success of this first step in the coming revolution, but it would be a guide—the measure of its success would be a guide to him. He went on to explain:

It is absolutely necessary for the person controlling such a movement to keep himself in tune with the voice of his followers, and therefore he must be as impervious to outside influences as he has to be sensitive to every little thing that goes on within.

I asked Gandhi if it was not possible that he might yet be able to avoid the extreme measures to which he was proceeding. When he replied promptly in the affirmative and said that the slightest gesture from the British Government would work the miracle, I inquired what that gesture in his view should involve. He replied:

Any real gesture from the British Government and the British people, or any unexpected combination, spontaneous and healthy among ourselves, which would in itself constitute sufficient pressure to compel world attention, and not merely the attention of the British people.

That meant, of course, combination with extremists, but what kind of gesture from Britain?

Supposing the British Cabinet were to say tomorrow, ‘We are prepared to consider and further a scheme of Indian independence’, and produce an atmosphere, as it can certainly do, congenial to the framing of such a scheme, that would automatically prevent any further preparation for civil disobedience.

Does not the proposed Round Table Conference offer you an opportunity for full discussion in this respect?

He answered with some emphasis:

No, not in any shape or form. Because the Round Table Conference scheme so far as I have understood it from authentic sources is designed to discuss anything between a form of government infinitely less than the present and Dominion Status. There is, for example, this proposition made by responsible ex-officials that powers hitherto enjoyed by the people of India, such as they are now, should be taken away, because these critics actually suggest that we have proved ourselves unworthy of the powers. Therefore, such a Round Table Conference, where even the capacity of India for full freedom is in question, has no place for me whatever. It is entirely out of the question that I should attend. I can only attend a conference which is pledged not to consider how much power India should or should not

enjoy, but to consider ways and means of framing a scheme of complete independence. This is the only conference I could consider for a moment attending.

I asked Gandhi bluntly at this point whether he seriously believed his methods would frighten the British Government into subjection to his demands. It all depends on the response of the people. I am confident, but I am not certain. I think the time is ripe now to formulate my plans. It is my own limitations that make it impossible for me to penetrate the surrounding darkness.

In other words, the atmosphere round me is depressing, and there are undoubtedly forces of violence to be seen on the surface which I may not be able to control.

But, as I have said, true non-violence which I advocate might yet be able to circumvent and rise superior even to these forces, but being myself an imperfect instrument I may not be able readily to lay my hands on the proper form of non-violence which will meet these circumstances. It is this menacing force of violence which threatens the land which must first be sterilized.

Gandhi emphasized here that civil disobedience was the extreme limit of action that he would countenance, declaring it to be the limit of non-violence, anything more involving a programme of violence, to which he would never be a party.

Replying to a further question, he said:

The strength of the extremists is not great today, but is growing.

But supposing the extremists got out of hand and the responsibility for bloodshed becomes theirs, and therefore yours—what then? Supposing the British Government are then forced to take the action which the British public will demand of them, and they make arrests and arrest you—what then? He replied solemnly:

I am not afraid of arrest and it is quite open for the British Government to precipitate the reign of violence as they have done in the past. What the consequences then will be I cannot say but such a step would, in my opinion, be the sheerest folly.

Then your view of the immediate future is what?

The immediate future is, for a man so optimistic as I am, quite bright, but if I were to calculate the pros and cons and to enter into the arithmetic of the situation, I must confess that the problem is insoluble. I do not know what is going to happen. I am not in the happy position of a general who knows beforehand the whole of his plan, who works according to a time-table, and can profess to be able to forecast results with certainty.

But I can assure you of this much. The trial of strength in India

is now at hand. The outcome depends entirely on the British Government.

There are two courses which they may pursue. One way is the old panicky way which will lead to Dyerism, to frightfulness and mad repression, and then anarchy. The other course is the way of the wise man who reflects on his past sins, repents, and retraces his steps. Let us hope.

The Searchlight, 12-2-1930

256. TO THE INDIAN CRITICS

I know that you are angry with me for my having been the supposed breaker of the negotiations with the Viceroy. You think I have made a hash of it. If I have done so, I was driven to it. I was disinclined to join the party. But I was wanted if only for my supposed influence over the masses. I went and spoke in accordance with the dictates of the inner voice. This ability to hear and obey that voice gives me whatever power I may have and has enabled me to render some little service to the country. You will not have me at this time of my life to change my course and listen to any other voice but the inner.

And what is the offence that I have committed in common with Pandit Motilalji? Not to depart from the Congress instructions, not to depart from the terms of the now famous Delhi manifesto? It is well known that the terms mentioned therein, no matter by what name they are called, were binding on all Congressmen. We broke on the very central point of Dominion Status. I make bold to say that the country has gained by the correct attitude Pandit Nehru and I adopted.

Surely nothing will be lost by the Congress abstaining from participation in the Conference if the British Cabinet mean well. Let those that have faith attend, and if they bring anything worth looking at from the independence standpoint, the Congress will capitulate. The days of being satisfied with costly toys are over. It is the substance that India wants.

British domination must cease.

British administration, that is costing the country far beyond its means, must end now, not in the remote future.

The vast majority of Congressmen believe that this cannot be had through any round table conference unless a proper atmosphere for it is created. Diplomatic language that may mean one thing for the British voter and another for the Indian peasant will never make India free. The British people must realize that the Empire

is to come to an end. This they will not realize unless we in India have generated power within to enforce our will. The English have paid dearly for their freedom such as it is. They therefore only respect those who are prepared to pay an adequate price for their own liberty. The real conference therefore has to be among ourselves.

Instead therefore of looking at the independence movement with hostility, the critics should bless it even when they cannot identify themselves with it.

But perhaps they do not mind the independence propaganda so much as they mind the idea of civil disobedience. Will they have an armed rebellion instead? The Congress cannot stay its hands after having passed the independence resolution. It was no bluff, no showy nothing. It was a deliberate definite change in the Congress mentality. It is then as much up to the critics as to me to devise ways and means of achieving independence.

There is undoubtedly a party of violence in the country. It is growing in strength. It is as patriotic as the best among us. What is more, it has much sacrifice to its credit. In daring it is not to be surpassed by any of us. It is easy enough to fling unkind adjectives at its members, but it will not carry conviction with them. I am not now referring to the frothy eloquence that passes muster for patriotism I have in mind that secret, silent persevering band of young men and even women who want to see their country free at any cost. But whilst I admire and adore their patriotism, I have no faith whatsoever in their method. They and I are as poles asunder. India's salvation does not lie through violence. I am convinced that their methods have cost the country much more than they know or will care to admit. Let them study the reforms which they claim were a result of their activity. Assuming that their claim is just, let them remember that the reforms have cost more than the country could at all pay. But they will listen to no argument however reasonable it may be, unless they are convinced that there is a programme before the country which requires at least as much sacrifice as the tallest among them is prepared to make. They will not be allured by our speeches, resolutions or even conferences. Action alone has any appeal for them. This appeal can only come from non-violent action which is no other than civil resistance. In my opinion it and it alone can save the country from impending lawlessness and secret crime. That even civil resistance may fail and may also hasten the lawlessness is no doubt a possibility. But if it fails in its purpose, it will not be civil resistance that will have failed. It will fail, if it does, for want of faith and consequent incapacity in the civil resisters. This argument may not appeal to the critic. I shall be sorry, if it does not. Even so, he will

perhaps admit the purity of my motive.

We must cease to dread violence, if we will have the country to be free. Can we not see that we are tightly pressed in the coil of violence? The peace we seem to prize is a mere makeshift, and it is bought with the blood of the starving millions. If the critics could only realize the torture of their slow and lingering death brought about by forced starvation, they would risk anarchy and worse in order to end that agony. The agony will not end till the existing rule of spoliation has ended. I would have waited if I could have been convinced that the condition of the masses has undergone progressive amelioration under British rule. Alas, he who runs may see that it has progressively deteriorated under that rule. It is a sin, with that knowledge, to sit supine, and for fear of imaginary anarchy or worse, to stop action that may prevent anarchy, and is bound, if successful, to end the heartless spoliation of a people who have deserved a better fate.

Young India, 23-1-1930

257. TO ENGLISH FRIENDS

To the many known and still more unknown English friends, I owe perhaps a word on the eve of what may end in being a life-and-death struggle. In spite of myself I tried to believe in the possibility of self-respecting Congressmen attending the proposed Round Table Conference. I had my doubts because I knew that the Congress, though it is admittedly the most representative organization in the country, had no adequate power behind it for vindicating its position. It could therefore be represented at the Conference, only if it knew that the British Government and people had, either through a generous impulse or through the pressure of world opinion, decided to grant immediate Dominion Status, and that the Conference was to meet in order to discuss not anything the different groups liked but to discover the contents of a Dominion Status constitution. The Viceroy made it clear in no uncertain terms that he could give no such assurance. Such being the case, consistently with its past declaration and with the national interest of which the Congress claims to be the principal trustee, clearly it could not allow itself to be represented at the Conference. But it may be asked: Granting that the Congress could not in the circumstances be expected to send its representatives, where was the necessity for going from Dominion Status to independence? The answer is plain. Organizations like men, if they are to command respect and grow, must have a sense of honour

and must fulfil their promises. Well, the Congress promised at Calcutta to change the creed to independence if Dominion Status was not forthcoming by the 31st of December 1929. It did not come nor was there any prospect of its coming for certain in the immediate future. The Congress therefore had no other course left open, if it was not 'to commit suicide', but to declare its immediate objective to be complete independence instead of Dominion Status.

But what is there intrinsically wrong in wanting independence? It is not possible for me to understand this opposition from sober Englishmen to the enunciation of an inalienable right of every nation to be independent except on the supposition that even they, the sober Englishmen, do not want India to be free.

'But you are not fit for independence', say some. Surely it is for us to judge whether we are fit or not. And granting that we are not, there is nothing wrong or immoral in our aspiring after independence and in the attempt rendering ourselves fitter day by day. We shall never be fit by being taught to feel helpless and to rely upon the British bayonet to keep us from fighting among ourselves or from being devoured by our neighbours. If we have to go through the agonies of a civil war or a foreign invasion, it won't be a new thing in the history of nations that have struggled for freedom. England has gone through both the experiences. After all freedom is not a hot-house growth.

It is open to those English friends who are sincerely anxious for India's welfare to assist India in her fight for freedom and on her terms. She knows best what she needs. Complete independence does not mean arrogant isolation or a superior disdain for all help. But it does mean complete severance of the British bondage, be it ever so slight or well concealed. The opposition therefore to the demand for immediate independence raises the strongest suspicions about the good intentions of those who have conceived the idea of the Conference. It must be clearly understood that the largest nationalist party in India will no longer submit to the position of a dependent nation or to the process of helpless exploitation. It will run any risk to be free from the double curse.

Is it not now intelligible why, notwithstanding its undoubted risks, I am planning some sort of civil disobedience so as to get together all the non-violent forces and see if it stems the tide of onrushing violence? Hatred and ill will there undoubtedly are in the air. They are bound sooner or later to burst into acts of fury if they are not anticipated in time. The conviction has deepened in me that civil disobedience alone can stop the bursting of that fury. The

nation wants to feel its power more even than to have independence. Possession of such power is independence.

That civil disobedience may resolve itself into violent disobedience is, I am sorry to have to confess, not an unlikely event. But I know that it will not be the cause of it. Violence is there already corroding the whole body politic. Civil disobedience will be but a purifying process and may bring to the surface what is burrowing under and into the whole body. And British officials, if they choose, may regulate civil disobedience so as to sterilize the forces of violence. But whether they do so, or whether, as many of us fear, they will, directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously, provoke violence, my course is clear. With the evidence I have of the condition of the country and with the unquenchable faith I have in the method of civil resistance, I must not be deterred from the course the inward voice seems to be leading me to.

But whatever I do and whatever happens, my English friends will accept my word, that whilst I am impatient to break the British bondage, I am no enemy of Britain.

Young India, 23-1-1930

258. THINGS TO REMEMBER FOR 26TH

1. Remember that 26th is the day *not* to declare independence but to declare that we will be satisfied with nothing less than complete independence as opposed to Dominion Status so-called. Hence the word *swaraj* in the Congress constitution now means complete independence or *purna swaraj*.

2. Remember that on 26th we do not start civil disobedience, but merely hold meetings to declare our determination to attain *purna swaraj* and to that end to carry out Congress instructions that may be issued from time to time.

3. Remember that since we desire to attain our end by non-violent and truthful means only, we can do so only through self-purification. We should therefore devote the day to doing such constructive work as lies in our power to do.

4. Remember that at the meetings there are to be no speeches. There is to be mere recitation and approval by show of hands of the declaration distributed among all the Congress committees. The recitation should be in the provincial language.

For ready reference here is the text of the declaration¹ to be

¹ For Gandhiji's draft, *vide* "Draft Declaration for January 26", 10-1-1930.

made on 26th:

We believe that it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom, but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain *purna swaraj* or complete independence.

India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is 7 pice (less than two pence) per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay, 20 per cent are raised from the land revenue derived from the peasantry and 3 per cent from the salt tax, which falls most heavily on the poor.

Village industries, such as hand-spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. The British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports. Customs duties betray clear partiality for British manufactures, and revenue from them is used not to lessen the burden on the masses but for sustaining a highly extravagant administration. Still more arbitrary has been the manipulation of the exchange ratio which has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.¹

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. No reforms have given real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. The rights of free expression of opinion and free association have been denied to us, and many of our countrymen are compelled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to their homes. All administrative talent is killed, and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us.

Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly, and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our homes and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognize, however, that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves, by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including

¹ Vide "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 17-1-1930.

non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation, the end of this inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing *purna swaraj*.

Young India, 23-1-1930

259. HAS NON-VIOLENCE BEEN ABANDONED?

A friend writes:¹

It is very improper of any editor to publish incorrect reports about someone in this manner, without proper investigation and verification. I have never said what has been quoted above. Non-violence is an integral part of my life; I can never forsake it. My faith in non-violence is growing day by day. I have also been getting visible proof of its success. Whatever I said regarding what people should do after my arrest is the exact opposite of what is quoted above. In other words, I said that if people should turn violent under these circumstances the adherents of non-violence should endeavour to restrain them. As for slavery, I said that if I were compelled to choose to be a witness to slavery or violence, I shall certainly choose to be a witness to violence. There is a vast difference between these words and what is published in the papers. There is no word in favour of violence in what I spoke. We are all witnesses to violent and other undesirable actions, even though it be unwillingly; but we have always been so and must remain so.

One lesson has to be learnt from the above letter, namely, when one hears or reads anything unusual about a well-known public servant or a public leader, it should never be believed without corroboration from him.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 23-1-1930

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had reported that some newspapers quoted Gandhiji as suggesting violent action in the event of his arrest.

260. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[January 23, 1930]¹

I value your frank criticism². But much of it is hasty. Its value lies in its honesty. You can certainly be with me on my walks.

BAPU

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

261. LETTER TO DR. ROMER

SABARMATI,

January 23, 1930

DEAR DR. ROMER,

Could you please repair the accompanying set³ for Mrs. Gandhi? It slipped from her hand and broke.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 4582

262. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 23, 1930

BHAI RAMESHWARDAS,

I got your letter. You need not worry. I will now set the matter right. You have not violated truth in any way. I can be blamed for an oversight, though I do not know what mistake I made. I distinctly remember that I told Pyarelal or Kusumbehn what should be done. If either of them made a mistake, it should be regarded as mine. This is not formal justice but real justice.⁴

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 202

¹ From the addressee's diary

² Of the functioning and atmosphere of the Sabarmati Ashram

³ Of dentures

⁴ *Vide* also "My Notes", 2-2-1930, sub-title, "Attention to Detail".

263. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
January 23, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your letter. Chhaganlal and Ramniklal are immediately leaving the Ashram because of the new rules. I do not want to go deep into the reasons for their leaving as I do not have the time. I have received your letter regarding Chandradutt. He is not at all ready to go to Vijapur. He started crying when I talked to him about it. What was the use of sending him against his wishes? So I am keeping him here. I will see what I can do. I am unable to look after him. From what you write, it seems that the situation is difficult. I hope you do know that Bhagirathji is here.

Keep making efforts to improve your health. Do not worry about us. I will go through the *Ramayana*. Ba sends her blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 32946

264. TELEGRAM TO NALINI RANJAN SARKAR

[On or before *January 24, 1930*]¹

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO SUBHAS AND OTHER FRIENDS². SEND ME FULL PARTICULARS. TELL ME ALSO WHAT STEPS BEING TAKEN.

Amrita Bazar Patrika, 25-1-1930

265. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 24, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. You may come whenever you wish to. I shall be here up to the 2nd of March, if I am not arrested before then. On the 2nd is Rukhi's wedding.

¹ The report is datelined "Calcutta, January 24".

² On their conviction

How did Kamala develop constipation? Never forget that it should not be tolerated even for a day.

Gangabehn must be giving you all the news about the ebb and flow here.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9275

266. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

January 24, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I got your letter. Somehow or other your digestion must improve. There are several remedies, but ultimately you have to find one yourself.

As regards work, I would advise you to perform cheerfully whatever task is assigned to you. You will derive true strength out of that. Do discuss with Jamnalalji if you feel the need of doing anything in particular. He will delegate that job to you if he approves. Even otherwise have no worry. This is the duty of a true soldier. Our welfare lies in the welfare of the organization and only the man at the helm must judge the interests of the organization, even though the judgment may not be the right one.

You can certainly pay Vinobaji the boarding expenses incurred by the Ashram on you and you must not hesitate to inquire from Jamnalalji what you owe him for the expenses incurred in his kitchen. He will not only not mind it but will appreciate it.

Prabhudas has reached Vijapur. He shook off his fever only after reaching there.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2373

267. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

January 25, 1930

CHI. JAMNALAL,

What advice should I give you regarding Shantikumar? Do whatever you think is right. Do nothing beyond your capacity. I may however say this, that the step I am contemplating this time will be the final step. It will be either the greatest mistake of my life or its purest act. I for one have no doubt at all about its purity. I am examining myself as carefully as I can. My self-confidence has grown greatly.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/60

268. LETTER TO ANANDANAND

January 25, 1930

BHAISHRI ANANDANAND,

I have your letter. I do not know what agitation Malaviyaji is carrying on. But if it is against the Congress he can hold no position in the Anti-Untouchability Committee.¹ I have no doubt about this. Let Jamnalalji trace Malaviyaji's speech against the Congress and send it to him, and, like a son to his father put to him his doubt about the propriety of his remaining in the Anti-Untouchability Committee. Malaviyaji is not hurt by such questions, and even if he is, he has a great capacity for suppressing his feelings. I had thought that he would never carry on an agitation against the Congress for whatever reason. It is necessary to clear this matter at once.

I have still not understood Rajaji's suggestion regarding Vallabhbhai and myself touring. Boycott of the Assemblies is a necessary but negative and not a very important part of our new programme. The important and constructive part is civil disobedience. And for that I do not think it necessary for anybody to tour the country. On the contrary, those who regard non-violence as an essential means for the attainment of independence should avoid touring. If you do not follow this, ask me for further clarification, for it is necessary that Jamnalalji, you and others should understand it well.

The letter up to here was dictated at five o'clock in the morning.

¹ Set up by a resolution passed by the Calcutta Congress in 1928. Jamnalal Bajaj was appointed to look after the work of the committee.

Afterwards I got your letter regarding Shantikumar. I am writing to Jamnalalji today leaving the matter to his decision.

I note what you say about Nataraj. Many will come round now. This is no new experience for me in my life. We should go on doing what seems right to us. You are however doing well in meeting all these classes of people.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/59

269. NAVAJIVAN KARYALAYA

A full report of the activities of the Navajivan Karyalaya accompanies the present number of *Navajivan*. I invite to it the attention of every lover of the journal. The reader will please consider it pardonable if he notices anywhere in the Report a sense of pride resulting from self-satisfaction. This Karyalaya came into being in circumstances that no one had ever imagined. It got the services of Swami Anand, who helped to give the Karyalaya the stability which it now has. My purpose in drawing attention to the Report is to show that a business, run with honesty and in a spirit of service but in a businesslike manner, can succeed, and to dispel the illusion that one cannot afford to be entirely honest in business.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 26-1-1930

270. LETTER TO C. RAJAGOPALACHARI

ASHRAM,
January 27, 1930

MY DEAR C.R.,

I cannot give you the letter I would love to. Every ounce of energy is taken up in attending to the details of life here.

I do not still see the necessity of touring. In view of the impending C.D. I do not want to create occasions for other resistances. Let the critics have a clear board as far as platform propaganda is concerned. More of this when we meet. I want you to be here at least on the 12th if not much earlier. I want you to understand me of today as thoroughly as you can.

Yes, I wrote to Srinivasa, Satyamurti and Subhas. S.N. has sent me a book of choice adjectives in reply. S.M. has sent an

argumentative apology. Subhas's is a good reply. Anyway I am glad I wrote to them.

I feel that I have now a scheme of effective C.D. The picture is not yet complete. But I think I am nearing completion.¹ I am thinking of nothing else. You must keep your health in full working order.

What a strange letter from *The Hindu*? Yet it did not surprise me.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/62

271. LETTER TO A. SUBBIAH

ASHRAM,

January 27, 1930

MY DEAR SUBBIAH,

I grieve for you and your wife, for you must naturally have felt it. Death causes no sorrow in me now. It has become to me averitable friend. Comparing death with birth, death may almost be an event for rejoicing and birth for sorrow. Death may be a deliverance, birth is imprisonment. Even a living baby dies after and never before . . .² If there are still more debts to pay, there is another body to inhabit.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/63

272. LETTER TO M. R. JAYAKAR

January 28, 1930

DEAR MR. JAYAKAR,

I thank you for your note³. I said that if everything was in order I should try to help the friends. I had heard however that Sir Purshottamdas was unwilling to shoulder the burden. If my recollection is correct⁴, the friends were also to raise an equivalent amount. I had entrusted the whole thing to Mr. Baban Gokhale

¹ For the resolution adopted by the Working Committee on Civil Disobedience and Gandhiji's comments, *vide* "Never Faileth", 20-2-1930.

² The rest of the sentence is obscure in the source.

³ About Gandhiji's promise to secure for N. D. Bhosle a fund of Rs. 15,000 for a hostel for the depressed class students in Bombay; *vide* "Letter to N. D. Bhosle", 17-3-1928.

⁴ The source has "correction".

who was not well impressed. If you could spare the time, I would like you to send for and see Mr. Gokhale. I would welcome your active intervention in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Jayakar's Private Papers, Correspondence File No. 422. Courtesy: National Archives of India

273. PREFACE TO "KATHAKUSUMANJALI"

UDYOGA MANDIR, SABARMATI,

January 29, 1930

This is a collection of articles by Sjt. Valji Desai. All readers of *Navajivan* know by now the labour which preceded the writing of each one of these articles. They were not written to serve a journalist's immediate aim, but were written to serve permanent public good. Hence they deserve to be published in book form. The subjects dealt with in these articles will be of great help to anyone seeking *satsang*². From the point of view of language, too, their value is no less, for Valji Desai commands a unique style.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9276. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

274. CLEARING THE ISSUE

I have never sought to delude Indian opinion into the belief that a definition of purpose, however plainly stated, would of itself by the enunciation of a phrase provide a solution for problems which have to be solved before that purpose is fully realized. The assertion of a goal, however precise its terms, is of necessity a different thing from the goal's attainment. No sensible traveller would feel that a clear definition of his destination was the same thing as the completion of his journey.

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But though the Conference cannot assume the duty that appertains to His Majesty's Government, it will be convened for the purpose, hardly less important, of elucidating and harmonizing opinion, and so affording guidance to His Majesty's Government on whom the responsibility must subsequently devolve of drafting proposals for the consideration of Parliament.

The foregoing titbits from His Excellency the Viceroy's address

¹ Literally, 'a floral tribute in the form of stories'

² Company of righteous or religious men

to the Assembly¹ make it as clear as possible that Dominion Status was never to be the immediate objective of the proposed Round Table Conference. And why need any of us doubt that even Lord Birkenhead will concede that Dominion Status may be India's distant goal? Where time is of essence, it makes a difference not in degree but in kind. And when that difference in kind was discovered at the interview at Delhi², there was no meeting ground left between the Viceregal mentality and the Congress mentality. The Viceroy would not mind waiting for the grant of Dominion Status till every millionaire was reduced to the level of a wage-earner getting seven pice per day. The Congress will today, if it had the power, raise every starving peasant to a state in which he can at least get a *living* even equal to a millionaire's. And when the peasant is fully awakened to a sense of his plight and knows that it is not *kismet* that has brought him to the helpless state but the existing rule, unaided he will in his impatience abolish all distinctions between constitutional and unconstitutional, even violent and non-violent means.

The Congress expects to guide the peasant in the right direction.

The Viceroy's speech has cleared another thing. We now know why Sir John Simon has made the discovery that the question of Indian princes should be made an integral part of his precious inquiry. A pure creation of the British Government, unlike those in British India, bereft even of speech, they are to be pawns in the game of exploitation to be played at the Conference. The Conference room will ring with the name of Dominion Status whilst further burdens will be sought to be heaped upon the devoted heads of the starving millions. Let those who wish join a game where one party plays with loaded dice.

His Excellency is offended over the Congress resolution on financial obligations! Why? Be it noted that the Congress has referred the examination of the justness or otherwise of these obligations to an impartial tribunal. Is it a crime to question the propriety of some of these obligations? Lord Irwin's impatience over that most innocent resolution is typical of the British mentality. Thousands of Englishmen honestly believe that all obligations have been incurred voluntarily and for India's good, and that it is the height of ungratefulness even to suspect unfairness about any of the transactions of the Secretary of State for India.

Prominence has been exclusively given in that speech to the

¹ On January 25

² On December 23

unity which is impossible of full achievement so long as a foreign rule divides the varied interests and unconsciously or consciously plays one against another for the purpose of perpetuating itself. The Congress is well out of the tangle. It can afford even to be in a minority if need be. But the demonstrations of 26th are an unmistakable proof that the Congress still remains the one body to rule the hearts of the masses. Thank God, they have unity in their starvation. This Government is wholly impartial in the discharge of its duty of extracting the last pie from the peasantry whether Hindu or Mussalman or any other.

I make the same 'childish' offer (almost) to Lord Irwin that I had the honour of making to Lord Reading.¹ Let him and the British Cabinet initiate the following reforms:

1. Total prohibition,
2. Reduction of the ratio to ls. 4d.,
3. Reduction of the land revenue to at least 50% and making it subject to legislative control,
4. Abolition of the salt tax,
5. Reduction of the military expenditure to at least 50% to begin with,
6. Reduction of the salaries of the higher grade service to one half or less so as to suit the reduced revenue,
7. Protective tariff on foreign cloth,
8. The passage of the Coastal Traffic Reservation Bill,
9. Discharge of all political prisoners save those condemned for murder or the attempt thereat by the ordinary judicial tribunal, withdrawal of all political prosecutions, abrogation of Section 124 A, the Regulation of 1818 and the like, and permission to all the Indian exiles to return,
10. Abolition of C.I.D. or its popular control,
11. Issue of licences to use firearms for self-defence subject to popular control.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of pressing needs.² But let the Viceroy satisfy these very simple but vital needs of India. He will then hear no talk of civil disobedience, and the Congress will heartily participate in any conference where there is perfect freedom of expression and demand.

¹ Vide "Letter to Viceroy", 1-2-1922.

² These were the terms which Gandhiji communicated to Bomanji who undertook to negotiate with Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. (*The History of the Indian National Congress*, Vol. I, p. 366)

Our disunion is no bar to these reforms. The Congress is not agitating for a shadow. Hundreds of thousands of people do not gather to the annual session of the Congress in order to secure independence in mere name, they gather in the hope that the glow of freedom, when it comes, will be felt in the remotest village. The greatest evil is undoubtedly the economic pressure and the corroding feeling of inferiority which the people experience in every walk of life. We are like Sir Narayan Chandavarkar's goat whom, when released from airy surroundings to which she was forcibly taken, the deceased Knight saw frisking about on a Poona road being led by her mistress to her dungeon home. We refuse to be satisfied with the airy peace, we would rather risk the dark anarchy if perchance thereby we can be released from the grinding pauperism.

The threat of dire vengeance uttered against civil and criminal resisters is idle and therefore uncalled for. There is this in common between both. Both have counted the cost. They are out for suffering. Would that their means were also common. Unfortunately instead of being complementary, they neutralize each other. I know that the non-violent revolutionary like me impedes the progress of the violent revolutionary. I wish the latter would realize that he impedes my progress more than I do his, and that I, being a Mahatma, if left unhampered by him, am likely to make greater progress than he can ever hope to make. Let him realize too that he has never yet given me a fair chance. Some of them no doubt have been most considerate. I want full suspension of his activity. If it will please him, I am free to admit that I dread him more than I dread Lord Irwin's wrath.

His Excellency the Viceroy deserves the thanks of every Congressman for having cleared the atmosphere and let us know exactly where he and we stand.

Young India, 30-1-1930

275. DIFFICULTY OF PRACTICE

The reader should read Rev. B. de Ligt's letter printed elsewhere in this issue¹. I welcome the letter as of a fellow-seeker in the field of ahimsa. It is entitled to respectful consideration. And such friendly discussion leads to a clearer conception of the possibilities and limitations of non-violence.

In spite of the greatest effort to be detached, no man can altogether undo the effect of his environment or of his up bringing. Non-violence of two persons occupying different positions will not

¹ Under the title "Cat and Mouse"

outwardly take the same shape. Thus the non-violence of a child towards his father would take the shape of conscious and voluntary submission to his violence when he loses his temper. But if the child has lost his temper, the father's submission to the child's violence would be meaningless. The father would take the child to his bosom and instantaneously sterilize the child's violence. In each case it is of course assumed that the outward act is an expression of the inward intention. One who having retaliation in his breast submits to violence out of policy is not truly non violent and may even be a hypocrite if he hides his intention. It should also be remembered that non-violence comes into play only when it comes in contact with violence. One who refrains from violence when there is no occasion for its exercise is simply unviolent and has no credit for his inaction.

Dominion Status ceasing to be a factor, the points raised from that imaginary event now need not be discussed except to say, that the enjoyment by India of Dominion Status would have meant India, then become an equal partner, instead of being ruled by it, dominating the foreign policy of Great Britain.

My general and hearty approval of the Nehru Report must not be taken to mean endorsement of every word of it. My approval need not carry endorsement of the constructive programme for the future governance of free India. My non-violence would prevent me from fighting my countrymen on the many questions that must arise when India has become free. A mere academic discussion can only hamper the present progress of non-violence. I know however that if I survive the struggle for freedom, I might have to give non-violent battle to my own countrymen which may be as stubborn as that in which I am now engaged. But the military schemes now being considered by the great Indian leaders are highly likely to appear even to them to be wholly unnecessary, assuming that we have come to our own demonstrably through non-violent means deliberately chosen and used.

My collaboration with my countrymen today is confined to the breaking of our shackles. How we would feel and what we shall do after breaking them is more than they or I know.

It is profitless to speculate whether Tolstoy in my place would have acted differently from me. It is enough for me to give the assurance to my friends in Europe, that in no single act of mine have I been consciously guilty of endorsing violence or compromising my creed. Even the seeming endorsement of violent action by my participation on the side of Britain in the Boer War and the Zulu revolt was a recognition in the interest of non-violence of an inevitable

situation. That the participation may nevertheless have been due to my weakness or ignorance of the working of the universal law of non-violence is quite possible. Only I had no conviction then, nor have any now, of such weakness or ignorance.

A non-violent man will instinctively prefer direct participation to indirect, in a system which is based on violence and to which he has to belong without any choice being left to him. I belong to a world which is partly based on violence. If I have only a choice between paying for the army of soldiers to kill my neighbours or to be a soldier myself, I would, as I must, consistently with my creed, enlist as a soldier in the hope of controlling the forces of violence and even of converting my comrades.

National independence is not fiction. It is as necessary as individual independence. But neither, if it is based on non-violence, may ever be a menace to the equal independence of the nation or the individual as the case may be. As with individual and national independence, so with the international. The legal maxim is equally moral: *Sic utere tuo ut alienum non laedas*. It has been well said that the universe is compressed in the atom. There is not one law for the atom and another for the universe.

Young India, 30-1-1930

276. NOTES

BENGAL PATRIOTS

My congratulations to Sjt. Subhas Bose and his companions on one year's rigorous imprisonment for having dared to serve the country. Bengal may be rent into many divisions and parties. But Bengal's bravery and self-sacrifice can never wane. The only way the country can react to these imprisonments is to fill the prisons to overflowing till the Government has a surfeit of political prisoners. A few discharges occasionally obtained take the attention off the real thing which is to make such prosecutions impossible. That will only happen when either the British people have changed their viewpoint, or when we have, by filling the prisons honourably, made it profitless to imprison any more people. No government puts people in prison, if the punishment does not deter a single soul from so-called offence.

FORTY-FOUR DEATHS

Sjt. Benarsidas Chaturvedi and Pandit Bhavani Dayal send me the following wire:

Forty-four emigrants died on *Sutlej* returned West Indies. Bad diet, worse accommodation. Letter follows.

I await the letter. But the brief telegram is enough to show that there is hardly any improvement upon the old system after the happening of the tragedy that took place not long ago regarding such emigrants. The whole thing calls for a thorough investigation, and complete stoppage of all facilities to the countries that care not for the lives of those who labour for them.

LOCAL BOARDS

Sjt. Sasadhar Ganguly, a member of the Manbhum District Board and Purulia Municipality, writes:¹

I heartily endorse the suggestion made in this letter. No municipality represented by nationalists can accept dictation as to the holidays to be observed. And it would be an insult to the memory of departed patriots if members stole in the observance of their memory under cover of another holiday. It is the right of every nationalist municipality and local or district board to maintain its own holidays.

Young India, 30-1-1930

277. MONSTROUS MARRIAGES

Shri Benarsidas Chaturvedi writes:

I draw your attention with great shame to the article "Surfeit of child-marriages in Mathura" which was published in the 30th December issue of *Mathuri Hitaishi*. These weddings took place in our Mathur Chaturvedi caste. It is the misfortune of our caste that girls of 2, 2½ and 3 years are given in marriage. There has been considerable agitation over this. The well-known leader Shri Radheylal Chaturvedi, who belongs to our caste, tried very hard but these child-marriages could not be prevented. Last year an eight-month-old girl and a 15-month-old girl were given in marriage. One does not know how to reform these people. It must be pointed out that we, the Chaturvedi community, consider ourselves the highest Brahmins. We consider it a sin to eat food cooked even by other Brahmins.

What else can the marriages described by Benarsidasji be called than monstrous? It is sad that those who perpetrate such marriages continue to be respectable. This creates many difficulties in thwarting them; and when scriptures are quoted in their favour, the difficulties multiply. However, satyagraha can become a sure means of overcoming all kinds of tyranny. Always and under every

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked whether members of local bodies should resist dictation from bureaucracy and suffer the consequences.

circumstance we may not have the strength to resort to satyagraha or we may not know how to employ it. This is a different matter. It points to the limitations of the satyagrahi, not of satyagraha.

In the above circumstances every person can resort to one method. The family in which such marriages are recognized should be boycotted and no help of any kind should be expected of it. For example, if a father wishes to get his little daughter married, or if he wishes to sell her, then, in that case, the boys and girls of that house, or at least any one of them who has the courage, must leave the father's house and should accept no help whatever from him. If this is done it will surely have some effect on the father's heart. Even if there is none, those who have left the father's house will escape from the sin. And let them remember that the ultimate result of such a sacrifice can only be good. I have cited one method of satyagraha in this case only as an example. According to the circumstances every satyagrahi can find other ways and means for himself.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 30-1-1930

278. *LETTER TO RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP*

January 30, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Just a line to thank you for your letter. I am too preoccupied to say more just now. I know that you are doing all you can for the country.¹

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

RAJA MAHENDRA PRATAP

KABUL

AFGHANISTAN

From a photostat: Raja Mahendra Pratap Papers. Courtesy: National Archives of India

¹ *Vide* also "The U. P. Tour-IX", 14-11-1929.

279. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
January 30, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

Your criticism of the poet's praise of the wicked has not appealed to me. It is an expression not of Tulsidas's charity but his satire. It is a condemnation of the wicked. It commends the company of the good and non-co-operation with the wicked. This is shown by every quatrain and every couplet of this group of verses.

The one on meeting causes great pain.

The other on parting takes away one's life.

What does this suggest? Hence, though your effort is commendable and your imagination good, the writing needs improvement in certain places. You must be going ahead with the other cantos.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/65

280. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

SABARMATI,
January 30, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

I have your letter. I was glad to know that you were able to find work in the Congress office. Now we shall only be able to meet when your work brings us together. If I stay out of jail for any length of time, you must keep writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Jayaprakash Narayan Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

281. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

[January, 1930]¹

Well written² but this expensive note-book is of foreign make, I fear. You must learn to be thrifty . One pice ill spent is so much gone out of the pockets of the poor where it should belong.

BAPU

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

282. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

February 1, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I have your sweet letter. It was a great day the 26th. You always have my blessings. Sing away.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9613

283. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Since you are coming shortly, I do not write anything in this letter. This time I am thinking of providing you a room near the place where I sit. The houses occupied by Jaisukhlal and Kashi have become vacant. They can accommodate a large number. "Hridaykunj"³ is overcrowded just now. Perhaps you can sleep in it, but we shall think more about this after you come.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9279

¹ From the addressee's diary

² The addressee had noted down in his diary what had motivated him to come to the Ashram.

³ Gandhiji's cottage in the Ashram

284. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 1, 1930

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

Your letter. Don't you lose heart like this If the climate of Vijapur suits you, most certainly go there; or go to Bardoli if that suits you. And during summer you can stay at Tadikhet. Your health must improve. If you are drawn towards Vijapur, come here and we shall discuss about Morvi too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2374

285. MY NOTES

THE KHAKHRECHI SATYAGRAHA

The Khakhrechi satyagraha was a simple one and on a modest scale. The demand put forward by the farmers was actually small, but the satyagraha owed itself to the cultivators' courage, which was remarkable for Kathiawar and indeed surprising for a principality that lies in a remote corner of the region. What deserved the notice of all the States was how the farmers had initiated the satyagraha on their own. Their demand was so just that no one could have opposed it. The injustice against which the satyagraha was aimed was obvious. It was a painful surprise that the Durbar made the cultivators suffer for about six weeks. When a batch of satyagrahis arrived there to assist these farmers, it was only doing its duty. The satyagrahis deserve compliments for going through their sufferings patiently with no violation of limits of propriety. One cannot say that at the end of this satyagraha the prince on his part had showed any grace. It is true that the farmers have been pacified by doing them some justice and a promise to do some more. If the prince desires congratulations on the point, he might have them. But according to my information, the prince's behaviour towards the volunteer corps lacked grace, decency and courtesy. It does no honour to him that the members of the corps should have been banished from the territory in spite of their modest conduct, and insolently dealt with by the State police. It is an unpleasant fact that the victorious end of the satyagraha is not

followed by the sweetness which we should have expected. The people of Kathiawar have a right to expect from all the States there courteous conduct towards such public men as Sjt. Manilal Kothari and Sjt. Fulchand, so well known for their love of peace. The princes and the people both have a lesson to learn from this small-scale satyagraha.

CHILD-MARRIAGES

A Patidar youth writes:¹

Many others must be in such a plight. I would advise all such persons to refuse firmly to get into the bonds of such a marriage and to suffer whatever consequences follow from the refusal. Such marriages are a sign of our weak minds. This weakness retards our growth socially, economically, politically and spiritually. If we should assert our mental strength in one field, its effect cannot but be felt in the others. Hence I particularly advise youths in such a plight not to submit themselves, whatever the cost, to evil customs like child-marriage which are a bane to the society. Let them however show the utmost courtesy in their conduct towards the elders and equally scrupulous regard for truth. Courtesy without full regard for truth is no courtesy. It is only flattery, it is hypocrisy, and, therefore, truly speaking, it is discourtesy.

FEASTS AFTER DEATH

The Secretary, Visnagara Nagar youth Association, writes:²

My note on the subject of child-marriage above applies in this case too. I hope that the deceased's father himself will understand his dharma and refrain from following the savage custom of giving a caste dinner on his son's death. If the father does not so refrain, let the Youth Association stick to its resolution, and let all the youths of the town of Visnagar support it. For the sake of their principle, youths ought to be, and remain, prepared to forgo the advantages of living in the family home and other monetary help received from their elders, or be ready to be boycotted by them.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Last December when I was in Wardha, the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram gave me a piece of cloth of very fine count spun and woven by them. It was big enough for a khadi dhoti to be made

¹ The letter is not translated here. Marriages of the correspondent, aged 15, and his sister, aged 10, were being planned by their father.

² The letter is not translated here. The young men had decided to boycott the customary dinner after the death of a sixteen-year-old boy leaving behind a thirteen-year-old widow.

out of it. I could not bear the thought of taking it into personal use. Hence I thought of making money out of it. The cloth attracted the attention of Rameshwardas who offered Rs. 500 for it. He suggested that he would like me to give the five hundred rupees to the funds being collected for the Vidyapith rather than get it credited to any other account. Moreover, he put in the condition that in the Vidyapith account the money should not be shown and acknowledged in his name as was done;¹ if at all it should be shown as proceeds of the sale of the khadi cloth. I had accepted this suggestion, and promised to write, when sending the money to the Vidyapith, that the acknowledgement was to be as I have described here. My impression is that I had given instructions to write to the Vidyapith accordingly, but the sum has not been acknowledged in the manner desired and was shown as a donation by Sjt. Rameshwardas in the note published. He was uneasy at this. For one thing, he thinks that the credit of having made a donation to the Vidyapith is too much for him to accept. Moreover, he does not have the means to make such donations. He fears that some persons, happening to read the mistaken acknowledgement published in his name, might seek such other donations, and it would not be nice to have to disappoint them. Hence Rameshwardas desires the true facts to be published, which I do here. In this case, directly or indirectly, even if the donation was for propagation of khadi, the religious merit earned belongs to Rameshwardas alone. However, a person who is particular about the uprightness of his worldly transactions would of course ask for the correction desired by Rameshwardas. That has been made here and I hope it will satisfy him. And let me take this opportunity to tell the well-wishers of the Vidyapith that the purse of the Vidyapith has not yet been filled and that they should fill it.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-2-1930

286. *LETTER TO C. F. ANDREWS*

February 2, 1930

MY DEAR CHARLIE,

You have written to me more or less regularly, but owing to your wanderings², I have not known where to write. Your latest has given me a deliberate address. I hope therefore this will reach you safely

¹ For Gandhiji's reply, *vide* "Letter to Rameshwardas Poddar", 23-1-1930.

² In Canada and U.S.A.

wherever you may be.

I have read your article in the *New Republic*. I am not taking it in *Young India*. It is therefore being sent to Brelvi¹ as you have desired.

The events have moved fairly fast. I see as clearly as never before that the spirit of violence must be dealt with by non-violent *action* if the situation is to be at all saved. There is the growing violence of the Government expressing itself in a variety of ways — the subtle exploitation and the necessary prosecutions as a consequence of that exploitation, for instance. You will note the extended meaning I have given to violence. Greed, pilfering, untruth, crooked diplomacy—all these are phases or signs or results of violent thought and action. The reaction of this violence upon the thinking educated people is remarkable and daily growing. I have therefore to deal with this double violence. To sit still at this juncture is stupid if not cowardly. I have made up my mind to run the boldest risks. I have arrived at this definite conclusion as a result of deep and prayerful thinking. Lahore revealed it all to me. The nature of the action is not yet clear to me. It has to be civil disobedience. How it is to be undertaken and by whom besides me, I have not yet seen quite clearly. But the shining cover that overlays the truth is thinning day by day and will presently break.

I hardly wanted to write this when I began this letter. But there you are.

Gurudev² passed a delightful two hours with me. He has aged considerably. We came nearer each other this time and I was so thankful. We had fully intended to meet again, but Bomanjee suddenly took him away to Baroda.

Manilal and his wife and baby are here. Ramdas has a baby. He is in Bardoli assisting Vallabhbhai's work. Mahadev is just now here.

We did not get your first volume³ from the publishers. I asked the *Young India* people to purchase a copy. It is on my desk at present. I have read the first chapter. It is a fair presentation of my religious attitude.

Love.

MOHAN

¹ Syed Abdullah Brelvi, Editor of *The Bombay Chronicle*

² Rabindranath Tagore

³ *Mahatma Gandhi's Ideas* (1929)

[PS.]

I do hope you have had your copies of *Young India*.

From a photostat: G.N. 997

287. LETTER TO V. S. SRINIVASA SASTRI

SABARMATI,
February 2, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

I have your two letters. Of course, if you could send someone to take charge of *Indian Opinion*, he will shape its policy not according to my instructions but most decidedly yours. I should not interfere at all.

I wish you had written the letter you intended to. You know how I prize your opinion. It would give me immense relief to be able to adopt your mode of thought. But it has been my misfortune often to differ from most valued friends. My consolation lies in the fact that the mutual affection has never suffered.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 2192

288. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI¹

February 2, 1930

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

Will you please accompany Motilalji?² It will serve a double purpose. You will treat him and help the treatment of the greater patient—our country. Please do not say ‘no’.³

Tell Motilalji I shall reply to the conundrum of 11 points⁴ when we meet. I have a complete answer.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

¹ This should be read after “Letter to V. S. Srinivasa Sastri”, p. 445.

² He was going to Ahmedabad to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee.

³ In his reply dated February 10, 1930, Dr. Ansari expressed his inability to go to Ahmedabad “owing to an unforeseen professional responsibility”.

⁴ *Vide* “Clearing the Issue”, 30-1-1930 & “Some Implications”, 6-2-1930.

289. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

SABARMATI,
February 2, 1930

DEAR SIR PURSHOTTAMDAS,

There was no need for an apology for writing to me in English. My own impression is that the depreciation is largely manipulated and the letter from the India Office is intended to frighten us.¹ At the same time when the effect of the Congress resolution comes to be really felt, I know that all the gilt-edged securities are bound to suffer heavy depreciation unless the British Government underwrites all losses and is in a position to do so. I know that during the South African War even all the Republican notes, which 24 hours before the declaration of war were fully worth their face value, became scraps of paper and I understand that such was the case in France and Germany during the late War. It would not surprise me, if we have to go through the same purgatory. The meaning to me of the resolution is that the poor people who have invested their little savings in these securities should not suffer and that the British Government should be made to take over such liabilities as are held by the tribunal referred to in the resolution to be unjust or unjustifiable.

Lastly, you will agree with me that the interpretation of the resolution as also the momentary depreciation are not of so much importance as what action India is going to take in the near future. We are so many and our case is so overwhelmingly just that, if the other parties instead of belittling the Congress resolution and the Congress efforts were to endorse them, even if by reason of their weakness, they cannot make common cause with the Congress, we

¹ The addressee had written: "The repudiation of debts as approved of by the Indian National Congress at their Lahore session by their Resolution No. 10 has had considerable effect on the securities market both in England and in India as you are perhaps already aware. In the course of this week there has been published a letter addressed by the India Office to an investor in London, and I mention this to show what anxiety this Resolution of the Congress has created in the minds of investors in London.... My principal motive in addressing this letter to you is to draw your attention to the serious depreciation of Indian sterling securities in London since December last. . . . There is no doubt that an enormous amount of loss is being encountered by the present holders of Indian Government paper, either rupee or sterling, and it cannot be to the advantage of any school of politicians to make the innocent ones suffer. . . ." *Vide* also "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-II", 1-1-1930 & "Some Implications", 6-2-1930.

should come to our own without much disturbance of the present life in the cities. A radical reshaping of the life in the cities which is today related to the false and artificial standard that is set up by the British administrators and that is out of all keeping with the life of the millions is in any case necessary, if the terrible burden of taxation upon the poor is to be removed. I hope you are not among those who believe that by a mere change of the constitution the starving ryots will find themselves in a position to pay a larger revenue than they are paying today or even to pay comfortably what they are paying now. In my opinion the only meaning of swaraj to these people will be an appreciable reduction in the taxes that they are paying directly and indirectly and fixity of tenure. This cannot happen until we, who are partners with the British administrators in the game of the exploitation of the masses, are prepared to change the angle of our vision even as we expect the former to do.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

Purshottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 96, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

290. LETTER TO WILFRED WELLOCK

February 2, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

You will forgive me for not being able to write to you earlier. It is impossible for me to deal with every friendly letter separately. I only hope that you are following carefully the pages of *Young India* in which I pour out my heart weekly.¹ It seems to me the problem is beyond Mr. Benn's² capacity even if he has the will. Justice will not be done to India till Britain realizes that India has been terribly wronged and that, therefore, she has to part with millions that are being yearly drained from India.

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

WILFRED WELLOCK, ESQ.

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/70

¹ *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930 and "Some Implications", 6-2-1930.

² Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India, who had made a statement that India already had Dominion Status in action

291. LETTER TO SONJA SCHLESIN

February 2, 1930

DEAR MISS SCHLESIN¹,

I have your letter. I do wish you will come in time to correct the many inaccuracies you have discovered in the volumes. It is highly likely that when your long leave is on I may be in one of the king's hotels. Even so, you will see my spirit incarnate in the Ashram. It certainly brings into prominence all my shortcomings and some of my good points.

Manilal, Sushila and Sita are here. Ramdas has also a baby². I think I told you of the event. He is in Bardoli. Manilal is anxious to bewith me during these times. He is waiting for a word from Sorabji.

Yours,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/71

292. LETTER TO H.S.L. POLAK

February 2, 1930

MY DEAR HENRY,

What shall I do? I fear I have again disappointed you by my action in Lahore. If you had lived here as I have during the past 15 years, you would have done what I have. No tinkering will cope with the daily loot that is going on here. You should treat my writings in *Young India* as my weekly letter to you and other friends. Anyway our love will stand the strain of any difference in views and action based thereon.

Yours,

BHAI

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/72

¹ A Jewish woman who was Gandhiji's secretary for many years in South Africa

² Sumitra Gandhi

293. LETTER TO REVASHANKAR JHAVERI

February 2, 1930

RESPECTED REVASHANKARBHAI,

I have your letter. I have read the matter enclosed with it. I would advise you to issue a brief notice and hold a meeting here of the original donors. It will not matter if you cannot attend the meeting. The statement of accounts should be published and a copy of it should be sent to each donor along with the notice. I shall be present at the meeting and try to guide the proceedings. I shall try to get a resolution passed to hand over the amounts to the Vidyapith in accordance with certain rules and cautions which will be framed. If anyone suggests a better arrangement, we shall consider it at that time. Please let me know if you approve of this idea. I will then make a draft of the notice and send it to you. Get the rest done by Jamnadas. I do not wish to involve you in any worries or responsibilities in this matter. The proper thing would be to do what we can without too great an effort and then let things take their own course.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/67

294. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

February 2, 1930

BHAI MANILAL,

If it is likely that the Maharaja of Jodhpur will see you, it would be better for you to go to Delhi. Even if you think of going to Jodhpur, a visit to Delhi would be worth while. I would not advise you to go to Jodhpur by defying the State's prohibitory order. I have often said that if we accept the policy of utmost peace, we have got to endure some consequences that follow from that policy. By all means let the subjects of Jodhpur do all they can. They can never do enough. But I believe that you can do nothing more than carry on correspondence with the Jodhpur state. Having said this, I may tell you that my advice to you would always be finally to do as your conscience bids you.

I did not follow the point about the car. Vallabhbhai will explain when he comes. Take care of your health. You seem to have done well in Bhavnagar. Return to Vallabhbhai the balance of Khakhrechi money.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/66

295. A LETTER

February 2, 1930

I have your letter. I am sure what the people should do if I am arrested will be clear when that time comes. Shri Aurobindo Ghosh is not likely to come out at present.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S. N. 32579/68

296. A LETTER

February 2, 1930

RESPECTED THAKORE SAHEB,

Only today I saw in the papers that your father had passed away. I remembered my happy relationship with him and felt sad. Man's body perishes but his good actions do not. You are heir to your father's good actions. May you add to them. Be happy and make your people happy. This is my wish and also my blessing.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/73

297. LETTER TO AMBALAL

February 2, 1930

BHAISHRI AMBALAL,

I have your letter. If you are regretting not having given the customary funeral dinner under pressure from people, you should give one. But the truth is that the dead neither eat nor drink. If you feed others, is that food going to reach the dead person's stomach? But do what you think right.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/74

298. NOTE TO MAHADEV DESAI

Silence Day, February 3, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did not find a single word in "If We Let Go"¹ which required to be changed.

¹ A note by Mahadev Desai published in *Young India*, 6-2-1930

Vallabhbhai himself had suggested four or five days. Whatever happens, you must be present on the morning of the 12th. You know it is your job to persuade others to come forward. Has Durga stopped crying?

I understand about the Gujarati translation. We shall decide about it after I break my silence. If you have left today, we shall decide about it after you return. Counting the days, I think it is necessary that you should return on the 8th. If Durga wishes to go with you, you may take her.

I will send a letter to Reginald.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11470

299. *LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS*

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 4, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

Here are two letters for you.¹

I hope you received my previous letter. I want you to tell me all your experiences after you separated at Lahore. I have called *Young India* my weekly letter to friends. I hope, therefore, that you are carefully taking in that mouthful.

No time to dictate more.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4529. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

¹ *Vide* the following item.

300. LETTER TO C. Y. CHINTAMANI

SABARMATI,
February 4, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

This is to introduce a young English friend, Mr. Reynolds, who has come to India in a spirit of purest service. He has no axe of his own to grind and he holds views that may startle even the most advanced nationalist.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SJT. C. Y. CHINTAMANI
ALLAHABAD

From a photostat: C.W. 4530. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

301. LETTER TO S. P. PATWARDHAN

February 5, 1930

BHAISHRI APPA,

I have your letter. We may certainly participate in all Congress activities to which the authorities of the states do not object. There should be no need to seek permission, but it would be good to know their attitude indirectly if it can be done. I am not in favour of carrying on the Congress activities in the states by defying prohibitory orders wherever such orders exist. This is because states are helpless in such matters. In all such matters we have to use our discretion. In some places it may be easy to carry on such activities and in some others it may be wisdom not to do so. There is, of course, no room for cowardice on any occasion. Nor would it be proper to think that because some people have been carrying on such activities in some particular states, we also may do so in others. Whether or not the Congress activities should be carried on in a particular state should depend on conditions in that state and the skill of the worker.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/75

302. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 5, 1930

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your letter. There was also a long letter which deserved to be read by all. So I had it passed on to Mahadev, who may already have sent you some reply. Your letter of today has not impressed me. The earlier one did. In today's letter I notice fatigue. The meanings you read in the speeches of Benn and the Viceroy are forced. If you read my recent articles carefully you will find in them the answers to all your arguments. The eleven points I have put forward¹ have silenced even a bitter critic of mine like Natarajan. He believes that my demand is perfectly just. Why don't you understand that neither Benn nor the Viceroy is willing to concede even a single one of those demands or could do so even if he were willing? To make that possible responsible Englishmen will have to educate the British public opinion. Till that is done nothing is possible.

Vallabhbhai does not at all have the feeling you attribute to him. I asked Vallabhbhai and he told me positively that he did not in the least feel as you thought he did. He gave me his clear opinion that after the Viceroy's reply nothing else is possible. You must be observing what Raja is doing at present. Or do you think that he is striving so hard in Madras against his better judgment merely to please me? From his letter I see that the effect of the 26th January celebration has been unexpected. Even the papers which had been against us have now become silent. What more can I write to console you?

From a copy of the Gujarati: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/76

303. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 5, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have received your letter. If somebody takes away our spinning- wheel by force, we must spin on a *takli*. If even the *takli* is taken away, we can prepare *takli* from a piece of bamboo and spin on it. If even this is not possible let us not feel that the *yajna* has been

¹ Vide "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

violated.

It would be wonderful if you could work in a village. Where is Lakshmi Devi? How is your health? Why have you written in pencil? Are you cheerful?

Blessings from

BAPU

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

304. *THE ISSUE*

I gladly publish the foregoing circular letter¹. I have the privilege of knowing Mr. Horace Alexander personally, and I believe him to be a true friend. Common courtesy demands utmost frankness at this stage. I am as anxious as he and other English friends for honest co-operation as between equals. But the element of equality is wanting. The interview broke on the one single issue of Dominion Status, but not as Mr. Alexander puts it. No promise was asked for, 'that the outcome of the Conference would be the immediate establishment of full Dominion Status'. In the words of the Viceroy this is what was asked for:

On behalf of the congress Party the view was expressed that unless previous assurances were given by His Majesty's Government that the purpose of the Conference was to draft a scheme for Dominion Status which His Majesty's Government would undertake to support, there would be grave difficulty about Congress participation.

This is totally different from what Mr. Horace Alexander has understood. Both Lord Irwin and the Cabinet must have their own opinion apart from Simon Commission. That the latter has been a misfit and misfire everybody knows, though it may not be diplomatic to acknowledge it. If the farce of the Commission needs to be kept up for hoodwinking the British electorate, it is bad game at which the Indian reformer should not be invited to play. In the language of the man in the street, unless the reformer knows that he has in the Cabinet and the Viceroy his staunch supporters, he may not attend the Conference except to court disaster. If all the parties that are likely to

¹ Not reproduced here. In his letter, Horace G. Alexander had described how most English people remained in complete ignorance of Indian conditions and concluded: "Whatever may come, I believe you will not forget that you have friends in England, and you will not forget, as I hope we shall not either, that we are all children of one Father, even though some of us may be erring children. With sincere good wishes for a year that may still belie our fears and more than justify our hopes, . . ."

be invited could agree upon what they want, they would not need to go to London to demonstrate the fact. The Viceroy knows, the world knows, that the parties that are supposed to represent Indian opinion do not agree and are not likely to agree just yet. For them to be invited to London for any proposal they may wish to make is to accentuate their differences. The fact is that there is really only one party in the country that has weight with the masses. It is the congress. There is perfect agreement among Congressmen as to the demand. But I am free to confess that the Congress does not yet command such recognition from the Government. It has not yet the sanction behind it for enforcing its will. If therefore the Congress sends representatives to a heterogeneous conference, it must know definitely what the British Government intend doing. It must not have an open mind as to what India should have. The Conference, therefore, to serve any useful purpose, must necessarily have only one thing in view, i.e., to frame or recommend a scheme of Dominion Status (now independence) to suit India's needs. This Lord Irwin could not do; hence the break. The other points raised by Mr. Alexander were never reached at the interview. But there never has been any indication of a real change in the British policy. Political prosecutions, or to speak more correctly, political persecution has never ceased. And it cannot cease unless the British residents in India will be content to live only on the goodwill of the people. And this they will not do, so long as they consider it to be their right to exploit the starving masses of this land. Every approach to the Indian problem is made by them on the basis that British commerce must not suffer. Congressmen hold that British commerce as it is carried on today must suffer a radical change if India is at all to live.

Young India, 6-2-1930

305. SOME IMPLICATIONS

Well might the points suggested by me as for immediate attention¹ raise a storm of indignation in the British Press. They mean more to the British investor, and in fact every Britisher, than Dominion Status or even Independence. Dominion Status or independence may conceivably be hedged in with stipulations that may make it impossible for India to get rid of the burdens that have brought her to the verge of utter starvation. Hitherto progress towards the so-called constitutional freedom has meant more burdens upon the dumb millions and more money into the pockets of the Britisher. And

¹ *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

British imagination pictures to itself an India under Dominion Status remaining a perpetual *El Dorado* for the British. If Dominion Status is feared, it is because the reality of it would mean ability to undo continuing wrongs and therefore unjust burdens whether in the shape of Government of India loans or guarantees given to the military and the civil services, or favours shown to British manufactures at the expense of India, or concessions granted to the British trader, capitalist or prospector.

Whether therefore a *bona fide* Round Table Conference comes today or the day after, it is as well to know the truth lying behind the remarkable demonstration of 26th ultimo. The masses feel that the Congress will remove the burdens which they vaguely feel but cannot describe. I venture to claim that in formulating the eleven points, I have somewhat and to the extent of my ability given a concrete shape to their feeling.

It is not difficult to understand the resentment felt in England over the 'demands' nor the hysterics of Sir Malcom Hailey over the idea of repudiating debts in any circumstance whatsoever. Yet that is precisely what every ward, when he comes of age, has the right to do. If he finds the trustee having buttered his own bread at the ward's expense, he makes the trustee pay for his malpractices or misappropriation or breach of trust or whatever other name by which his selfishness may be described. There will thus be no atmosphere for a dispassionate examination of the case of the dumb masses either in India or in England till the Englishmen realize that they must part with some of the ill-gotten gains and cease in future to expect the inflow to England of millions that are annually drained from India under one pretext or another. If the stopping of the drain means a revision of the tastes of the city people of this land who live upon the commission they make from their British principals, it means also that the British as a whole will have to revise their tastes by reason of the sudden stoppage of the millions looted from India for their sakes.

It is clear, that the riches derived from the tillers of the soil are not a voluntary contribution or a contribution compelled for their benefit. The villages are not affected by the *Pax Britannica* so-called; for they were untouched even by the invasions of Timur or Nadirshah. They will remain untouched by anarchy if it comes. But in order that this enormous contribution may be exacted without resistance, violence has been organized by the British Government on a scale unknown before and manipulated in so insidious a manner as not to be easily seen or felt as such. British rule has appeared to me to be a perfect personification of violence. There are snakes that by their very appearance paralyse their victims. They do not need to make

any further demonstration of their power. Even so, I am sorry to have to say, has the British power worked upon us in India. Frightfulness is not a word of: Indian coinage. It was coined by a British judge¹ in order to bring vividly to light the meaning of Jallianwala massacre. And we are promised a multiple, if we dare lift up our heads and say: 'We will have no more of this loot that has bled India dry.'

Let us, too, understand how organized violence works and is on that account far more harmful than sporadic, thoughtless, sudden outburst. Ordered violence hides itself often behind camouflage and hypocrisy as we see them working through the declarations of good intentions, commissions, conferences and the like, or even through measures conceived as tending to the public benefit but in reality to the benefit of the wrongdoer. Greed and deceit are often the offspring as they are equally often the parents of violence. Naked violence repels like the naked skeleton shorn of flesh, blood and the velvety skin. It cannot last long. But it persists fairly long when it wears the mask of peace and progress so-called.

Such awe-inspiring violence concealed under a 'golden lid' begets the violence of the weak which in its turn works secretly and sometimes openly.

Non-violence has to work in the midst of this double violence. But if it is the supreme law governing mankind, it must be able to make its way in the face of the heaviest odds. Violence such as we have to face may well make us cowards utterly unable to discover the method of working non-violence. If therefore the forces of violence arrayed against us cannot be checkmated during our time, it would be no proof of the futility of non-violence, it would certainly be proof of the pervading cowardice.

The greatest obstacle in the path of non-violence is the presence in our midst of the indigenous interests that have sprung up from British rule, the interests of monied men, speculators, scrip holders, land-holders, factory owners and the like. All these do not always realize that they are living on the blood of the masses, and when they do, they become as callous as the British principals whose tools and agents they are. If like the Japanese samurai they could but realize that they must give up their blood-stained gains, the battle is won for non-violence. It must not be difficult for them to see that the holding of millions is a crime when millions of their ownkith and kin are starving and that therefore they must give up their agency. No principal has yet been found able to work without faithful agents.

¹ Jastice Rankin; *vide* "Congress Report on the Punjab Disorders", 25-3-1920.

But non-violence has to be patient with these as with the British principals. The aim of the non-violent worker must ever be to convert. He may not however wait endlessly. When therefore the limit is reached, he takes risks and conceives plans of active satyagraha which may mean civil disobedience and the like. His patience is never exhausted to the point of giving up his creed. But working in a hostile atmosphere, he runs the risk of forces of violence, which till then were held under check from mutual fear, being let loose through the restraint of such fear being removed. The Government will spread out its red paws in what it will call self-defence, the party of violence may commit the mistake of seeing its chance of coming out in the open. The non-violent party must then prove its creed by being ground to powder between the two millstones. If there is such a party, all is well for India and the world. My hope and plans are built upon an ever-increasing faith in the existence of that party of true non-violence.

Young India, 6-2-1930

306. NOTES

THE FINISHING TOUCH

It will be remembered that the Broomfield Committee¹, whilst holding that the Bardoli peasants' complaints were substantially justified, and cancelling the enhanced assessment to the extent of something over 89,379 rupees, still recommended a net increase of Rs. 30,806 over the old assessment. But there was a legal flaw about this recommendation. Government seem to have rectified the error by revising the assessment in something like 40 villages, and now they are making arrangements for giving full effect to the Broomfield Committee's recommendations about the rectification of errors in the classification of lands and kindred matters. The net result of all this might amount to, in effect, a restoration of the old assessment of the Taluk. That would put a finishing touch to the success of that historic struggle. No wonder that an English friend, writing to Mahadev Desai about his *Story of Bardoli*, says, "Lahore made me feel most sceptical of the power of India to work unitedly and effectively for swaraj, but the *Story of Bardoli* has more than answered my fears."

Though both the Lahore demonstration and the Bardoli struggle were offshoots of the Congress, the difference the English friend noticed is easily explained. The Lahore demonstration was the whole

¹ Comprising R. S. Broomfield and R. M. Maxwell

Congress at its best and its worst. It necessarily included every variety of character. Moreover it was the yearly deliberative function. The Bardoli struggle on the other hand was a Congress body in action. It was Congressmen who conceived it. The Sardar¹ himself was the President of the Provincial Congress Committee, and he mobilized the whole resources of the Committee for the struggle. The forces of violence were hushed in the presence of non-violent action. It remains to be seen how the all-India struggle for independence will shape. The law that governed the Bardoli struggle which centred round a local grievance will govern the greater struggle for independence. The partakers will have to be strictly non-violent; they will have to visualize the grievance of slavery as the Bardoli peasant visualized the grievance of an unjust assessment; they will have to submit to the strictest discipline even as the Bardoli peasants did.

THE POET ON BARDOLI

The Bard of Shantiniketan² writing to Mahadev Desai on his *Story of Bardoli* says:

I have finished your *Story of Bardoli*. It has the spirit of the Epic Age in its narrative of the triumph of moral right over arbitrary power through a fight moral in character, unique in modern times. I thank you, and the leader of the fight and the fighters, also your great guide. My blessings.

Let us all on whom the Poet showers his blessings accept them in all humility and qualify ourselves for the task that awaits us. For if the blessings pronounced by the great are given for something accomplished, they also carry with them the expectation of something greater still.

Young India, 6-2-1930

307. WHY 'PURNA' SWARAJ?

A fair friend writes:³

This letter raises two questions. I shall take the last first. To qualify 'swaraj' is no doubt doing violence to art. The writer's logic is also irresistible. But very often in national and similar complex matters logic and art have apparently to be sacrificed. In substance that which carries out a good intention is both true logic and true art.

¹ Vallabhbhai Patel

² Rabindranath Tagore

³ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had doubted the nation's capacity to win independence by non-violent means and questioned the propriety of prefixing the adjective 'purna' to 'swaraj'.

‘Swaraj’ in the Congress constitution was given a double meaning; it could be within the Empire if possible, without if necessary. A word or an expression had therefore to be found in order to connote the last meaning only. We could not do without the word ‘swaraj’. Hence the expedience of ‘*purna swaraj*’. I admit that it does not sound well to the ear. But if it carries out the nation’s meaning as it does, it will presently sound well. We could not have managed with a dubious word.

The second question is more difficult to dispose of. But attainment of swaraj means conquest over all difficulties. Non-violence or rather non-violent men are on their trial. They have to find out the best method of offering battle in spite of the violent atmosphere surrounding them. Non-violence is not of much consequence if it can flourish only in a congenial atmosphere. It is not then non-violence. It may easily be fear of being hurt. But my reading of the national temper is somewhat different from the friend’s. Dissensions and squabbles do not affect those who have ultimately to take part in the struggle. The latter will instinctively react to active non-violence. But whether they do or not, the party of non-violence must now use up all its resources. There can be no more waiting without its creed being laughed at or itself being thoroughly and rightly discredited. If it cannot act, it must own its incapacity and retire from the field of battle.

Young India, 6-2-1930

308. *CONFUSION OF THOUGHT*

A correspondent who is an honours graduate and an LL.B. writes:¹

This letter shows how even a trained lawyer can become confused when he is obsessed with an idea. The group that would not have liked the interview to succeed is the very group I had in mind. They are not the avowed enemies of India, but they are ‘deluded patriots’. The other group the writer refers to could never concoct a plot to assassinate the Viceroy for whose protection they are paid. Of course nothing is impossible, but we can only act on probabilities. Moreover the outrage deserves condemnation even if the plotter was a person belonging to a Government department. The Congress could

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. Referring to Gandhiji’s article “Cult of the Bomb”, 2-1-1930, the correspondent had written that the bomb outrage might have been manoeuvred by the guardians of law and order to justify their existence or magnify their importance.

not pass the incident by without laying itself open to the charge of hypocrisy or criminal indifference about its own creed.

And why am I guilty of participating in violence when I condemn the outrage? Condemnation or no condemnation, the Government would go its own way in trying to find out the guilty parties. I would be participator in violence if I approved of the penal code and its sanctions. If I had my way I would fling open doors of prisons and discharge even murderers. But I know that in holding this opinion, I am in the proud position of being in the minority of one. I must not however take up the valuable time of the reader by discussing my pet theories about crimes and punishments.

The writer pays poor compliment to the party of violence or by whatever name it may be called, when he imputes to them fear of death. They forfeited their lives when they dedicated themselves to their creed. That they keep themselves in hiding does not mean that they fear death, but it means that they want to hang on to life as long as possible so as to carry out their project. They stand in no need of my protection, active or passive. They know that I hold their lives as dear as my own, but they know too that I am a determined enemy of their creed. But my enmity resolves itself into an attempt to convert them to my own. Condemnation of the outrage was a method of conversion. That it may fail in its purpose does not affect it. I must act according to my lights and leave the result to the Higher Power.

Lastly, the writer's complaint that I had not a word to say about the policy that is responsible for the existence of the cult of the bomb shows what a superficial reader of *Young India* he must be. He must know that almost every issue of *Young India* contains some condemnation of the Government policy. What perhaps he means is that I should have said something about it in the very article. Well, it would have been wholly irrelevant, and what is more, my analysis of the doings of the cult would have lost much of its force. The point to be made in the article was that violence was ineffective, no matter how wicked was the policy of the Government.

Young India, 6-2-1930

309. "KHADI PRADARSHAK"

The book series called *Navajivan Mala* of the Shuddha Khadi Bhandar of Calcutta has already been mentioned by me in a former issue of *Hindi Navajivan*. I have, today, before me the booklet *Khadi Pradarshak* published by this Bhandar. This is the fifteenth number of the series. Besides the eight pages of appendix, it has eighty-six

pages and costs only four annas. This booklet is a Hindi translation of the *Khadi Guide* published by the Charkha Sangh. A lot of information has been given in this guide. It gives particulars of the progress of khadi in every province, the output and the sales in each one of them. Every person who loves khadi should have a copy of this booklet. There are several addresses where the books of *Navajivan Mala* are obtainable. The principal one is 132/1 Harrison Road, Calcutta.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-2-1930

310. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR¹ I

Questions asked and my answers to them are given below:

Q : Do you accept the duty of [bread] labour expounded by Tolstoy ?

A: Yes, certainly.

Q : Do you expect that every person should do all his work himself ?

A: I do not expect it and I do not think it practicable; Tolstoy too did not consider this essential. Man's dependence is no less than his independence. So long as he remains in society, and remain he must, he has to curtail his independence to fit into that of others, that is, society. Therefore it can only be said that each person, as far as it is possible, must do his work himself; that is to say, I may fill a mug for my use, but may not dig a well myself. Not to fill the mug is pride; to plan or begin digging a well is stupidity. One must, therefore, exercise discretion in deciding whether a task is to be done by oneself or with the help of others.

Q: Do you wish that all should earn their livelihood by the sweat of the brow ?

A: Certainly. Everyone does not do so and that is why dire poverty has arisen in the world and especially so in India. This is also the main cause of ill health and the immense greed for acquisition of wealth. If all earned their livelihood by physical work, greed would decrease and much of the power to acquire wealth would weaken automatically. If physical labour is done, ill health will almost disappear and the greatest gain will be the complete obliteration of the distinction between high and low in society.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-2-1930

¹ Published serially in four consecutive issues of *Hindi Navajivan*

311. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 6, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I never thought you would miss the importance of the 11 points.¹ However I do not propose to waste your time by arguing when a day or two after this reaches you will be on your way to Sabarmati. I expect you here for certain on 12th. I hope to satisfy you that our case has been strengthened not weakened by the 11 points. Will Kamala accompany you?

Yours,

BAPU

PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ANAND BHAWAN, ALLAHABAD

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

312. LETTER TO LILAVATI KODIDAS

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

February 6, 1930

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. It will be a good thing if you form the habit of writing with ink and in a good hand. See that you keep hysteria at arm's length now. You should reason with Uncle and explain to him that, since the jewellery is lying unused, it would be better to [sell it and] get interest on the money. Do not be in a hurry to return. You are, however, free to return as soon as you can do so with complete peace of mind. Live on milk and fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

SMT. LILAVATIBEHN KODIDAS

C/O MR. DWARKADAS GORULDAS

KALBADEVI, BOMBAY NO. 2

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9271

¹ *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

313. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 7, 1930

BHAI MANILAL,

It would be better if you slowed down a little even for the sake of the service which you are yearning to take up. Humbly recognizing that nobody's service is indispensable to the world, we should serve only within the limits of our physical capacity. If we imagine that though ill, we should climb heights and earn the applause of the world it will never do. Rather we should regard it as ignorance to do such a thing. I am firmly of the view that no harm would have come to Rajkot if you had not addressed a public meeting for one hour at Wadhwan. Now take complete rest. If you cannot do so there, come here or go to Chorvad. Observe self-control in eating. You can eat all the sweets you like after you have recovered. Know that moderation in eating is a hundred times more beneficial than fasting.

Regarding the car, write a polite letter to the Thakore Saheb of Morvi and ask him. No satyagraha is going on against him at present.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

314. A LETTER

February 8, 1930

I have your letter. I see some risk in holding the conference at present. It is likely to produce unnecessary bitterness. It will not be possible to prevent trouble-makers from getting in. They may harm our work by making or inspiring all sorts of demands and forcing unsatisfactory replies. Our duty is to go on doing what we can and be content to satisfy as well as we can those who bear real hardships. This, however, is only a personal opinion expressed without knowledge of the actual circumstances. It need not therefore be given more importance than it deserves.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

315. A LETTER

February 8, 1930

Condemning the wicked does not necessarily betray want of moderation. The condemnation is not of the wicked but of their wickedness. We often criticize the English in strong language, but we never wish ill of them. From that we claim that we condemn not the wicked but their wickedness. As a matter of fact the word condemnation is wrongly used here. There is no condemnation of the crow in calling it black, but there is of the swan in calling it black. Saying that Yudhishtira resorted to falsehood on one occasion in his life is not to condemn him, but saying that he was a coward because he did not protect Draupadi when she was being disrobed is condemning him and shows one's ignorance. If you understand this distinction, my meaning, will become clear to you. Bowing in respect both to the saintly and the unsaintly may be regarded as an explanatory comment on Chapter XVI of the *Gita*. There the description of the demoniac nature was necessary in order to explain the meaning of the divine nature and show its excellence by contrast.

From the Gujarati original: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

316. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI ASHRAM,
February 8, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,²

I have your letter. There is no need to be humble in the criticism of the wicked. In such criticism, you criticise wickedness, not the wicked. We speak ill of the British many a time but we never wish them ill. From that, we can claim that the criticism is of wickedness and not that of the wicked. In fact, the word 'criticism' is wrongly used here. Calling a crow black is not criticism of the crow but calling a swan black, is criticism. It is not a criticism of Yudhishtir when we say that he lied once in his life, but to call him a coward because he did not rescue Draupadi when she was being derobed, is his criticism. It is ignorance. What I want to say will be clear to you if you understand the difference. Praise of saints and satan alike can be considered criticism of the 16th chapter of the *Gita*. But in order to bringout fully, the meaning of a divine temperament, and to lend it

importance, it was necessary to describe the qualities of the satan.

I understand about Chandradutt and Devidutt. It is certainly necessary to know how the work ought to be done in the villages. I hope you are gaining weight.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: S. N. 32941

317. MY NOTES

OUR CARELESSNESS

A friend writes:¹

As has been stated above, there is no doubt that smokers transgress limits, and non-smokers do not even attempt to prevent the former from smoking, out of shame or fear. We no longer have such respect for women that in their presence we would not smoke, would not use obscene language or be guilty of any other discourteous conduct!

I cannot blame the railway servants in this matter. What can they do when passengers themselves are indifferent to their own comforts? We should bear in mind that these persons do not take up employment for the service of others. Moreover, even in accordance with the law, they have no authority to prevent without reason any passenger from smoking. This is because the regulations do not prohibit smoking under all circumstances, but only when one passenger objects to another doing so when the latter happens to be smoking in a compartment which is not meant for smokers. How can an officer know whether or not a particular passenger has been asked not to smoke? Hence so long as any passenger does not complain, the officer does not have the authority to prevent anyone from smoking.

Volunteers can render much assistance in this. They can politely reason with smokers and, if the latter are not amenable to reason, they can complain to the officer and pull the alarm-chain and stop the train. But I would not advise them to do this.

Difficulties are bound to arise in trying all at once to enforce a regulation, enforcement of which has not been attempted since it was made. Clashes too will arise. Hence, for the present, the task of the volunteers consists in educating public opinion and in explaining to

¹ The letter is not translated here.

the non-smokers their rights and to the smokers their limits. When the passengers begin to understand this matter and the smokers realize that many people are inconvenienced by their smoking, it is possible that they will stop doing so. Moreover, a satyagrahi volunteer will not as far as possible make anyone obey regulations by getting him punished. By trying to perform the duty of a policeman a reformer often fails to perform his own duty. The dharma of a reformer lies in trying to bring about a change of heart in those who violate regulations. In the beginning, patience is required for doing this but in the end the result endures and becomes widespread. Despite this, where certain ill habits have taken root, the law where it prevails can be helpful in eradicating them. This has happened in the past and will also happen in the future; for instance, the task of prohibition can be carried on very speedily if it is given the backing of law. Those who are addicted to smoking have formed such an evil habit that they would seldom listen to anyone however courteously they may be approached. For the enthusiastic volunteer, therefore, this is a fine occasion for testing his own forbearance and courtesy. In doing so, the volunteers can also utilize this fine occasion for cultivating among the people respect towards women. And, an attempt can be made to prevent those who create public nuisance just as those addicted to smoking keep doing so on all occasions without any consideration for the feelings of others.

KHADI WHILE ABROAD

A gentleman asks:¹

I do not think so. If after going abroad, it is desirable or necessary to compete with the Britishers in all matters, why not do so here also? With regard to virtues, we should always compete with an enemy, with regard to vices, there can be no such competition. Anyone who wishes to wear khadi can do so even when he is abroad. When Pandit Motilal went abroad, he had his entire outfit—from head to foot—made out of khadi. The definition of khadi here also includes material which is made out of hand-spun and hand-woven wool. It is true that I have expressed an opinion that there is no reason to regard khadi as something compulsory when living abroad. It may not be possible there to get the kind of khadi one requires or it may not be possible to buy the quality one wants as it may be too

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had sought advice whether Indians going abroad might give up khadi and compete with the British in all matters.

expensive; in that case, it would not be regarded as *adharma* to buy cloth which is mill-made but swadeshi or even that which is foreign.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

318. “GANDHISHIKSHAN”¹

Bhai Nagindas Amulakhrai writes:²

It is not surprising that I should be enamoured of my own writings. Hence, readers will not set much store by my testimonial to these volumes; nevertheless, those who are attracted towards *Navajivan* would like to make a collection of these volumes which are available almost at the price of its paper. My request to such persons is that they take advantage of Bhai Nagindas’s suggestion. His address is as follows: Sjt. Nagindas Amulakhrai, Sukhadwala Building, Ravelin Street, Hornby Road, Bombay.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

319. SPINNING-WHEEL WITH TWO SPINDLES³

I, too, believe that the speed of spinning can be much increased if the sliver is of a good quality. I am a slow spinner. Hitherto I could spin in an hour 160 rounds of 20 counts. As the slivers I am at present using are good I am able to spin 200 rounds per hour without effort. Good slivers are obtained when cotton pods are plucked by hand and are free from impurities, the cotton-wool is ginned by hand so neatly that no seeds get crushed and mixed with the cotton and, finally, such cotton is carded carefully.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

¹ A set of thirteen volumes of Gandhiji’s teachings

² The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had requested Gandhiji to take such note through *Navajivan* as he thought proper of the reduction in the price of this set from Rs. 8-10-0 to Rs. 2-0-0.

³ These are Gandhiji’s remarks published along with an article by Prabhudas Gandhi under this title.

320. VILLAGE ROADS¹

We have seen how to remove dung-hills and prevent harm being done to the village health and to produce from it manure worth its weight in gold.² We also saw how to increase village income without much hardship by not using cow-dung for making dung-cakes for fuel, but instead by producing manure from it. Moreover we discussed how village health might be protected by cleaning wells and ponds and maintaining them clean.³

Now let us consider village roads. One glance at them tells us how tortuous they are. They look like heaps of dust just levelled. Great hardship is caused to men walking along the roads, as also to cattle drawing cart-loads over them. For use on such roads we have to build heavy carts with heavy wheels, with the result that the bullock is unnecessarily required to draw a double load. To the hardship of the journey over roads full of dust heaps, we add the expense involved in having to draw heavy carts. If the roads are metalled, the bullock would draw double the load ordinarily carried, the carts would be less expensive and the health of villagers would improve. The present state of things illustrates the proverb, "Butter is given away with whey and, moreover, the giver is branded a slattern." On these roads so much mud is formed in the rainy season that it gets highly difficult to drive the cart through it, and men have either to swim or walk waist-deep in water. And in addition, people get the gift of all kinds of diseases.

Where the village is an extended dung-hill, where no one takes care of wells and ponds, where roads are what they were in Grandfather Adam's days, how can the state of children be any better? The behaviour of children, their culture—everything is bound to reflect the conditions of the village life. A look at the children will show that they are cared for no better than the roads. To speak of this now, however, would be to digress.

What, then, is to be done for these roads? If the spirit of co-operation prevails among the inhabitants, with no cost or with a little expense on account of gravel, etc., villagers can build metalled roads and add to the wealth of the village. Moreover, both the young and the old would get true education free of charge through such co-operative activity. As far as possible, villagers should employ no labourers for any work. The village inhabitants are mostly peasants

¹ This appeared in the supplement *Shikshan ane Sahitya*.

² *Vide* "Cowdung Cakes or Manure?", 17-11-1929.

³ *Vide* "Wells and Ponds", 12-1-1930.

and hence their own labourers.

When necessary they may ask their neighbours to help them. By giving a little of their time to the roads daily, the village people would soon set their roads right. To be able to do this, they should prepare a map of the village streets and also of the approach roads leading to neighbouring villages. Then they should arrange a programme of work according to their capacity so that, men, women and children, all might participate to some extent. The present state of our culture embraces family life only. The improvement of villages depends upon an extension of the family feeling to the whole village. The look of our villages would be a measure of our culture. Just as every member in a family joins in keeping the home clean, every family should be prepared to do the same for the village. Not until this is done can the village people live happily and become self-reliant. Today, however, we look up for everything to the Government—for clearing dung-hills, for making the roads and keeping them in repair, for cleansing wells and ponds, for children's education, for protection against wild animals, for protection of our property, etc. This attitude of the mind has crippled and disabled us. This helplessness goes on ever increasing and adds to the burden of taxes. If all the villagers regard themselves answerable for the cleanliness, the neatness and the safety of the place they live in, most of the necessary improvement would take place immediately and almost without cost. Moreover, with increased facilities for travel and transport and with improved health, the economic condition of the village would also improve.

Some application of intellect is certainly needed for cleaning the roads. I have already spoken of the road map. All the villages do not have the same kind of facilities for building good metalled roads. Some villages may have stone, but in several regions of Bihar no amount of search would find any stone. What ways should be adopted to make strong roads is left to the volunteers contemplated in this series of articles. Let him go and examine the neighbourhood. Let him see if there is anything worth learning from Government methods in the matter. One could certainly adopt such Government methods for making strong roads as are suitable. At times we might come across village elders who have much practical knowledge of such matters. The village worker should have no hesitation in finding and using such talent in the countryside. As in other matters, so in this one of making strong roads, let the village worker make a beginning by setting an example with his own personal labour.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-2-1930

321. LETTER TO PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 9, 1930

MY DEAR SIR PURSHOTTAMDAS

I thank you for your letter¹.

I must not enter into argument with you, for argument is useless when conviction on either side is deep-seated. I can only give you my assurance that I shall take no hasty step. A risky step need not necessarily be a hasty step.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SIR PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
BIRLA HOUSE, ALBUQUERQUE ROAD
NEW DELHI

Purshottamdas Thakurdas Papers, File No. 96, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

322. LETTER TO R. B. MOTWANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 9, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I have your letter.

The problem you present should not cause any difficulty to a real lover of his country. He will neither marry nor fall other wise. Love of the country should be sufficient to keep him untouched by base passions.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

R. B. MOTWANI
C/O SIND CENTRAL CO-OPERATIVE BANK, LTD.
KARACHI (SIND)

From a photostat: G.N. 2777

¹ Wherein the addressee had written: "I do not believe India will benefit either now or within a few decades by revolution as much as by a process of evolution. . . . If the constitution is not sufficiently changed after the Conference in London as to make us masters in our own house . . . I can understand your impatience. But to resort to civil disobedience during the brief intervening period does strike me as being a hasty step."

323. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

February 9, 1930

BHAISHRI MANILAL,

. . .¹ Shankerlal is not here at present. It is within his authority to call for the figures you have asked for. I have sent your letter to the Charkha Sangh office and asked for the figures. But I am afraid you are unnecessarily prejudiced against Harjivan². Harjivan is an experienced man. He has won the confidence of all his superiors. He is a capable and self-sacrificing worker. He cannot take more profit and put it in a safe. He keeps accurate accounts. The Charkha Sangh has not accepted the policy of taking limited profit on all varieties of cloth, but has adopted the policy of limited profit on the total stock and permitted more profit on some special varieties of cloth because on some other varieties it takes even less than the permitted limited profit. For instance, there should be no objection to taking 100 per cent profit on khadi lace, while on dhoti no profit need be taken or very little if at all. Some things may even be sold at loss. Business can be carried on only in this way.

Kashmiri items are made for luxury-loving people like you and me, while the khadi sold in the general market is for persons who do not know patriotism but are forced to adopt simplicity. Hence some of the things are sold even at a loss. If you have anything to say against this policy adopted by the Charkha Sangh you may certainly do so. You and I get from friends money for first-class fare when we ask them for third class. Similarly we get the costliest variety of Kashmiri shawl when we ask for an ordinary Kashmiri shawl. And when we ask for dates from an orchard we get dates neatly packed inelegant boxes more expensive than the dates. If we condemn the people taking profit on such dates and shawls, don't you think we would degrade ourselves? How many crores do you think there would be in India who consumed such dates and wore such shawls? As I am dictating this letter I have in front of me a Kashmiri shawl which would cost not less than twenty-five or thirty rupees. And though I know this, I am shamelessly using it every day. I hope you will understand my meaning.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

¹ Omission as in the source

² Harjivan Kotak, A. I. S. A. representative in Srinagar

324. LETTER TO JYOTI PRAKASH

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 9, 1930

BHAISHRI 5 JYOTI PRAKASH,

I have received your letter. Do include the *Ramayana* in the curriculum. Keep sending me your diary every week. Give each hour's account of your activities in it.

Blessings from
BAPU

SHRI JYOTI PRAKASH
LALA GYAN PRAKASHJI MASTER
RAMJAS SCHOOL, No. 2
ANAND PARBAT
DELHI

From the Hindi original: S.N. 34066

325. LETTER TO CHHOTUBHAI PATEL

February 10, 1930

BHAI CHHOTUBHAI,

It saves me time to write out a reply instead of asking you to come over. When one comes across a suitable girl one can hardly resist the temptation to marry. You may, if you can, overcome the temptation, if you are convinced of the greatness of *brahmacharya*. If you insist more and more on qualifications in the bride, you would find no one eligible. You would find them all [fit] to be your sisters; but no one to be your wife.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10469

326. LETTER TO KUNVARJI PAREKH

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 12, 1930

CHI. KUNVARJI,

I have your letter. Chi. Rami will leave for Rajkot by the 6th or the 7th¹. Will that be all right and serve the purpose? I hope you are keeping good health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9715

327. AN ADVOCATE'S DILEMMA

The following² from an advocate has been passed on to me for reply:

The dilemma is there. My sympathies and my opinion are with the advocate. But the argument goes deeper than the advocate has carried it. When I use a postage stamp or a coin bearing the King's portrait, I seem to belie my profession of independence. When I obey a policeman's instructions or pay taxes, I acknowledge the King's authority. And some of these things I should be doing even if we declared an independent parallel government which we have not as yet. How am I to solve the puzzle? Must I, because I do not or cannot go the 'whole hog', continue to bear allegiance to the King? One escape from the dilemma is to withdraw all such voluntary co-operation as it is possible for me to withdraw and as is calculated to diminish the prestige and the authority of that rule. The Congress could not go further than it did without weaning from it a large number of useful and able workers. Experience has shown that the Congress organization breaks down where lawyers withdraw their assistance. They have from the very commencement taken the most active and effective part in the Congress. It is unfortunate, that the other classes still feel powerless to run Congress Committees without the assistance of lawyers. They are called officers of the Court. They know what foreign rule means. By training they are the fittest to carry

¹ According to the Gujarati calendar

² Not reproduced here. The correspondent had asked how a practising lawyer owing allegiance to the King could be a member of the Congress after the independence resolution.

on political agitation when they are honestly and patriotically moved. They have undoubtedly done much for the national movement, but much more is expected from them. And I have no doubt, that when the movement demands from them the last sacrifice, many if not all of them will prove equal to it. Meanwhile since the Congress has not declared boycott of law-courts, the matter rests with individual conscience. Where, consistently with it, a lawyer cannot both practise and remain in the Congress and cannot give up practice, he may give up Congress, and still help it as effectively as if he was in it, provided of course that he believes in independence being the right and the duty of every Indian to work for and achieve. I may mention incidentally that many lawyers think that they have a lien on the Congress, and they resent as intrusion the advent of laymen to office, whereas they should deem it a privilege to prepare laymen to take office and make them feel that, if they the laymen have bravery and sacrifice, they can run Congress organizations just as well as lawyers. Indeed there are today several Committees that are being efficiently and ably managed by non-professional men. The movement in that direction however needs to receive a much greater impetus. We want a Committee in every one of the seven hundred thousand villages. Thank God we have not got in all India even seventy thousand lawyers. Cobblers, scavengers, tanners, tailors, bricklayers and the like should be found willing and able to work Congress Committees. The educated few can hasten the event, if they will.

Young India, 13-2-1930

328. 'THE DUTY OF LAWYERS'

The first number of the English edition of the bulletin of the Organizing Committee of the International Juridical Conference has been on my file for the past three or four months. The bulletin is edited by a Board of Directors drawn from Austria, Czechoslovakia, Cuba, France, Germany, Holland, Indonesia, Mexico, Poland and Venezuela. The Organizing Secretary is Dr. Alfred Apfel of Berlin where the bulletin is issued. The editorial notice says that the bulletin is only a temporary publication. The opening article is headed the 'Duty of Lawyers' from which I take the following two interesting sections¹ as being not irrelevant in the present times in India.

Young India, 13-2-1930

¹ Not reproduced here. The extracts described how the fundamental rights in a democracy are abridged through the creation of extraordinary courts and emergency laws and the attitude a jurist should adopt in the situation.

329. MY INCONSISTENCIES

Thus writes Sjt. Trivikramrav, a Bezwada barrister:¹

Some others have also written much in the same fashion. I must admit my many inconsistencies. But since I am called 'Mahatma', I might well endorse Emerson's saying that 'foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds'. There is, I fancy, a method in my inconsistencies. In my opinion there is a consistency running through my seeming inconsistencies, as in nature there is a unity running through seeming diversity.

Boycott of legislatures is wholly consistent with the demand for the reforms suggested in the eleven points.² I would myself sit if need be in a legislature in which the passage of the reforms is assured. But the existing legislatures are powerless to pass most of those measures if any at all. I have not said that the struggle for independence is to cease the moment [the] eleven points are gained. What I have said is that, if they are gained, the Congress will lift the ban on the Conference and that civil disobedience will be suspended. The points were mentioned in order to prevent the misconception that the Viceroy's speech had given rise to. Even an Independence Constitution is not an end in itself. Independence is wanted in order to remove the grievous defects of the present rule. Independence means at least those eleven points, if it means anything at all to the masses, the man in the street. Mere withdrawal of the English is not independence. It means the consciousness in the average villager that he is the maker of his own destiny, he is his own legislator through his chosen representatives. The eleven points are some of the vital tests of the villager's authority. The very letter of the Bezwada barrister shows how necessary it was to clear the issue. By mentioning the eleven points I have given a body in part to the elusive word independence. I should be prepared to reconsider my attitude towards the legislatures if the legislators can accomplish the things covered by the eleven points. And if they are covered, I should have no hesitation in advising Congress representation at the Conference where independence could be made the basis. For I do conceive the possibility of a conference even for discussing an Independence Constitution.

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had pointed to the inconsistency of advocating boycott of legislatures while voicing 'minimum demands' and allowing Congressmen to associate with local bodies.

² *Vide* "Clearing the Issue", 30-1-1930.

As to the local bodies, I am aware of my weakness. I have little faith in their substantial usefulness. I admit that they have led to bad blood and disgraceful wrangling. But one cannot take things by storm in a vast body like the Congress. There is no question now of capturing local bodies. A wise and selfless man, when he finds that he can render no service through these bodies, will retire from them as did Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai and Babu Rajendra Prasad.

As for my leadership, if I have it, it has not come for any seeking, it is a fruit of faithful service. A man can as little discard such leadership as he can the colour of his skin. And since I have become an integral part of the nation, it has to keep me with all my faults and shortcomings, of some of which I am painfully conscious and of many others of which candid critics, thanks be to them, never fail to remind me. Of this however I am certain, that if they and those who would never criticize me will have the patience to understand my programme and have the steadfastness to follow it, *purna swaraj* is near.

Young India, 13-2-1930

330. TREATMENT OF SMALLPOX

Friends have pressed me to publish the modes of the treatment of smallpox patients. The Udyoga Mandir has not escaped the infection. There have been in all seven cases in the Mandir. One has proved fatal. It is possible to say that that case was not treated like the rest. It was an early case, and I feel guilty of having shown want of firmness. Contrary to my conviction, the girl remained without hydropathic treatment and was permitted even to take solid food. The treatment adopted in the cases that have recovered or that I hope will recover was:

1. Complete rest;
2. Free ventilation;
3. Light received through a red medium;
4. No solid food, and milk diluted with equal quantity of water when there was no fever; otherwise orange juice or dried grapes juice;
5. Occasional opening medicine and regular enema;
6. Wet sheet pack. Rolling the patient in a sheet wrung out of cold water and put between blankets till perspiration.

During the 1915 epidemic I had two very serious cases of

confluent smallpox. I knew nothing then of red light treatment. In the 1916 cases the boys were given a bath daily with hot water in which *neem* leaves were boiled. This was regarded by me somewhat a substitute for Condyl's fluid. After convalescence the boys were stronger than before.

The treatment given in a book called *Why Vaccinate* by Harold W. Whiston, price 6d., published in Macclesfield by Claye, Brown and Claye is copied below.¹ The book can be also had from the National Anti-Vaccination League, 50 Parliament Street, London, S.W.

I have no doubt that more people die of fright than of disease itself. I notice this fright even in my children who, poor things, have been taught from childhood to dread the disease. There is no reason whatsoever that smallpox is any more fatal than many other diseases. Smallpox yields to nature's treatment just as well as any other illness. It is nature's way of purging the body of latent poison. In order to drive away the fright and to prevent simple people from rushing to the vaccination depot, I give the most salient passages from the book to show how unnecessary, even dangerous and filthy the practice of vaccination is.

This is how a medical man describes the process of preparing lymph :²

The following emphatic testimony³ against vaccination of Dr. Walter R. Hadwen will be read with interest.

There is ample other medical evidence against vaccination collected in the booklet.

Young India, 13-2-1930

331. NOTES

AMAZING IGNORANCE

The Secretary, C. P. (Marathi) Congress Committee, writes:

In the C. P. Legislative Council, while opposing the motion of Mr. G. R. Pradhan, recommending to the Local Government a grant of amnesty to political prisoners, etc., Mr. Gordon on behalf of the Local Government is reported to have stated that offenders like Avari, who incited murders and preached open violence, would never be pardoned by the Government.

The ignorance of some of these officials is equalled only by their arrogance. They do not even care to study the facts on which

¹ Not reproduced here

² *ibid.*

³ *ibid.*

they claim to speak with authority. If Mr. Gordon had taken the trouble to inquire, he would have discovered that Sjt. Avari had never incited to murder or violence. Whatever his faults, he was never guilty of incitement to violence. And Mr. Gordon added injury to insult by associating Sjt. Avari's name with pardon. If I know him at all, I know that he will never be guilty of asking for pardon. As a satyagrahi that he has always professed to be, he could not ask for pardon. If he commits an offence, he serves his deserved punishment; if he seeks imprisonment as a civil resister, he could never seek pardon.

MORE TEMPLES OPENED

The Anti-Untouchability Committee appointed by the Working Committee is making steady progress. It reports that eight more temples owned by the Telugu Munurvar community residing in cosmopolitan Bombay were declared open on 2nd instant to the so-called 'untouchables'. This opening was no hurried matter. The proposal was discussed in various meetings of the community, and the temples were thrown open to the 'untouchables' only when there was almost complete unanimity. At the last meeting presided over by Advocate Sayaji Lakshman Silam, member of the Corporation, there was only one dissident when the final vote was taken. The resolution also appealed to the suppressed brethren to carry out internal reforms

The Committee further reports that Dr. Patwardhan of Amraoti, President of the Hanuman Vyayam Prasarak Mandal, which has 4 branches in the town besides the Central Gymnasium which alone has a daily attendance of about 1,000 boys, and which has about 50 branches throughout Berar, has addressed a letter to the Secretary, Anti-Untouchability Committee, in the course of which he says:¹

Boys of the so-called untouchable classes are admitted to our gymnasiums along with the boys of the so-called caste Hindus on terms of absolute equality, and no distinction whatever is made as to their instruction or treatment....

These are encouraging events. All the parties concerned deserve congratulations. But for the ready atmosphere Advocate Silam could never have carried the whole of the Munurvar community with him. Dr. Patwardhan's letter does not surprise me. He is an old worker in the field, and it would have been surprising indeed if he had been found behind the times. Let us hope that before long temples and institutions shutting their doors against the suppressed classes will be among the exceptions and not the rule as they still unfortunately are today. The appeal made by the Munurvars to the suppressed class for internal reform is quite relevant. The two movements, internal reform

¹ Only an extract is reproduced here.

by the latter and repentance by the so-called 'touchables', should go hand in hand.

OVERCROWDING IN TRAINS

Sjt. T. N. Sharma of Anandaniketan, Andhra Desha, writes:¹ In my opinion the idea of stopping the train by pulling the chain to avoid overcrowding is quite sound. If the railway authorities enforce the rule of numbers for 1st and 2nd class compartments, why will they not for the 3rd class? The overcrowding is at times suffocating as was described the other day by Shrimati Mirabehn in these pages.² It is largely greed of profits that makes the authorities indifferent to the comfort of the uncomplaining submissive 3rd class passengers who provide the profits, not 1st and 2nd class passengers. It will be interesting to know why Sjt. Shrihariray is being prosecuted if the facts are as stated above.

FIVE CONUNDRUMS

Sjt. P. K. Majumdar, Bar-at-Law of Jalapahar, asks the following questions which are preceded by a long argument which I omit, as it is contained in the questions themselves:

1. Is Man a special creation of God?
2. Does the 'Inner Voice' mean the 'message of God'?
3. Defenceless as India is in the way of arms and ammunition, is it wise to court 'force' from a war-equipped opponent on the off chance of being successful by the use of 'soul force' with the consequent risk of civil war or foreign invasion?
4. Does 'soul force' mean what a man cannot do physically but is latent in his 'soul'?
5. Is 'soul' something apart from 'life'?

The answers are:

1. Man is a special creation of God precisely to the extent that he is distinct from the rest of His creation.

2. The 'Inner Voice' may mean a message from God or from the Devil, for both are wrestling in the human breast. Acts determine the nature of the voice.

3. The most defenceless mouse struggles for liberty against his born enemy the cat who is armed to the teeth. The mouse does not court 'force'. It is his nature to struggle though he knows that he will be worsted in the unequal contest. It is only reserved for man to act less than the mouse, if it is also reserved for him to act infinitely better than the mouse by recognizing the inner power within him which has

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. It described how a young man campaigned against overcrowding in trains and how he was arrested.

² *Vide* "The Third-Class Carriage", 12-12-1929.

been known repeatedly to defy all the physical forces arrayed against it. The *risk* of civil war is nothing against the *fact* of the existing condition in which an enslaved India *feels* powerless to struggle for freedom even to the extent that the poor mouse does.

4. Soul force begins when man recognizes that body force, be it ever so great, is nothing compared to the force of the soul within, which pervades not only him but all creation.

5. Soul is apart from life. The latter is conditioned by the body, the former is not.

Since my legal correspondent has asked for my opinion as ‘senior counsel’, the fee for it is that he should give up his gown, and wear the Congress uniform and join the battle for freedom in spite of the odds against us. If he pays the fee, he will discover that the opinion was worth it.

Young India, 13-2-1930

332. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR—II

QUESTION: Is not the division of labour under varnashrama dharma sufficient for the development and welfare of humanity? Which do you value more—varnadharma or duty of labour?

ANSWER: The purport of this question is that varnadharma and duty of labour are incompatible obligations. In fact they are not. Both are concurrent and imperative. Varnadharma pertains to the society and duty of labour pertains to the individual. The sages divided society into four sections for its welfare and thereby attempted to root out rivalry which is fatal to society. Therefore they made one varna responsible for the growth of knowledge in society, the second responsible for the protection of life and property in society, the third for trade in society, and the fourth for service to society. All the four functions were and are equally essential; therefore there was no reason to consider one high and the other low. Adverting to the equilibrium of scales Maharshi Vyas has indeed said that each individual by performing the duties of his own varna acquires fitness for salvation; whereas mutual rivalry and distinctions of high and low bring about ruin. Varnadharma does not in the least imply that any Varian is exempt from manual labour. The duty of labour is incumbent on every person belonging to every varna. The Brahmin also had to approach his guru with firewood in his hands, that is to say, he also had to go into the forest and glean firewood and tend cattle. This work he did for himself and his family, not for society. Only children and cripples were exempt from such manual work.

The doctrine of manual labour for a living which Tolstoy has expounded is a corollary of the duty of labour. Tolstoy felt that if everyone had to do manual work then it means that man must earn his bread by manual labour, never by mental work. In varnadharma the work of each varna was for the welfare of society. Livelihood was not the motive. Gain or no gain, the Kshatriya had to defend the people. The Brahmin had to impart knowledge whether he received alms or not. The Vaishya had to farm and tend cattle whether he earned money or not. But Tolstoy's doctrine that every person must do manual work for a living is perfectly true. We come across distressing disparities in the world today because this universal duty has been neglected or forgotten. Disparities will always be there, but like the several leaves of a tree they will look beautiful and pleasant. In the pure varnadharma disparity is no doubt there, and when it was in its pure form, it was pleasing, peaceful and pretty. But when several people use their talents for amassing wealth, distressing disparities are created. Just as, if a teacher (Brahmin), a soldier (Kshatriya), a businessman (Vaishya) and a carpenter (Shudra) follow their professions for amassing wealth, not for the welfare of society, then varnadharma is destroyed. Because in matters of duty there can be no room for amassing. In society there is need for lawyers doctors, soldiers and others. But when they work for selfish ends they no longer are protectors of society but become parasites on society.

The *Gita* III, 10 has expounded a great principle where it says:

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:."

Now we can clearly comprehend the etymology of the word *yajna*. The meaning of *yajna* is manual work and this is the first and foremost act of worship of God. He has given us bodies. Without food the body cannot exist and without labour food cannot be produced. That is why manual labour has become a universal duty. This duty of labour is not Tolstoy's alone but of the whole world. Ignorance of this great *yajna* has led to the worship of mammon in the world and intelligent people have used their talents to exploit others. It is clear that God is not covetous. Being all powerful, He creates every day only as much food as is sufficient for every human being or living creature. Not knowing this great truth, several people indulge in all kinds of luxuries and thereby starve many others. If they could give up this greed and work for their living, and eat enough to meet their needs, the poverty that we find today will vanish. I hope the

interrogator would now see that varnadharma and duty of labour are concurrent, complementary and essential.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-2-1930

333. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

[Before *February, 14, 1930*]¹

MY DEAR REGINALD,

If you need my apology for my silence so long, you have it. But my correspondence is lying neglected. I simply cannot cope with it. I have been thinking of your letter for these last three days.

The real thing is likely to begin not before March.

I know you are doing your work in a thorough manner. Come when you can. I wish you will be here on 14th February. But I don't want you to interrupt your experiments. The Ashram is your home to come to whenever you like.

No more today.

Yours,

From a copy: Kusumbehn Desai's Diary. S.N. 32579/64

334. LETTER TO KASTURBEHN BHATT

February 14, 1930

CHI. KASTURBEHN BHATT,²

Where are you [now]? You may write to me. Have you now mastered all the things? Do you meet Harihar? Where are Taranath, Tansukh?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9249

¹ Inferred from the contents

² Wife of Harihar P. Bhatt, an inmate of the Ashram

335. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

February 15, 1930

BHAI NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI,

I have your letter. I understand your feelings. Doctor will not desire to do anything which may make you unhappy. I will write to him.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

SJT. NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2581

336. LETTER TO MANILAL KOTHARI

February 15, 1930

BHAISHRI MANILAL,

I have your letter. I am writing this at 3-30 in the morning, so please do not expect me to write more.

There is no need to pass any resolution about satyagraha just now. All the things that I expect from people will be clearly explained in *Young India*¹ and *Navajivan*. I will write to you if I have to add anything. What I expect from you is that you should make your body strong.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

337. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 15, 1930

CHI. DEVDAS,

I have your long letter. The session of the W. C. is going on. It has been decided that I should start civil disobedience. That of course does not mean that I alone should start it; it means that all those to whom ahimsa is a creed in the striving for swaraj should resort to it. I

¹Vide "Some Rules of Satyagraha", 23-2-1930 and "When I am Arrested", 27-2-1930.

am inclined to start with you. Are you ready? Are you willing? If you are, obtain Zakir Saheb's permission and reach here soon. Whatever I decide to do I wish to do at once.

There is no time to reply to the rest of your letter, nor is it necessary to do so.

I am writing this before the 4 o'clock morning prayer. Keshu arrived yesterday. Mathuradas is here. A nice group has gathered here. Manilal and Ramdas also have come.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

338. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

February 15, 1930

Gandhiji addressing the inmates referred to the names he had received and said that it was not necessary that one and all should give their names. If they felt the slightest doubt about their ability to join the campaign they might withdraw their names even then.

He continued:

People expect you to join in the fight with great preparedness on your part. The whole world is looking at the Ashram with great expectancy. It may be that you might not be ready when you joined the Ashram, but the discipline and atmosphere must have brought that much confidence in you and must have helped you in preparing yourselves for the ensuing fight.

Gandhiji apprised them of the sufferings and hardships they would have to undergo during the fight. They might be sent to jail, and they might be beaten, but that was not all. They might have to go without food or might be driven out of the Ashram or a worse fate might befall them. But under all circumstances they must be prepared to remain non-violent in thought and in action and must never lose their temper or get angry. They must try to have a thorough change of heart. The time might come when even God might be angry with them, but they must not lose patience.

He continued:

Suffering is writ large on the face of every devotee. Even Rama and Sita had to suffer. God tests you on the touchstone and if it is found that you have withstood that test, then nothing remains to be desired. In the Ashram itself, you have enjoyed yourselves to a certain extent, but enjoyment is worth while only when you show your mettle and sacrifice yourself when the time comes. You must now convert the

Ashram into a lamp of sacrifice. Those who feel themselves weak or unable to join the fight must quit the Ashram. Once you have plunged yourselves in battle, if you retreat, it will be a blemish on you and blot on the whole fair name of India.

The Hindu, 17-2-1930

339. *LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI.*¹

SABARMATI,
February 16, 1930

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

It is now 3.30 a.m. I have been struggling to find time to give you a few lines. Your letter I appreciate. It was first seen by Motilalji and Jawaharlal and then read to the Working Committee. There were various comments. No one, however, thought that there was anything in it to warrant a departure from the Lahore programme. I agree that the Hindu-Muslim problem is the problem of problems. But I feel that it has to be approached in a different manner from the one we have hitherto adopted—not [as] at present by adjustment of the political power but by one or the other acting on the square under all circumstances. Give and take is possible only when there is some trust between the respective communities and their representatives. If the Congress can command such trust the matter can proceed further, not before. The Congress can do so only by becoming fearless and strictly just. But meanwhile the third party—the evil British power—has got to be sterilized. There will be no charter of independence before the Hindus and the Muslims have met but there can be virtual independence before the charter is received. Hence must civil disobedience be forged from day to day by those who believe that there is no escape from non-violence and that violence will never bring freedom to India.

I do not know if I have made myself clear. Anyway my own personal line is cast. I fancy that I see my way clear now. There will be no turning back. I can live if God wills and if He finds work for me. I have no interest in living if there is no work for me in the direction for which. He appears to me to have called me. If all this be hallucination I must perish in the flames of my own lighting. I want you then to

¹ This should be read after “Speech at Prayer Meeting, Sabarmati Ashram”. For the addressee’s letter dated February 13, 1930 to which this was a reply, *vide* Appendix “Letter from Dr. M. A. Ansari”, 13-2-1930.

cheer up. It does not matter at all if we do not see eye to eye. It is well with us if our hearts are pure, as I know they are.

Yours ever,
M. K. GANDHI

[PS.]

I had a heart to heart chat with Shuaib. He has promised to meet you. I would love to see as he does. You may share this with him or any friend you like.

M. K. G.

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

340. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

February 18, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I have your two letters. I miss you these days. But I have deliberately refrained from sending for you. I feared that it might arouse envy. What more can I talk to you about ahimsa? I have always discussed only ahimsa. However, if you feel the necessity of talking over anything, do not hesitate to come.

I believe they will arrest me in the middle of March. I expect my letter to the Viceroy will be despatched on the 2nd.

I had some talk with Antarjami. It was not very satisfying. I am awaiting the arrival of Shankerlal [Banker]. It will be good if the Utkal work is organized well.

I am awaiting Hemprabha Devi's letter. How is she keeping?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Do tell me if you find any difficulty with my handwriting or language.¹

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1615

¹ In the G. N. series this is the first letter in Hindi to the addressee.

341. LETTER TO AMBALAL SARABHAI

YERAVDA MANDIR,
February 18, 1930

DEAR BROTHER,

I have received your gift of books. I understand your affection and I am thinking of you all the time.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 11125. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

342. LETTER TO UDIT MISHRA

February 19, 1930

BHAI UDIT MISHRAJI,

Only today have I been able to read your letter to the end.

Persons with views or faith contrary to ours should never be employed to teach our children. And in no case should half the study time be devoted only to English. Knowledge of Hindi is not essential for an English teacher.

If the children [distrust]¹ any teacher, he ought to be removed.

When a junior teacher gives wrong lessons to the children, it is the duty of the Head Master to check him. It is also his duty to warn the guardians of the children if he notices any impropriety in the conduct of the junior.

The consideration of anyone's pleasure or displeasure has no place in following the right path.

The children should be taught to reject courteously gifts of foreign articles by whomsoever made.

Sacrificial spinning on the *takli* should never be given up; I am arranging to send *taklis*.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

¹ The source is illegible.

[PS.]

It would be right to inform Ghanshyamdasji of all this. This letter too may be shown to him.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 4219

343. 'NEVER FAILETH'

अहिंसाप्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः¹

'HATE DISSOLVES IN THE PRESENCE OF LOVE.'

In the opinion of the Working Committee civil disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence for the purpose of achieving *purna swaraj* as an article of faith, and as the Congress contains in its organization not merely such men and women, but also those who accept non-violence as a policy essential in the existing circumstances in the country, the Working Committee welcomes the proposal of Mahatma Gandhi and authorizes him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith to the extent above indicated to start civil disobedience as and when they desire and in the manner and to the extent they decide. The Working Committee trusts that when the campaign is actually in action all Congressmen and others will extend to the civil resisters their full co-operation in every way possible, and that they will observe and preserve complete non-violence notwithstanding any provocation that may be offered. The Working Committee further hopes that in the event of a mass movement taking place, all those who are rendering voluntary co-operation to the Government, such as lawyers, and those who are receiving so-called benefits from it, such as students, will withdraw their co-operation or renounce benefits as the case may be, and throw themselves into the final struggle for freedom. The Working Committee trusts, that in the event of the leaders being arrested and imprisoned, those who are left behind and have the spirit of sacrifice and service in them, will carry on the Congress organization, and guide the movement to the best of their ability.

This resolution² of the Working Committee gives me my charter of freedom if it also binds me in the tightest chains. It is the formula of which I have been in search these long and weary months. For me the resolution is not so much a political as a religious effort. My difficulty was fundamental. I saw that I could not work out ahimsa through an organization holding a variety of mentalities. It could not be subject to the decision of majorities. To be consistent with itself, it might have to be inconsistent with the whole world.

A person who has a choice before him is ever exposed to temptation. The instinct of those therefore, with whom non-violence is

¹ Patanjali's *Yogadarshanam*, ii. 35

² Adopted on February 15, 1930 at Ahmedabad

a policy, when tempted by violence, may fail them. That of those who have no remedy but non-violence open to them can never fail them if they have non-violence in them in reality. Hence the necessity for freedom from Congress control. And I was thankful that the members of the Working Committee saw the utter correctness of my position.

It is to be hoped, that no one will misunderstand the position. Here there is no question of superiority. Those, who hold non-violence for the attainment of freedom as an article of faith, are in no way superior to those with whom it is a mere policy, even as there is no such inequality between brown men and yellow men. Each acts according to his lights.

The responsibility devolving on me is the greatest I have ever undertaken. It was irresistible. But all will be well, if it is ahimsa that is guiding me. For the seer who knew what he gave to the world has said, 'Hate dissolves in the presence of ahimsa.' The true rendering of the word in English is love or charity. And does not the Bible say:

Love worketh no ill to his neighbour,
Believeth all things,
Hopeth all things,
Never faileth.¹

Civil disobedience is sometimes a peremptory demand of love. Dangerous it undoubtedly is, but no more than the encircling violence. Civil disobedience is the only non-violent escape from its soul-destroying heat. The danger lies only in one direction, in the outbreak of violence side by side with civil disobedience. If it does I know now the way; not the retracing as at the time of Bardoli. The struggle, in freedom's battle, of non-violence against violence, no matter from what quarter the latter comes, must continue till a single representative is left alive. More no man can do, to do less would be tantamount to want of faith.

Young India, 20-2-1930

344. SOME QUESTIONS

With reference to the imminent civil disobedience some pertinent questions have been put by friends as well as critics. These need answering.

Q. Surely you are not so impatient as to start your campaign without letting the authorities know your plans and giving them an opportunity of meeting you and arresting you?

A. Those who know my past should know that I hold it to be

¹ *I Corinthians*, xiii

contrary to satyagraha to do anything secretly or impatiently. My plans will be certainly sent to the Viceroy before I take any definite step. A satyagrahi has no secrets to keep from his opponent or so-called enemy.

Q. Did you not say even at Lahore that the country was not prepared for civil disobedience, especially no-tax campaign on a mass scale?

A. I am not even now sure that it is. But it has become clear to me as never before that the unpreparedness in the sense that a non-violent atmosphere is wanting will, as time goes by, very likely increase as it has been increasing all these years. Young men are impatient. I know definitely many stayed their violent designs because in 1921 the Congress had decided to offer civil disobedience. That school has been more active than before because of my repeated declarations that the country was not prepared for civil disobedience. I feel then that if non-violence is an active force, as I know it is, it should work even in the face of the most violent atmosphere. One difficulty in the way was that the Congress claiming to represent the whole nation could not very well offer civil disobedience and disown responsibility for violence especially by Congressmen. I have procured discharge from that limitation by taking over the responsibility for launching on civil disobedience. I represent no one but myself and at the most those whom I may enroll for the campaign. And I propose at present to confine myself only to those who are amenable to the Ashram discipline and have actually undergone it for some time. It is true that I may not shirk responsibility indirectly for any violence that may break out on the part of the nation and in the course of the campaign. But such responsibility will always be there and can be only a degree more than the responsibility I share with the British rulers in their sins against the nation in so far as I give my co-operation however reluctantly and ever so slightly. For instance I give my co-operation by paying taxes direct or indirect. The very salt I eat compels my voluntary co-operation. Moreover it has dawned on me never so plainly as now that if my non-violence has suffered the greatest incarnation of violence which the British imperialistic rule is, it must suffer the crude and ineffective violence of the impatient patriots who know not that by their ineffectiveness they are but helping that imperialistic rule and enabling it to consolidate the very thing they seek to destroy. I see now as clearly as daylight that my non-violence working as it has done against the British misrule has shaken it somewhat. Even so will it shake the counter-violence of the patriot if taking courage in both my hands I set my non-violence actively in motion, i.e., civil disobedience. I reduce the risk of the outbreak of

counter-violence to a minimum by taking sole charge of the campaign. After all is said and done, however, I feel the truth of the description given to my proposal by *The Times of India*. It is indeed 'the last throw of a gambler'. I have been a 'gambler' all my life. In my passion for finding the truth and in relentlessly following out my faith in non-violence, I have counted no stake too great. In doing so I have erred, if at all, in the company of the most distinguished scientist of any age and any clime.

Q. But what about your much vaunted faith in Hindu-Muslim unity? Of what value will even independence be without that unity?

A. My faith in that unity is as bright as ever. I do not want independence at the cost even of the weakest minority, let alone the powerful Mussalman and the no less powerful Sikh. The Lahore Congress resolution on unity¹ finally sums up all its previous effort in that behalf. The Congress rules out all solution proposed on a communal basis. But if it is ever compelled to consider such a solution it will consider only that which will give (not merely justice) but satisfaction to all the parties concerned. To be true to its word therefore, the Congress cannot accept any scheme of independence that does not give satisfaction, so far as communal rights are concerned, to the parties concerned. The campaign that is about to be launched is calculated to generate power for the whole nation to be independent. But it will not be in fact till all the parties have combined. To postpone civil disobedience which has nothing to do with communalism till the latter is set at rest will be to move in a vicious circle and defeat the very end that all must have in view. What I am hoping is that the Congress being free from the communal incubus will tend it, if it remains true to the nation as a whole, to become the strongest centre party jealously guarding the rights of the weakest members. Such a Congress will have only servants of the nation, not office-seekers. Till independence is achieved or till unity is reached it will have nothing to do with any office or favours from the Government of the day in competition with the minorities. Happily the Congress has now nothing to do with the legislatures which have perhaps more than anything else increased communal bitterness. It is no doubt unfortunate that at the present moment the Congress contains largely only the Hindu element. But if the Congress Hindus cease to think communally and we take no advantage that cannot be shared to the full with all the other communities, it will presently disarm all suspicion and will attract to itself the noblest among

¹ Vide 1st footnote to "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.-III", 1-1-1930.

Mussalmans, Sikhs, Parsis, Christians, Jews and all those who are of India. But whether the Congress ever approaches this ideal or not, my course is, as it always has been, perfectly clear. This unity among all is no new love with me. I have treasured it, acted up to it from my youth upward. When I went to London as a mere lad in 1889 I believed in it as passionately as I do now. When I went to South Africa in 1893 I worked it out in every detail of my life. Love so deep seated as it is in me will not be sacrificed even for the realm of the whole world. Indeed this campaign should take the attention of the nation off the communal problem and to rivet it on the things that are common to all Indians, no matter to what religion or sect they may belong.

Q. Then you will raise, if you can, a force ultimately hostile to the British ?

A. Never. My love for non-violence is superior to every other thing mundane or supramundane. It is equalled only by my love for Truth which is to me synonymous with non-violence through which and which alone I can see and reach Truth. My scheme of life, if it draws no distinction between different religionists in India, it also draws none between different races. For me "man is a man for a' that"¹. I embark upon the campaign as much out of my love for the Englishman as for the Indian. By self-suffering I seek to convert him, never to destroy him. Q. But may not all this be your hallucination that can never come to pass in this matter of fact world of ours?

Q. But may not at all this be your hallucination that can never come to pass in this matter of fact world of ours?

A. It may well be that. It is not a charge wholly unfamiliar to me. My hallucinations in the past have served me well. This last is not expected to fail me. If it does, it will but harm me and those who may come or put themselves under its influence. If my hallucination is potent to the authorities, my body is always at their disposal. If owing to my threatened action any Englishman's life is put in greater danger than it is now, the arm of English authority is long enough and strong enough to overtake any outbreak that may occur between Kashmir and Cape Comorin or Karachi and Dibrugarh. Lastly no campaign need take place, if all the politicians and editors instead of addressing themselves to me will address themselves to the authorities and ask them to undo the continuing wrongs some of which I have inadequately described in these pages.

Young India, 20-2-1930

¹ Robert Burns

345. 'BUCCAANEERING COMMISSION'¹

As the public have a short memory, I reproduce below the two Congress resolutions which have been defended by Professor Coomarappa and which have been so misrepresented here and abroad:

GAYA CONGRESS RESOLUTION (1922)

Whereas by reason of unjustifiable military expenditure and other extravagance, the Government has brought the national indebtedness to a limit beyond recovery, and whereas the Government still pursues the same policy of extravagance under cover of the authority of the so-called representative assemblies constituted without the suffrage of a majority or any substantial fraction of the voters and despite their declared repudiation of the authority of such assemblies to represent the people:

And whereas if the Government is permitted to continue this policy, it will become impossible for the people of India ever to carry on their own affairs with due regard to the honour and happiness of the people, and it has therefore become necessary to stop the career of irresponsibility:

This Congress hereby repudiates the authority of the legislatures that have been or may be formed by the Government in spite of the national boycott of the said institutions in future to raise loans or to incur any liabilities on behalf of the nation, and notifies to the world that on the attainment of swarajya the people of India, though holding themselves liable for all debts and liabilities rightly or wrongly incurred hitherto by the Government, will not hold themselves bound to repay any loans or discharge any liabilities incurred on and after this date on the authority or sanction of the so-called legislatures brought into existence in spite of the national boycott.

LAHORE CONGRESS RESOLUTION² (1929)

The Gaya resolution is surely innocuous and even charitable at the expense of posterity, in that it makes the people liable for the then existing debts whether 'rightly or wrongly incurred'. The Lahore resolution undoes the mistake, and adopts the honourable and usual method of submitting all accounts, past, present and future when the time comes, to the scrutiny of an impartial tribunal. What happens when an institution or a business passes from one steward to another?

¹ In this article to which Gandhiji appended his comments, J. C. Coomarappa had explained how the people of India had been burdened with debts by the British Government to the tune of over £200 million—all by unjust transactions—and had invited the readers' attention to the resolution on the subject passed at the Gaya and Lahore Congresses.

² Not reproduced here.

Does not the outgoing steward render accounts to the incoming one? Are not those accounts subject to scrutiny? The future national Government will betray its trust at the very threshold of its career, if it fails to perform the obvious duty of submitting to the strictest scrutiny all the obligations it may take over. If Great Britain and India are then solvent, no investor need fear the loss of a penny or a pice. For whatever India takes over, she will have to pay. Whatever cannot be charged justly against her has to be taken over as a matter of course by Great Britain. It is only the present helpless voiceless India that is made to pay against her will what cannot be justly charged against her. When the time comes for reckoning, it will be the sacred duty owing to India's millions to repudiate every transaction proved to be unjust. But that would mean merely an inevitable and just transference about which the investor, the scripholder and the like need not be concerned.

Young India, 20-2-1930

346. NOTES

'NO SURRENDER'

Here are the choicest bits from Northcliffe House just received:

... Politicians must for ever drop their gibberish about Dominion Home Rule for the Eastern Empire. Those of them who persist in toying with so fatal a policy must be remorselessly driven from public life.

The retention of India is more important to the welfare of Great Britain than tariffs or any other political question. That country may fairly be described as the very keystone of the Empire. Its trade is vital to our people. The total loss of the Indian market would mean bankruptcy for Lancashire and misery for her industrial workers. In the last year for which figures are available British exports to India were £; 83,900,000 in value (one-ninth of our total exports), and there is no other country or territory, British or foreign, which takes anything like that amount of British goods. This trade it is the deliberate purpose of the revolutionaries to destroy if they get the chance.

British investments in India reach the enormous figure of £1,000,000,000, according to evidence given before the Simon Commission. Again, it is the declared intention of the revolutionaries to repudiate the Indian debt and to confiscate the plantations and factories which British capital has created on Indian soil. *From the loss of such a sum Great Britain could never recover.*

The policy of surrender in India has got to stop. . . . There are two courses, and only two. The first is to get out and hand over the country to the Princes, who would pretty quickly settle the Hindu lawyers of the All-India Congress. The second is to stay in India and govern. That second course is the one which this country will take.

The title is the *Daily Mail*'s as also the italics and different types. The writing is as outspoken as it is true notwithstanding Mr. Benn's belittling of it. But 'no surrender' is a game at which either party may play. If the millions of India play 'no surrender' their non-violence will be more than a match for the British 'no surrender' in spite of the combined aid of the military, the naval and the air forces which it can summon. It is the material benefits which England derives from the connection that matter to the British public. It is the extinction of those benefits that matters most to the Indian masses who can no longer bear the crushing burden. For India considers many of them ill-gotten. Let this double no surrender stagger humanity. British bullying must stop at all cost.

NO CONVERSION PERMISSIBLE

The English Press cuttings contain among many delightful items the news that Miss Slade known in the Ashram as Mirabai has embraced Hinduism.¹ I may say that she has not. I hope that she is a better Christian than when four years ago she came to the Ashram. She is not a girl of tender age. She is past thirty and has travelled all alone in Egypt, Persia and Europe befriending trees and animals. I have had the privilege of having under me Mussalman, Parsi and Christian minors. Never was Hinduism put before them for their acceptance. They were encouraged and induced to respect and read their own scriptures. It is with pleasure that I can recall instances of men and women, boys and girls having been induced to know and love their faiths better than they did before if they were also encouraged to study the other faiths with sympathy and respect. We have in the Ashram today several faiths represented. NO proselytizing is practised or permitted. We recognize that all these faiths are true and divinely inspired, and all have suffered through the necessarily imperfect handling of imperfect men. Miss Slade bears not a Hindu name but an Indian name. And this was done at her instance and for convenience. We have more such instances. Richard Gregg who is not suspected of having given up Christianity is to us Govindji. An old Christian sister, Miss Ada West now in Louth, became Devibehn to us in Phoenix.

Young India, 20-2-1930

¹ This was observed in the introductory remarks to the "Interview to *The Daily Express*," 22-1-1930.

347. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR-III

Q. It is of course good to find the virtues of all the four varnas in any one individual but can the majority of human beings acquire them all and is it proper to place this ideal before society?

A. Many virtues and functions are common to all varnas and ought to be so; but it is neither necessary nor possible for everyone to have all the virtues of all the varnas.

Q. If Tolstoy's duty of labour is universally accepted will it not be difficult for poets like Kabir and Rabindra to live in this world? And would this not be a misfortune for the world?

A. Acceptance of the duty of labour is not a denial of Kabir and Rabindranath; on the other hand it is capable of making the poetry of both more forceful and radiant. Manual labour does not weaken the mental faculty; on the contrary it nourishes it. The difference merely is that the votary of manual labour will never earn a living by only writing poetry nor will he give up manual labour altogether. Kabir was of course an advocate of manual labour. He never earned a penny by composing religious songs and hymns. He earned his living as a weaver of cloth. Propagation of religion and morality had become his nature or hobby. Rabindranath is a great poet of this age because he does not earn his living by writing poetry. Whatever he earns by writing poetry is all donated to his institution. He lives by the income from his estates. I do not know how far he believes in the duty of labour; this I do know that he certainly does not despise it. We learn from history that ancient poets or sages had accepted the duty of labour even if it might have been implicitly. As a result their benedictions are with us even today.

Q. According to the doctrine of the duty of labour, Jesus, Buddha and Tolstoy himself are blameworthy. Tolstoy's wife herself has said that beyond writing books he could do nothing else. He might have learnt carpentry and some other manual work only to become a laughing-stock; but this does not satisfy Tolstoy's concept of the duty of labour. Is it not therefore necessary to examine it very carefully?

A. This view takes no note of history. Jesus was a carpenter. He never used his intellect to earn his livelihood. We do not know how much manual work Buddha did before he attained wisdom. Yes, we know this much, that he did not propagate religion for securing his livelihood. He lived on charity. That could not militate against the duty of labour. A roving ascetic has to do a lot of manual work. Now, to come to Tolstoy, what his wife has said is true but it is not the whole truth. After the change in his outlook Tolstoy never took for himself the income from his books. Although he had property worth millions, he lived like a guest in his own house. After the attainment of wisdom,

he worked eight hours a day and earned his wages. Sometimes he worked in the field and sometimes he made shoes at home. Although he did not earn much by doing such work, still he earned enough to feed himself. Tolstoy strove hard to practise what he preached. This was characteristic of him. The sum and substance of all this discussion is that the duty which the ancients observed themselves and which the majority in the world discharges even today has been presented to the world in an explicit manner by him. In fact this doctrine was not Tolstoy's original idea; it was thought of by a great Russian writer by name Bondoref. Tolstoy endorsed it and proclaimed it to the world.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 20-2-1930

348. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

[February 20, 1930]¹

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL,

I have your letter. I am glad that your worry is over. Observe as much simplicity as possible.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

JETPUR, KATHIAWAR

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2580

349. LETTER TO ANAND T. HINGORANI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM,

SABARMATI,

February 22, 1930

MY DEAR ANAND,

I was delighted to receive your letter. I hope that your firmness will last and will increase day after day. Take no hasty step and do not try to coax your wife² to come. If she comes she must do so of her own absolutely free will. You know too that she will have to live

¹ From the postmark

² Vidya

separately from you.¹ Let her also know that the impending struggle may upset all arrangements and may result in her having to go back soon.

I hope you are keeping as well in body as you seem to be in mind.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

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

350. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

February 22, 1930

CHI. DEVDAS,

You will have received my reply to your wire. Now I am awaiting your letter. A letter to the Viceroy will go from here on the 2nd.² You will see everything if you are here at the time. It will not be surprising at all if they arrest me any day after the 4th. Let those who wish to join you in the march, have patience for the present. My desire, if I myself lead the march, is to keep you with me. Alternatively, I may send you in the first batch and try to follow after all of you have been arrested. They are sure to arrest me to prevent all this. In that case you should court arrest. And after that most of the Ashram inmates should get themselves arrested. I should like you to be here at least to enable me to give you a complete picture of this plan. Manilal also will be here by about the 27th. Motilal and Jawaharlal are coming.

You may now do what you think best.³

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers, Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

¹ *Vide* also "Letter to Anand T. Hingorani", 14-11-1929.

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

³ Someone adds in a post-script: "After the above was written Bapu received your letter. He wants me to write that what he has written above is still the best plan."

351. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I got your letter. Keep me informed about the effect of the injections. I had told Narandas about your budget for the spinning-wheel. I will note down your name. In the satyagraha movement, physical illness is no impediment. Even though Kishorelal is bed-ridden, he goes on sending his own and Gomatibehn's names. And I have also entered them. This of course does not mean that all are to be sent to jail. But it does mean that they will take up whatever duties relating to the struggle are assigned to them by me or by those who remain behind after I am arrested. Devidutt should not be encouraged, but he should not be discouraged either. His services too will be used when the time comes. He should be told that for that he should daily make progress in self-purification.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

352. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

CHI. KISHORELAL,

All the three types of people mentioned by you can join this struggle. But discussing these distinctions in *Navajivan* at present is likely to confuse people's minds. I think everyone has understood the broad meaning of the Working Committee's resolution. Almost all men and women here have sent in their names. All of them cannot understand the distinctions suggested by you. But I think they all have faith in non-violence and understand that no Englishman should be harmed or permitted to be harmed in any way. They believe in non-violence not as an expedient but as a creed. Who can say how far their ahimsa will endure when the testing time comes? What can we say even about you and me? Peter who was as hard as stone turned out to be soft as wax at the moment of crisis. And those two women who were only guided by their faith remained as firm as rock. If you have any questions pertaining to the articles I am writing these days, do place them before me. Read the rules about satyagraha carefully and

let me know if you notice any omission in them.

And now for the monthly periods. A couple of women who had not during their periods joined others for meals for fear of criticism followed Mirabehn's example and joined. That gave rise to some discussion. The matter had been settled earlier. It had been agreed that any woman who, like Mirabehn, wished to join others for meals during her periods could do so. She must observe three rules: she should not enter the kitchen for the four days of menses; even from outside the kitchen she should not look at the food being cooked or at the water used for cooking; she should not touch the cooked food. This decision was arrived at after correspondence with Nathji through Panditji. But a couple of women were in panic after a woman in menses had joined at the meals. Therefore, benefiting from Nathji's presence the conditions necessary for preserving the sacredness of *mantras* have been ascertained and clarified. We have among the inmates some persons who practise *mantras* and such persons also constantly visit the Ashram. I believe that it is the duty of the Ashram for the sake of such persons to observe as fully as possible the conditions for preserving the sacredness of the *mantras*. If I can understand the purpose of the conditions better, I shall help in their still stricter observance. I had asked Ramniklal to get one or two points clarified by Nathji. But he does not seem to have been able to do so. Is milk polluted by the look or touch of a woman in menses? From the papers I have with me it seems that it is polluted by touch. In Nath's opinion, even if a person practising *mantras* does not know that a particular sample of milk has been touched by a woman in menses, the fact of the touch itself has the power of nullifying the effect of the *mantra*, to some extent at least. This means that a person practising *mantras* should practically live without milk, because whether in the Ashram or outside, particularly outside, women in menses do happen to look at milk. We can think of hundreds of ways of milk being polluted by look. Hence the question of milk needs to be carefully considered. I understand that uncooked grain is not polluted either by touch or look. Is it not the same with regard to ghee and oil? At what stage can look or touch affect water? For I understand that the water meant for cooking is affected both by look and touch. Nath says from experience that cooked food is affected both by the look and the touch of the woman in menses. But he is not able to explain the reason. Have you thought about the reason? If you have, send me your opinion on it and also on the other questions above after discussing them with Nathji or independently if you can.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Chhaganlal Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Sabarmati Sangrahalaya

353. LETTER TO TULSI MAHER

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 22, 1930

BHAI TULSI MAHER,

I received your letter.

You are carrying on your work quite well and I hope it will continue so. Do not be perturbed by the news of the struggle here. Your duty lies in sticking to your post.

These days smallpox is rampant here. We are being tested in this way too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6537

354. SOME RULES OF SATYAGRAHA¹

Satyagraha literally means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word satyagraha. Satyagraha, to be genuine, may be offered against parents, against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against fellow-citizens, even against the whole world.

Such a universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of ahimsa or love. In other words it is soul force.

Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister will joyfully suffer even unto death.

It follows, therefore, that a civil resister, whilst he will strain every nerve to compass the end of the existing rule, will do no intentional injury in thought, word or deed to the person of a single Englishman. This necessarily brief explanation of satyagraha will perhaps enable the reader to understand and appreciate the following rules:

AS AN INDIVIDUAL

1. A satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister will harbour no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.

¹ The Gujarati original of this appeared in *Navajivan*, 23-2-1930.

3. In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger.

4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by authorities.

5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.

6. Non-retaliation excludes swearing and cursing.

7. Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent, and therefore also not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of ahimsa.

8. A civil resister will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.

9. In the course of the struggle if anyone insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his life.

AS A PRISONER

10. As a prisoner, a civil resister will behave courteously towards prison officials, and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect; as for instance, whilst he will salaam officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations and refuse to shout 'Victory to Sarkar'¹ or the like. He will take cleanly cooked and cleanly served food, which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insultingly served or served in unclean vessels.

11. A civil resister will make no distinction between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself as superior to the rest, nor will he ask for any conveniences that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as may be required for his physical or spiritual well-being.

12. A civil resister may not fast for want of conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to one's self-respect.

AS A UNIT

13. A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.

¹ Government

14. He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free before joining to determine the fitness of the corps to satisfy him, but after he has joined it, it becomes a duty to submit to its discipline irksome or otherwise. If the sum total of the energy of the corps appears to a member to be improper or immoral, he has a right to sever his connection, but being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.

15. No civil resister is to expect maintenance for his dependents. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil resister entrusts his dependents to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds of thousands give themselves up to it, they are able to make no previous provision. How much more, then, should such be the case in satyagraha? It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

IN COMMUNAL FIGHTS

16. No civil resister will intentionally become a cause of communal quarrels.

17. In the event of any such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu he will be generous towards Mussalmans and others, and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save non-Hindus from a Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.

18. He will, to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.

19. If there is a procession of satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities.

Young India, 27-2-1930

355. TO CONTRIBUTORS AND CORRESPONDENTS

An article with the caption "Plight of Women"¹ was published on p. 125 of *Navajivan*, dated December 15, 1929. I was taken in by the correspondent having given names, addresses and other details. I took the writer to be entirely truthful. Now, from the facts supplied to me in this matter, I find that the letter was full of exaggeration and was

¹ *Vide* "Plight of Women", 15-12-1929.

libellous. The truth has been so twisted in the presentation that the chief actor in the incident comes out as cruelty incarnate. The information now reaching me puts the whole incident in a different light. However, I do not desire to go into the details of the case. My aim in writing this is to request correspondents to give facts only. Exaggeration does not help improvement in any way or anywhere. I advise the correspondent who wrote the original letter to apologize to the person whom he has slandered for the exaggeration he has made. If he still desires to adhere to his statement, he should write to me permitting me to send his letter to the persons concerned.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-2-1930

356. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

SABARMATI,
February 23, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I am quite clear that those who believe in and would fight for immediate independence cannot take part in conferences such as you mention.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9614

357. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

SABARMATI,
February 23, 1930

MY DEAR MURIEL,

Your letter is lying in front of me demanding an answer. On the eve of what promises to be a life and death struggle I think of all my English friends known and unknown. You are not the least among them.

My love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6561

358. LETTER TO KISHORELAL MASHRUWALA

Sunday [February 23, 1930]¹

CHI. KISHORELAL,

Although it did not occur to me when I spoke to Nath, the thought suddenly came to me while talking to Surendra that it would be better if you both did not come here right now. It seems so from all points of view. Surendra thinks that in the interest of the health of both of you, it might be better to come over. If that is so, I would wish you to come post-haste. I have been hesitating to call you only from considerations of your health, fearing that the water of this place may suit you even less. If you think that since sooner or later you have to face up to it, you might as well do so now? then you had better come over. I would wish you to be around on the 2nd when the letter to the Viceroy is to be despatched.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati: C. W. 10710. Courtesy: Gomatibehn Mashruwala

359. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

February 24, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I had not read the speech. I hardly get time to read.

You will see the forthcoming issue. It will contain much. The substance has already appeared in Gujarati *Navajivan*. Perhaps we shall get a few moments to discuss things more fully when we meet on 1st March. My letter to the Viceroy² will also clarify the issue.

I am glad there is nothing serious with Kamala. But why should she not now go to a hospital and have the necessary treatment?

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ From the reference to the letter to the Viceroy to be sent on the 2nd. The reference presumably is to the letter of March 2, 1930. The Sunday preceding was February 23, 1930.

² *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

360. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
February 25, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I am including your name in the list but how can I ask you to give up the responsibility which you have undertaken there and call you here?

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. JAISUKHLAL GANDHI
KHADI KARYALAYA
CHALALA (KATHIAWAR)

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: MMU/III/75

361. LETTER TO MITHUBEHN PETIT

February 26, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I was eagerly awaiting your letter. Come on the 1st. Jamnabehn, Perinbehn, Khurshedbehn Jawaharlal, etc., will also have arrived on that day.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MITHUBEHN PETIT
SWARAJ ASHRAM
SURAT

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2685

362. LETTER TO HARI-ICHCHHA DESAI

February 26, 1930

CHI. HARI-ICHCHHA,

I got your letter. May you live long and render much service. I would have been happy if you could have come. Janakibehn will come in a day or two.

I got Chandan's letter too.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7463

363. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

[February 26, 1930]¹

CHI. PRABHUDAS,

I have your postcard. You ought to complete the course of injections which you have commenced. If necessary, therefore, you should stay either in the Vidyapeeth or the Ashram for that purpose. I believe the Ashram air to be very bad these days. Small-pox is widespread. I should therefore like it if Manu too, stayed on there.

It is good that Brijkishan is quite well. Let him improve his health to the utmost.

Blessings from

BAPU

CHI. PRABHUDAS GANDHI

STRI UDYOGALAYA

VIJAPUR "VIA" KALOL

From the Gujarati original: S.N. 33046

364. WHEN I AM ARRESTED

It must be taken for granted that, when civil disobedience is started, my arrest is a certainty. It is, therefore, necessary to consider what should be done when the event takes place.

On the eve of my arrest in 1922² I had warned co-workers

¹ From the postmark

² *Vide* "Message to the Public", 9-3-1922 & "Message to the Country", 18-3-1924.

against any demonstration of any kind save that of mute, complete non-violence, and had insisted that constructive work which alone could organize the country for civil disobedience should be prosecuted with the utmost zeal. The first part of the instructions was, thanks be to God, literally and completely carried out —so completely that it has enabled an English noble contemptuously to say, ‘Not a dog barked.’ For me when I learnt in the jail that the country had remained absolutely non-violent, it was a demonstration that the preaching of non-violence had had its effect and that the Bardoli decision¹ was the wisest thing to do. It would be foolish to speculate what might have happened if ‘dogs’ had barked and violence had been let loose on my arrest. One thing, however, I can say, that in that event there would have been no independence resolution at Lahore, and no Gandhi with his confidence in the power of non-violence left to contemplate taking the boldest risks imaginable.

Let us, however, think of the immediate future. This time on my arrest there is to be no mute, passive non-violence, but non-violence of the activist type should be set in motion, so that not a single believer in non-violence as an article of faith for the purpose of achieving India’s goal should find himself free or alive at the end of the effort to submit any longer to the existing slavery. It would be, therefore, the duty of everyone to take up such civil disobedience or civil resistance as may be advised and conducted by my successor, or as might be taken up by the Congress. I must confess, that at the present moment, I have no all-India successor in view. But I have sufficient faith in the co-workers and in the mission itself to know that circumstances will give the successor. This peremptory condition must be patent to all that he must be an out and out believer in the efficacy of non-violence for the purpose intended. For without that living faith in it he will not be able at the crucial moment to discover a non-violent method.

It must be parenthetically understood that what is being said here in no way fetters the discretion and full authority of the Congress. The Congress will adopt only such things said here that may commend themselves to Congressmen in general. If the nature of these instructions is to be properly understood, the organic value of the charter of full liberty given to me by the Working Committee should be adequately appreciated. Non-violence, if it does not submit to any restrictions upon its liberty, subjects no one and no institution to any restriction whatsoever, save what may be self-imposed or voluntarily adopted. So long as the vast body of Congressmen continue to believe in non-violence as the only policy in the existing

¹ Of February 1922 to suspend the civil disobedience movement; *vide* “Working Committee’s Resolutions at Bardoli”, 12-2-1922.

circumstances and have confidence not only in the *bona fides* of my successor and those who claim to believe in non-violence as an article of faith to the extent indicated but also in the ability of the successor wisely to guide the movement, the Congress will give him and them its blessings and even give effect to these instructions and his.

So far as I am concerned, my intention is to start the movement only through the inmates of the Ashram and those who have submitted to its discipline and assimilated the spirit of its methods. Those, therefore, who will offer battle at the very commencement will be unknown to fame. Hitherto the Ashram has been deliberately kept in reserve in order that by a fairly long course of discipline it might acquire stability. I feel that if the Satyagraha Ashram is to deserve the great confidence that has been reposed in it and the affection lavished upon it by friends, the time has arrived for it to demonstrate the qualities implied in the word satyagraha. I feel that our self-imposed restraints have become subtle indulgences, and the prestige acquired has provided us with privileges and conveniences of which we may be utterly unworthy. These have been thankfully accepted in the hope that some day we would be able to give a good account of ourselves in terms of satyagraha. And if at the end of nearly 15 years of its existence, the Ashram cannot give such a demonstration, it and I should disappear, and it would be well for the nation, the Ashram and me.

When the beginning is well and truly made I expect the response from all over the country. It will be the duty then of everyone who wants to make the movement a success to keep it non-violent and under discipline. Everyone will be expected to stand at his post except when called by his chief. If there is spontaneous mass response, as I hope there will be, and if previous experience is any guide, it will largely be self-regulated. But everyone who accepts non-violence whether as an article of faith or policy would assist the mass movement. Mass movements have, all over the world, thrown up unexpected leaders. This should be no exception to the rule. Whilst, therefore, every effort imaginable and possible should be made to restrain the forces of violence, civil disobedience once begun this time cannot be stopped and must not be stopped so long as there is a single civil resister left free or alive. A votary of satyagraha should find himself in one of the following states:

1. In prison or in an analogous state; or
2. Engaged in civil disobedience; or
3. Under orders at the spinning-wheel, or at some constructive work advancing swaraj.

Young India, 27-2-1930

365. SALT AND CANCER

I gladly publish this letter¹. I have glanced at the literature. As an ardent food reformer I have lived without any salt for over six years. Even now I take very little salt internally. But even a food reformer like me has many other uses of salt. To cure a cold, a hot salt water nasal douche is effective. As a tooth powder, finely powdered salt is precious. The way to teach people moderation in salt is not to tax that otherwise most valuable commodity. And above all what is true of well-fed or overfed people, who can provide for themselves every variety of condiment and salt-charged foods that the earth can produce or the ingenuity of man can manufacture, may not be true of millions who are semi-starved and live on rice or stale unleavened cakes. Who can say with certainty that these do not need much more salt than they get? At any rate there are doctors who do say that India's millions need more salt than they eat, and that her cattle too need much more than the poor farmers can afford to give them.

Young India, 27-2-1930

366. SALT TAX

A paragraph appeared in the Press that I would advise non-payment of the salt tax to begin with. The manufacturer of the canard did not know, perhaps, that the salt tax was so ingeniously devised that it would not yield to easy non-payment. Nevertheless there was this truth in it, that I was contemplating some method of attacking this nefarious monopoly. The garbled report has however resulted in most valuable information having been supplied to me by known and unknown writers. Among the publications thus received is the monograph issued by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce on salt. It is a valuable publication giving an authentic history of the process of killing by wicked methods salt manufacture in Bengal and dumping down Liverpool salt on a soil which could produce good salt for only a little labour. This history of the evolution of the salt tax furnishes by itself complete condemnation of the British Government.

Next to air and water, salt is perhaps the greatest necessity of

¹ From Frederick T. Marwood, not reproduced here. The correspondent had enclosed literature proving causal connection between salt and cancer and had asserted that the salt tax was a blessing in disguise.

life. It is the only condiment of the poor. Cattle cannot live without salt. Salt is a necessary article in many manufactures. It is also a rich manure.

There is no article like salt outside water by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The tax constitutes therefore the most inhuman poll tax that ingenuity of man can devise. The wholesale price per maund of 82 lbs. is according to Government publications as low as 10 pies, and the tax, say, twenty annas, i.e., 240 pies. This means 2,400 per cent on sale price! What this means to the poor can hardly be imagined by us. Salt production like cotton growing has been centralized for the sake of sustaining the inhuman monopoly. The necessary consequence of the wilful destruction of the spinning-wheel was destruction of cottage cultivation of cotton. The necessary consequence of salt monopoly was the destruction, i.e., closing down of salt works in thousands of places where the poor people manufactured their own salt. A correspondent writes to me from Konkan, saying that if the people had freedom, they could pick up salt from the deposits made by the receding tides on the bountiful coast. But he sorrowfully adds that officers turn the salt over into the sea as fast as nature deposits it. He adds however, that those who can successfully evade the salt police do help themselves to this sea salt. Gujarat workers report the existence of many places where, but for the prohibition, people can get their salt as easily as they can dig out earth for many household purposes. Bengal free can today manufacture all the salt she can ever need. And yet she is forced to import all the salt she eats.

Here is what a retired salt officer writes without disclosing his name:

Under the law the manufacture of salt includes every process by which salt is separated from *brine* or earth or any other liquid or solid substance and also every process for the purification or refinement of salt.

Contraband salt means salt or salt earth which has not paid duty.

1. Manufacture, removal, or transport of salt without licence;
2. The excavation, collection, or removal of natural salt or salt earth;
3. And possession or sale of contraband salt are punishable with a fine up to Rs. 500 or imprisonment up to six months or both.

The whole western littoral of the Bombay Presidency from Cambay to Ratnagiri; the whole coast of Kathiawar and the southern coast of Sind is a huge natural salt-work, and natural salt and salt earth from which salt can be easily prepared is in every creek.

If a band of volunteers begin the work all along the coast, it would be impossible for the whole strength of the police and customs staff to prevent them from collecting natural salt and salt earth, turning them into salt in the

interior and retaining it. The people of the presidency or at least the men and women of the older generation firmly believe, that locally manufactured sea salt is healthier than Kharaghoda salt, and they would love to have it, while everyone would like to have cheap salt. The poor people on the coast will join to get salt from Government salt-works without paying duty would be stealing or robbery, an act of First Class Hinsa that would justify even shooting down of the offenders if they persisted in the act.

I have given the letter as it was received. When salt can be manufactured much more easily than it can be taken from salt depots, I am not likely to advise people to help themselves to the article from salt pans or storehouses. But I do not share the salt officer's characterization of such helping as first-class *hinsa*. Both the helping from pans and manufacturing contraband salt are statutory crimes heavily punishable. Why is the manufacturing without licence a virtue and taking salt from a manufacturing pan a vice ? If the impost is wrong, it is wrong whether in connection with manufactured salt or the crude article. If a robber steals my grain and cooks some of it, I am entitled to both the raw and the cooked grain. I may draw a distinction for the sake of avoiding inconvenience between in the collection of salt spontaneously in these days of unemployment. Trying manufactured and crude salt, and adopt the easier method of manufacturing salt. But that does not alter the legal position in the slightest degree. When therefore the time comes, civil resisters will have an ample opportunity of their ability to conduct their campaign regarding the tax in a most effective manner. The illegality is in a Government that steals the people's salt and makes them pay heavily for the stolen article. The people, when they become conscious of their power, will have every right to take possession of what belongs to them.

Young India, 27-2-1930

367. NOTES

THE NATIONAL FLAG

The more the National Flag is gaining in importance, the nicer become the questions that are being raised about its colours, size, the charkha symbol, etc. It should be remembered that the National Flag has become national only by convention and not by any Congress resolution. With the growing consciousness of oneness, Congressmen have begun to dislike the communal meaning that as inventor of the

design I gave to the colours on the Flag.¹ A correspondent some days ago sent me a cutting describing a new meaning a lady gave to the colours. So far as I recall her speech, red was suggestive of bravery, green of calmness and white of purity. I have no hesitation in accepting this meaning in the place of mine. When we have achieved heart unity, there is no doubt that we shall be ashamed of recalling things which had no use but to placate warring elements in the nation. When we are really united, we shall never need to remember our differences, we shall want to forget them as soon as we can. But we shall always need to cultivate and treasure the virtues of bravery, calmness and purity. This new meaning therefore should set at rest all differences about the colours. As for the spinning-wheel, I shall be sorry to find anybody objecting to the wheel which means energy, which binds the poor and the rich, and which ever reminds Congressmen that in anything that they may do, they dare not forget the masses.

SMOKING NUISANCE

A correspondent writes:²

In this case at any rate the authorities are not to blame. Unless the passengers affected complain the railway authorities can take no action. The passengers can do much to abate the nuisance which is very real. The smoker all the world over is perhaps the most inconsiderate of all the slaves of habit. He takes it for granted that everybody else smokes or ought to. He will part with many things before he will part with his pipe. He will spit anywhere and smoke in your very face and expect you to enjoy the smoky curl that mounts up in front of you. And it would be the height of insolence if you were to protest against the enjoyment thus thrust on you. Our proverbial docility enables the Indian smoker to outdo his foreign companions in indifference. And so the smoker in India appears to have acquired a prescriptive right to make of himself a nuisance. Who can deny that he is in a majority? For of the travelling public almost every other man one meets with is smoking tobacco in one form or other. The only remedy is for volunteers to come into being, who will courteously ask the offending smokers to desist from smoking, and then if need be, to report to the authorities. Of course the best course

¹ Vide "The National Flag", 13-4-1921; also "Speech at Flag-Hoisting Ceremony, Ahmedabad", 28-2-1929 & "The National Flag", 7-3-1929.

² The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had questioned why the railway authorities and passengers did not enforce the legal provision to penalize passengers smoking in trains.

is as elsewhere to set apart smoking compartments or perhaps to reserve compartments for non-smokers.

Young India, 27-2-1930

368. HISTORY OF SALT MANUFACTURE

The following¹ is abridged from the publication *Moral and Material Progress* 1910-11. Many curses have been handed down to us from time immemorial as salt monopoly is claimed by the publication to have done. Only the whole people were never in the grip of the salt tax curse in the pre-British days. It was reserved for the British Government to reduce the curse to a perfect formula covering every man, woman, child and beast.

Young India, 27-2-1930

369. RAISING FALSE HOPES

With the deeper penetration among the masses, there is danger of Congressmen making thoughtless promises and raising false hopes which may never be realized. As an illustration I have before me a Hindi circular issued by a Youth League which among twenty-five promises contains these:

Cow-slaughter will stop altogether.

Milk, ghee and curds being cheap, all will put on flesh and be strong.
Child mortality will decrease.

Grain will not be exported to foreign parts. Knavery will cease and all will be honest

Boys and girls will receive free instruction up to the age of 14.

Life will be clean and healthy.

Everyone will have arms for self-defence.

There will be no child widows.

Postage and railage will be reduced.

The promises are admirable, but extravagant and hardly likely to be fulfilled by the mere fact of India gaining independence. Many of the reforms hoped for will require tremendous social effort. Foreign domination is undoubtedly responsible for many evils, but we need to remember that many pre-existing evils were also a potent cause of that domination. Therefore the mere throwing off of the foreign yoke, whilst it is as essential as life breath, will never be the cure-all.

Take the cow-slaughter. This will not stop for the mere

¹ Not reproduced here

independence. It will come by the good grace of our Mussalman countrymen and still more by hard thinking and harder acting. It is much more an economic than a religious problem. If we knew and acted according to the science of cow keeping, cow breeding and some other things mentioned in these pages, the cow can be saved today. To mention her in an enumeration of the future hopes is to retard the process of her preservation.

I will run through the other items.

Cheap milk, ghee, curds will come from applied knowledge, never from independence.

Child mortality will not decrease except by banishing poverty and instructing the adult population in the art of rearing children.

Grain, if we produce more than we need, will certainly be exported as well for our benefit as that of mankind in general.

Knavery will cease only if we achieve our freedom by non-violent and truthful means, *not otherwise*.

I doubt if we shall ever be able to give free instruction to boys and girls up to anything like 14. But we might be able to take their labour as fees. This will happen if the nation is weaned from false notions of education.

Life will be as dirty as it is today unless we learn corporate sanitation.

I am certain that everyone will not have arms for self-defence, but there will be much freer issue than hitherto. Issue of arms will still be regulated but from wholly different motives from now.

There will be child widows in abundance, unless by the time we achieve freedom, blind orthodoxy and lust have given place to reasoned faith and self-restraint.

I am not sure that postage can be further reduced. Railage may be.

But I may be wrong and the Youth League in question may be right in its estimate of the capacity of independence to do things for us. The point is not who is right. The point to be made is that it is rash and imprudent to make hasty promises. It is more than enough to be able to say without fear of contradiction, that Independence means the removal of the greatest obstacle in the path of our economic, political, cultural and spiritual progress, that without the removal of that obstacle there is no progress, and that delay means national bankruptcy, suicide.

Young India, 27-2-1930

370. KHADDAR FRANCHISE

The clause in the Congress constitution requiring Congressmen to wear hand-spun and hand-woven garments on pain of being debarred from voting at meetings continues to cause trouble. A correspondent writes:

These Congress members, though they are clad top to toe in foreign and Indian mill-made garments, do not hesitate to say when questioned that to the best of their ability and knowledge they are dressed in khaddar garments. In the face of Pandit Motilalji's decision at Calcutta the chairmen at Congress Committee meetings feel obliged to accept such Statements though they are manifestly false. Honest men who when challenged admit that they are not dressed in khaddar are debarred. Can you not show a way out, or cannot the Working Committee provide a remedy?

The remedy that comes to me on the spur of the moment is that the chairmen at such meetings should firmly rule out of order those who are manifestly clad in any but khaddar garments. Pandit Motilalji's decision was given, I imagine, to obviate a difficulty. It establishes no precedent, and he will himself refuse to be bound by a decision which was neither serious nor considered. On the eve of the great struggle that we are about to enter upon, it behoves all Congressmen to carry out the Congress constitution honestly. Those who do not like the khaddar clause are free to agitate for its repeal but they are in honour-bound to give effect to it while it forms part of the constitution.

Another correspondent asks questions which present no difficulty. The following answers obviate the necessity of copying the questions:

1. No one at the time of becoming a four anna member is obliged to wear khaddar. The idea behind the wording of the clause was first to enlist everyone who would subscribe to the 1st article and pay 4 annas or the required quantity of self-spun yarn and then to induce him to wear khaddar.

2. Those who are entitled to vote at meetings must be habitual wearers of khaddar. It is not enough therefore to wear khaddar only for the purpose of attending Congress functions. But the practice has grown up of not making any further inquiry when a person attending any meeting is found to be wearing khaddar.

3. Those who are partly dressed in khaddar cannot be considered khaddar clad.

4. Mill-made cloth is *not* khaddar.

Young India, 27-2-1930

371. *THAT NOXIOUS PALM* ¹

This reminds me of what is now going on in Bengal. The water hyacinth beautiful to look at is a deadly plant floating on the great Bengal rivers. The local Government are trying to destroy it as otherwise it bids fair to destroy the crops that are watered by the rivers. I have known of stringent legislation requiring people on pain of being imprisoned to destroy noxious plants. The central point of the world crusade against opium is to destroy and prevent the cultivation of the poppy. It was not therefore surprising to find condemnation of this 'wild date palm' as it has been called in the extracts unearthed by Mahadev. It has no value apart from the fiery liquid it provides. The sooner the other owners destroy it to make room for life-giving crops, the better it will be for them and society.

Young India, 27-2-1930

372. *BORDERLAND OF INSOLVENCY*

The address of Sjt. Ghanshyamdas Birla as President of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, delivered recently at Delhi in the presence of the Viceroy, has justly attracted wide attention. I take the following seasonable paragraphs² from it our foreign liabilities.

Sjt. Birla as a financier can only deal with the arithmetic of the transactions and find how those liabilities just or unjust may be met. Reformers claim to go behind these liabilities and to know how and why they were created. We need not be squeamish about repudiation of liabilities only so called and imposed upon us involuntarily and often without our knowledge. Constitution making is a good pastime under healthy conditions. But it is deceptive and ruinous when the patient for whom a new constitution is prescribed is about to die. An impartial and unfettered examination of our financial position should therefore be a condition precedent to any scheme of constitution making.

Young India, 27-2-1930

¹ Mahadev Desai's article under this title giving extracts from settlement reports and other documents, is not reproduced here. It showed that toddy trees were injurious to cultivation and fit only to be destroyed.

² Not reproduced here. They analysed the extent and impact of British investments, home charges and charges for such services as transport, insurance, etc.

373. VARNADHARMA AND DUTY OF LABOUR-IV

Q. Tolstoy has written "Money and slavery are one and the same thing. Their object is the same and their outcome is also alike. . . . Money is a new and frightful image of slavery and like the ancient personal bondage, it degrades and depraves the slave as well as the master. That is not all. It is worse; because it destroys the human affection which subsisted between master and slave in the ancient form of personal slavery."

Do you support this view? Can money never become a harmless medium of exchange? If so, how? and if not, why not?

A. I am not aware that Tolstoy wrote what the questioner quotes as the former's statement. Slavery and money do not belong to the same class and therefore they cannot be compared. Slavery is a status and always abhorrent. Money is only a medium for one's dealings with the world. However powerful a medium it may be, it is just as likely to be beneficial as to be harmful. This same can be said of many other material things. Under every circumstance and in some form or other, the need for money will surely exist. Slavery never was and never could be necessary. We must understand the meaning of money here. When I barter grain for shoes, then, as the grain is the medium of exchange for shoes, it becomes money. But because barter by grain becomes difficult for a large number of people, a bit of metal or paper is used to represent it. This metal or paper is money. There can be no objection to this. But when a person hoards such paper, metal or grain beyond his needs, it leads to evil. It is therefore clear that money by itself is not harmful, but greed for it is harmful. As opposed to this, slavery is a sign of greed. It is wrong and greedy to make a man a slave, but possession of money becomes wrong only when it is held in excess.

However, the man who believes in varanadharmā is contented and therefore will not be greedy of wealth. And the man who believes in the duty of labour will never make another a slave,

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 27-2-1930

374. LETTER TO NAUTAMLAL BHAGWANJI

ASHRAM SABARMATI,
February 27, 1930

BHAISHRI NAUTAMLAL,

I got your letter. I make the following suggestion. The bride should be dressed in as simple garments as possible. The ornaments, too, should be as few as possible. Whatever you wish to give to her, give it in the form of a *hundi*¹. Do the same if you also wish to give a dowry to the bridegroom. Apart from that, give him a very simple dress of khadi. There should be no dinner party at all. There will be some guests on the day of the wedding and it will of course be necessary to feed them. The menu for them should include as few delicacies as possible. The noisy singing by women should be altogether forbidden. There should be no band. The wedding should be made a purely religious ceremony. The guests should not be pressed to stay on after the wedding is over. The custom of giving presents to members of the caste should not be observed. If you wish to spend something on the occasion of the marriage, spend it on some good cause, and, if possible, on a cause which will benefit all people. It would be better if you spend nothing specially for the benefit of the caste. Sub-divisions of the caste deserve no help. I have dictated these suggestions in some haste; you may carry out as many of them as you can.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2584

¹ Bill of exchange or indigenous cheque

375. LETTER TO RAMDAS GANDHI

SABARMATI,
*Thursday [February 27, 1930]*¹

CHI. RAMDAS,

I have your letter. I understand your desire not to leave the Ashram this time, I do wish to frame some rules. How is the girl? And Nimu?

Blessings from
BAPU

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

376. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

February 28, 1930

BHAI GHANSHYAMDASJI,

I have your letter. I have reproduced your speech at length.² Whatever was done is all to the good. I have practised my 'gift' well by this time. I now see that they have no answer to it. They merely exploit our ignorance and cowardice.

The sooner the Assembly dissolves the better. I have little hope of remaining out of jail by the end of March.

I have a query. Keshu and his mother were there, so were Radhabehn and Devdas. Tell me what you think of them? How did Keshu behave during his illness?

Yours,
MOHANDAS

From Hindi: C.W. 6182. Courtesy: G.D. Birla

¹ The date suggested in the source is February 26, 1930. Thursday, however, corresponded to February 27.

² *Vide* "Borderland of Insolvency", 27-2-1930.

377. LETTER TO RUKMINI BAJAJ

[Before March 2, 1930]¹

CHI. RUKHI,

I have received your letter.

I am astonished to read what you write about Narandas. He has never shown himself disinclined. And I am sure Jamnadas can never oppose it, judging from his views on the subject. However, I am pleased to know that you are not the least perturbed and that both of you, mother and daughter, are steadfast. In this matter, your opinion alone should count most. But when Santok also completely agrees with you, then the likes and dislikes of other people do not matter much. If you and Benarasi become an ideal couple, then all criticism will be silenced and you will have shown the path to the Hindu community. I say to Marwari friends in jest, "You have taken away a daughter from me. Therefore, my tax on you will now be doubled." Only today I have collected Rs. 201/- for khadi from a Marwari gentleman by using this joke on him. He gave the amount with great pleasure.

Radha's health creates anxiety. I am enclosing a letter for her. Learn Hindi either from Totaramji or from Kashinathji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G. N. 9047

378. THAKKAR BAPA'S BEGGING-BOWL

What shall I add to the details² below, which Thakkar Bapa has sent? Even if there should be war trumpets blowing, even if conditions should be hard, for such public good and at the instance of this aged worker, the rich will certainly loosen their purse-strings. The next donor should be a Jugal Kishore Birla not of Marwar but of Gujarat. That will be to the glory of Gujarat.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-3-1930

¹ From the contents, the letter appears to have been written some time before the addressee's marriage to Benarasidas; they were married on March 2, 1930; *vide* "Speech at Wedding, Sabarmati Ashram", 2-3-1930.

² Concerning expenditure incurred on digging 49 wells for untouchables, out of funds donated by Jugal Kishore Birla, and giving a list of 37 villages where work had to be suspended for lack of funds.

379. TWO LETTERS

A young man writes:¹

Not all parents are like this. Here is a letter² that a mother wrote to her son at the Gujarat Vidyapith, who was wanting to join the satyagraha movement.

This mother deserves congratulations. If India has many such mothers, our struggle will end successfully and quickly. Fortunately, the number of such parents is well on the increase. There are two well-to-do girls whose parents, too, have given them full encouragement and put no restrictions on their self-disciplined freedom. I have intentionally used here the adjective “self-disciplined” before “freedom” to suggest that freedom can be either self-disciplined or self-willed.

Where there is opposition to one’s good intentions, as in the case of this young man, from one’s father or teacher, one should, if one is an adult son or daughter over sixteen years of age, first humbly try to persuade the elders concerned, and then respectfully disobey their order or their will. That is the clear duty of the son or the daughter in a situation like this. If the son’s description of his father in the letter above is true and if the latter recognizes himself as the father referred to, I would request him to honour the khadi he wears, give his blessings to the son and encourage him in his idea of self-sacrifice. The father should also discard both tea and the thermos. Tea is never a necessity of life, and a thing like a thermos has no place in his poor home. I have no prejudice against such foreign articles as are needed for maintaining one’s health or for similar uses. However, to decide what is essential is a matter to which considerable thought should always be given. It is not enough to wear khadi. The wearer should also realize that khadi symbolizes the spirit of patriotism and modesty. Wearing khadi does not give one the licence to enjoy all kinds of liberty, but is the first step in the direction of self-restraint and a sign of our desire to curtail other unnecessary freedoms. I shall show here a cheap, indigenous way of preserving the temperature of hot water or any similar drink. If hot water or a similar drink is put in a vessel that can be closed tight, and if the vessel is then wrapped up on all sides in a woollen blanket or in cotton and kept inside a chest or box, the drink will preserve its temperature for twenty-four hours.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 2-3-1930

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had complained that guardians discouraged the patriotic urges of their wards. He had also referred to his khadi-wearing father using a foreign thermos flask.

² Not translated here. It complimented the son on his eagerness to court arrest.

380. LETTER TO LORD IRWIN

SATYAGRHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 2, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

Before embarking on civil disobedience and taking the risk I have dreaded to take all these years, I would fain approach you and find a way out.

My personal faith is absolutely clear. I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives, much less fellow human beings, even though they may do the greatest wrong to me and mine. Whilst, therefore, I hold the British rule to be a curse, I do not intend harm to a single Englishman or to any legitimate interest he may have in India.

I must not be misunderstood. Though I hold the British rule in India to be a curse, I do not, therefore, consider Englishmen in general to be worse than any other people on earth. I have the privilege of claiming many Englishmen as dearest friends. Indeed much that I have learnt of the evil of British rule is due to the writings of frank and courageous Englishmen who have not hesitated to tell the unpalatable truth about that rule.

And why do I regard the British rule as a curse?

It has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation and by a ruinously expensive military and civil administration which the country can never afford.

It has reduced us politically to serfdom. It has sapped the foundations of our culture. And, by the policy of cruel disarmament, it has degraded us spiritually. Lacking the inward strength, we have been reduced, by all but universal disarmament, to a state bordering on cowardly helplessness.

In common with many of my countrymen, I had hugged the fond hope that the proposed Round Table Conference might furnish a solution. But, when you said plainly that you could not give any assurance that you or the British Cabinet would pledge yourselves to support a scheme of full Dominion Status, the Round Table Conference could not possibly furnish the solution for which vocal India is consciously, and the dumb millions are unconsciously, thirsting. Needless to say there never was any question of Parliament's verdict being anticipated. Instances are not wanting of the British Cabinet, in anticipation of the Parliamentary verdict, having pledged itself to a particular policy.

The Delhi interview¹ having miscarried, there was no option for Pandit Motilal Nehru and me but to take steps to carry out the solemn resolution of the Congress arrived at in Calcutta at its Session in 1928.²

But the Resolution of Independence³ should cause no alarm, if the word Dominion Status mentioned in your announcement had been used in its accepted sense. For, has it not been admitted by responsible British statesmen that Dominion Status is virtual Independence? What, however, I fear is that there never has been any intention of granting such Dominion Status to India in the immediate future.

But this is all past history. Since the announcement many events have happened which show unmistakably the trend of British policy.

It seems as clear as daylight that responsible British statesmen do not contemplate any alteration in British policy that might adversely affect Britain's commerce with India or require an impartial and close scrutiny of Britain's transactions with India. If nothing is done to end the process of exploitation India must be bled with an ever increasing speed. The Finance Member regards as a settled fact the 1/6 ratio which by a stroke of the pen drains India of a few crores. And when a serious attempt is being made through a civil form of direct action, to unsettle this fact, among many others, even you cannot help appealing to the wealthy landed classes to help you to crush that attempt in the name of an order that grinds India to atoms.

Unless those who work in the name of the nation understand and keep before all concerned the motive that lies behind the craving for independence, there is every danger of independence coming to us so changed as to be of no value to those toiling voiceless millions for whom it is sought and for whom it is worth taking. It is for that reason that I have been recently telling the public what independence should really mean.

Let me put before you some of the salient points.

The terrific pressure of land revenue, which furnishes a large part of the total, must undergo considerable modification in an independent India. Even the much vaunted permanent settlement benefits the few rich zamindars, not the ryots. The ryot has remained as helpless as ever. He is a mere tenant at will. Not only, then, has the

¹ Which took place on December 23, 1929.

² *Vide* "Speech on Resolution on Nehru Report, Calcutta Congress-I", 26-12-1928.

³ The resolution referred to is the Congress resolution passed at Lahore in 1929. *Vide* "Speech at Subjects Committee, A.I.C.C.", 27-12-1929.

land revenue to be considerably reduced, but the whole revenue system has to be so revised as to make the ryot's good its primary concern. But the British system seems to be designed to crush the very life out of him. Even the salt he must use to live is so taxed as to make the burden fall heaviest on him, if only because of the heartless impartiality of its incidence. The tax shows itself still more burdensome on the poor man when it is remembered that salt is the one thing he must eat more than the rich man both individually and collectively. The drink and drug revenue, too, is derived from the poor. It saps the foundations both of their health and morals. It is defended under the false plea of individual freedom, but, in reality, is maintained for its own sake. The ingenuity of the authors of the reforms of 1919 transferred this revenue to the so-called responsible part of dyarchy, so as to throw the burden of prohibition on it, thus, from the very beginning, rendering it powerless for good. If the unhappy minister wipes out this revenue he must starve education, since in the existing circumstances he has no new source of replacing that revenue. If the weight of taxation has crushed the poor from above, the destruction of the central supplementary industry, i.e., hand-spinning, has undermined their capacity for producing wealth. The tale of India's ruination is not complete without reference to the liabilities incurred in her name. Sufficient has been recently said about these in the public Press. It must be the duty of a free India to subject all the liabilities to the strictest investigation, and repudiate those that may be adjudged by an impartial tribunal to be unjust and unfair.

The iniquities sampled above are maintained in order to carry on a foreign administration, demonstrably the most expensive in the world. Take your own salary. It is over Rs. 21,000 per month, besides many other indirect additions. The British Prime Minister gets £ 5,000 per year, i.e., over Rs. 5,400 per month at the present rate of exchange. You are getting over Rs. 700 per day against India's average income of less than annas 2 per day. The Prime Minister gets Rs. 180 per day against Great Britain's average income of nearly Rs. 2 per day. Thus you are getting much over five thousand times India's average income. The British Prime Minister is getting only ninety times Britain's average income. On bended knees I ask you to ponder over this phenomenon. I have taken a personal illustration to drive home a painful truth. I have too great a regard for you as a man to wish to hurt your feelings. I know that you do not need the salary you get. Probably the whole of your salary goes for charity. But a system that provides for such an arrangement deserves to be summarily scrapped. What is true of the Viceregal salary is true generally of the whole administration.

A radical cutting down of the revenue, therefore, depends upon an equally radical reduction in the expenses of the administration. This means a transformation of the scheme of government. This transformation is impossible without independence. Hence, in my opinion, the spontaneous demonstration of 26th January, in which hundreds of thousands of villagers instinctively participated. To them independence means deliverance from the killing weight.

Not one of the great British political parties, it seems to me, is prepared to give up the Indian spoils to which Great Britain helps herself from day to day, often, in spite of the unanimous opposition of Indian opinion.

Nevertheless, if India is to live as a nation, if the slow death by starvation of her people is to stop, some remedy must be found for immediate relief. The proposed Conference is certainly not the remedy. It is not a matter of carrying conviction by argument. The matter resolves itself into one of matching forces. Conviction or no conviction, Great Britain would defend her Indian commerce and interests by all the forces at her command. India must consequently evolve force enough to free herself from that embrace of death.

It is common cause that, however disorganized and, for the time being, insignificant it may be, the party of violence is gaining ground and making itself felt. Its end is the same as mine. But I am convinced that it cannot bring the desired relief to the dumb millions. And the conviction is growing deeper and deeper in me that nothing but unadulterated non-violence can check the organized violence of the British Government. Many think that non-violence is not an active force. My experience, limited though it undoubtedly is, shows that non-violence can be an intensely active force. It is my purpose to set in motion that force as well against the organized violent force of the British rule as [against] the unorganized violent force of the growing party of violence. To sit still would be to give rein to both the forces above mentioned. Having an unquestioning and immovable faith in the efficacy of non-violence as I know it, it would be sinful on my part to wait any longer.

This non-violence will be expressed through civil disobedience, for the moment confined to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram, but ultimately designed to cover all those who choose to join the movement with its obvious limitations.

I know that in embarking on non-violence I shall be running what might fairly be termed a mad risk. But the victories of truth have never been won without risks, often of the gravest character. Conversion of a nation that has consciously or unconsciously preyed

upon another, far more numerous, far more ancient and no less cultured than itself, is worth any amount of risk.

I have deliberately used the word “conversion”. For my ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence, and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India. I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve them even as I want to serve my own. I believe that I have always served them. I served them up to 1919 blindly. But when my eyes were opened and I conceived non-co-operation, the object still was to serve them. I employed the same weapon that I have in all humility successfully used against the dearest members of my family. If I have equal love for your people with mine it will not long remain hidden. It will be acknowledged by them even as the members of my family acknowledged it after they had tried me for several years. If the people join me as I expect they will, the sufferings they will undergo, unless the British nation sooner retraces its steps, will be enough to melt the stoniest hearts.

The plan through civil disobedience will be to combat such evils as I have sampled out. If we want to sever the British connection it is because of such evils. When they are removed the path becomes easy. Then the way to friendly negotiation will be open. If the British commerce with India is purified of greed, you will have no difficulty in recognizing our independence. I respectfully invite you then to pave the way for immediate removal of those evils, and thus open a way for a real conference between equals, interested only in promoting the common good of mankind through voluntary fellowship and in arranging terms of mutual help and commerce equally suited to both. You have unnecessarily laid stress upon the communal problems that unhappily affect this land. Important though they undoubtedly are for the consideration of any scheme of government, they have little bearing on the greater problems which are above communities and which affect them all equally. But if you cannot see your way to deal with these evils and my letter makes no appeal to your heart, on the 11th day of this month,¹ I shall proceed with such co-workers of the Ashram as I can take, to disregard the provisions of the salt laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land the beginning will be made with this evil. The wonder is that we have submitted to the cruel monopoly for so long. It is, I know, open to you to frustrate my design by arresting me. I hope that there will be tens of thousands ready, in a disciplined manner, to take up the work after me, and, in the act of disobeying the Salt Act to lay themselves open to the

¹ The march, however, started on March 12.

penalties of a law that should never have disfigured the Statute-book.

I have no desire to cause you unnecessary embarrassment, or any at all, so far as I can help. If you think that there is any substance in my letter, and if you will care to discuss matters with me, and if to that end you would like me to postpone publication of this letter, I shall gladly refrain on receipt of a telegram to that effect soon after this reaches you.¹ You will, however, dome the favour not to deflect me from my course unless you can see your way to conform to the substance of this letter.

This letter is not in any way intended as a threat but is a simple and sacred duty peremptory on a civil resister. Therefore I am having it specially delivered by a young English friend who believes in the Indian cause and is a full believer in non-violence and whom Providence seems to have sent to me, as it were, for the very purpose.²

*I remain,
Your sincere friend,
M. K. GANDHI*

H. E. LORD IRWIN
VICEROY'S HOUSE
NEW DELHI-3

Young India, 12-3-1930; also S.N. 16624

381. SPEECH AT WEDDING³, SABARMATI ASHRAM

March 2, 1930

Whenever a wedding is arranged through the Ashram, I say a few words while offering my blessings. On this occasion again I wish to express the hope which I expressed on the occasion of the marriage of Shri Shankarlal and Umiya.

Bhai Benarsi, I have a right to hope for much from you. I have been very happy to observe your humility and your religious devotion. I hope that you will devote yourself to national work to the best of your ability and inspire Rukmini to do likewise. Try to

¹ The Viceroy's reply was simply an expression of regret that Gandhiji should be "contemplating a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace".

² Reginald Reynolds who took the letter to the Viceroy, referring to it in *To Live in Mankind*, observes: "Before I went Gandhi insisted I should read the letter carefully, as he did not wish me to associate myself with it unless I was in complete agreement with its contents. My taking of this letter was, in fact, intended to be symbolic of the fact that this was not merely a struggle between the Indians and the British. . . ." *Vide* also "About That Letter", 6-3-1930.

³ Of Benarsilal Bazaj and Rukmini, daughter of Maganlal Gandhi.

understand fully the meaning of the *saptapadi* vow and preserve it in practice in your life. In this vow, the bride and the bridegroom promise to be each other's friends; but their friendship is real only if they try to remedy each other's defects and to strengthen their own virtues. The cause of the attachment and aversion we see in the world is people's habit of observing one another's defects. Those whose only aim is enjoyment in life are bound to be filled with such feelings. I should, therefore, like to see a bond of friendship between husband and wife, instead of one of sensual enjoyment. I know that it is difficult to cultivate such a relationship, but nothing is too difficult for determined effort. The vow requires the bride to say that the bridegroom is her guru and her god. I had wanted this time to alter the vow in this regard, but refrained from doing so for fear that that might confuse people's minds. I intend to omit the words 'guru' and 'god' in future, because it is not right that a husband should regard himself as a guru or god. Anyone who serves another does become a guru or god without his claiming to be one. This, however, does not mean that today's vow is not binding. Rukmini has accepted you as her guru and god, understanding quite well the meaning of the vow. You should, therefore, be worthy of her trust. Take care of her as you would of a flower. Tolerate the differences in outlook and manners which may arise from the fact of you two belonging to different provinces. May the bond between Marwar and Gujarat which has been formed grow and bear happy fruit. May your relationship become an ideal for others.

Rukhi, the choice of Benarsi was not mine; it was Maganlal's. I have only tried to be worthy of his legacy. You should fulfil the hope which Maganlal had cherished about you. You know that his entire life was dedicated to service. I have occupied the seat left vacant by him in the hope that his virtues may grow in me. You know my views. Follow them and so live your life that you will win praise for your father and grandfather. My ambition for you is that your mother-in-law and others should never detect a trace of selfishness in you, and that you will do nothing of which I, Khushalbhai, Devbhabhi or Santok need feel ashamed. I would be pained if you should be guilty of a single act which would make us feel ashamed of you. People will admire you if you exercise self-control even in your enjoyments. Let self-control be your aim in all that you enjoy. We obey the instincts of our nature and do certain things. For instance, music at the time of prayers is a form of enjoyment, for the experience of sweetness is a pleasure. But we wish to learn renunciation through this enjoyment. Similarly, married life is a form of enjoyment but we should know that the aim behind it is

self-control. Our enjoyment is for the purpose of overcoming the desire for enjoyment. You have been learning this lesson from the time that we were in South Africa. Always serve others. Let Benarsi not repent having married a Gujarati girl, and one brought up in the Ashram. Even if he does not have virtues which would make him worthy of being regarded by you as a guru or god, you should be a woman of such ideal character that he may acquire those virtues. My sincere blessings to you both for a long life.

From a copy of the Gujarati: C.W. 9296

382. NOTE TO ANAND T. HINGORANI¹

March 3, 1930

You are a good young man of promise. If the surrounding atmosphere responds, it will be well with you. I hope to go through your other diary. Look at my remarks on your 'who am I.'

BAPU

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

383. LETTER TO DR. M. A. ANSARI

SABARMATI,

March 3, 1930

DEAR DR. ANSARI,

I have your message, It does not move me. I want you to read my letter to the Viceroy with an unbiased mind. You seem to have made up your mind that the Independence Resolution is wrong and that Civil Disobedience—its corollary—is also wrong, i. e., at the present moment. You will find neither to be wrong. We cannot achieve unity through any Conference. But we can through fighting for common causes. At the time of the flood in Gujarat four years ago, all without exception in the flood area made common cause. There was no difficulty about Mussalmans seeking the same shelter as the Hindus. The blindly orthodox Hindu suspended his prejudice against the untouchable. The snake discarded his venom for the time being. True, they are again "as you were", but a few more such lessons will certainly set them right. I want you to realize the new orientation I have given to the struggle. I seek independence through a redress of the age-long grievances which touch the masses more than us. I want you to throw yourself heart and soul into this battle. If your

¹ The addressee in a note had asked Gandhiji what he thought of him.

preoccupations prevent you, you must at least give it your blessing. I have smallpox raging in the Ashram. We are most of us anti-vaccinationists from religious motives. No provable virtue of vaccination will therefore move us. If you know of a remedy apart from vaccination, please send me the prescription. The treatment we are having is red colour, strong permanganate solution warm baths followed by wet-sheet pack and liquid food, chiefly fruit juices, and when the virulence abates a little milk and water, but of 12 cases three have proved fatal. Two obstinate cases of confluent smallpox have completely recovered. There is uncertainty about one bad case. We are trying to keep children from the patients but it is so difficult to isolate patients completely. It is an expensive process if you will not make it heartless and leave the patient practically to his fate.

If you have leisure please dictate full instructions.

Id mubarak.

Yours ever,

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Ansari Papers . Courte sy: Jamia Millia Islamia Librar y

384. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Monday, 3.45 a.m. [March 3, 1930]¹

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I was expecting your letter. I was relieved to learn from Chhaganlal and Kashibehn that your fever had gone down.

If you can digest milk with ghee added to it, do take it. It would be all right too if a little milk taken with chapati can sustain you. The finding of vaidyas is that those who find milk constipating are bound to find other things excepting fruit constipating, too. But there is no need of other things. Take whatever relieves you.

Now, for Delhi. Send a telegram restraining your brother and mother from coming over. Tell them there is no likelihood of your going to jail now, and that they must not interfere in your activities. If, in spite of this, they do come, remain firm and say courteously that they must give up all hope of exerting pressure upon you. Bear with their suffering. A time will come when they will be reconciled.

Mahadev has not gone to Delhi. Reynolds has taken the letter.

Blessings from

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2375

¹ The date is inferred from the reference to the letter to Lord Irwin, which was delivered by Reginald Reynolds.

385. *LETTER TO MANMOHANDAS P. GANDHI*

March 3, 1930

BHAISHRI MANMOHANDAS,

I got both the books sent by you. You already see that I have been using the book on the subject of salt. If you have this further information, send it to me; if you don't have it, please get it for me. What is the expenditure incurred on the collection of the salt tax? Some say it is eight per cent and some that it is twenty per cent. Compare the percentage of expenditure on this tax with the percentage of expenditure on other taxes.

If you have a copy of the latest Administration Report on salt, send it to me. If you have no spare copy, I will return it to you.

Send me any other information which you think will be useful to me.

Now about your book on cotton. I have been reading it. But I may point out two errors just now. You say that formerly weaving and spinning were probably independent professions and not subsidiary occupations. Weaving and spinning are two independent activities. Weaving was (chiefly) an independent profession and is so even today. That spinning, on the other hand, has always been (chiefly) a subsidiary occupation we can prove with thousands of instances even today. The individuals were alive when the movement for the revival of spinning started in 1919. This is an important distinction, and so you must have seen that your error is a serious one. This error will continue to be made in the absence of personal knowledge of the facts. Even writers who have gone deeper than you have committed it. But that defence will not serve an humble student. The second error is this. Writing about the Mogul period you say that there were then such frequent and widespread massacres that no profession could flourish. There are two errors in this view. Such massacres were never widespread. Before Akbar, no Muslim ruler had entered villages. The massacres always took place in cities and there, too, they had little effect on the artisan classes. Even today we see these classes going on with their occupations under this anarchical rule. Formerly, the government touched the lives of only those who were connected with the administrative machinery. It is only in the present age that governments have become eager to extend their grip over entire populations. And, among them all, the British Government has acquired the utmost efficiency in this. It is this efficiency which is ruining us, for British rule is inspired by no philanthropic motives.

I found some time in the morning to write this, for I expect you to make a valuable contribution to the cause.

Blessings from
MOHANDAS

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6

**386. LETTER TO MANGALDAS, KASTURBHAI AND
GORDHANBHAI**

SABARMATI,
March 4, 1930

SHETH SHRI MANGALDAS, SHETH SHRI KASTURBHAI AND SHETH SHRI
GORDHANBHAI,

I remember it was a condition that in the administration of the sums contributed by the mill-owners to the Tilak Swaraj Fund, my advice also would be sought. For some time, the workers have not been getting the benefits from that amount which they were getting previously. It is likely that I may have to go to jail after the 11th. If, therefore, you call a meeting to the mill-owners before that date, I may place my views before them and we may discuss how the amount might be utilized.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33141

387. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 5, 1930

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

I must dictate this letter or not write to you at all.

Whilst you are at liberty to use or not to use anything you like, I think the position taken up by Father and Mother is unassailable. They are the rulers of the household. You may make gentle suggestions but you may not resent their dispositions. Nobler parents no one can desire. It is enough that you do not make use of Western facilities and contrivances wherever it is possible for you to avoid them. By being strict with yourself and charitable towards your surroundings you can affect them as in no other way.

Yours,
BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9615

388. REMARKS AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

March 5, 1930

The campaign will start on the morning of the twelfth, and, therefore, all joining me have to get ready in five days. You should not worry about food or water. Let us put our trust in God and we shall have everything.

We shall march in the direction of Pethapur.¹ A horse will accompany us, and if I am not well I shall ride it. I shall be marching with Shri Abbas Tyabji and a batch of fifty. Let everyone have a copy of the *Bhagavad Gita* with him. In the jail too, if it should be necessary, we shall offer civil disobedience. Only men will accompany us. Women and others will stay in the Ashram.

Women will have enough opportunity to offer satyagraha.² Just as Hindus do not harm a cow, the British do not attack women as far as possible. For Hindus it would be cowardice to take a cow to the battlefield. In the same way it would be cowardice for us to have women accompany us. In the coming struggle, even children might get killed. Knowing this, if we take children with us it would be sheer folly.

I wish the struggle to come to an end in a month or so, but it may continue longer.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 9-3-1930

389. LETTER TO VITHALDAS JERAJANI

March 5/6³, 1930

BHAISHRI JERAJANI,

I have your letter. You may go to any place which Shankerlal may ask you to visit. Don't think it necessary to obtain my permission in such matters. When I need you, I will call you from wherever you are.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9769

¹ Gandhiji said this in answer to a boy's question about the place to which they were to march.

² It had been suggested that four or five women might be allowed to go along.

³ The letter was dictated on the 5th and signed by Gandhiji on the 6th.

390. PENAL SECTIONS OF THE SALT ACT

The following sections¹ copied or abridged from the Bombay Salt Act and the Indian Salt Act will show the design underlying their operation. The Bombay Act is a refined reproduction of the India Act of 1882. Most of the penal sections of the Bombay Act show a stiffening of the original which evidently experience of administration had shown to be necessary. Only one section has been taken from the central Act. The reader will not fail to notice a strange section which makes “cowardice” on the part of the salt-revenue officers a crime punishable with imprisonment extending to three months. The word “cowardice” is not defined. But the reader with an imagination will have no difficulty in understanding what cowardice can possibly mean in the administration of an Act which takes in its sweep millions of human beings, men and women, young and old, cripples and healthy.

Young India, 6-3-1930

391. PUBLIC DEBT ANALYSED

Sjt. Haridas Muzumdar has prepared a note on Public Debt. I give below the following condensation² which will assist the reader to know what this debt is.

Young India, 6-3-1930

392. ABOUT THAT LETTER

My letter to the Viceroy went on the 2nd instant as anticipated by the newspapers. Forecasts have been published of its contents which are largely untrue. I wish these correspondents and the news agencies will, instead of making the publication of news a matter merely of making money, think of the public good. If there had been anything to give to the public, surely Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru would have given it. But it was thought advisable to wait for an acknowledgement from Delhi before publishing the letter. I am not intent on a fight. I am leaving no stone unturned to avoid it. But I am ready for it the moment I find that there is no honourable way out of it. Premature publication of news indirectly obtained by means not always straight ought not to be the function of journalists. I know that the newspaper said to be the greatest in the world makes it a boast to obtain by secret methods news which no other agency can. It makes it a boast to publish news which the keepers are most anxious often in the public interest to withhold for the time being. But the English

¹ *Vide* Appendix “Penal Sections of the Salt Act”, 6-3-1930.

² Not reproduced here.

public submits to the treatment, because moneyed and influential men conduct *The Times*. We have blindly copied the rulers' code of manners without discrimination in the matter of publication of news as in many others of still greater importance. I know that mine is a voice in the wilderness, though I speak with the authority of an unbroken experience of practical journalism for over twenty years, if successful conducting of four weeklies¹ can be regarded as such. Be that as it may, the imminent fight includes among the points of attack this slavish habit of copying everything English. No one will accuse me of any anti-English tendency. Indeed I pride myself on my discrimination. I have thankfully copied many things from them. Punctuality, reticence, public hygiene, independent thinking and exercise of judgment and several other things I owe to my association with them. But never having had the slightest touch of slave mentality in me and never having even a thought of materially benefiting myself through contact, official or otherwise, with them, I have had the rare good fortune of studying them with complete detachment. On the eve of battle therefore I would warn fellow journalists against copying the English method of obtaining and publishing news. Let them study my original method which was introduced long before I became a Mahatma and before I had acquired any status of importance in the public life of India. It was a hard struggle, but I found in the field of journalism as in many others that the strictest honesty and fair dealing was undoubtedly the best policy. Any shorter cut is longer at least by double the length sought to be saved. For there must be a retracing. I say all this not for the sake of reading a lesson to fellow-journalists but for the sake of the struggle in which I would value the co-operation of journalists whether they approve of or oppose my methods of political warfare. Let them not add to the risks I am already taking. The rule I would like them to observe is never to publish any news without having it checked by someone connected with me and having authority.

With this long preface I may inform the reader that the letter was sent through a special messenger to be personally delivered to the Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy. The messenger selected was a young English friend Reginald Reynolds who came to India some months ago and who has identified himself completely with the Indian cause. For me the sending of the letter was a religious act as the whole struggle is. And I selected an English friend as my messenger, because I wanted to forge a further check upon myself against any intentional act that would hurt a single Englishman. If I have any sense of honour in me, this choice should prove an automatic restraint even upon unconscious error. It pleases me also to have the unselfish and unsolicited association of a cultured, well-read,

¹ *Indian Opinion*, *Young India*, *Navajivan* and *Hindi Navajivan*.

devout Englishman in an act which may, in spite of all my effort to the contrary, involve loss of English life.

As for the letter itself, when the reader has the text before him he will see that it is not an ultimatum, but it is a friendly, if also a frank, communication from one who considers himself to be a friend of Englishmen. But the reader must hold himself in patience for a while.

Young India, 6-3-1930

393. STUDENTS AND CHARACTER

A retired Inspector of Schools (Punjab) writes:¹

I have already written about the cries in a previous but recent issue of *Young India*.² I fully agree that “Down with the Union Jack” smells of violence. There are several other objectionable cries that have come into vogue. One who believes in non-violence even as a policy may not utter those cries. They do no good and may do harm. A disciplined young man will not utter those cries. It is certainly opposed to satyagraha. As for the second point raised by the writer, he has evidently failed to see that the authorities are reaping as they have sown. The system of education is responsible for the lack of character wherever it shows itself. The remedy now is not to seek my opinion or assistance, but for the teachers to make common cause with the students and lead them to victory. The latter know the tragic history of their own nation, they know how the other nations have gained their liberty. It is impossible to restrain them from working for the freedom of their own country. If they are not properly guided in their approach to their goal, they will take the means that their unripe and unaided reason will suggest. In any event, in so far as I am concerned, I have shown them the way. If I am responsible for their enthusiasm, I am glad. I am trying too to guide it in the right direction. If they go wrong in spite of my effort, I cannot be held responsible.

No one can be more grieved than I over the bomb outrage at Amritsar through which an innocent young man, Sardar Pratap Singh, who was undoubtedly not the target of the bomb-thrower, met his death. These outrages are surely due to the lack of character to which the retired inspector of schools has drawn attention. The word “character” is perhaps not the happiest expression. Ballast is the right word. If it was the Principal of the Khalsa College who was aimed at, the incident is proof of a deep-seated disease. There is no bond between the teachers and the taught. The teachers of educational

¹ The letter is not reproduced here. The correspondent had sought Gandhiji's opinion on the growing violence, hatred and indiscipline among students.

² Vide “Some Rules of Satyagraha”, 23-2-1930.

institutions, whether entirely owned or aided by the Government, naturally feel it incumbent upon them, whether they have it in them or not, themselves to profess and inculcate in others loyalty to the existing Government. The students have no sense of loyalty in them. They have become impatient. Impatience has led to loss of self-control, and so their energy finds its vent through dubious channels. For me these incidents are no warning to stay my hand, but to go on with my programme and gain control over, or break myself in the attempt to stem the surging tide of violence on either side.

Young India, 6-3-1930

394. THE PUBLIC DEBT

Thanks to the Congress resolution on public debts, important literature on the subject is springing into being. *The Bombay Chronicle* is rendering a service by publishing the informing series of articles by 'Politicus' on this subject. Financial problems are always a dry subject requiring concentration and some previous study. It is for our learned economists to put these problems in an interesting manner capable of being understood by the public. The series by 'Politicus' is an attempt in that direction. I am not however sure that the presentation of his subject cannot be made simpler even if that should require a fuller treatment. I pick up from the series two things for the reader's consideration. After examining all available figures, 'Politicus' concludes that:

the aggregate burden of all kinds of Public Debt, owed by all sorts of authorities and incurred for no matter what purpose or in what form, will be not much short of Rs. 1,200 crores at the present moment. This is about half of India's total annual wealth in material goods of all kinds. And that wealth barely suffices to give only one meal a day of the coarsest kind to every human being in the land and that too if we exclude all other needs of human life.

If this statement is true, it constitutes a black record of crime against India. It shows that the debts are largely unproductive. If these obligations were healthy, our wealth should have so increased as to give more than enough to every one of us to eat. Having summed up the total debt, 'Politicus' examines the ethics of the obligations and sums up thus:

The fact, however, must be repeated that, hitherto, the debt has been contracted by the Government without consulting the people of India; that the latter have no power to vote the borrowing programme or the debt charges, even under the reforms of 1919-20; and that any condition precedent to the recognition of our political majority, even in the form of a full Dominion Status, which will serve as an encumbrance for all time to come on the people of India, without their explicit consent or confirmation, must, in law as well as conscience, be held to be void. The trustee liquidating or dissolving the

trust is entitled, of course, to a full statement of accounts regarding his management of the trust, so that no unexpected claims or counter-claims be urged against him subsequently by the beneficiaries coming into their own. But that is no reason why the trustee should be permitted to insist, on the occasion of dissolving the trust, that *all his* claims against the trust estate shall be passed and adopted, without examination, by the erstwhile beneficiaries under his trust.

The Congress resolution means no more than this, save that it suggests also an unexceptionable machinery for a due examination of these transactions.

But they have the power to impose their will, we have not yet generated strength to resist that will. Or Sir Malcolm Hailey would not be able to say as he is reported to have said. He was speaking to the U. P. Legislative Council. In the course of his address he said:

First and foremost, every legal means would be adopted to defeat the campaign of civil disobedience, and in the event of legal resources proving insufficient, we shall attempt to secure such legal provision as is required to effect our purpose.

This was not enough, and so His Excellency warmed up and said:

He might even feel that it would not be wholly amiss if the Government were, on this occasion, to furnish some proof of the demoniac character of which he has been told so much.

I trust that civil resisters have counted the cost. For the rulers to give an exhibition of that admirable character would be no new experience for India. I hope that the campaign will so shape itself as to allow the fury exhaustively to expend itself. That is the inevitable result of the law of non-retaliation.

Young India, 6-3-1930

395. *NO RULE* v. *MISRULE*

This letter¹ is obviously meant for publication. Mr. Pennington must always command respect for his great industry at his age and for his sincere advocacy of a cause he believes in. Professor Kumarappa is well able to take care of himself. He, being in village, is not easily accessible. But whether he has any answer or not to Mr. Pennington's facts, I can say this from my own experience. Most of the "facts"

¹ Not reproduced here. J. B. Pennington had criticized J. C. Kumarappa's chapters on "Public Finance and Our Poverty" which were serialized in *Young India* from November 28, 1929 to January 23, 1930. Pennington had pointed out some benefits derived by India from *Pax Britannica* and expressed misgivings about the proclamation of independence.

such friends as Mr. Pennington can produce may be true, and yet do not affect the conclusion arrived at by nationalists, nor do those facts warrant the deductions their authors base upon them. "One swallow does not make a summer." Nor can high prices paid for a few acres in a rich tract prove the general prosperity of a continent. As against isolated facts of isolated prosperity stands the grim fact of the general pauperism of India as a whole. This pauperism can be seen with physical eyes by anyone who would care to wander through India's villages. *Pax Britannica* is not a beneficial operation. It has as much value to India as the slave dwellers have in an estate whose owner keeps the slaves from fighting with one another, protects the estate from foreign inroads and makes the slaves work with a regularity that is just enough to keep the estate going in his, the owner's, interest. The slaves of this imaginary estate will, when they grow to consciousness of their position, prefer anarchy to slavery if there is no other choice. Even so should I prefer anarchy to the existing rule and its much-vaunted peace if I can have no other choice. Surely no-rule is better than bad rule. As for the friends who "are most anxious to hold me in respect", I can only say that while I would always esteem their affection, I must be content to go without it if I cannot retain it consistently with obedience to the Inner Voice. What shall it profit me even though I may win the esteem of a whole world, if I have to lose my soul?

Young India, 6-3-1930

396. OBSCENE LITERATURE

No country and no language is free from obscene literature. As long as there are self-indulging and immoral people in the world, obscene literature will continue to be produced and read. But when such literature is disseminated through newspapers of good standing, and under the guise of art or service, it is truly horrible. I have received this kind of obscene literature from the Marwari community. I have also received a copy of the statement published on behalf of respectable Marwaris. The statement seeks to rouse the Marwari community and calls upon it to boycott literature which goes under the name of art but in reality has money as its end. What provoked the statement was the Marwari number of a monthly called *Chand*. I could not read all of it, nor do I wish to do so, but whatever I could read was so obscene and loathsome that no man who has any sense or who has the good of society at heart would ever publish such things. To publish such things in the name of reform is unnecessary and harmful. People who sing filthy songs such as are published in *Chand* do not read newspapers. Its readership can only be of two types: the

educated debauchees who wish to satisfy their lust by any means, and innocent men who, though so far free from the ways of vice, are so impressionable that they may be corrupted. For such people obscene literature is fatal. This is also the experience of all. I hope that the effect of the statement issued by these distinguished Marwari gentlemen will be felt by the editor of *Chand* and his associates, and that they will withdraw this number of *Chand* and will refrain in future from publishing such obscene literature. A greater duty as regards this is that of the Marwari community and of society in general. It should never buy nor even read such obscene literature. Editors of Hindi papers have a twofold responsibility. Since we want to make Hindi the national language, it becomes their duty to protect this language. One like myself who worships the national language would expect only books with lofty ideas. Therefore, if it is possible, the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan should appoint a language committee whose function it would be to scrutinize every new book for its language, thought, etc. The committee should then prepare lists of books adjudged best and those adjudged obscene, and it should popularize the goodbooks and boycott the obscene ones. Such a committee can only be successful if its members are well versed in literature and are willing to devote themselves whole-heartedly to the service of literature.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 6-3-1930

397. TELEGRAM TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

AHMEDABAD,
March 6, 1930

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

ALLAHABAD

LETTER¹ HANDED PRESS FOR PUBLICATION. MARCHING EARLY
MORNING 12TH WITH SIXTY COMPANIONS.

GANDHI

A.I.C.C. File No. 178, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

398. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 6, 1930

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I have your letter. I do not think it advisable to ask you to leave that place just now. I will start on the march on the 12th, accompanied

¹ Vide "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

by most of the men in the Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

399. *LETTER TO TEHMINA KHAMBHATTA*

March 6, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I can understand that you will feel hurt if Bhai Khambhatta joins the struggle at present. Just now I agree with you. I hope you do not wish that he should not join the struggle at any time? It is one's duty to do everything possible to preserve one's body. When, however, a situation arises in which one can be faithful to dharma only by laying down one's life, it becomes one's duty to do so. I am sure, therefore, that if and when such a time comes both of you will be ready to sacrifice yourselves. Rest assured that, to those who fight in the name of God, He gives the strength to endure all hardships.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7544

400. *LETTER TO BEHRAMJI KHAMBHATTA*

March 6, 1930

BHAISHRI KHAMBHATTA,

I have your letter. Though you have not joined the Ashram, to me you are more than an inmate of the Ashram. Your regular study of *Young India* and *Navajivan* and your manner of life are not unknown to me. You are quite fit to join the struggle. But you should not be in a hurry just now. You should respect the feelings of Tehminabehn. There is some substance, too, in what she says. The way you are neglecting your body, who can guarantee how long it will be able to stand the life in jail? Hence it would be better to be humble. My advice, therefore, is this: Hold yourself back for the present and join the struggle when it takes a crucial turn. If you get an opportunity in Bombay itself, you may certainly take the plunge. At that time, I think Tehminabehn also will not restrain you but, on the contrary, will encourage you. If it becomes necessary, she herself will plunge into the struggle. I think women, too, will have to join in this final struggle. If, moreover, violence breaks out in Bombay, it will become your duty to try to preserve peace and even lay down your

life in doing so. It would, therefore, be better if you hold yourself in reserve for the time being. It is indeed necessary that some persons should do so.

I was glad, all the same, that you sent a letter to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7545

401. LETTER TO PUNJABHAI

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 6, 1930

BHAISHRI PUNJABHAI,

I have your letter.

The march will start on the 12th. If you wish to join, you should come and see me before that.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4010

402. DRAFT OF RESOLUTION FOR THE WORKING COMMITTEE

[Before *March 7, 1930*]¹

The W. C. notes with sorrow that Dr. Syed Mahmud has recently had three deaths in his family including the loss of his elder brother² who was the manager of his large joint household and its mainstay. The difficulty is intensified by the fact that Dr. Mahmud's wife is suffering from a serious illness. In the circumstances the W. C. is of opinion that Dr. Mahmud should not be allowed to run the imminent risk of being arrested and therefore relieves him of the office of Secretary of the Congress and membership of the Committee till such time as may be necessary for making satisfactory arrangements for the management of his domestic affairs.

DR. SYED MAHMUD
BAR-AT-LAW
CHHAPRA
BIHAR

From the original: Dr. Syed Mahmud Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also G. N. 5085

¹ From the postmark, which bears the date March 7, 1930

² Mazhar-ul-Haq, who died on January 4, 1930; *vide* also "Notes", 9-1-1930

403. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

March 7, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

After a talk with Sitla Sahai, I have decided to send him there. Let him see what he can do there and you will watch developments. If he and you decide that he should come back, he may do so. His wife and children will remain here and he can draw upon the Ashram for his bare upkeep. The rest you will hear from him.

Yours,

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

404. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

March 7, 1930

CHI MRIDULA,

You can come tomorrow (Saturday) at 9.30 a.m. if it is convenient. If this time does not suit you, come any time and we shall meet. If you can make it at lunch time, it will be good. We shall lunch together.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11108. Courtesy: Sarabhai Foundation

405. STATEMENT ON ARREST OF VALLABHBHAI PATEL

March 7, 1930

It is a good omen for us that Sardar Vallabhbhai has been arrested and sentenced. It remains to be seen what use we make of this happy beginning. The fight has now commenced and we have to carry it to its conclusion. People should celebrate the Sardar's arrest and the sentence passed on him by observing a general hartal. I request the mill-owners to close the mills, the students to absent themselves from their institutions and all shopkeepers to close their shops. There should be no need to tell Gujarat to preserve peace. Our struggle must remain non-violent from beginning to end.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 9-3-1930

406. CABLE TO JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

[On or after *March 7, 1930*]¹

NOBODY HAS AUTHORITY REPRESENT ME AMERICA. MOVEMENT
ABSOLUTELY PEACEFUL. CONGRESS POLICY OF NON-VIOLENCE
REMAINS UNCHANGED. IN EVENT MASS RESPONSE DIFFICULT SAY
HOW THINGS WILL SHAPE BUT THOUSANDS BENT ON KEEPING.
PEACE UNDER GRAVEST PROVOCATION. NO ONE EVEN WHISPERS
ABOUT MILITARY RESISTANCE. NO ONE ARMING NATIONALISTS.
CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE UNDER STRICTEST RESTRICTIONS BEING
STARTED ON 12TH.

GANDHI

From a photostat: S.N. 16637

407. FOREWORD TO COW-PROTECTION²

SABARMATI,
March 8, 1930

Those who are interested [in] the preservation of the priceless
wealth of India in the shape of the cow through constructive means
will find much food for thought in the following well-written pages.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 9327

¹ This was sent in reply to the following cable of March 6, 1930, received at the Ashram the following day: "Friends Indian independence universal peace most anxiously watching nationalist movement under your leadership redoubling efforts rallying American sympathies. Subsidized imperialist agencies permanent obstacle but most serious damage being done Indian cause by Sailendranath Ghose styled representative Indian Congress, your agent, etc. His persistent wildly violent misrepresentations like announcing Indian resolve military resistance arming million nationalists would [*sic*] your sponsorship increasingly alienating sympathies millions who pinning faith your non-violence victory. Respectfully urge Congress immediately disavow Ghose's representative character prevent further injury. Rezmie founder India Independence League ceaselessly influencing all shades American Press public through accurate temperate sympathetic interpretation nationalist position your creed acts. Rezmie zealous trustworthy could splendidly represent you and Congress. First time we venturing advise you but condition very serious danger permanently losing American support imminent. Kindly act before disobedience starts. . . ."

² A book by Valji Desai

408. FOREWORD TO “DRAUPADINAN CHIR”

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 8, 1930

Those who wish to study the subject of khadi from a historical point of view or understand why spinning is a moral duty will find the following chapters by Shri Valji Desai immensely interesting.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9273. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

409. FOREWORD TO “RAJKATHA”

SATYAGRAHA ASHRAM, SABARMATI,
March 8, 1930

A study of the mutual obligations of rulers and subjects has a special relevance at the present time. Shri Valji Desai’s collection of essays helps us to understand clearly the duties of a king, the distinction between a good king and a bad king, how kings were elected and dethroned in ancient times, and so on.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI
From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 9272. Courtesy: V. G. Desai

410. LETTER TO TOTARAM HINGORANI

March 8, 1930

DEAR FRIEND,

I am glad you have written to me about Anand. The more I see him the more I like him. All he needs is a little firmness. I wish you will not press him to go to you just now. Leave him to develop along his own lines and you will be proud of him. He has decided to join the column I am to lead.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

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

411. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Saturday [March 8, 1930]¹

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

If you have the strength this is your duty.

Assure mother that you will not court imprisonment, but that you will have to go if arrested. She must return to Delhi in peace. Even if she does not go you will have to leave for Vijapur.

And having said your say, go away to Vijapur. Whatever your mother may do, even if she should die, you cannot deviate from your dharma. And it would be *adharma* to shirk on this occasion. Your duty is to strengthen your body and devote yourself to your work. If mother will stay on here, she will be looked after and served. Your brother told me that he quite understood; I think mother too will come round. Anyway, your path is quite clear.

Blessings from
BAPU

[P.S.]

See me for a minute before leaving.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2376

412. SPEECH AT AHMEDABAD

March 8, 1930

I know that my voice will not reach you all. In the first place it does not have the power it once had. And then no man's voice can be heard by such a large crowd. I must be content if a few of these men and women can hear me. More people will be able to hear if those that cannot hear will be quiet and wait till their neighbours can give them a report of the speech.

I have nothing new to tell you. I have already given to the people of Ahmedabad and the whole of India the message which I had to give. Now the time has come when you and I will be finally tested, and in that matter the Government has made our path easy—yours as well as mine. I had never dreamt that Sardar Vallabhbhai would be imprisoned so soon. I think his services to Gujarat, and more particularly to this city, exceed mine a hundred times. Hence it is no wonder that he has been honoured by imprisonment before me. That certainly is his good fortune and yours also. But I find myself in a difficult situation because he has been imprisoned before me. I am

¹ The date is from *At the Feet of Bapu*, p. 57

eager to get arrested at any cost. I want to deprive the Government of its illegitimate monopoly of salt. My aim is to get the Salt Tax abolished. That is for me one step, the first step, towards full freedom. Sardar Vallabhbhai is no longer with us in this task. The people of India are now impatient and will not rest until they have won complete freedom. My voice is bound to reach the Government somehow, but Gujarat should preserve complete peace. The imprisonment of Vallabhbhai is the Government's way of rewarding his services in preserving complete peace during the satyagraha at Bardoli.

We have known it for years that this is the only way in which the Government can reward an independent-minded and freedom-loving person like Sardar Vallabhbhai. Let us all get so completely absorbed in our task that we win at once what we have been yearning for all these years. To fulfil the pledge we took on the 26th we should offer civil disobedience. Though Vallabhbhai had broken no salt law, the Government has arrested him and broken my right hand, so to say. If it has imprisoned and removed one Vallabhbhai, you, the men and women of Ahmedabad, should take his place and work as his representatives. Get ready at once, if you have love for him and have come here to sacrifice yourselves. If you are ready to follow him in his self-sacrifice, we shall show to the Government and to the world how our aspirations are bound to be realized. May God grant us the strength necessary for the sacrifice we have to make.

My determination to march on Wednesday morning with the first batch, comprising the Ashram inmates, stands unchanged. Let everyone present here do his duty. Vallabhbhai has said in his message that his speech at Broach clearly indicates what people should do if and when Gandhi is arrested. By going to jail himself, he has been as good as his word. Let the Government reward us all in that way. I have no intention of asking you to pass any resolution here. But I expect you to put into practice the pledge which I have drafted for you to take now.

We the citizens of Ahmedabad, men and women, hereby resolve to follow Sardar Vallabhbhai to jail, or win complete independence. We shall have no peace, nor will we let the Government have any, till we have won complete independence. We believe that India's freedom is to be won through peaceful and truthful means.

I hope that the thousands of men and women present here will raise their hands and take the pledge for which I have been training the country in general, and the citizens of Ahmedabad in particular, for the last fifteen years, and which was taken at the time of the labour

strike here. Raise your hands only if you have the strength to act upon it.¹

I congratulate you on the peaceful strike you have observed. I expect the men, women and students of Ahmedabad to do their duty by Sardar Vallabhbhai and the country.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 10-3-1930

413. TALK TO MILL-OWNERS' ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

March 8, 1930

The Majoor Mahajan used to be paid the interest on the National School funds. That pleased me and I believe you too were pleased. But now that money has stopped coming in. I had asked M. Sheth not to stop it. Nevertheless it was stopped. The objection was that the mill-owners should have a say in its management—this was of course a difference of principle. It is for the Mahajan to decide how the Majoor school should be run. Moreover, it is they themselves who run it. Even the inspectors have been satisfied. I too have inspected it. I have noticed progress every time. Be that as it may, we cannot have a hand in managing the affairs of an institution to which we make a donation. For then it ceases to be a donation. I had explained this even at the time I asked for donations from you. You had remarked that my work was of a political and social nature. After this was made clear, you gave me this money for social work. Likewise you accepted my views generously. It is not proper that you should now demand a hand in the management. I ask you to have a committee of inspection. If you feel that the work is not being carried on properly, you may stop your donations. Even the Government does not participate in the management though it does supervise. You too can do what you like as inspectors. Even then if you do not like to donate funds, I shall make another suggestion. The people are filled with admiration for the school that is being run there, the Montessori school. Donate money to him—to Prof. Miller. . . .² The labourers need that money. You talk of the increase in the wages of labourers. I must tell you that even sons of big men study there and do not pay full fees. You seem to desire that this school should be run on the small sum that the labourers save. Do the labourers collect money for the purpose of fighting? You should be thankful to me because they do not collect funds to launch a fight.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: S.N. 16657

¹ Thousands of hands were raised.

² One sentence here is obscure.

414. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

[Before March 9, 1930]¹

How can I go back on the principles I have held dear all my life, when I find that it is these principles that are being put to the test? I have no doubt in my mind that vaccination is a filthy process, that it is harmful in the end and that it is little short of taking beef. I may be entirely mistaken. But holding the views that I do, how can I recant them? Because I see child after child passing away?² No, not even if the whole of the Ashram were to be swept away, may I insist on vaccination and pocket my principle. What would my love of truth and my adherence to principle mean if they were to vanish at the slightest touch of reality?

. . .³ But God is putting me through a greater test. On the eve of what is to be the final test of our strength, God is warning me through the messenger of death. I have tried hydropathy and earth treatment with success in numerous cases. Never has the treatment failed as it seems to have done during the month. But does that mean that I must therefore lose faith in the treatment and faith in God? Even so my faith in the efficacy of non-violence may be put to the severest test. I may have to see not three but hundreds and thousands being done to death during the campaign I am about to launch. Shall my heart quail before that catastrophe, or will I persevere in my faith? No, I want you, everyone, to understand that this epidemic is not a scourge, but a trial and preparation, a tribulation sent to steel our hearts and to chain us more strongly and firmly to faith in God. And would not my faith in the *Gita* be a mockery if three deaths were to unhinge me? It is as clear to me as daylight that life and death are but phases of the same thing, the reverse and obverse of the same coin. In fact tribulations and death seem to me to present a phase far richer than happiness of life. What is life worth without trials and tribulations which are the salt of life? The history of mankind would have been a blank sheet without these individuals. What is *Ramayana* but a record of the trials, privations and penances of Rama and Sita? The life of Rama, after the recovery of Sita, full of happiness as it was, does not occupy even a hundredth part of the epic. I want you all to treasure death and suffering more than life, and to appreciate their cleansing and purifying character.

Young India, 12-3-1930

¹ A brief report of this speech was published in *Navajivan*, 9-3-1930.

² Three children had died of smallpox in the Ashram.

³ As in the source.

415. *THE FINAL TEST*

The letter¹ to the Viceroy was despatched from here on Sunday. It reached him on Tuesday. As proposed therein, it was given to the Press on Thursday for publication after awaiting the Viceroy's telegram. The reader will find in this issue a translation of the letter.

God willing, I hope to start the march at daybreak on Wednesday. Workers from Surat side tell me that there are many facilities there for easy manufacture of salt. Moreover, as they say, complete peace is likely to be preserved there and, along with it, help from the general public is also very probable. In the district of Surat, again, the choice has fallen on Jalalpur taluka for the marching corps to enter. In 1921, when the struggle for swaraj was launched at Bardoli, the Jalalpur taluka had applied for being chosen for the honour and I still have several sweet memories of my experience of the place. Even today the constructive programme there is in a flourishing state. The taluka has many facilities for the manufacture of salt. The people of the place are full of enthusiasm and in every way ready to participate in the struggle. This is Sardar Vallabhbhai's view, and he has, therefore, selected Jalalpur taluka for offering civil disobedience against the salt law. Whether my co-workers or I shall be able to proceed so far in our march, that is, whether Government will let us reach there, is a question. I believe we shall not be so allowed. Even then, I expect, Jalalpur taluka will take full part in the struggle. The Sardar is quite sure that it will. But I shall not be satisfied with that. I hope the whole of Gujarat will join this time. If Gujarat takes the initiative, I have no doubt that the whole of India will rise up. When a great awakening takes place among a people, there is always the fear of violence breaking out. This non-violent war is not free from that fear. No one is pained at the outbreak of violence where no question of violence or non-violence arises. Many even welcome it. But in this struggle we have a large number whose duty it would be to prevent, and not welcome, the outbreak of violence. Deterred by the fear of violence, I had been holding back civil disobedience and trying till now to dissuade the people from launching it. But I am now ready to take the ultimate step even at the risk of a violent outbreak, because I find that there is no other way in which I might prepare the people for the struggle. Looking at the other side, I find that the Government's organized violence goes on increasing day by day and the group wanting to meet violence with violence is becoming correspondingly stronger. Hence, if non-violence has the power to

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Lord Irwin", 2-3-1930.

check violence or if I am truly non-violent, I must be able to find a non-violent way to restrain the double violence which I have mentioned. That way, I believe, is the way I am now adopting. And if I am mistaken, I have no doubt that I ought to cease obstructing the progress of the people any more. I do clearly see that I would put my non-violence to shame if I remained content with working only for khadi. There is no doubt in my mind that the power of non violence is a million times greater than that of khadi. Nor do I in any way doubt that khadi is an essential element of the non-violent way to win swaraj and that without khadi, there can be no swaraj. I have no doubt also that unless khadi had made the progress it has I should not have had the self-confidence to adopt the way I am now preparing to take. But it is clear that there should now be some other action besides the manufacture of khadi. There is need of greater awakening among the people even for giving more impetus to the khadi movement. If we are able to rouse the people and also maintain non-violence, there is no doubt that swaraj will be ours here and now. Having thus considered the matter I am taking the plunge. The reader will observe that this reasoning occurred to me after I had first seen the way. It is my belief that great things are achieved by man in obedience to the prompting of the inner voice. It is another matter whether the inner voice is from God or Satan. It has been my experience, with regard to myself and many others, that after one has heard the inner voice, one finds arguments in support of it.

It is clear as daylight that I ought to get out of the way if this inner voice is wrong or devilish. I believe the inner voice to be divine and hence the only way open to me is to follow the way shown by the light within and demonstrate its success or die in the attempt.

I, therefore, look upon this struggle as the final test. Those who join it may join on this understanding only.

If countless multitudes join the struggle and if peace is preserved, we shall win swaraj sooner than we imagine.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-3-1930

416. SATYAGRAHIS' MARCH

Our party is likely to consist of about a hundred men. I have not been able to finalize the list yet, as, besides the present inmates of the Ashram, I am selecting for inclusion some others who observe the rules of Ashram life and are eager to join, and who have to be included.

The march will begin at 6.30 on the 12th morning. I give below

the programme as tentatively fixed:

Wednesday, the 12th		Aslali
Thursday, the 13th	Morning	Bareja
	Evening	Navagam
Friday, the 14th	Morning	Vasana
	Evening	Matar
Saturday, the 15th	Morning	Dabhan
	Evening	Nadiad
Sunday, the 16th	Morning	Boriavi
	Evening	Anand
Monday, the 17th	Morning	Napa
	Evening	Borsad
Tuesday, the 18th	Morning	Raas
	Evening	Badalpur

I request the *mahajans* and the workers of the respective places to bear in mind the following. The satyagrahi party is expected to reach each place by 8 o'clock in the morning and to sit down for lunch between 10.00 and 10.30 a.m. It may be half past nine by the time the party reaches Aslali on the first day. No rooms will be needed for rest at noon or night, but a clean, shaded place will be enough. In the absence of such a shaded place, it will be enough to have a bamboo-and-grass covering. Both bamboo and grass can be put to use again.

It is assumed that the village people will provide us food.

If provisions are supplied the party will cook its own meal. The food supplied, whether cooked or uncooked, should be the simplest possible. Nothing more than *rotli* or *rotla* or kedgerie with vegetables and milk or curds, will be required. Sweets, even if prepared, will be declined. Vegetables should be merely boiled, and no oil, spices and chillies, whether green or dry, whole or crushed, should be added or used in the cooking. This is my advice for preparing a meal:

Morning, before
departure:

Rab and *dhebra*; the *rab* should be left to the party itself to prepare.

Midday:

Bhakhri, vegetable and milk or butter-milk.

Evening, before the
march is resumed:

Roasted gram, rice. Night: Kedgerie with vegetable and butter-milk or milk.

The ghee for all the meals together should not exceed three *tolas* per head: One *tola* in the *rab*, one served separately to be smeared on the *bhakhri*, and one to be put into the kedgerree. For me goat's milk, if available, in the morning, at noon and at night, and raisins or dates and three lemons will do. I hope that the village people will incur no expenses whatever, except for the simple food items named above.

I look forward to meeting the people of each village and its neighbourhood.

Everyone in the party will be carrying his own bedding, so that the village people will have to provide nothing except a clean place for resting in.

The people should incur no expense on account of betel leaves, betel-nuts or tea for the party.

I shall be happy if every village maintains complete cleanliness and fixes beforehand an enclosed place for the satyagrahis to answer calls of nature. If the villagers do not already use khadi, it is clear that they should now start using it.

It is desirable that information under the following heads should be kept ready for each village:

1. Population: Number of women, men, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsis, etc.

2. Number of untouchables.

3. If there is a school in the village, the number of boys and girls attending it.

4. Number of spinning-wheels.

5. The monthly sale of khadi.

6. Number of people wearing khadi exclusively.

7. Salt consumed per head; salt used for cattle, etc.

8. Number of cows and buffaloes in the village.

9. The amount of land revenue paid; at what rate per acre.

10. The area of the common grazing-ground if any.

11. Do the people drink? How far is the liquor shop from the village?

12. Educational and other special facilities, if any, for the untouchables.

It will be good if this information is written out on a sheet of paper neatly and handed to me immediately on our arrival.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 9-3-1930

417. LETTER TO MANIBEHN PATEL

March 9, 1930

CHI. MANI,

I was waiting every day to hear from you. Not a day passed on which I did not remember you, but I quite understand your feeling that I neglect you. My pitiable condition is responsible for it. I have no time even to raise my head to look at anybody. I was content with knowing where you were and what you were about.

Father did not leave any instructions for you. He had no idea [he would be arrested]. You should live in any place where you will be happy and at peace.¹ You can certainly go to jail when the time comes. Mahadev has written about it. I understand why you like to live in the Ashram. But I think your attitude is not proper. Compulsion in such matters however is out of the question. So I will say nothing more about it. I only wish that you should be at ease, no matter where you live.

I expect to be arrested before Tuesday.

Be brave and improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. MANIBEHN
C/O DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL
SHRIRAM NIWAS, PAREKH STREET, BOMBAY-4

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-4: Ku. Manibehn Patelne, p. 69

418. LETTER TO SATIN D. GUPTA

[Before March 10, 1930]

I know my absence will bring a fresh leader to the forefront. Let every man constitute himself into a leader and conduct the movement whose success must depend on the deep faith of the mass in non-violence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 10-3-1930

¹ The addressee had been ailing and was receiving treatment in Bombay.

419. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI
ASHRAM ¹

March 10, 1930

I am glad that you have been coming to our prayer in such large numbers, and generally I would say, 'May your tribe increase.' But I must utter a few words of warning. If it is mere curiosity that draws you here, you had better not come at all. If it is the prayer that attracts you, you are quite welcome, but in that case this sudden inroad cannot be accounted for. But I presume you come both for the prayer and for understanding the significance of the campaign I am about to launch.

As for the prayer, I assure you that mere utterance, parrot wise, of the name of God is of no avail. All your trouble in coming this long distance from the town would be wasted and the quiet of our prayers would be disturbed. If therefore your desire to take part in the prayer is genuine, you must be prepared to fulfil a condition which alone can prove your *bona fides*, and that is that you come here dressed in khadi. You may or may not admit the many claims made on behalf of khadi, but one thing is now practically universally admitted, that khadi unites the wearer to the poorest of the land. And I may tell you that but for the progress that khadi has made in recent years I should not have been able to launch this campaign. It is the spread of khadi that infuses in me the hope that the message of non-violence has spread to the masses, for I have always associated non-violence with khadi. A believer in violence may wear khadi, but he would do so in order to exploit it.

As for the other desire that also prompts you to come here, you know that the march begins on Wednesday morning. Everyone is on the tiptoe of expectation, and before anything has happened the thing has attracted world-wide attention. Now I should like to analyse the thing for you and to implore you to appreciate its implications. Though the battle is to begin in a couple of days, how is it that you can come here quite fearlessly? I do not think anyone of you would be here if you had to face rifleshots or bombs. But you have no fear of rifleshots or bombs. Why? Supposing I had announced that I was going to launch a violent campaign (not necessarily with men armed with rifles, but even with sticks or stones), do you think the Government would have left me free until now? Can you show me an

¹ This is a condensed summary of Gandhiji's speech made at the end of the prayer meeting, which was attended by about 2,000 people.

example in history (be it England, America or Russia) where the State has tolerated violent defiance of authority for a single day? But here you know that the Government is puzzled and perplexed. And you have come here because you have been familiarized by now with the idea of seeking voluntary imprisonment.

Then I would ask you to proceed a step further. Supposing ten men in each of the 700,000 villages in India come forward to manufacture salt and to disobey the Salt Act, what do you think can this Government do? Even the worst autocrat you can imagine would not dare to blow regiments of peaceful civil resisters out of a cannon's mouth. If only you will bestir yourselves just a little, I assure you we should be able to tire this Government out in a very short time. I want you, therefore, to understand the meaning of this struggle and to do your part in it. If it is only curiosity that moves you to walk this long distance, you had better not waste your time and mine. If you come here to bless us and our movement, the blessings must take some concrete shape. I don't want any money from you. I am hoping that it may be possible to fight this battle with the least possible money. At the time of Kheda Satyagraha in 1918 I had to refuse several offers for raising contributions. In Bardoli an appeal was made and there was a spontaneous response, but much of the money was saved and is now being utilized for constructive work. So I do not want you to contribute any money just now. That you will do unasked when our suffering has reached that stage which cannot but compel your sympathy. But I want you to take your courage in both hands and contribute in men towards the struggle which promises to be fierce and prolonged. I certainly expect the city of Ahmedabad, the Ahmedabad of Vallabhbhai, who is already in jail, to furnish an unlimited supply of volunteers to keep the stream unbroken, in case batch after batch happens to be arrested and marched to jail. That is the least I expect of you. May God give you the strength to rise to the occasion.

Young India, 12-3-1930

420. MESSAGE TO ANDHRA¹

[Before March 11, 1930]

This is a battle to the finish. The Divine Hand is guiding it. It must be prolonged till the last man offers himself for satyagraha.

The Hindu, 14-3-1930

¹ This was read out at a public meeting held on March 11 under the auspices of the Rajahmundry City Congress Committee.

421. INTERVIEW TO H. D. RAJAH ¹

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]

I had a prolonged interview with Gandhiji regarding the coming struggle and the part youths are to play. Gandhi said:

I begin the struggle in right earnest on 12th morning. This struggle must be continued to the successful end. Either we shall be effaced out of the earth or we shall spring up as an independent nation enjoying full freedom. We shall face the bullets with our backs to the wall. In our fight, we shall be engaged in active civil disobedience campaign and fill the prisons with men and women, but there will be no retreat at any cost. I hope to return to Ashram triumphant in our struggle for India achieving her independence.

Questioned by me as to what the people should do when he is arrested, Gandhiji said:

Yes, I expect arrest at any moment. But the fight should continue. The Congress Committees, Provincial, District or Taluka, should organize the campaign.

What part can the Youth Leagues play in this fight?

The Youth Leagues should organize volunteers and offer them to the Congress Committees which decide on a course of action. If any Congress Committee of a particular place fails to do the work, the Youth League would take up the work and do it. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 12-3-1930

422. INTERVIEW TO "THE MANCHESTER GUARDIAN"

SABARMATI ASHRAM,

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]²

I don't believe that the slightest good for India can come of the Round Table Conference in London. I would like to spare the world the melancholy spectacle of Indians fighting against Indians in a foreign country, but this is what the Conference would lead to, as it seems to be composed at present. I shall waste no time. I expect my movement to be successful. I hope that my movement will not lead to deeds of violence, but even in this case there can be no going back for me. Yet I supported the Nehru Report once; but many things have

¹ This was published as a letter to the Editor.

² Evidently the interview was given before Gandhiji started on his march on March 12, 1930.

changed since then.

I admit that this may be my last chance, and if I do not seize it, it may never come again. The revolutionary and, of course, violent movement has gained ground heavily. The need for the speediest action is absolutely clear. The question of religious antagonisms and the problem of the native States are subordinate questions, and cannot be solved until we have the power in our own hands. I do not believe that there is any solution to the Indian problem except the one I have now proposed.

The Hindu, 11-6-1930

423. ON RECORDING OF MESSAGE¹

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]

If there is truth in my message, then whether I am inside or outside the jail, people are bound to pay heed to it. But if there is no truth in it, then in spite of all your efforts, and even with the help of gramophone, you would not be able to carry it to the people. If the satyagraha we are going to start is really satyagraha, that is to say, if it means an insistence on truth, and if we are prepared to go ahead on the basis of truth and non-violence, it is bound to succeed, whether people hear my words or not, and whether my voice reaches their ears or not. Therefore, a record like this is neither necessary nor likely to be of any help.

At the Feet of Mahatma Gandhi, pp. 181-2

424. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ²

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]

Q. What sort of Government do you want?

A. I want a Government that would obey and carry out the wishes of the people.

Q. You want a democracy?

A. I am not interested in words, and I never worry myself about the form of government.

Q. But don't you mind methods?

A. I do mind them very much indeed, but I don't mind the form.

¹ Rajendra Prasad had suggested that a message of Gandhiji might be recorded so that it could be played after his arrest. This was Gandhiji's reply.

² These were reported by Mahadev Desai under the heading "Talks before the Trek".

Q. Then you would not mind a monarchy?

A. I said form and machinery do not much matter to me.

Q. Well, then, tell me what form your democracy will take.

A. I do not know; the method alone interests me, and by method I mean the agency through which the wishes of the people are reached. There are only two methods; one is that of fraud and force; the other is that of non-violence and truth. Force always includes fraud, non-violence always excludes it.

Q. Can't you have fraud with non-violence?

A. No. Impossible. Fraud itself is a species of violence.

Q. Well, I have seen fraud associated with non-violence. China is reputed to be one of the most peaceful countries in the world, and if I were to tell you about the frauds there, you would be shocked.

A. I repeat, words do not capture my imagination. As a people, the Chinese are one of the most peaceful in the world, but that peace cannot be real and voluntary if there is fraud in it. If I harbour ill-will in my breast but do not express it in acts, I am still violent. By non-violence or peace I mean the peace which comes through inner strength. If I have that peace, that non-violence, I won't have any hate in me. Violence does not necessarily mean bodily harm. What I want to impress on everyone is that I do not want India to reach her goal through questionable means. Whether that is possible or not is another question. It is sufficient for my present purpose if the person who thinks out the plan and leads the people is absolutely above board and has non-violence and truth in him. Non-violence works organically, not mechanically. It was for that reason that I asked for unrestricted authority from the Working Committee of the Congress to work out my plan of non-violence.

Q. Don't you think, Gandhiji, boycott of foreign goods would be more potent than civil disobedience?

A. Years ago I heard that futile cry and I replaced it by one for the boycott of foreign cloth. It made some impression, but that of boycott of foreign goods made none at all.

Q. My impression is that in Bengal boycott of British goods was tried with success, but no other province took it up.

A. No. It fizzled out. The mills in Ahmedabad and Bombay defrauded the nation by sending spurious cloth; and when genuine mill-cloth was sent, exorbitant prices were charged.

Q. That is what I mean to say. The thing was not tried seriously.

A. If it was not, it means that the people did not want to. So far as I am concerned, I never believed in it and so I could never back it.

Q. But would it not be easier to handle foreign-cloth boycott than civil disobedience?

A. No. It is far more difficult. In one case you want the co-operation of 300 million people. In the other, even if you have an army of ten thousand defiant men and women, your work is done.

Q. Why? They can be all clapped in jail and nothing more will happen thereafter.

A. Let them try the experiment. They would have to hang these men before they could dismiss them from their minds. If these men are trusty and true their very presence will worry the Government unto death.

Q. Will they worry Government even in prison?

A. For one thing they can't keep them there for any length of time. The fact is that we never had even 5,000 full civil resisters in 1921. Every political prisoner is not necessarily a civil resister.

Q. Will not your movement lead to violence?

A. It may, though I am trying my best to prevent any outbreak of violence. Today there is greater risk of violence, in the absence of any safety-valve in the shape of a movement of non-violence like the one I am contemplating.

Q. Yes, I have heard you say that you are launching this campaign for the very purpose of stopping violence.

A. It is one argument, but that is not the most conclusive argument. The other and most conclusive argument for me is that if non-violence has to prove its worth, it must prove its worth today. It must cease to be the passive or even impotent instrument that it has come to be looked upon [as] in certain quarters. And when it is exercised in the most effective way, it must act in spite of the most fatal *outward* obstructions. In fact non-violence by its very nature must neutralize all *outward* obstruction. On the contrary, inward obstacles in the shape of fraud, hatred, and ill-will would be fatal to the movement. Up to now I used to say: "Let me get control over the forces of violence." It is growing upon me now that it is only by setting the force of non-violence in motion that I can get those elements under control.

But I hear people say, "History will have to repeat itself in India." Let it repeat itself, if it must. I for one must not postpone the movement unless I am to be guilty of the charge of cowardice. I must fight unto death the system based on violence and thus bring under control the force of political violence. When real organic non-violence is set to work, the masses also will react manfully.

Q. But after you are removed the movement will no longer be in your control?

A. In South Africa the movement was not in my control during the latter part of it, when it gained considerable momentum without any action on my part. Thousands joined the movement instinctively. I had not even seen the faces of them, much less known them. They joined because they felt that they must. They had possibly only heard my name, but they saw in the twinkling of an eye that it was a movement for their liberation; they knew that there was a man prepared to fight the £3 tax and they took the plunge. And against what odds? Their mines were converted into jails; the men who oppressed them day and night were appointed warders over them. They knew that there would be hell let loose on them. And yet they did not waver or falter. It was a perfect miracle.

Q. But would not the movement add to the already numerous divisions existing in the country?

A. I have no such fear. The forces of disunion can be kept under control, even as the forces of violence. You may say that there is fear elsewhere. The party of violence may not respond to my advances and the masses might behave unthinkingly. I am an optimist and have an abiding faith in human nature. The party of violence will give me fair play and the masses will act rightly by instinct. It is possible that I may be living in a fool's paradise. But no general can possibly provide for all contingencies. For me it is the opportunity of a lifetime. The movement is none of my seeking. Almost in spite of myself I was irresistibly drawn to Calcutta. I entered into a compromise to which I was driven. The period of two years I changed to one, simply because it did not involve any moral principle. In Lahore I had to conceive and frame practically every resolution. There I saw the forces of violence and non-violence in full play, acting side by side; and I found that non-violence ultimately triumphed over violence.

Q. You said some time ago that the time was not ripe for civil disobedience. What has happened between that time and today that has helped you to alter your view?

A. I am quite positive that it is fully ripe. The reason I will tell you. Nothing has happened externally, but the internal conflict in me, which was the only barrier, has ceased; and I am absolutely certain now that the campaign had been long overdue. I might have started it long before this.

Q. And what was that internal conflict?

A. You know I have always been guided solely by my attitude towards non-violence, but I did not know then how to translate that attitude into action in the face of growing violence. But now I see as

clearly as daylight that, pursuing the course that I have adopted, I minimize the risk I am taking.

Q. Are you sure that the salt campaign will lead you to jail?

A. I have not a shadow of doubt that it will. How long exactly it will take is more than I can say, but I feel that it will be much sooner than most people would be inclined to think. I expect a crisis to be soon reached which would lead to a proper Conference—not a Round Table Conference, but a Square Table, one where everybody attending it would know his bearings. The exact lineaments of that Conference I cannot at present depict, but it will be a Conference between equals met to lay their heads together to devise ways and means for the establishment of an Independent Constitution in India.

Q. Were you not responsible for allowing the Viceregal negotiations to come to an abrupt end?

A. I know that is the impression in certain quarters; the public blamed me for a time, but now it has come to understand the true position.

Q. Are you quite sure that in the position you took, the influence of the younger generation did not weigh with you?

A. No. Not a bit. I had never been sanguine about the Round Table Conference. I went of course as far as I could. But the central thing I always insisted on was that the Conference should apply itself to a scheme of Dominion Status suited to the needs of India. If the Viceroy had said 'Yes', I should gladly have asked him to proceed to the other points.

Q. Then you had no objection to the scheme coming into operation some years hence?

A. If the scheme was such as to come into operation at a future time, I should rule it out. But I may not talk about our interview with the Viceroy. The public might know more about it some day. I can assure you however that there was no question of a real Dominion Status scheme being framed.

Q. Just a question about your now famous eleven points. If some of them are conceded, would there be room for a compromise?

A. If they were to concede a few main points and couple the concession with a promise that the rest would be conceded as soon as possible, I would be prepared to consider a proposition for a Conference. But the justice of all those demands must be admitted. You will agree that there is nothing new about them. Most have been handed down to us from Dadabhai Naoroji's time.

Q. Supposing they conceded your demand about the reduction of civil and

military expenditure, would you not regard it as a sufficient proof of their *bona fides*?

A. I should seriously reconsider my position, but it would all depend on the spirit in which the concession was made.

Young India, 20-3-1930

425. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM*

[On or before *March 11, 1930*]¹

Let me, moreover, make one thing clear. Either we shall win the goal for which we are marching or die in the attempt to win it. There can be no turning back for us hereafter. We will keep on our fight till swaraj is established in India. This will be the last fight. The soldiers who accompany me must note that there is to be no retreat. Those of them that are married should take leave of their wives, and the wives should congratulate their husbands on their being the first soldiers of the country's freedom battle. We are as good as parting from the Ashram and from our homes. Only with complete victory can we return to this place.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 16-3-1930

426. *SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM*

March 11, 1930

In all probability this will be my last speech to you. Even if the Government allow me to march tomorrow morning, this will be my last speech on the sacred banks of the Sabarmati. Possibly these may be the last words of my life here.

I have already told you yesterday what I had to say. Today I shall confine myself to what you should do after I and my companions are arrested. The programme of the march to Jalalpur must be fulfilled as originally settled. The enlistment of volunteers for this purpose should be confined to Gujarat. From what I have seen and heard during the last fortnight I am inclined to believe that the stream of civil resisters will flow unbroken.

But let there be not a semblance of breach of peace even after all of us have been arrested. We have resolved to utilize all our resources in the pursuit of an exclusively non-violent struggle. Let no

¹ According to the source the speech was delivered to a large gathering either on the 10th or 11th of March.

one commit a wrong in anger. This is my hope and prayer. I wish these words of mine reached every nook and corner of the land. My task shall be done if I perish and so do my comrades. It will then be for the Working Committee of the Congress to show you the way and it will be up to you to follow its lead. That is the only meaning of the Working Committee's resolution. The reins of the movement will still remain in the hands of those of my associates who believe in non-violence as an article of faith. Of course, the Congress will be free to chalk out what course of action commends itself to it. So long as I have not reached Jalalpur, let nothing be done in contravention to the authority vested in me by the Congress. But once I am arrested, the whole general responsibility shifts to the Congress. No one who believes in non-violence, as a creed, need therefore sit still. My compact with the Congress ends as soon as I am arrested. In that case there should be no slackness in the enrolment of volunteers. Wherever possible, civil disobedience of salt laws should be started. These laws can be violated in three ways. It is an offence to manufacture salt wherever there are facilities for doing so. The possession and sale of contraband salt (which includes natural salt or salt earth) is also an offence. The purchasers of such salt will be equally guilty. To carry away the natural salt deposits on the seashore is likewise a violation of law. So is the hawking of such salt. In short, you may choose anyone or all of these devices to break the salt monopoly.

We are, however, not to be content with this alone. Wherever there are Congress Committees, wherever there is no ban by the Congress and wherever the local workers have self-confidence, other suitable measures may be adopted. I prescribe only one condition, viz., let our pledge of truth and non-violence as the only means for the attainment of swaraj be faithfully kept. For the rest, everyone has a free hand. But that does not give a licence to all and sundry to carry on on their individual responsibility. Wherever there are local leaders, their orders should be obeyed by the people. Where there are no leaders and only a handful of men have faith in the programme, they may do what they can, if they have enough self-confidence. They have a right, nay, it is their duty, to do so. The history of the world is full of instances of men who rose to leadership by sheer force of self-confidence, bravery and tenacity. We too, if we sincerely aspire to swaraj and are impatient to attain it, should have similar self-confidence. Our ranks will swell and our hearts strengthen as the number of our arrests by Government increases.

Let nobody assume that after I am arrested there will be no one left to guide them. It is not I but Pandit Jawaharlal who is your guide. He has the capacity to lead. Though the fact is that those who have

learnt the lesson of fearlessness and self-effacement need no leader, but if we lack these virtues, not even Jawaharlal will be able to produce them in us.

Much can be done in other ways besides these. Liquor and foreign-cloth shops can be picketed. We can refuse to pay taxes if we have the requisite strength. The lawyers can give up practice. The public can boycott the courts by refraining from litigation. Government servants can resign their posts. In the midst of the despair reigning all round people quake with fear of losing employment. Such men are unfit for swaraj. But why this despair? The number of Government servants in the country does not exceed a few hundred thousand. What about the rest? Where are they to go? Even free India will not be able to accommodate a greater number of public servants. A Collector then will not need the number of servants he has got today. He will be his own servant. How can a poor country like India afford to provide a Collector with separate servants for performing the duties of carrying his papers, sweeping, cooking, latrine-cleaning and letter-carrying? Our starving millions can by no means afford this enormous expenditure. If, therefore, we are sensible enough, let us bid good-bye to Government employment, no matter if it is the post of a judge or a peon. It may be difficult for a judge to leave his job, but where is the difficulty in the case of a peon? He can earn his bread everywhere by honest manual labour. This is the easiest solution of the problem of freedom. Let all who are co-operating with the Government in one way or another, be it by paying taxes, keeping titles, or sending children to official schools, etc., withdraw their co-operation in all or as many ways as possible. One can devise other methods, too, of non-co-operating with the Government. And then there are women who can stand shoulder to shoulder with men in this struggle.

You may take it as my will. It was the only message that I desired to impart to you before starting on the march or for the jail. I wish there to be no suspension or abandonment of the war that commences tomorrow morning, or earlier if I am arrested before that time. I shall eagerly await the news that ten batches are ready as soon as my batch is arrested. I believe there are men in India to complete the work begun by me today. I have faith in the righteousness of our cause and the purity of our weapons. And where the means are clean, there God is undoubtedly present with His blessings. And where these three combine, there defeat is an impossibility. A satyagrahi, whether free or incarcerated, is ever victorious. He is vanquished only when he forsakes truth and non-violence and turns a deaf ear to the Inner Voice. If, therefore, there is such a thing as defeat for even a

satyagrahi, he alone is the cause of it. God bless you all and keep off all obstacles from the path in the struggle that begins tomorrow. Let this be our prayer.

Young India, 20-3-1930

427. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[*March 11, 1930*]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

It is nearing 10 p.m. now. The air is thick with the rumour that I shall be arrested during the night. I have not wired to you especially because the correspondents submit their messages for approval and everybody is working at top speed. There was nothing special to wire about.

Things are developing extraordinarily well. Offers of volunteers are pouring in. The column will proceed with the march even though I may be arrested. If I am not, you may expect wires from me; otherwise I am leaving instructions.

I do not know that I have anything in particular to say. I have written enough. I gave a final message this evening to a vast crowd that gathered for prayer on the sands.

May God keep you and give you strength to bear the burden.

With love to you all,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 83-4

428. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

THE ASHRAM, SABARMATI,

March 11, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

This may be my last letter—before my arrest at any rate. Tomorrow I feel they are bound to arrest me. There are rumours also to this effect. I have received your letters. What reply can I give? Do whatever is possible. I am giving instructions that a copy of the *Gita* be sent to you. It is ready.

I have no time to write separately to Hemprabha Devi. May God grant you both the strength to give up all, the wisdom always to discern your duty and a long life for service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1636

429. TELEGRAM TO BHAWANIDAYAL SANNYASI¹

[On or after March 11, 1930]

WISH YOU SUCCESS.

GANDHI

From a microfilm: S.N. 16668

430. MESSAGE TO BOMBAY PROVINCIAL
CONGRESS COMMITTEE

[Before March 12, 1930]

I have the telegram of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee about Jamnalalji. I agree with the Committee that Jamnalalji's presence in Bombay at the present moment will be of greater benefit to the country than elsewhere. I have conferred with him and he has decided to give Bombay as much time as he can. I only hope that Bombay will make the fullest use of his presence and will take a leading part as has been its wont in the movement of emancipation. I hope that Bombay has fittingly celebrated Sardar Vallabhbhai's arrest.

The Bombay Chronicle, 13-3-1930

431. SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL

Sardar Vallabhbhai is the one man who has been responsible for keeping the peace in Gujarat during these troublous times. He is the man whose unique administration of the Ahmedabad Municipal Board drew unstinted praise from the Government. He is the man whose tireless energy put heart into the flood-stricken people of Gujarat in 1927 and when the Government machinery had broken down, his workers were responsible for saving the lives of thousands of people. It was Vallabhbhai Patel who waged a peaceful war in Bardoli the other day resulting in a settlement honourable to both the parties. This man of peace, this idol of the Gujaratis, their uncrowned king, is now a prisoner for disregarding a notice prohibiting speech when there was not even the remotest danger of breach of the peace. He had not gone, the authorities knew, for disobeying the provisions of the Salt Act. He had gone simply to prepare for my march. He had to be removed somehow or other. The Viceroy is sorry for my

¹ This was in reply to the addressee's telegram received on March 11, 1930, which read: "Accepted presidentship Shahabad District Congress, Starting satyagraha after your arrest. Send blessings."

contemplated breach of the law. What is to be said of this act of corrupting and abusing the law, interfering with a man's liberty in the name of the law?

And where is Sardar living and how? He is in a common cell, unable to sleep in the open and without any light. He is given food which may induce dysentery to which he is prone.

He may not receive any but religious books. As a satyagrahi, he wants no special treatment. But why should the commonest felon be prevented, if he is no danger to safety, from sleeping under the sky in this hot weather? Why should a felon not be given light to read or write if he needs it? May not a murderer read and instruct himself? And why should Sardar Vallabhbhai not have food that his health demands? But this is a matter of prison reform. Sardar Vallabhbhai is not the man whose spirit will be broken, if he does not get the necessary creature comforts. Did not the learned journalist and dramatic author Sjt. Khadilkar have similar treatment only the other day? The spirit of satyagraha will not be broken by shabby treatment in the Indian prisons. Only let those who have faith in the proposed conference know what Dominion Status in action really means. Gujarat, nay, India, is perparing to vindicate the authority of the supreme law which will supersede the utter lawlessness masquerading under the name of law. The authorities have imprisoned Vallabhbhai in the hope that his work will languish. Before long they will realize that his work will continue as if he were bodily in the midst of his people.

PS.

Information has just been received that Sardar is being better treated. He is to be allowed literature and the food he may need.

Young India, 12-3-1930

432. *BEGGING THE QUESTION*

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

His Excellency the Viceroy desires me to acknowledge your letter of the 2nd March. He regrets to learn that you contemplate a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace.

Yours very truly,

G. CUNNINGHAM

PRIVATE SECRETARY

The reader is familiar with this reply. He will note, too, that it begs the question; and if further justification were needed, this stereotyped reply affords it. On bended knees I asked for bread and I have received stone instead.

It was open to the Viceroy to disarm me by freeing the poor man's salt, tax on which costs him five annas per year or nearly three days' income. I do not know outside India anyone who pays to the State Rs. 3 per year, if he earns Rs. 360 during that period. It was open to the Viceroy to do many other things except sending the usual reply. But the time is not yet. He represents a nation that does not easily give in, that does not easily repent. Entreaty never convinces it. It readily listens to physical force. It can witness with bated breath a boxing match for hours without fatigue. It can go mad over a football match in which there may be broken bones. It goes into ecstasies over blood-curdling accounts of war. It will listen also to mute resistless suffering. It will not part with the millions it annually drains from India in reply to any argument, however convincing. The Viceregal reply does not surprise me.

But I know that the salt tax has to go and many other things with it, if my letter means what it says. Time alone can show how much of it was meant.

The reply says I contemplate a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of the law and danger to the public peace. In spite of the forest of books containing rules and regulations, the only law that the nation knows is the will of the British administrators, the only public peace the nation knows is the peace of a public prison. India is one vast prison house. I repudiate this law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of the compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the nation for want of free vent.

Young India, 12-3-1930

433. THE FOURFOLD CURSE

The moral influence of British rule on personal character, on the position of women, in stimulation of public spirit, in the attitude to children and the poor and infirm, far outweighs the great material burdens imposed by it.

Thus writes the *Indian Daily Mail* of 7th March. I was unprepared for this defence of the British rule at this hour of the day. It reminds me of a learned Indian saying fifteen years ago, at a conference, that he was proud to own the British Tommy as his master as he owed all his knowledge to his British professors. A Governor and his wife were present at this conference. I hung my head in shame when I heard the learned sentiment and the vigorous clapping of it by the Governor's wife. One sees in the two sentiments quoted by me an exemplification of our cultural conquest which is worse than the material.

But for the cultural conquest, it must be the plainest thing to see

that it is *not* the British rule but British contact that has exercised whatever moral influence we may feel. Surely the two things are different and may well be contradictory. British contact may be a godsend, British rule may be a curse. And we may have the one without the other. My description of the rule as a curse would be accurate even though a knowledge of the good influence of British contact might be present with me at the time of giving the description. Personally I dispute much of the glorification whether of the British contact or the British rule painted in the sentence quoted. Nor must it be forgotten that the masses are wholly untouched by the influence described by the writer. Is the doubtful character of the moral results on the educated few an ample or any compensation for the pauperization of millions? And what is this moral influence on the few educated among us? Are we more truthful, are we cleaner, are we more sober, are we more humane, are we braver than the masses? Are the wives of the educated few better off than those of the masses who fearlessly work in their fields without molestation from their husbands? Is our record about venereal diseases—that infallible index to the moral content of a human being—better than among the masses? Are we less selfish than they? What do we do for the poor and the infirm? How much do we set apart even from our superfluities for their sake? I need not prolong the agony. I fear that the confinement to the city life and the comparative ease that the city life has given us have made us too lazy and too indifferent to study the condition of rural India and to think for ourselves.

Nor do we fully realize the meaning of economic distress. It is below par in the sense that the distress has reduced man in India below his species. He is an underfed beast of burden in human form and is daily sinking. The money taken from him is never used for his betterment. He is untouched by any moral or other good influence.

But the article under consideration says that the Indian States are much worse. If they are, our thanks are again due to the British rule. The Princes have no incentive to be good, they are exposed to every temptation to 'go wrong'. They are more irresponsible than they were before. The ryots were once able to rise against Princely tyranny; now the Princes are protected by the awe-inspiring British power. It is true that they are free to do what good they like. But the hot-house culture which they are given from infancy has given them a taste for pleasures and pomp they will not forgo, and the seclusion which is imposed upon them in childhood so isolates them from their people as to make them strangers in their own land. It speaks volumes for the ancient culture that in spite of every influence to the contrary, there are bright examples now and then to be seen. Remove the dead weight of the

British rule which ‘stunts’ them and us, and they and we as independent parts of the same ancient land will grow as if by magic. But if they hug the golden chains that bind them to the British footstool, they are at liberty to hold on to the chains. India outside the States zone is awake and will bear the yoke no longer, even if it has to break in the attempt.

The exclusive stress in my letter to the Viceroy on the economic exploitation was inevitable for my purpose. But the moral and spiritual wrong which is a direct result of the foreign rule is probably greater even than the economic wrong. Those who are engaged in the war of independence are not, it is obvious, moved by the economic wrong. *They* do not *feel* it. *They* are moved solely by the moral and spiritual wrong which they feel in every fibre of their being. The degradation they scent in the air, the very knowledge that a whole continent of which they are children lies prostrate at the feet of a handful of men coming from a distant island fills them with horror and disgust with themselves. In their impatience to break through the snaky coil they do not mind what they do so long as they do something, even though it may destroy them. I claim to have presented India with a sovereign remedy for dealing effectively with the fourfold curse. The remedy is designed to free India and also Britain. It will not be long before her people will acknowledge that I am not their enemy. I claim to be their true and wise friend and an equally true and wise servant of India.

Young India, 12-3-1930

434. MISREPRESENTATION

Having lost caste with some Mussalmans, there are numerous misrepresentations about me to be seen in the Muslim Press. A friend has brought the latest to my notice. It is to the effect that I have prevented the Imam Saheb, an inmate of the Ashram and an honoured life co-worker, from joining the Ashram group of civil resisters, on the plea that he could not subscribe to non-violence as an article of faith for achieving the national purpose. The fact is quite the reverse. Imam Saheb’s name is on my list. He gave it after full deliberation. I personally never had any difficulty about reading the message of non-violence in the Koran. Imam Saheb is not joining the march as he is too weak to undertake the exertion. But it is quite likely that he may offer himself for arrest when the actual manufacture of contraband salt commences. Two Mussalmans are actually enlisted for the march, as they have no difficulty about subscribing to the creed of non-violence for the purpose of swaraj.

Thus the insinuation referred to is baseless in two ways. But the moment there is suspicion about a person's motives, everything he does becomes tainted. The present plan of campaign is so designed as ultimately to dispel all suspicion.

Young India, 12-3-1930

435. WHAT IT IS NOT

Maulana Shaukat Ali is reported to have said that the independence movement is a movement not for swaraj but for Hindu Raj and against Mussalmans, that therefore the latter should leave it alone. On reading the report I wired to the Maulana inquiring whether he was correctly reported. He has kindly replied confirming the report. The Maulana has launched a grave charge against the movement. It needs to be repudiated once for all. Whatever the movement is, it certainly is not for Hindu Raj, nor is it against Mussalmans. It bears within itself a complete answer to the charge. The Congress has taken the first step in final non-co-operation. No Congressman can enter the legislatures, much less accept employment under the Government. No Congressman can seek or receive favours from the Government. Does not the Hindu-Muslim question centre round a division of political power—spoils of office? How can the movement be anti-Mussalman or for Hindu Raj when no one identified with it has the slightest notion, till independence is reached, of possessing any political power? True, the Congress has still left open the entrance to local boards. What is at present going on in Calcutta almost makes me think that instead of being weak, I should have pressed for the boycott even of these boards. The Congress is better without these temptations. They are just now mere snares for the unwary or the selfish rather than instruments of national service for the patriot. But I am sure the Maulana did not have the local boards in mind when he said that the movement was against Mussalmans. The only ground for the belief, in so far as I can fathom it, can be that those who are engaged in it must, by its very nature, become more self-reliant, more defiant and more capable of resisting any encroachment on their liberty than before, and that since the vast majority of them are Hindus, they will in course of time become more powerful than the Mussalmans. But such reasoning would be unworthy of the brave Maulana I have known him to be. He must therefore explain to the public what he means by his serious charge.

I grant that if till the end of the chapter only Hindus join the movement in the right spirit, they will become an irresistible force of the right, i.e., non-violent type. But the obvious deduction from this

fact is that all those who are keeping aloof should join the movement at the earliest moment. And I prophesy that, if the movement keeps the chalked path, the Maulana and the other Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, Jews, etc., will join it.

Surely all are equally interested in securing repeal of the salt tax. Do not all need and use salt equally? That is the one tax which is no respecter of persons.

Civil disobedience is a process of developing internal strength and therefore an organic growth. Resistance to the salt tax can hurt no single communal interest. On the contrary it must, if successful, help the abstainers equally with the participants.

As against this absolutely national method of gaining our end, put the unnatural, artificial and diplomatic method of a Round Table Conference in which conflicting interests will be represented by interested parties, and all the Indian groups together will be moved and dominated by the paramount and all-powerful British group. This conference without the power of the people behind it and composed of the powerful and the weak will bring anything but swaraj. In the existing circumstances therefore it can only result in further consolidating the British power.

Civil resisters can have nothing to do with such a conference. Their business is merely to generate and conserve national strength. They have nothing to do with communalism. But if they are compelled by force of circumstances to countenance a communal solution, they are pledged only to consider such as may be satisfactory to the parties concerned. How the Maulana can call such a movement anti-Muslim or one for obtaining Hindu Raj, passes comprehension.

The fact that those taking part in the movement are preponderantly Hindus is unfortunately true. By proclaiming a boycott the Maulana is helping the process. Even so, there can be no harm, if the Hindu civil resisters are fighting not for themselves but for all—Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, and others who will make the nation of the future free India.

Not much imagination is required to see that even when civil resisters have acquired sufficient influence to make themselves felt, it will still be open to anyone at the time of framing a constitution to block the way. The only time when abstainers, be they Mussalmans or Hindus or any other, will be helpless against the civil resisters is when they drive out the English or when the latter retire in a huff or in disgust. In the first place, however, they can never do this if their means are uniformly peaceful. Secondly, Mussalmans above all can

help themselves and the nation by joining the struggle. Thirdly, if no violence on the part of the people is offered, civil resistance *must* result in complete conversion of the English. They will then consider it their duty, it will be their penance, to help us, at their own expense, to arrive at a solution of the many difficulties of which they will own themselves to have been the authors. They will help us as absolute equals and friends to inaugurate an independent organized government.

As for the irritation felt by the Maulana against me personally, I need not say much. Since I have no counter-irritation in me, I prophesy that when his temper has cooled down and when he discovers that I am not guilty of the many sins he imagines against me, he will restore me to 'his pocket' in which I had the honour to be only the other day as it were. For it is not I who have gone out of his pocket. He has thrown me out of it. I am the same little man that I used to be in 1921. I can never be an enemy of Mussalmans, no matter what any one or more of them may do to me or mine, even as I can never be an enemy of Englishmen, even though they may heap further wrongs upon the Everest of wrongs their representatives have already piled. I am too conscious of the imperfections of the species to which I belong to be irritated against any single member thereof. My remedy is to deal with the wrong wherever I see it, not to hurt the wrongdoer, even as I would not like to be hurt for the wrongs I continually do.

Young India, 12-3-1930

436. A NEW ORIENTATION

The discussion that has raged round the eleven points mentioned in my article¹ on the Viceregal address to the Assembly and my reference to some of them in my letter to the Viceroy shows how necessary it was to bring them out. Critics have said that these points fall far below even Dominion Status, not to speak of Independence. They could not have carefully read my article or my letter. If they will re-read them, they will find it stated therein that the conceding of those points was a preliminary to a conference about Independence.

Whilst therefore there is no substance in the criticism levelled against my presentation of the case, I am free to admit that I have endeavoured to give a new orientation to the national demand. Just as it was necessary in 1921 to keep the Khilafat and the Punjab wrongs separate from swaraj and I used to say then that for me to have their

¹ Vide "Clearing the Issue" 30-1-1930.

redress purely through our effort was tantamount to swaraj, so has it become necessary for me on the eve of battle to lay stress on the eleven points and even to say that they are swaraj. For if they are not included in swaraj, it can have no meaning for the nation; and if we generate sufficient strength to gain those points, we have strength enough to gain an Independence Constitution.

Let me illustrate my point. There is the proposal for protecting the mill industry and at the same time of Imperial Preference. I call this a dangerous trap, especially when the expression Dominion Status is being bandied about in connection with the proposed Round Table Conference. If against the grant of Dominion Status or even Independence a stipulation is made that there should always be preference for British cloth, Dominion Status or Independence will have no meaning either for the millions or for the indigenous mills. There can never be preference for things British when India is capable of manufacturing them to the full extent of the demand thereof within her own borders. She may share foreign trade with others; she dare not share her inland trade with anybody so long as she is able to cope with it herself. Indeed she is entitled and it is her duty to protect growing industries against even a friendly England or any other friendly power. It would be wrong and unpatriotic for the mill-owners to fall into the trap laid for them. They should stoutly refuse to have anything to do with Imperial Preference for British cloth, even if they gain a prohibitive tariff against all other foreign cloth.

But to revert to my point. The new orientation consists in familiarizing the nation with the contents of Independence. It must know what it is to mean for the masses. There was much meaning in the circular letter of a Youth League recently criticized in these pages. The masses should know both what Independence will and will not mean for them. If the main features are not constantly kept in view and public opinion formulated, when the time comes, they are likely to be overlooked or even deliberately sacrificed. The controversy over public debt has now made it impossible, I hope, for any representative to bind the nation to its payment without being satisfied that it was all incurred in the national interest. It is, I hope, impossible similarly to bind the nation in any future constitution to the high cost of civil and military expenditure. And so it may be said regarding all the illustrative points and many more that can be mentioned by me.

The plan therefore I have in mind is to concentrate the national attention on all these points one after another or simultaneously and demand relief preparatory to Independence.

This is the most expeditious plan, if Independence is to be achieved through peaceful means. Satyagraha works only in this manner. It arms people with power not to seize power but to convert the usurper to their own view till at last the usurper retires or sheds the vices of a usurper and becomes a mere instrument of service of those whom he has wronged. The mission of satyagrahis ends when they have shown the way to the nation to become conscious of the power lying latent in it.

Young India, 12-3-1930

437. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SABARMATI ASHRAM

[*March 12, 1930*]¹

God willing, we shall set out exactly at 6.30. Those joining the march should all be on the spot at 6.20. If our first step is pure, all our subsequent steps will be good and pure. As Manilal is joining us, I would say something for his benefit. He should not join just because he is my son though he cannot help being my son, nor can I forget that I am his father.

We who are setting out with a great responsibility on our heads—we the Ashram inmates—have but one capital. We can boast of no learning. We who took certain vows and pledged ourselves to the Ashram way of life ought to adhere to those vows scrupulously. The seventy-two² men joining the march should once again read the Ashram rules and think whether or not they should join the march. Those inmates of the Ashram who have any dependants will not be able to draw money from the Ashram for them. None should join the struggle with that hope. This fight is no public show; it is the final struggle—a life-and-death struggle. If there are disturbances, we may even have to die at the hands of our own people. Even in that case, we shall have made our full contribution to the satyagraha struggle. We have constituted ourselves the custodians of Hindu-Muslim unity. We hope to become the representatives of the poorest of the poor, the lowest of the low and the weakest of the weak. If we do not have the strength for this, we should not join the struggle. For my part I have taken no pledge not to return here, but I do ask you to return here only as dead men or as winners of swaraj. Chhaganlal Joshi will not be able to run up here if Dhiru falls ill. Even if the Ashram is on fire, we will not return. Only those may join, who have no special duty to their

¹ The source does not mention the date. It is, however, apparent that this was delivered on the morning of the 12th before the beginning of the march.

² Actually seventy-eight; for a list of the names, *vide* Appendix “Letter from Jawaharlal Nehru”, 4-11-1929.

relatives. The marchers have vowed to follow life-long poverty and to observe *brahmacharya* for life. They leave here with the determination to observe *brahmacharya* and will remain faithful to that determination. The man who always follows truth and always proclaims what he does is a brave man. Anyone who deceives others is not brave. I cannot speak to anyone privately for I have not a minute to spare. Though addressing myself to Manilal particularly, I say this to all.

We are entering upon a life-and-death struggle, a holy war we are performing an all-embracing sacrifice in which we wish to offer ourselves as oblation. If you prove incapable, the shame will be mine, not yours. You too have in you the strength that God has given me. The Self in us all is one and the same. In me it has awakened; in others, it has awakened partially.

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

438. *PARTING MESSAGE AT CHANDOLA*¹

March 12, 1930

Your surpassing love for me has drawn you thus far. I appreciate your affection for me which has been so vividly demonstrated by you . . . There were rumours of my arrest last night. God is great, mysterious indeed are His ways. I am here to say good-bye to you. But even if I were in prison, with your strength I could come back. Indeed, it is your strength that will bring us swaraj. Go back and resolve to do your share. Propagate khaddar work, be prepared to offer yourselves as civil resisters. Let there be no flinching. Your way at present, however, lies homeward; mine straight on to the sea-coast. You cannot accompany me at present, but you will have an opportunity to accompany me in a different sense later. . . .

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1930

439. *INTERVIEW TO HARIDAS T. MAJUMDAR*

ASLALI,

March 12, 1930

While he was having lunch, I asked our beloved captain if such an uninterrupted walk of over eleven miles did not tire him out.

¹ Gandhiji and party left Sabarmati Ashram at 6.30 a.m. followed by a huge procession. They reached Chandola lake at 8.30 a.m. after covering seven miles. Gandhiji addressed those who had come to see him off. The message has been extracted from a letter to the Editor by Haridas T. Majumdar who was among the volunteers marching with Gandhiji.

I should not say I am very tired; to be sure, I am tired, but it is ordinary fatigue. I myself am amazed that I should have been able to walk so far at a stretch. You know I have had no practice for some time in long-distance walking....

I asked him what he would like to say in regard to the parallel between the great march of 3,000 men, women and children he had organized in South Africa and the present march to the sea-coast.

Well, the technique is the same even though the organization is different. Soul-force is the weapon common to both. In South Africa, however, there were 3,000 persons, here we are only 79. Again in South Africa we were in the midst of a hostile environment, social as well as political, and we had to carry our own foodstuffs with us; here we are in the midst of a hospitable environment and do not have to carry our food. The march in South Africa was attended by greater hardships than the present one.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-3-1930

440. SPEECH AT ASLALI

[*March 12, 1930*]

Do not be content with merely wearing khadi and plying the spinning-wheel, thinking that you have done all that you could do.

Take the case of your own village: For a population of 1,700, 850 maunds of salt will be required. For 200 bullocks, 300 maunds of salt will be required. That is, a total of 1,150 maunds of salt will be required.

The Government levies a tax of Rs. 1-4 on one pukka maund of salt. Hence, on 1,150 maunds, which is equal to 575 pukka maunds, you pay a tax of Rs. 720.

A bullock must be given two maunds of salt. In addition, there are 800 cows, buffaloes and calves in your village. If you give them salt, or if the tanner uses salt for treating hides, or if you use salt as manure, you would be paying that amount of tax in excess of Rs. 720.

Can your village afford to pay this amount in taxes every year? In India, the average income of an individual is calculated at 7 pice or, in other words, hundreds of thousands of persons do not earn even a single pice and either die of starvation or live by begging. Even they cannot do without salt. What will be the plight of such persons if they can get no salt or get it at too high a price?

Salt, which sells at 9 pice a maund in the Punjab, salt of which

heaps and heaps are being made on the coast of Kathiawar and Gujarat, cannot be had by the poor at less than Re. 1-8-0 a maund. What curses the Government may not be inviting upon itself from the poor for hiring men to throw this salt into mud!

The poor destitute villagers do not have the strength to get this tax repealed. We want to develop this strength.

A democratic State is one which has authority to abolish a tax which does not deserve to be paid. It is one in which the people can determine when a certain thing should or should not be paid.

We, however, do not possess such authority. Likewise, even our supposedly great representatives do not have it. In the Central Legislative Assembly, Pandit Malaviya said that the manner in which Sardar Vallabhbhai was arrested could not be called just ; that it was unjust and high-handed. And this resolution was supported by Mr. Jinnah. To this the Government official replied that their magistrate had acted in a manner which befitted a loyal subject, if he had acted otherwise, he would have been regarded as a traitor. If, however, that is the case, this bearded person (Abbas Saheb) and I should also be arrested, because I on my part openly make speeches about preparing salt.

We want to establish a government which will be unable to arrest a single individual against the wishes of the people, which cannot extract ghee worth even a quarter pice from us, cannot take away our carts, cannot extort money from us.

There are two ways of establishing such a government: that of the big stick or violence and that of non-violence or civil disobedience. We have chosen the second alternative, regarding it as our dharma. And it is because of this that we have set out to prepare salt after serving notice on the Government to that effect.

I can understand there being a tax on such things as the hookah, *bidis* and liquor. And if I were an emperor, I would levy with your permission a tax of one pie on every *bidi*. And if *bidis* are found too expensive, those addicted to them may give them up. But should one levy a tax on salt?

Such taxes should now be repealed. We should make a resolve that we shall prepare salt, eat it, sell it to the people and, while doing so, court imprisonment, if necessary. If, out of Gujarat's population of 90 lakhs, we leave out women and children, and the remaining 30 lakhs get ready to violate the salt tax, the Government does not have enough accommodation in jails to house so many people. Of course, the Government can also beat up and shoot down those who violate the law. But the governments of today are unable to go to this extent.

We, however, are determined to let the Government kill us if it wishes.

The salt tax must be repealed now. The fact that a sea of humanity had gathered and showered blessings upon us—for a distance of seven miles from the Ashram to the Chandola lake—a sight for the gods to see—that is a good omen. And, if we climb even one step, we shall readily be able to climb the other steps leading to the palace of Independence.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 16-3-1930

441. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DURING DANDI MARCH,
[After March 12, 1930]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letters. Find some work for Ranchhodbhai. It can be manual labour. If you can find even some teaching work discuss the matter with him and fix it up.

In this weather Punjabhai can sleep outside. If he does that, mosquitoes at any rate will not bite him.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8091. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

442. HINDI IN BENGAL AND ASSAM

Teachers know that in 1928 a society for the spread of Hindi was formed in Calcutta. The treasurer of the society was Shri Ghanshyamdas Birla. I have received a statement of the working of this society and a statement of accounts. I give the following facts¹ from the statement of its working.

From this it is apparent that the work is progressing in some measure. There is much room for expanding this work. An effort is being made to meet the expenses of each school with local help, which is praiseworthy. Only thus can success be achieved. The start may well be made with the main centre but ultimately all local work should become self-supporting. Only then will the publicity work widen and take on a permanent shape. Bengal and Assam are two places where thousands of people can be taught Hindi. This work is already divided into two parts. The first is instruction and the second is expansion of this work by lectures arranged by local branches. There is need for a third part; and that is revision of the methods of making instruction

¹ Not translated here

easy. Competent and resourceful teachers are daily in search of means to make this work of instruction yield quick results. Many Bengali and Assamese words resemble Hindi. Books to make this fact known should be written, pocket-size Hindi-Bengali and Bengali-Hindi dictionaries should be prepared, Bengali books in Devnagari script and Hindi books in Bengali script should be published. Such books can pay their way as has been shown in Madras. When the books are really useful and good they gain value and they become popular.

One word more. Bengal is a big centre of Marwari traders. The task of spreading Hindi in Bengal is a special responsibility of these traders. So, there should be no hitch in this work for want of funds.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 13-3-1930

443. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 13, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

Whilst there is time, you should write and that fully or as fully as time permits. Yesterday's demonstration was a triumph of non-violence. I know it won't be everywhere and always like that during the struggle, but it was a great and good beginning.

You will be patient, anxious for nothing, charitable towards those who do not do as you would have them do. Your central work is women and children.

See that Reginald takes care of himself and is not rash.

Everything must be in an apple-pie order.

Your diary will be fully kept.

And you will not be anxious about me. He will keep me fit so long as He needs me.

With love,

BAPU

From the original: C. W. 5426. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9660

444. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

March 13, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I hope you received what might have been my last letter¹. The news given to me of my impending arrest was said to be absolutely

¹ Vide "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 11-3-1930.

authentic. But we have reached the second stage safely. We take the third tonight. I am sending you the programme¹. All the friends are most particular that I should not go to Ahmedabad for the Working Committee. There is considerable force in the suggestion. The Working Committee may, therefore, come to the place where we may be for the day or you alone may come. The sentiment that we won't voluntarily go back without finishing the struggle is being well cultivated. My going back will mar it a bit. Jamnalalji told me he had written to you about it. I hope Kamla is keeping well.

I asked yesterday that full wires should be sent to you.

Yours sincerely,

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 84

445. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

March 13, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

Take care of yourself. Besides looking after *Young India*, do please identify yourself with the activities of the Ashram. I am anxious for it to become an abode of peace, purity and strength. You I hold to be a gift from God for the advancement of that work.

Yours,

BAPU

From a photostat: C. W. 5431. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

446. LETTER TO GANGABEHN ZAVERI

March 13, 1930

CHI. GANGABEHN ZAVERI,

I believe you have joined the common kitchen now. Will you also stay in the Hostel? Nanibehn should live only on milk and fruit. If she does that, she will be all right.

This is a rare opportunity for women. I think it will be a great achievement on their part if they assume the entire burden of the internal management of the Ashram.

I have no time to write more.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3099

¹ Not available; *vide*, however, "Satyagrahis' March", 9-3-1930.

447. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

March 13, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

You are certainly mad, but your madness endears you to me. You have been working with greater devotion than I had expected from you and God keeps you in good health. Never be impatient. Try to speak less loudly. If you do so, you will not aggravate the condition of the tonsils.

Tell Kusum that something still remains to be done about her tongue, and that the doctor should attend to it at his leisure.

Write to me. I have no time to write more.

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, pp. 8-9

448. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 13, 1930

CHI. KUSUM¹,

I have your letter. I should have got it yesterday, but Pyarelal forgot to put it up to me and it came into my hand just as I was finishing a letter to Ba.

You have done very well in deciding to move to the Hostel.

Now persuade Dudhibehn to do the same. If, instead of living in a separate room, she went to live in the Hostel, it would be possible to look after her. See that Sarojini works. Do not hesitate to talk to her plainly about it. Get Shantu's ² teeth examined by Haribhai³. Give me reports about all who are ill. Do not neglect to maintain your diary. Study the *Gita* carefully. Clear the Gujarati file. Give me your daily programme of work. I cannot say when I shall be arrested. They may arrest me whenever they wish. In any case, you should write to me regularly. For one day more a car will come from there⁴. Try once again to write about Haribhai⁵. Do not give up the effort in despair.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1792

¹ Kusum Desai used to act as Secretary of the Ashram in the absence of male inmates.

² A trainee of the Charkha Sangh

³ Dr. H. M. Desai of Ahmedabad

⁴ Ahmedabad

⁵ Haribhai Desai, the deceased husband of the addressee. The reference is to his biography that she was intending to write.

449. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

March 13, 1930

CHI. MAHADEV,

I did get your letter. God will grant you everything. We may take it the Ashram has done well so far. But there is scope for much further awakening still. Let us not feel elated too soon. If I remain free, you should certainly take the plunge. I want an account of the good or the harm which the fast may have done Durga.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I had intended to write a separate letter to her, but have dropped the idea.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11471

450. SPEECH AT BAREJA

March 13, 1930

This is our second halt after the march began. As at our first halt, here too I was given the required information about this village. I was pained to read it. It is strange that a place so near Ahmedabad has zeroes against the columns for consumption of khadi, the number of habitual khadi rearers and spinning-wheels at work. During my tours of North and South India, I used to follow a rule, namely, that the barber cutting my hair should be a khadi-wearer. But here you keep yourselves far away from such a thing as khadi. Khadi is the foundation of our freedom struggle. All like khadi, but people are nowadays deterred by the fear that those wearing khadi will have to go to jail and die. Bareja has not a single khadi-wearer, which is indeed a very painful fact. There is a khadi store here and you can certainly remove this blot. We do not disown our mother because she is fat or ugly to look at and adopt another woman, more beautiful, to fill her place. Foreign cloth will never bring us freedom. I request you to renounce luxuries and buy khadi from this heap before you.

At present Sardar is in jail, and I have come here to ask you to join in our common struggle for freedom. Think over the matter and get ready to join. The state of our villages is pitiable in various ways. With the help of these soldiers of freedom, you will be able to make your village clean. It does not take much time to do so. Diligence and care are all that is necessary. The people of this place number twenty-five hundred. If you so resolve, you can make the village

beautiful and have as many amenities as you choose. By doing so, you will help agriculture here and also add to your strength. The education imparted in present-day schools is, according to me, no education at all. The village has a large number of Christians and Muslims also. If you all come together, you will be able to achieve much for the village. For winning complete freedom, all these communities will have to unite.

As for the Bhangis, you believe that they are the scum of the earth. We do nothing at all for their betterment. We only lower ourselves by believing them to be of low birth.

Now, having said this, let me turn to other things. We have come forward to win our freedom from this tyrannical and oppressive Government. If we cannot put our own house in order in an organized manner, how shall we run the country's Government? I ask you, therefore, to learn order and organization. Think of cow-protection also. In this band marching with me, there are experts on animal husbandry who will be able to help you. Introducing improvements by slow degrees, you can solve the question of cow-protection. Do think about these things. This struggle against the Government on which we have embarked is not going to reach its conclusion with five, or twenty-five, or even millions of men getting killed. We have to look after these other things also simultaneously.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

451. SPEECH AT NAVAGAM

March 13, 1930

As I enter the Kheda District, memories—some sweet, some bitter—fill the mind. It was while working in the Kheda District that I became one with the lives of people. I have seen nearly all the villages here. I covered many of them on foot. I have come to Navagam in the middle of a battle. This is our third halt: Aslali was the first, Bareja was the second and Navagam now is the third. Vallabhbhai had great expectations of the Kheda District. Having been arrested in this district, he has won glory for himself.

The Government found some pretext or other to arrest Vallabhbhai. It knew well that his, and not the Government's, writ would prevail in Kheda if he was free. Pressure was brought to bear on the Magistrate somehow to serve a notice on Sardar, and he was arrested. What could a poor Magistrate do where the entire atmosphere is vitiated? We do not yet have the necessary spirit of

self-sacrifice and the necessary self-confidence for anyone of us to tell the Government that he could not issue such a notice. What does it matter that a person receives salary from the Government? And, moreover, who pays that salary? Who am I to explain to the Magistrate that it is God who does that? How can I do it? To the Magistrate the Government is God, the protector, and everything.

The Patidars and the Dharalas, the two principal communities of the Kheda District, are both courageous. What will they do to fight this Government? Before I ask the question, I have to congratulate you all. All the Matadars here have shown great courage in my presence and stated that they would not accept the Headman's office, with the result that the latter has now resigned. I congratulate you on your resignations. If you have been offering resignations under pressure from anyone, I must ask you to withdraw them. Not only will that cause me no pain, but I will protect you against those who might try to force you to resign. This fight is based on truth. I want no victory with unworthy help.

It is after many days and nights of heart-searching that I have decided to stake my life on this last struggle, and to take my co-workers with me so that they, too, may sacrifice their lives. I depend on truth alone for winning this war. I shall be happy if I have your support in that. It will make no difference to me even if you do not resign.

When we win swaraj, even a scavenger will be free to take Vallabhbhai to task. When he was in jail Vallabhbhai used to ask whom he could fight when all officials from the peon upward were Indians. You should remember this. With the present Government might is right. But, against me, its guns and gunpowder are no more than dust or pebbles. Your present duty is to show the Government your strength through your work.

Be true to your word, Headman and Matadars, if you are bent on winning complete independence. You should remember and act upon Tulsidas's words:

“The way of the Raghus it has been ever,
Life may be lost but a pledge never.”

Before all these present here I remind you of this. Listen to me and, if you so feel, admit truthfully that you do not have the strength to resign. The people of the Kheda District have bathed me in their love. No resident of this district should first give me a promise and then stab me in the back.

I shall regard you as brave men if you truthfully withdraw your

resignations, and also if you truthfully adhere to them.¹

In the present struggle, which we have started to establish *Ramarajya*, both the poor and the rich are ready to give me monetary help, but I look up to the people for strengthening me. You will have redoubled my strength when, following me, you come forward to manufacture salt. By leading you along my path, I wish to bring glory to one and all among us. I may ask for your resignations or for money from you; but for the present I am asking for soldiers for this fight. Civil disobedience of the salt law is within the power of all—men and women, young and old.

I have gone through the figures regarding Navagam. In the population numbering a thousand, only one person is a habitual khadi-wearer and there is just one spinning-wheel to swear by. I ask you now to take a vow to produce and wear khadi. That way you will save Rs. 5,000 a year. By working at the spinning-wheel, women too will be adding to their power greatly.

Remember that in the resignations you have handed in I see God's hand. The Kheda District has made an auspicious beginning. I have embarked on this last struggle of my life because God wishes to make me His instrument for this work. The life of this skeleton which is addressing you is God, and it does whatever good He desires. Let us now part with Ramanama on our lips.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

452. TALK TO PRESS REPRESENTATIVES ²

NAVAGAM,
March 14, 1930

I wish to offer some consolation to the Press representatives present here. I am responsible for the hardships caused by the application of Ashram rules. I have been asking for alms from the people, though I have no right to demand any. Hence, I cannot permit everybody to accompany me and live on the alms. We do need the help of newspapers. But this struggle is a unique one. If they have respect for the movement they may help it. No one need write anything for my sake. They may criticize me. From the village people I receive food in measured quantities and no one can accept more

¹ At this stage the Headman and the Matadars explained how they had resigned of their own free will, and the Headman presented Rs. 125 to Gandhiji on behalf of the village.

² Given at the end of the morning prayer meeting

than what the rule permits. I request the Ashram inmates and the Press representatives that if they need any item in excess of what is permitted by the rule, they may get it only with my permission. In the last analysis, even the Press representatives have come for public service, have they not?

Hundreds of thousands will follow this batch of seventy-eight in whatever they do. People will criticize us if we do not cultivate self-sacrifice. If the people feel the slightest distrust of us, they will condemn the whole movement. We have, therefore, to treat them with love, not force. The mountain is an assemblage of earth particles sticking together. Similarly, all great accomplishments in the world are the result of homogeneous effort. When the effort is heterogeneous the result is quite different. Because the river Ganga has the power to sanctify all waters, it absorbs all impurity within itself.

If the satyagrahis follow truth in carrying on this struggle, they will show, not merely to India but to the whole world, that ours is a holy war. My speech yesterday was also in the nature of a prayer to all.

People fall ill through their own negligence. The rule for one who falls ill is that he should be left where he falls ill. I am indeed sorry that I cannot try to meet you all. I ask you, therefore, to come and see me when you need to consult me. The burden of work on me is too heavy to leave me time to see you.

It is my advice to you that no person should come here without special permission. Only after obtaining previous permission may anyone accompany this batch. Those who desire to come here and see what is happening should rather stay where they are and do their duty there. They should persuade every one to offer civil disobedience and offer it themselves.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

453. LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT

March 14, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I want a full account of the arrangements made for you. Send me your daily programme of work and also tell me about your health. Let me know whether or not you can clearly understand the translation of the *Gita*. Read it with great care. Do you enjoy complete peace of mind?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

My blessings to Kamla. What work does she do?

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9281

454. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

March 14, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I don't know how to compliment you as well as you deserve. I had observed your strength of character even when I first saw you before you were married. But the strength which you have actually revealed has surpassed my expectation. If you cannot keep your peace of mind there, you may go to Akola without any hesitation. But I should certainly like you to remain there if you can be tranquil and if you and Sita can keep good health, for the Ashram is at present the best school for women. You will not get at any other time the experience you are getting there just now. I am sure you will not worry about Manilal. God has given him a strong physique. And he is all simplicity of heart. Nothing makes him unhappy. There is no limit to his courage. How can such a person suffer? He has been looking after me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4765

455. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 14, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

If Krishnakumari's eyes are sore, get them examined by Haribhai. Tell Chandrakanta that I expect much from her. Get Shantu's teeth examined by Haribhai and ask him to remove the loose ones. Send me a report about Dhiru and about anybody else who may be ill.

Send me your daily programme of work. Do you have a separate room to yourself? How do you feel there?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1793

456. SPEECH AT VASANA¹

March 14, 1930

You have all given us an excellent reception. You have seen to it that there is nothing wanting. You have raised this pandal and erected a cottage for me, which I very much like. I am glad that you have arranged things as I had wanted them. But a doubt lingers in my mind about this village, and as a satyagrahi I should tell you the thought that occurs to me. Of course it is not practical wisdom in a man to speak out all that he thinks. Still, for my part, I regard myself a very practical man. One should have nothing to do with the practical wisdom which goes against the world's welfare. My co-workers or I have lost nothing through this attitude of mine. I wonder if you thought that, since there were five *Antyajas*, and possibly some Muslims, accompanying me on this campaign, it would be best to lodge me and my party outside the village. I hope you have not been clever and thus quietly avoided trouble. I first asked people to inquire about this, but subsequently decided to put the question to the meeting here. I am determined to reach Jalalpur, having given you all that I have. Those accompanying me are only students. A true student always hungers for knowledge, which he seeks to garner with the world as his school and with nature and mankind as his books. Many saints were illiterate, but they had trained themselves in the art of thinking and so they were students. I even sent some students to inspect the *Antyaja* locality here.

This fight is based on truth and non-violence and, therefore, we are true satyagrahis. And I ask you to believe me when I prophesy that a day will come when the British will apologize to us. Shri Vallabhbhai turned nights into days and rendered help to the British. He served the people, and the Government is repaying him now by arresting and removing him away from us. I tell you, though the Government has been able to imprison for the present a man like Vallabhbhai it will have to apologize to him. Of course he does not care that he has been arrested. To me, he was my hands and feet. Had he not worked and prepared the ground here in this district, I could not have mustered the courage to speak these few words before you.

What is going to be your reply to the salt law? All of you have to reform yourselves and offer a fight to the Government. We can prepare ourselves to win complete freedom by serving our *Antyaja* brethren. I should be happy if my doubt about your village is

¹ The meeting was held at 3 p.m.

ill-founded. May you serve one and all without exception. Abolition of the salt tax or remission of some other taxes will not mean swaraj for us. Winning swaraj is not going to be so easy as that. That is only a way to it and by following it we shall reach the goal of freedom.

It is indeed a good thing that the Headmen of Navagam, Vavdi, Agam, Mahelaj and other villages have tendered their resignations. Why should they stick to Headmanship for the mere five rupees a month that the Government pays them? If the Collector summons a Headman, let him say, "Give us back our Sardar. Grant us a remission in land revenue." To give up Government service is to exorcise an evil spirit haunting the home. In resigning his job, your Headman has done a meritorious deed. When we have a people's Government, we shall see what to do. Satyagraha means disobedience to every law of the Government. Disobedience of the salt law is one item of such satyagraha. Such disobedience is our duty; it is our right. In the fight for that right, I need your help, not in the form of money but of volunteers to break the law.

The next item on my programme is khadi. How shameful that your village shows a zero against the columns for the number of spinning-wheels and khadi-wearers! If you have not been wearing khadi hitherto, wake up and begin now. I appeal to you to help our poor country by using khadi. It is my wish that there should be none among you who does not wear khadi, I earnestly ask you to be dressed in khadi clothes. For women, spinning used to be a *yajna*. There were five such *yajnas*. The first was the kitchen fire. Performing that *yajna*, my mother set apart a *go-grasa*, a morsel for the cow. The second was the quern, the third was the broom, the fourth the spinning-wheel and the fifth was fetching water. Now all these *yajnas* are on the wane, because selfishness has crept in among us. If you wish to follow the path of dharma, start again the spinning-wheel sacrifice and follow the good sense that God has bestowed on you.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930

457. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

ON THE DANDI MARCH,
March 15, 1930

CHI. NARANDAS

Credit to the *Navajivan* account the money which you are receiving.

I am writing to Mathew. That is how he always works. Unless he

is able to fix his attention, he is of no service even in the G.S.S.¹

Ask Prabhudas to write to me. So far I have experienced no difficulty in walking.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8090. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

458. *LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA*

[*March 15, 1930*]²

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

It pained me to have to use harsh words with you, but it had to be done, as I wished to remove your pusillanimity. Unless you are determined and firm in your purpose, your energies cannot be fully utilized. Tenderness of heart is essential, but for true tenderness determination is even more essential. Thereby family ties are purified, and delusion is overcome. You must also give up your desire to meet me. Whatever I could give you I have already given. A time will come when you too will have to go to jail like so many of us, but for the present your work is your prison. Therefore do not leave Vijapur unless it is on important business. Improve your health, and continue to render whatever help you can.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2377

459. *SPEECH AT DABHAN*

[*March 15, 1930*]

I have come to know that a Headman, a Matadar and a watchman of Kanakapura have submitted their resignations. I hope that you have handed in those resignations willingly and that none of you will yield if any of the officials intimidates you and that you would not, seeking pardon, withdraw them. When we have once taken a vow, we shall not withdraw them even if we die.³

Your Headman has submitted his resignation but his old uncle has registered himself as a volunteer. It is not that only young people can join this struggle. This is a religious as also a non-violent struggle

¹ Gandhi Seva Sangh

² The date is from *At the Feet of Bapu*, p. 58.

³ This and the following three paragraphs have been taken from *Prajabandhu*, 16-3-1930.

and even children can take part in it. The names of some women have also been received by me. I have received names even of children below the age of fifteen and I do not hesitate to mention them.

I have received names of many more old men also and they say that it is better to die in jail than outside it, but only out of thoughtfulness I do not take them along with me. On reaching Dandi, we shall call them first and send them first to jail.

I hope that the Headmen and Matadars from the neighbouring villages also will send in their resignations.

Although we claim to practise cow-protection, we should now call it buffalo-protection or service to buffaloes. In this town of Dabhan, there are three hundred buffaloes as against three cows. This suggests that we are ignorant of animal husbandry. In this district, it is difficult to obtain cow's milk or ghee for sick persons or for those who have taken the vow to serve only the cow. *Goseva* does not mean saving the cows from Muslims or Englishmen— this amounts to cow-slaughter. That is a misinterpretation of the term *goseva*.¹

The number of cows sent to Australia to be slaughtered is a hundred times the number that are slaughtered in India by the Muslims. If you desire to see to it that cows are not exported abroad, you should all train yourselves in animal husbandry and act in accordance with that science.

I do not recall the taste of buffalo's milk. Hence I cannot distinguish it from cow's milk. However, doctors have testified that buffalo's milk and ghee are not as nourishing as those of the cow and Europeans do not even touch the milk of the buffalo.

Ours is a holy war. It is a non-violent struggle. Even women and children can take part in it. The soldiers of satyagraha will never do what the ordinary soldiers do. Your village consumes 800 maunds of salt a year, and thus pays money to the Government without reason. The Government appropriates to itself all the taxes you pay without making any return to you. We wish to throw off that burden and hence we demand complete freedom. If you feel strong enough, give up Government jobs, enlist yourselves as soldiers in this salt satyagraha, burn your foreign cloth and wear khadi. Give up liquor. There are many things within your power through which you can secure the keys which will open the gates of freedom.²

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 16-3-1930, *Navajivan*, 30-3-1930, and *Gujarati*; 23-3-1930

¹ This and the following two paragraphs have been extracted from "Swaraj Gita", *Navajivan*, 30-3-1930.

² This has been taken from *Gujarati*, 23-3-1930.

460. SPEECH AT NADIAD

March 15, 1930

I have visited Nadiad often and made many speeches here, but never before did I see such a huge mass of men. Bound by the chains of slavery, we are being crushed at present, and we want to shake them off. I am sure you have come here today not for my sake or for the sake of my troop of eighty, but because you hunger for complete freedom. Since I left Ahmedabad, on my way here large numbers have showered their blessings on me and my mission. The showers have swelled into a flood, as it were. You, too, are witnessing the same thing.

Vallabhbhai's services to Kheda District have been many and various. At the time of the floods he saved thousands of men. That Vallabhbhai is now behind the prison bars. I too have done some work in this district. You have, therefore, a threefold duty to discharge. The imprisonment of Vallabhbhai is your imprisonment. Arresting him in Kheda is arresting Kheda itself. Of course by imprisoning Vallabhbhai the Government has honoured him, but you it has insulted. What is to be your reply to this insult? Your reply can only be winning complete freedom. How could you do that? Only by following my path. That is as clear as the rule of three.

I wish all Government servants to give up their jobs. What is Government service worth after all? A Government job gives you the power to tyrannize over others. And what do you earn in the job? By dint of independent labour a man can earn thousands if he chooses to do so. The local Headman has resigned his post. But is that enough? Nadiad produced Govardhanram and Manilal Nabhubhai. It has been a city of men of letters. Are there any heirs of these learned men now? What is the duty of the students in this city of learned men? And the duty of their sisters and mothers? It is up to you all to give a reply to these questions. You all have to enlist yourselves as volunteers. As soon as I get behind the bars or as soon as the All-India Congress Committee gives a call, you should come forward to offer yourselves for being jailed. Then alone shall I believe that Nadiad has made its contribution to our struggle.

Nadiad is thirty-one thousand strong. You spend three hundred and ten thousand rupees on cloth year after year. Instead of letting this wealth flow out of the city, what a gain it will be if you keep it in your homes! You will then have obeyed the most beautiful law of nature. That is the simple calculation I ask the heirs of Govardhanram and Manilal to make. If they do not do so, they would be bringing

disgrace on the good name of Nadiad. Will not Nadiad, the pride of Gujarat, do even this much? May God grant you the strength to do it.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 23-3-1930

461. LETTER TO DURGA GIRI ¹

[On or after *March 15, 1930*]²

CHI. DURGA,

I have your beautiful letter written in a beautiful hand. What you write about Mahavir is correct. He who regards all as equals wins. Kaka's Shankar too has joined the caravan. Immerse yourself fully in works of service. Do not be lazy about anything. We are all well here. Tell Maitri not to be indolent in the least. Does she dip her hands in potassium permanganate solution? She must observe restraint in her diet.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Virat Vatsalta, pp. 30-1

462. WE ARE ALL ONE

God is present in all of us. For my part, every moment I experience the truth that though many we are all one. He does not reveal Himself in the same form in all of us, or rather the hearts of all of us not being alike we do not see Him in the same form— just as in mirrors of different colours and shapes a thing is reflected in different colours and shapes.

From this it follows that the sin of one is the sin of all. And hence it is not up to us to destroy the evil-doer. We should, on the contrary, suffer for him. From this thought was born the idea of satyagraha and of civil disobedience of law. Criminal, violent or uncivil disobedience is sin and ought to be abjured. Non-violent disobedience can be a holy duty. It is with this thought that Deenabandhu Andrews has often said that he is doing atonement on behalf of the English, that Mirabai has come to live in the Ashram and that Reginald Reynolds is staying in the Ashram.

Shri Khadgabahadur Giri is known to all. He killed a man for committing adultery and then surrendered himself to the police. This friend had lived in the Ashram for some time. In his statement to the

¹ The text of the original, which is in Gujarati, is not available.

² Shankar, D. B. Kalelkar's son mentioned in the letter, joined the Dandi March on this day.

court he described himself as a believer in the principles of the Ashram. Though I could not understand his meaning, I was not prepared to examine his action. This led many to write strong letters to me, but I did not reply to them and I remained silent, as I did not think it my duty to pronounce an opinion. Now this friend has come to join in the present pilgrimage. Missing his train, he arrived a day late. Now, since he cannot join unless he has my permission, he has had to stay back at the Ashram. I believe that the struggle which is in the offing should be started only by those who observe the principles of the Ashram. I have, therefore, written to him: "You may come if you accept the principles of the Ashram as binding on you."

This account, however, is irrelevant to the present article. It has been given merely to introduce Shri Khadgabahadur. The reason for publishing his name is that he, too, has come to do atonement for the sins of others. He has given his reason for insisting on being included in the very first batch as under:¹

The Mahavir mentioned in this letter is the son of the late Dalbahadur Giri. Following the line of thinking in the extract above, Dalbahadur Giri himself had joined the Non-co-operation movement in 1921 and also suffered imprisonment. When he came out of jail he had been suffering from severe dysentery, which proved fatal. He had advised his wife to go and live in the Ashram. The widow communicated her resolve to come and stay in the Ashram. I had known Dalbahadur Giri. I could not disregard his death-bed wish, and the wish of his wife. I thought it my duty to respect it. This widowed mother encouraged her son to join the present struggle. The boy is being brought up at the Ashram for the last nine years. As Mahavir's guardian, I also permitted him to join. Such boys as had completed fifteen years of age had the permission to join if they so wished. Mahavir has joined the struggle of his free will and with the blessings of his elders. My experience of him has been a sweet one.

These facts will probably enable the reader to see the struggle in a better light. He will also have a better understanding of what satyagraha means. The whole conception rests on unbounded faith in the unfailing power of non-violence. The satyagrahi always acts in the spirit of atonement. He believes that he shares in the sins of the ruler or the ruled. He regards himself also as a sinner. One is certainly a sinner as long as the possibility of sin remains in one. One is guilty of passion if one has potentiality for passion.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-3-1930

¹ The letter is not translated here.

463. *THE DEPARTURE*

Thousands of Ahmedabad citizens, both men and women, kept vigil on the night of the 11th. Thousands flocked to the Ashram. One heard rumours all through the night. "Here is some news," someone with a grave face twice whispered into my ear! "Reliable news has been received that a special train is arriving this evening and will take you away to be borne to Mandalay." As it is the same to me whether I am in jail or outside, the news had no effect on me and I went to bed in perfect peace. But the sight of the mill-workers and mill-owners around me could not but make me happy. Though eagerly expected, "they" did not come, and at the appointed hour and minute God gave us the send-off. We walked on between rows of people who had come to see us set out, the rows extending to as far as the Chandola lake. I can never forget the scene. For me, this was the form in which God's blessing descended on me. In the face of such a spectacle, how could I believe that there was no prospect of success in this struggle? Both the rich and the poor were present in proportion to their numbers in the population. If the spectacle has any meaning, it is this, at any rate, that all people want freedom and they want it through peaceful means. In the eyes of men lining the road from the Ashram to Ellis Bridge I saw not poison but nectar. I saw in their eyes no anger against British rule or rulers, but I saw there the joy born of the confidence that complete freedom was now at hand.

The authorities on their part had acted wisely. Not one policeman was to be seen. What business could the police have where people had come together for a festive occasion? What would the police do there?

May the self-confidence displayed by the citizens of Ahmedabad last for ever! Let that confidence spread all over the country, and complete freedom will be ours without much effort. If such freedom is our birthright, how much time should we need to win that right? To breathe is my birthright, and breathing therefore proceeds with ease. It is the long history of slavery that has given us the illusion that slavery is our natural state. The truth is that it is not the natural state of any man whatever. If three hundred million men and women are determined to win freedom, you may take it that it is theirs. The scene on the 12th was a sign of that determination.

But I am not a man to be easily taken in by appearances. All over the world, the common mass of men move like sheep following one another. It was so on the 12th too. Many had come out just because others had done so. For many others, this coming out for the

festival was the beginning and the end of their self-sacrifice. If that was the truth, their coming out was no sign of the approach of freedom. If a hundred thousand men oppress three hundred million and the latter come together to struggle to get rid of the oppression, they will win their freedom from slavery with very little effort and sacrifice. But some sacrifice there has to be. Winning freedom is not child's play. It requires the labour of thoughtful men, so that if the three hundred million would not become khadi-wearers, at any rate three million must come forward to offer civil disobedience. If many join in this sacrifice for swaraj they would share the labour. If the number of such people is small, they will have to bear a greater burden, for the labour needed for winning freedom will always be the same. The only question therefore, is who should bear this burden and how. The immediate burden of bringing success to the present march falls on the Gujaratis. Bringing success to the march does not mean only providing regular meals and rendering other services to the party. The mahajans at the various places are doing that with love. To bring success to the march means men and women coming out in large numbers to join the struggle. People should get ready for civil disobedience of the salt law as soon as the marching party reaches Jalalpur. Every village should get ready its own quota of civil law-breakers so that at the proper time they plunge into the fight.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-3-1930

464. “BHAGAVAD GITA” OR “ANASAKTIYOGA”

It is more than forty years since I have been reading, pondering and following the *Gita*. Friends expressed a desire that I should put before the Gujaratis my understanding of that work. I embarked on translating it. From the point of view of scholarship my qualifications for attempting the translation would seem to be nil, but as one following its teaching I may be considered to be fairly well qualified. The translation has now been published. Many editions of the *Gita* carry the Sanskrit text also. It has been intentionally left out in this one. I would like it if all knew Sanskrit, but all will never learn Sanskrit. Moreover, many cheap editions with Sanskrit are available. I, therefore, decided to leave out the Sanskrit text and reduce both the size and the price. This edition has 19 pages of introduction and 187 pages of translation so that it can be easily carried in one's pocket. Ten thousand copies have been printed. My aspiration is that every Gujarati will read this *Gita*, ponder it and practise its teaching. An easy way to ponder it is to try and understand the meaning without

referring to the Sanskrit text and then to conduct oneself accordingly. For example, those who interpret the teaching of the *Gita* to mean that one ought to kill the wicked without making a distinction between one's kinsmen and others, should kill their parents or other relatives if they are wicked. In practice, they will not be able to do so. Naturally, then, it would occur to the reader that where destruction is prescribed the work contemplates some other form of destruction. Almost every page of the *Gita* advises us not to make a distinction between our own people and others. How is this to be done? Reflection will lead us to the conclusion that we should perform all our acts in a spirit of non-attachment. In the very first chapter we find Arjuna facing the troublesome question of one's own people and others. In every chapter the *Gita* brings out how such a distinction is false and harmful. I have called the *Gita* *Anasaktiyoga*. The interested reader will be able to learn from the work what that is, how non-attachment is to be cultivated, what its characteristics are, etc. Trying as I do to live according to the teaching of the *Gita*, I could not avoid the present struggle. As a friend says in his telegram to me, this is a holy war for me. It is a happy augury for me that this book is being published just as the holy war is entering its last phase in the form of the present struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 16-3-1930

465. LETTER TO ABBAS TYABJI

March 16, 1930

DEAR BHRR,¹

What a joy to have received your letter ! Of course, you must take rest. Sardar has filled me with many anecdotes about you and now Mahadev has come in to give us the latest. I am glad this time you have not brought any illness with you. Can't afford to think of you as an old man in spite of the whiteness of your ample beard. Mahadev tells me you can dance. I feel like asking for a short leave to come and see you dance. But that cannot be. I am, therefore, imagining all sorts of movements. You should be put with the Poet!!!

Love from us all.

Yours ever,

M. K. G.

From a photostat: S.N. 9569

¹ This was a form of greeting used between Gandhiji and the addressee.

466. *LETTER TO VASUMATI PANDIT*

March 16, 1930

CHI. VASUMATI,

I have your letter. Restrain your desire to come and see me. If, despite your best efforts, you cannot do that there is no harm in coming. Keep in mind the condition that you should take proper care of your health while working. You will not get such an opportunity again. You should, therefore, preserve your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 9282

467. *LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI*

ON THE DANDI MARCH,

Sunday [March 16, 1930]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I get your letters. I send with this a letter on the Bank. If it does not serve your purpose, please let me know.

I have asked those three gentlemen from Madras and the two from Bengal to return. They do feel sorry. If you see them repenting when they arrive there and if they are keen on joining the Ashram again, take them back. There is no harm in doing so if they are real workers. But I do not wish to interfere with your management, and that is why I refused to give them any letter.

How is Purushottam keeping? Cannot Keshu lead the recitation of the *Gita*? He can sing the *bhajans* too. If he does not agree, in any case Premabehn is there.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Enclosed with this is a letter written by Jamna, which seems to have been sent to me by mistake.

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8092. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

¹ From the enquiries about Purushottam's health and arrangements regarding recitation of the *Gita* and *bhajans*, this appears to have been written on the first of the three Sundays during the Dandi March.

468. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Sunday [March 16, 1930]¹

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

I hope your work is proceeding well. I have pinned great hopes on you. May God grant you the strength to fulfil these hopes. Sumangal² had a slight touch of fever. There is no cause for anxiety. He is being nursed well.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Keep writing to your parents.

From a photos tat of the Gujara ti: Chandr akanta Papers . Courte sy: Gandhi Nation al Museum and Librar y

469. LETTER TO VIDYA HINGORANI

March 16, 1930

CHI. VIDYA,

I have heard much about you from Anand, and I was glad to hear about your devotion to God. You should not be anxious on account of Anand. God will protect him.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

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

470. SPEECH AT BORIAVI

March 16, 1930

In this peaceful struggle there is no room for coercion of any kind. We will coerce no Englishmen nor any of our countrymen. I do not want anyone to resign under compulsion. Resignations tendered under duress or in awe of somebody ought to be withdrawn. They have jailed your Sardar, that is, they have taken from you swaraj itself. We must get him released from prison and, you will have proved your strength if you can see to it that he is out in one month instead of after three. After Vallabhbhai is released, take care that you do not

¹ From the contents the letter appears to have been written on the first of the three Sundays during the Dandi March; *vide* also "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 17-3-1930.

² Sumangal Prakash, addressee's cousin

apologize and withdraw your resignations. You can withdraw the resignations and become Headmen again only when we get control of the Government.

If you drink liquor, tea, etc., and still think that Gandhi who has gone to battle with his band will bring you swaraj, you are making a mistake. Gandhi will leave for ever and his troop will be lost in the sea. Swaraj can be won only if you all take up constructive work. Those of you who do not enlist as soldiers of swaraj should at least wear khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 23-3-1930

471. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

March 17, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have your letter and the flowers that were struggling to find me out. My fatigue so far seems to be health-giving. For it enables me to take milk twice instead of once and plenty of fruit. Today the fatigue of the past five days made me sleep five times during the day. I hope to find myself thoroughly fit to undertake the ensuing week's march or whatever else may be in store for me. So you will not worry about me.

I see you are now finding yourself there. The struggle has been a veritable godsend for all of us. It is, as it should be, a process of cleansing. Let us never be slack.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5427. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9661

472. LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

ANAND,

March 17, 1930

BHAI SATIS BABU,

I saw in the newspapers that Bengal has appointed you dictator. Is it true? If true, have you been appointed by both the factions or only one? Whatever it may be, I know that your love will put everything right. Only yesterday Panditji¹ gave us a song in the prayer meeting which can be translated thus: "The way of love is like the purifying flame." When true love is born it destroys all impurities.

¹ Narayan Moreshwar Khare

Your job is the hardest of all, I realize. Your penance of eight years will give you wisdom and strength. May God give you and Hemprabha Devi a long life.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1616

473. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

ANAND,

*Silence Day [March 17, 1930]*¹

O PARSI LADY,

There is no limit to your cunning. You seem to be preparing an alibi in advance. If parents lift you up, haven't they the right to throw you down? And why do you believe that I have lifted you up in order that I may afterwards throw you down? Why did I have Chapter XII [of the *Gita*] read out on the day of your marriage? If you believe that you do not possess the virtues I attribute to you, you should pray to God to grant them to you. But your uncle calls you Dhairyamata². What do you say to that?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4766

474. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

ANAND,

*Silence Day [March 17, 1930]*³

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter. What you say about a house is quite correct. But your duty was to move into the Hostel, and it was good that you did so. We should love what is good for us. Work as much as you like, but preserve your health. And be sure that you write to me from time to time.

The secretaryship still clings to you. When you get time, clear up everything. Don't worry about me. I know that I have made

¹ From the contents the letter seems to have been written in 1930. In that year, Gandhiji was at Anand on this date.

² Literally, "Mother of Courage"; the addressee's daughter was named Dhairyabala.

³ The reference to the addressee moving into the Ashram Hostel suggests that this was written in 1930.

you unhappy, but I don't feel sorry that I have done so. Who else could have that privilege?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1794

475. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

Silence Day, March 17, 1930

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have had no letter from you for some time. It was expected that I would be arrested on the 12th itself. Now six days have passed, and since it is Monday today I have sat down to write this letter. Though I have been walking a great deal, I have kept fine till now. You must be reading the accounts in the papers. Hence I do not write anything about it here, nor have I the time to do so. If you like, you may show the accompanying letter to Jayaprakash, and if he permits, inform Father and go to the Ashram.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadev came a moment ago and read out your letter. I felt happy. If you can come, please do.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3361

476. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

Silence Day [March 17, 1930]¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter.

The fact that people still come presents a very difficult problem. Keep those who work. Those who do not work should immediately leave.

I certainly like your going to the common kitchen for your meals. But give your body the food which it requires and preserve its health. You seem to me to be a follower of the *Gita* and I believe, therefore, that the burden of your happiness and welfare will be borne by God.

Kevalram's wife may certainly come. Illness dogs us here too.

¹ Sumangalprakash was left behind at Anand where Gandhiji was on March 17, 1930.

Three persons are ill. Sumangalprakash has a mild attack of measles. I will leave him here.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

Has Purushottam left? If so, who conducts the prayers? I suppose you know how to do that? Do not forget that Keshu also is an expert. No burden should be put on Prabhudas.

From Gujarati: C.W. 8094. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

477. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Silence Day [March 17, 1930]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN (SENIOR),

I have your letter. You will always be doing good, doing service. Lakshmibehn came and told me something. As you know, I could not spare time to ask her for more details. Take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8743. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

478. LETTER TO JAYAPRAKASH NARAYAN

ANAND,

March 17, 1930

CHI. JAYAPRAKASH,

Nowhere else have I observed such zeal for sacrifice as has been displayed by the Ashram women. At present the women are to a great extent managing the internal affairs of the Ashram. The chance of acquiring such experience will never be repeated. I would therefore advise you to send Prabhavati there. After my arrest the Ashram women too will court imprisonment. I think Prabhavati should join them. She is worthy in every respect. I hope your work is proceeding well.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 3362

¹ The source bears the date March 20, 1930 in the addressee's hand which could be the date of receipt. The preceding Monday was March 17.

479. LETTER TO RANI VIDYAVATI

March 17, 1930

DEAR SISTER,

I have your letter. When the women at the Ashram are ready to go to jail, you ladies may also go. In the meantime you should do organizational work in villages.

Blessings from

BAPU

SHRI RANI VIDYAVATI

BARUA

Via HARDOI

U. P.

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

480. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Silence Day [March 17, 1930]¹

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

It was discovered today that Sumangal has smallpox. You should not feel unhappy about Bhaiya's illness. Nor should you worry. Anand is like a big city. All kinds of facilities are available there. The house is also good. I shall make all arrangements and look into everything. I shall be getting news every day. Do not cause worry to your parents by informing them. There are not many pustules noticeable. You do know that the satyagrahis are under a vow and cannot return on any account. Still, I have ascertained what Bhaiya wants. I have not been able to speak today. I shall do it tomorrow and then go.

Blessings from

BAPU

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

481. SPEECH AT ANAND

March 17, 1930

You have just heard Panditji sing that the path of love is like a flame. A satyagrahi's path is the path of love, not one of enmity. It

¹ From the reference to the illness of Sumangal Prakash, who was left behind at Anand where Gandhiji was present on March 17, 1930; *vide* also "Letter to Kapilrai Mehta", 3-4-1930.

should be the ambition of a satyagrahi to win over even the most hard-hearted of enemies through love.

How can one demonstrate that there is nothing but love underlying civil disobedience? Pritam must have had a direct experience of this, as a result of which this *bhajan* poured forth from his heart.

Ill feeling perhaps could be compared to fire. How could that be said of love? Whereas ill feeling burns others, love burns oneself and purifies the other person. When love assumes this intense form, it may well appear to some as fire, but you may be sure that in the end it will make its cooling effect known. This band of satyagrahis which has set out is not staging a play; its effect will not be merely temporary; even through death, it will prove true to its pledge—if death becomes necessary. The Government will, in the end, have to admit that these persons practising satyagraha were devotees of truth and non-violence. Nothing will be better than if this band of satyagrahis perishes. If the satyagrahis meet with death, it will put a seal upon their claim. None of us can assert today whether we have the strength to die a satyagrahi's death. To stab someone in the abdomen in a fit of rage or to die harbouring anger in heart, but keeping up an appearance of non-violence through shame is not to die a satyagrahi's death.

Not only should there be no anger within one's heart at the time of death, but on the contrary, one should feel and pray: 'May good befall him who kills me !' When anyone meets death in such a manner, I would call it a satyagrahi's death and only in such a death would the dying person be considered to have been true to his pledge. Even with regard to myself I cannot give any assurance today. It is only others who can judge a person by this test after his death.

Here in Anand, you have Narsinhbhai's hut. Anand is the educational centre of the Patidars. Kheda district is the home town of the Patidars of Vallabhbai, of Motibhai Amin, and of the volunteers of the Charotar Education Society. Where can I give expression to the feelings within me if not before such an audience? I have come to you filled with great expectations.

I have asserted at many places that this time I have not set out to beg for funds. I know how to do that. This struggle is not one based on money. It is going to be carried on without it. In a trice this morning, the yarn merchants of Bombay presented me with Rs. 2,501. The Diamond Association has sent me Rs. 2,000. Moreover, if I make even a feeble appeal for funds, Gujarat and India would shower money upon me; I would be buried under its weight and would be

unable even to reach Jalalpur.

I have come to ask for a big contribution. In your hands lies the honour of the Patidars of Charotar. You are like salt in the sea of Patidars. If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? Salt is more sapid than either sugar or jaggery. The latter may even cause jaundice, whereas a pinch of salt adds flavour to the meal. If Anand gives up its savour, if courage and such other virtues which have been attributed to the Patidars are not displayed in Anand at this juncture, where else can one see them?

You must have understood the reason for this introduction. Are the students of Anand and Kheda district going to sit down with their books, or will they follow the lead that has been given by the Vidyapith? We have already received a return with interest for the 2_lakhs of rupees spent by Dr. Mehta for the Vidyapith and contributions made by other well-wishers. Today the Vidyapith has wound up its book-learning and has proved its motto: That is learning which liberates.

All the students who have entered their sixteenth year have united in giving up their studies, and the teachers too have joined them. What more can be expected of a place where all the students as well as the teachers obtain cent per cent marks? Why do you also not adopt this path?

It is my hope that Gujarat will set an object-lesson to the rest of the country. One cannot say yet whether the fight will be a prolonged one or will end quickly. If, however, we have sacrificed our all in the movement, we should not worry about whether it will be long or short.

I have a right to entertain such hopes of the Patidars of Kheda district. They have been giving me hopes ever since my South Africa days. Kheda district has a population of seven lakhs which includes our Thakore brethren. If the Patidars show the way, the Garasias are bound to follow them. Has not Tulsidas said that base metal shines at the touch of the *parasmani*¹.

You students must suspend your studies for as long as this struggle continues. At this time, I recall the words of the late Deshbandhu. He was unhappy about non-co-operation in schools. He used to say that we should certainly call out students when the time came for the final struggle but that we should leave them alone at the moment. I did not agree, and he joined in the boycott of schools. But these words were uttered in 1920. Not five, but ten years have elapsed since then. The final battle has to be waged. Hence there is no reason why students should now remain in schools.

¹ Philosophers' stone

Today I am not asking for preparing one battlefield only. Today, everyone from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Karachi to Dibrugarh will be able to practise non-co-operation either individually or collectively.

Until last December, I felt that the atmosphere was not favourable for civil disobedience and I said what I felt. I now claim that if ever the circumstances were opportune, they are today. This is the auspicious moment. If at this auspicious time we do not develop the strength for civil disobedience we shall never do so.

What student is he who will continue to study at such a time? Formerly, I asked the students to leave schools and to set up national schools. Today I ask them to leave schools and come out on the battlefield and become mendicants for the sake of the country. If a business man continues to carry on his business today, he will not enhance his prestige. If India wishes to launch satyagraha on a wide scale, this is the time when it should do so.

God will provide food and drink; countless people will provide it. If there is a flare-up in the entire country, and if the whole of India starts practising civil disobedience, how long will it take for 30 crores of people to free themselves from the grip—the domination—of a hundred thousand Britishers? School children will work this out by the rule of three.

The army consists of 70 thousand Britishers and others including Sikhs, Pathans, Gurkhas and Marathas. This army is sitting astride both our shoulders; although it may be stationed in Meerut and other cantonments, we see nothing else behind the laws that suppress us. The British make us dance to their tune on the strength of the backing of this army.

Please remember again I am not asking you to give up your studies for good, but only to give up book-learning while the struggle lasts. It is up to you whether it will be a protracted one or not. Youth leagues—that is you students—proclaim many big things. This year our Congress President is a young man who rides a horse. Hence a large part of the burden of this struggle is to be borne by you students.

May God give you inner strength. This is not a question of utilizing your intellect. If something has to be made convincing through the use of the intellect, it can be set out in the same manner as a proposition of geometry with a Q.E.D. at the end of it. However, here the intellect becomes helpless if there is no strength of heart. The intellect is a handmaid of the heart.

I am helpless, however, if you feel at heart that this man has only

begun a stunt, that at the end of a month he will call the thing off saying he has committed a Himalayan blunder and withdraw quietly to the banks of Sabarmati. If, however, you do not believe this to be the case, rest assured that so far as you and I are concerned this is indeed the final struggle and the means to be adopted are peaceful, involving civil disobedience and so on.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-3-1930

482. TALK TO VOLUNTEERS¹

March 17, 1930

Ours is a sacred pilgrimage and we should be able to account for every minute of our time. Let those who cannot finish their quota or do not find time to spin or to write up their diaries see me. I shall discuss the thing with them. There must be something wrong about their time-table and I should help them to readjust it. We should be resourceful enough to do all our daily duties without the march coming in our way. I dare say we are not hardy enough for a strenuous trek, and I am, therefore, providing for a weekly day of rest. But I should listen to no proposal for the relaxation of the regular discipline of the Ashram. I repeat that ours is a sacred pilgrimage, and self-examination and self-purification are essentials which we cannot do without. The diary is a great help in this matter. This regular spinning, counting the yards spun each day, the daily diary—all these things were thought out by me in the Yeravda Jail, and for us whose ambition it is to lay the foundation of the edifice of swaraj, inasmuch as ours will be the first sacrificial offering, it should be as unsullied as possible. Those who follow us may dispense with the rigid discipline we are going through, but for us there is no escape. That rigorous self-discipline will generate in us a force which will enable us to retain what we have won. It is the natural result of active non-violence and should stand us in good stead after swaraj. It is hardly likely that when we are imprisoned, we shall all be kept together. Therefore if our life is well-regulated from now, we should not have the slightest difficulty in going regularly through our daily task.

Young India, 20-3-1930

¹ Extracted from an account by Mahadev Desai

483. SPEECH TO SATYAGRAHIS¹

[After March 17, 1930]²

It is possible that what you say is true. If you regard the rules burdensome, they are so. However, in this matter, the condition was laid down before we set out that only those who were prepared to shoulder this burden should join the march. Hence, these rules cannot now be relaxed. It is only through total adherence to these rules that any massive strength can be generated. The inner, spiritual rules have a greater effect than the external and material factors. Such is the idea behind this march. In this struggle we are attempting to eradicate the pervading violence by means of non-violence and in it we need humility as much as determination and courage. So long as we are arrogant, so long as we try to progress through our own efforts, we are bound to fail. So long as the elephant relied on his own strength, it did him no good. This demonstrates a fundamental principle.

Do we not find that those amongst us who appeared to be weak are hale and hearty today, while those who appeared to be strong are bed-ridden? When a man gives up his arrogance and becomes humble like dust, only then is the power of non-violence awakened in him and the divine strength becomes his. Hence we should all become fully devoted to our duties. We should pray to God that He alone do everything. In this manner, if the eighty persons who have set out become like ciphers, our task will certainly be accomplished.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

484. A GREAT SEER

NAPA,
March 18, 1930

Kavi Rajchandra was born in a place called Vavania in Kathiawar. I came in touch with him in 1891, the day of my return from London, at Dr. P. J. Mehta's residence in Bombay. Kavi, as I used to call him, was nearly related to Dr. Mehta. He was introduced to me as a *shatavadhani*, i.e., one who can remember a hundred things at a time. Kavi was quite young at the time, not much older

¹ This has been extracted from "Dharma Yatra".

² This speech was delivered after one of the satyagrahis had had an attack of smallpox and had to be left behind at Anand, where Gandhiji was on March 16 and 17.

than I was then, i.e., 21 years. He had, however, given up all public exhibition of his powers and was given to purely religious pursuits. I was much struck by his simplicity and independence of judgment. He was free from all touch of blind orthodoxy. What struck me perhaps more was his combining business with religion in practice. A student of the philosophy of religion, he tried to practise what he believed. Himself a Jain, his toleration of the other creeds was remarkable. He had a chance of going to England for studies, but he would not go. He would not learn English. His schooling was quite elementary. But he was a genius. He knew Sanskrit, Magadhi and, I believe, Pali. He was a voracious reader of religious literature and had acquired through Gujarati sources a knowledge, enough for his purpose, of Islam, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. Such was the man who captivated my heart in religious matters as no other man has till now. I have said elsewhere that in moulding my inner life Tolstoy and Ruskin vied with Kavi. But Kavi's influence was undoubtedly deeper if only because I had come in closest personal touch with him. His judgment appealed to my moral sense in the vast majority of cases. The bedrock of his faith was unquestionably ahimsa. His ahimsa was not of the crude type we witness today among its so-called votaries who confine their attention merely to the saving of aged cattle and insect life. His ahimsa, if it included the tiniest insect, also covered the whole of humanity.

Yet I never could regard Kavi as a perfect man. But of all the men I knew he appeared to me to be nearer perfection than the rest. Alas! he died all too young (thirty-three years) when he felt that he was surely going to see truth face to face. He has had many worshippers but not as many followers. His writings, largely consisting of soulful letters to inquirers, have been collected and published. An attempt is being made to have them translated in Hindi. I know that they would bear an English translation. They are largely based on inward experience.

Modern Review, June 1930

485. LETTER TO RAMANAND CHATTERJEE

BORSAD,
March 18, 1930

DEAR RAMANAND BABU,

Under great stress I was able today to scribble the enclosed¹. You may do what you like with it. I hope you are giving

¹ *Vide* the preceding item.

the movement your unreserved support and blessing.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the original: C.W. 9287. Courtesy: Sita Devi

486. *LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA*

March 18, 1930

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

I have your letter. Brother has been well today, I get news of him twice in the day. If Gangabehn¹ and Narandasbhai² permit do go to look up brother for a day. Narandasbhai has written that you are doing good work in the office.

Blessings from
BAPU

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

487. *SPEECH AT BORSAD*

March 18, 1930

At one time I was wholly loyal to the Empire and taught others to be loyal. I sang "God Save the King" with zest and taught my friends and relations to do so. Finally, however, the scales fell from my eyes, and the spell broke. I realized that the Empire did not deserve loyalty. I felt that it deserved sedition. Hence I have made sedition my dharma. I try to explain it to others that while sedition is our dharma, to be loyal is a sin. To be loyal to this Government, that is to say to wish it well, is as good as wishing ill of the crores of people of India. We get nothing in return for the crores of rupees that are squeezed out of the country; if we get anything, it is the rags from Lancashire. To approve the policy of this Government is to commit treason against the poor. You should free yourselves from this latter offence. I believe I have done so. Hence I have become ready to wage a peaceful war against this Government. I am commencing it by violating the salt law. It is for this purpose that I am undertaking this march. At every place, thousands of men and women have conferred their blessings upon it. These blessings are not showered on me but on the struggle.

Our patience has been severely tried. We must free ourselves

¹ Gangabehn Vaidya

² Narandas Gandhi

from the yoke of this Government and we are prepared to undergo any hardships that we may have to suffer in order to secure swaraj. It is our duty as well as our right to secure swaraj.

I regard this as a religious movement since sedition is our dharma. Every moment I desire the end of the policies of this Government. I have no desire to touch even a single hair of our rulers. But we certainly shall not bow down to them. Kindly, therefore, become conscious of your responsibilities and wash away your sins against India. Today we are defying the salt law. Tomorrow we shall have to consign other laws to the waste-paper basket. Doing so we shall practise such severe non-co-operation that finally it will not be possible for the administration to be carried on at all. Let the Government then, to carry on its rule, use guns against us, send us to prison, hang us. But how many can be given such punishment? Try and calculate how much time it will take a lakh of Britishers to hang thirty crores of persons.

But they are not so cruel. They are human beings like us and perhaps we would be doing the same things that they are doing if we had been in their position. Man does not have the strength to fight circumstances; the latter mould his actions. Hence I do not feel that they are to be blamed for this. But I find their policy so bitter, that I would destroy it today if I could. It will be destroyed regardless of whether I am put behind the bars or allowed to remain free. I breathe here before you and with every breath that I take, I desire this very thing. I am fully convinced that there is nothing base in it. I act exactly as I believe.

No one has been able to reply to the complaint I have registered before God and mentioned in my letter to the Viceroy. No one says that the salt tax is just. No one says that the expenditure on the army and the administration is justified. No one holds that the policy of collecting land revenue is justifiable, nor indeed that it is proper to extort 20 to 25 crores of rupees from the people after making drunkards and opium-addicts of them and breaking up their homes. Both foreigners and British officers testify to the fact that all this is true. However, what can be done about it? Money is required. For what purpose is it required? In order to repress the people.

Recently the Government has appointed all police officers above the rank of constables as officers dealing with salt. As a result of the authority vested in him, even a policeman can arrest me and perpetrate any indignity on me that he likes; if he fails to arrest me he would be guilty of the offence of cowardice. Here we find this offence of cowardice which does not exist in any other Act of the Government.

Any constable who sees us making salt, who sees us heating a pan of salt water, can arrest us, snatch away the pan and throw away the water. What can he feel in throwing away the salt? In Lansundra near Kapadvanj there is a mound of salt, which has been covered with dust. Why is this so? Why this injustice? It is our dharma to oppose such outrageous conduct and such inhuman policy.

If you feel that I should be grateful to you for the purse you have presented to me, I should say I am grateful. But my hunger will not be satisfied with money. I desire that all of you men and women should enrol yourselves in this sacrificial movement. It is my cherished desire that all students studying in this high school who are above the age of fifteen, and all teachers too, should enrol themselves. Wherever revolutions have taken place, that is, in Japan, China, Egypt, Italy, Ireland and in England, students and teachers have played a prominent role. In Europe, war broke out on the 4th of August in 1914, and when I reached England on the 6th of that same month, I found that students had left colleges and marched out with arms.

Here, in this righteous war, truth, non-violence and forgiveness are the weapons. The consequence of using such weapons can only be beneficial, and it is the duty of every student and teacher to take part in such a struggle. At a time when the final struggle is being waged in order to free India from slavery, any student or teacher who takes shelter in his home or in the school will be regarded as having acted as a traitor to his country. Will you be engaged in learning poems by heart or in doing sums at a time when a person like Sardar is behind the bars? Just as when a house is on fire everyone comes out to extinguish it, similarly you should all come out to put an end to these sufferings of our country.

Those who say that Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jews and others have not united speak an untruth. This salt tax applies equally to all. If it is the case that whereas Hindus have to pay this tax, Muslims can get themselves exempted from it, they may very well do so. If anyone can save himself in this manner, I shall have to modify my dharma. I am prepared to get this tax abolished even if I have to prostrate myself on the ground in order to do so. Why should not everyone unite in order to have that tax abolished from which even a buffalo and a cow cannot escape?

My prostrating myself on the ground for the sake of removing the hardships of crores of people was of no avail. I have spared no efforts in drafting appeals. Everyone knows that I know how to use polite language. However, I have become a revolutionary when politeness and persuasion proved infructuous. I find peace in

describing myself as a revolutionary and I practise my dharma to some extent. In a revolution which is calm, peaceful and truthful, you should get yourselves enrolled regardless of the religion to which you belong. If you enlist yourselves with sincerity and if you can keep up your courage, the salt tax will have been abolished, this administration will have come to an end and all the hardships enumerated in the letter to the Viceroy as well as those which have not been so enumerated will have to cease. Then when new administrative policies are to be formulated, the time will be ripe for solving communal disputes and satisfying everyone.

I invite you all in the name of God. Even the Britishers will join in this movement. Will they perpetrate many injustices in order to justify one? And will they put innocent men behind the bars, whip them and hang them?

God can never be identified with that which is untruth, that which is injustice. It is as plain as I am speaking to you here and now. I see equally clearly that the days of this administration are numbered and total swaraj is in sight. The Goddess of Independence is peeping in and wishes to garland us. If at such a time we run away, who will be as unworthy as we?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-3-1930

488. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

RAS,

March 19, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

You are in for a whole night's vigil but it is inevitable if you are to return before tomorrow night. The messenger will bring you where I may be. You are reaching me at the most trying stage in the march. You will have to cross a channel at about 2 a.m. on the shoulders of tried fishermen. I dare not interrupt the march even for the chief servant of the nation.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

This is the place where Vallabhbhai was arrested. All the hereditary officials of this village have just gone, leaving their resignations in my hands.

PUNDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1930. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

489. SPEECH AT RAS

March 19, 1930

Today we have entered the taluka in which Sardar Vallabhbhai was arrested and sentenced to prison and in which he had carried on such a vigorous struggle in 1924 that the Government had finally to admit its error and mete out justice that should not have required a struggle. It is as if Sardar was sentenced to prison as a reward for having served you!

The question now is what you can do to serve the cause for which he has been sent to jail and what I should do.

Some of the Headmen and Matadars have handed in their resignations. I congratulate them. However, there are still many who cannot abandon the line. I have not come across a single person who has accepted the post of a Headman for the sake of the salary attached to it. Headmen have the privilege of perpetrating indignities on the people or it may be said that they have the right to participate in the indignities perpetrated on the people. The improper reason for their clinging to their posts is that this privilege satisfies their base self-interest or assists them in their work. But how much longer will you keep on doing your part in squeezing these villages?

Have not your eyes yet been opened to the robbery that is being committed by the Government?

The Headman, the Talati and the Ravana are the representatives of the Government in the villages, and it is through these persons that the latter carries on its administration. A village which is afraid of a handful of men and continues to act in a manner contrary to its own wishes, neither enhances the prestige of the Headman, the Talati or the Ravana nor that of the villagers themselves. Sardar was making great efforts to end this indignity.

Sardar neither made speeches nor came here to foment trouble. Neither the Magistrate nor you had expected any sort of trouble. The task for which Sardar had approached you was not a secret to anyone. A satyagrahi has no secrets. Even a child can see how a satyagrahi stands, sits, eats and drinks. It can also examine the latter's accounts. What secret can a satyagrahi like Sardar have? He had come here to clear the way for me. He had not come here to convey the message regarding salt. We had both so planned that it would be through me and those whom I took along with me that the salt law would be violated. You do not know many of the persons who are accompanying me. They are all public workers devoted to Sardar. I

have not been able to understand the nature of Sardar's offence. Even the Magistrate did not know it. That Sardar should be awarded a sentence of three months' jail is a matter of shame both to Sardar and to the Government. A person like him should be sentenced to a term of seven years' imprisonment or be exiled. It would not befit the Government to sentence me to three months' imprisonment. Exile for life or hanging would be a punishment fit for a person like me. I am guilty of sedition. It is my dharma to commit sedition against the Government. I am teaching this dharma to the people. A regime under which tyranny is being perpetrated, under which the rich and the poor are made to pay the same amount of tax on an item like salt, under which exorbitant sums are being spent on watchmen, the police and the army, under which the highest executive receives a salary which is five thousand times the income of the cultivator, under which an annual revenue of 25 crores of rupees is derived from narcotics and liquor, under which foreign cloth of the value of Rs. 60 crores is imported every year, and under which crores of persons continue to remain unemployed, it is one's dharma to rise against and destroy such a regime, to pray that fire may consume its policies.

For such a treasonable offence, I was once sentenced to six years' imprisonment but, unfortunately for the Government and myself, I fell ill and I was released as it was felt that I should no longer be held in prison. Now again a cloud, if you choose to call it so, or a procession with a fanfare if you wish so to describe it, is approaching me. It will be good if I am arrested. The magistrate will be put to shame if he sentences me to three months' imprisonment. One guilty of sedition should be banished to the Andamans, sentenced to a life-term of exile, or to hanging. What other punishment can be meted out to anyone like me who regards sedition his duty?

The Government must have believed that by sentencing Sardar to three months' imprisonment, it will be able to scare the people and suppress them. However, the fact that you have turned out here in thousands appears to signify that you are looking forward to a celebration. You must regard it as something to celebrate if my colleagues and I are arrested. But will you sit quiet after regarding this as an occasion for celebration? Will the Headmen and the Matadars cling to their offices as flies cling to dirt? That would indeed be a matter of shame and grief.

Durbar has come and settled in this taluka for many years. Who is this Durbar? He has given up his kingdom—however tiny a village it may be. He does not want any comforts; he only wants to serve. You should learn courage and sacrifice from him. What an adverse impression it will create if the Headmen of such a taluka do not give

up their office !

The money that you have given me today has no value for me. When I collected a crore of rupees, it did have value for me. Those crores of rupees have rendered service many times their value. Today, however, I do not need money but your services. All the men and women present here should get themselves enrolled. Say that you are prepared, when your turn comes to violate the salt law. Even women can participate in this righteous struggle and many have already enrolled themselves.

This religious struggle does not involve hurting even a hair of anyone. We shall teach the Government a lesson by suffering hardships ourselves, and by doing so create world opinion in our favour. And, finally, we shall achieve a change of heart in our rulers. At present, however, the Government is inclined to indulge in oppression instead of meting out justice.

A person like Shri Sen Gupta, Mayor of Calcutta, whose name is familiar to everyone in Bengal, has been imprisoned in Burma. The Government has adopted the policy of arresting those who are not guilty of any offence. At a time when the nation cries out in despair and thousands are coming forward to express their grievances, the Government should abolish a thing like the salt tax and redress other grievances as well. But this Government cannot afford to do so. It cannot afford to see a crore of rupees remaining with the people. It is behaving in such an outrageous manner in order that this sum is sent out to England. The first step towards freeing ourselves from such oppression is to seek the abolition of the salt tax. We shall violate the salt tax law to such an extent that we shall be prepared to suffer whatever the penalty we may have to face—be it imprisonment, flogging or any other.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 23-3-1930

490. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

DURING DANDI MARCH,

*Wednesday, 10.30 p.m. [March 19, 1930]*¹

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. If those young men are so keen, I believe that we should admit them. They did repent before me at any rate. I refused to give them a letter of recommendation, so that you may

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Narandas Gandhi", 16-3-1930.

decide there as you think best. That is the position even now. Do only what you think right.

Blessings from

BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 8093. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

491. NOTES

SALT TAX

Fifteen villagers of Bhangore and Matla in 24 Parganas District have been fined eight annas each by the Sub-Divisional Officer of Alipore on a charge of illicit manufacture of salt. The men pleaded guilty and throwing themselves at the mercy of the Court, submitted they were too poor to buy salt and were manufacturing it for their own consumption.

This seasonable item is from the public Press. Eight annas fine for poor people is no joke. The magistrate might have discharged the men with a caution or he might, as magistrates have done before now, have paid the fine from his own pocket, if he felt that he was bound to impose a penalty. It is likely of course that in that case, he might have laid himself open to the charge of cowardice under the Salt Act. Be that as it may, the fact that the men “threw themselves at the mercy of the court,” and “submitted that they were too poor to buy salt,” and that the magistrate rejected the plea of the villagers, is eloquent testimony in favour of the civil disobedience campaign. No milder agitation would have answered the purpose. Moreover, the salt tax is but a sample from the mountain of such grievances, from which it is the duty of every Indian who knows the wrongs being done to India to strain every nerve to free her.

HOW TO BREAK IT

A correspondent writes to say that there is no salt tax in Portuguese India, that Daman is quite near Pardi, that salt is sold at 2 annas per maund in Daman, and that any quantity may be imported from Daman and payment of tax refused on passing the British border. A similar suggestion has come too from Kathiawar. There also there is no tax, though there is the State monopoly which makes the salt dearer than the cost price. Nevertheless it is much cheaper than in the British territory. Thus a maund (*cutcha*) costs, I understand, Rs. 1-4 in Ranpur whereas the same quantity outside Ranpur will cost probably no more than 10 annas, if that. Anyway, when the instructions for civil disobedience on a mass scale are issued, there is no doubt that the salt law is the easiest to break.

The Government is naturally preparing to combat the civil law

breakers after its usual fashion. Every police officer above the rank of a constable in the Bombay Presidency except in Sind and Aden has been appointed a salt officer. These men, armed with new powers, may be fully expected to give a good account of themselves. And when they have stained their hands with innocent blood, there will be no doubt the usual inquiry followed by a repeal of the Salt Act. But this time the object of civil disobedience is double—the repeal of the tax and the repeal of the British bondage of which the salt tax is but an offshoot. No inquiry merely into the Salt Act followed by its repeal can stop the campaign of civil disobedience. It behoves all who want the repeal of the salt tax to join the agitation at least to that extent, unless they would have the tax rather than success of civil disobedience even for a specific grievance.

SOMETHING ADDED, NOTHING DEDUCTED

It has been said that I have now abandoned my first love and that I have given up Hindu-Muslim unity, removal of untouchability and khaddar as conditions of swaraj. This is a mischievous suggestion. The fact is that I have given up nothing. Many new things have been added. Hence have I called the recent presentation a new orientation. There will be no swaraj without the old conditions being fulfilled. But there will be none if some more conditions are not also fulfilled. They might have been neglected altogether at the time of formulating the constitution. Now they form an integral part of any scheme of swaraj if it is conceived in the interest of the masses. Again civil disobedience is being offered irrespective of the full fruition of the various points; for it, being in substitution for an armed rebellion, can go on side by side with the prosecution of the amplified constructive programme—even as an armed man will be fighting, whilst the civil population may be engaged in various other national pursuits, suspending them to the extent necessary for supporting the armed man. There is no danger of any one of the conditions of swaraj being neglected or given up as those who are engaged in civil disobedience are irrevocably committed to them. The question therefore is, who are guiding the civil disobedience movement? It is well if they are pure nationalists not directly or indirectly fostering communalism. Civil disobedience is the method whereby the nation is to generate the strength to reach her formulated goal.

DEENABANDHU ANDREWS

The reader knows that C. F. Andrews had become a convert to Independence before I came to it. I had hugged the belief that Dominion Status was superior to Independence. But Deenabandhu

knew his England better than I did. In this latest letter written on his birthday he says:

I cannot tell you how much I have been thinking of you! At such times as these I have realized that thoughts are prayers. The greatest of all struggles has begun, and India is right, as I have always believed, in claiming nothing short of Independence. She *cannot* be part of an Empire. It is unthinkable.

The idea behind this letter evidently is that India with Dominion Status can only be part of an Empire, not a member on an equal footing of a commonwealth of nations. Of course when I talked of Dominion Status, I had no thought of being anything but an equal partner. Apart therefore from the Calcutta resolution, when the experience of 1929 proved that partnership on a footing of absolute equality was out of the question, I became a convinced Independence-wallah.

Young India, 20-3-1930

492. THE CHOICE BEFORE STUDENTS

It has been often said that the money spent on national education in general and the Gujarat Vidyapith in particular has been so much waste. In my opinion the Gujarat Vidyapith by its supreme sacrifice has more than justified its existence, the hopes entertained by its authors and the grants made to it by donors. For the Vidyapith has suspended its literary activities save for boys under 16 who are already under training there. The teachers and students of over 15 years of age have offered their services as volunteers and nearly forty students with the teachers are already in the field. A class for giving fifteen days' emergency training in connection with satyagraha has been opened for the sake of those who may need such training. I congratulate the students and the teachers on the promptitude with which they have acted. I may state that twenty of these are with me on the march. They are divided into two parties, both preceding the 80 pilgrims to make preparations in advance and assisting the villagers. They are under orders not to offer civil resistance till the 80 are arrested and immediately to replace them as soon as they are arrested.

I am sure that every national educational institution will copy the noble example of the Gujarat Vidyapith which was the first to come into being in response to the call of non-co-operation in 1920. And I hope that the Government and aided institutions will also copy the example. Every revolution of modern times has found students in the forefront. This, because it is peaceful, ought not to offer less attraction to the students.

The motto of the Gujarat Vidyapith is: सा विद्या या विमुक्तये. It means:

That is knowledge which is designed for salvation. On the principle that the greater includes the less, national independence or material freedom is included in the spiritual. The knowledge gained in educational institutions must therefore at least teach the way and lead to such freedom.

The most superficial observer will not fail to notice that the daily routine of the satyagrahi pilgrims constitutes by itself a perfect education. It is not a company of violent rebels who are moving about creating ravages and letting loose every passion; it is a band of self-restrained men who have declared non-violent rebellion against organized tyranny and who seek to secure freedom from it by severe self-suffering, spreading on their march the message of freedom through non-violence and truth. No father need feel the slightest anxiety about dedicating his son or daughter to what is after all the truest education that can be conceived in the existing circumstances of the country.

Let me distinguish between the call of 1920 and the present call. The call of 1920 was for emptying Government institutions and bringing into being national ones. It was a call for preparation. Today the call is for engaging in the final conflict, i. e., for mass civil disobedience. This may or may not come. It will not come if those who have been hitherto the loudest in their cry for liberty have no action in them. If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? The students are expected to precipitate a crisis not by empty meaningless cries but by mute, dignified, unchallengeable action worthy of students. It may again be that the students have no faith in self-sacrifice, and less in non-violence. Then naturally they will not and need not come out. They may then, like the revolutionaries, whose letter is reproduced in another column, wait and see what non-violence in action can do. It will be sportsmanlike for them either to give themselves whole-heartedly to this non-violent revolt or to remain neutral, and (if they like) critical, observers of the developing events. They will disturb and harm the movement, if they will act as they choose and without fitting in with the plan of the authors or even in defiance of them. This I know, that if civil disobedience is not developed to the fullest extent possible now, it may not be for another generation. The choice before the students is clear. Let them make it. The awakening of the past ten years has not left them unmoved. Let them take the final plunge.

Young India, 20-3-1930

493. OFFICIAL PETTINESS

The Government of Burma knew that Sjt. Sen Gupta was but a bird of passage when he was in Rangoon the other day. Yet he, the Mayor of the Calcutta Corporation, has been taken under warrant to

Rangoon for prosecution. A prosecution so vindictively brought is bound, if past experience is any guide, to result in a conviction. The inference is irresistible that there is an unwritten but well understood conspiracy among the high officials to 'lop off tall poppies'. It was Sardar Vallabhbhai yesterday, it is Sjt. Sen Gupta today. It will be other leaders tomorrow. There is no other way open to the Government than either repression or relief. The latter the Government does not propose to give; the former therefore is inevitable. The swifter and stronger it is, the better it is for the movement. For if it has inherent vitality in it, it will grow with every wave of repression. I therefore tender my congratulations to Sjt. Sen Gupta on his arrest.

I observe that a spontaneous movement has grown up in the country to appoint convinced believers in non-violence as dictators in the various provinces. Tamil Nad has taken the lead by appointing Sjt. C. Rajagopalachari; Andhra Desha has followed by appointing Deshabhakta Konda Venkatappayya. Now comes the news that Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta has been similarly appointed in Bengal. I am a little nervous about Bengal. For the Press message is not clear whether the appointment is on the part of both the groups or only one. I hope it is by both. They may have their vital differences, if any. But on the question of the goal and the method of civil disobedience, there can be none. And since Sjt. Satis Chandra Das Gupta has no designs either upon the Council or the Corporation, he should be able to weld the two elements together. The two great leaders being taken away, surely it is the duty of the rival groups to coalesce and assist Satis Babu.

In any event the task of a dictator is no bed of roses. He may himself be taken away any moment. He allows himself to be appointed for that purpose. But he ought to receive the unanimous and unquestioned support of the people. Once a person is called to such an office, he should have absolute allegiance. All argument should be hushed at the time of battle. The time for argument was when the appointment was made.

The word "dictator" is, in my opinion, ill-chosen and has a bad odour. I should name him First Servant. The definition of his duties will give the precise meaning to the office. Use of some words from current and apparently similar movements is inevitable. But we ought to avoid the use, in a movement in which dictatorship is altogether out of place and impossible, of a word bearing that meaning and having that force.

Young India, 20-3-1930

494. GOOD IF TRUE

I publish the foregoing¹ just as I have received it. I have not the privilege of knowing "Colonel Bedy". If he and the letter are not a hoax and if the letter is genuine, I congratulate the revolutionary party on its decision. Three years' limit given to me is ample. If during three years of active non-violence under the auspices promised by the party are not enough to carry conviction, I should regard myself to be an unworthy representative of non-violence. I hope therefore that the revolutionary party will not only suspend its own activities but will also prevent so far as is possible, sporadic violence from breaking out.

Young India, 20-3-1930

495. SWARAJ AND RAMARAJYA

No matter in how many ways swaraj may have been defined, no matter how many interpretations I myself may have given it, to me its only meaning which is eternally valid is Ramarajya. If the word Ramarajya offends anyone, then I shall call it 'Dharmarajya'. The sense of the word Ramarajya is this that under such a rule the poor will be fully protected, everything will be done with justice, and the voice of the people will always be respected. But in order to attain Ramarajya all must help. But in order to achieve this khadi alone is the universal and constructive instrument. But in order to increase the power of the people something else with a wider appeal was needed. That something is salt tax. Both the poor and the rich use salt equally and because a tax is levied on this universally useful thing, one that is necessary for everyone, one and all can offer civil disobedience against the salt tax law and thus strengthen their power. The power that we shall gain by this sort of civil disobedience will, because of its civil and peaceable nature, help us in securing Ramarajya. There are many other taxes like the salt tax which weigh heavily on the people and in resisting which people can get a good training, and their strength can increase. Ramarajya, by such means, will become easy to establish. No one can predict when we shall attain full Ramarajya. But it is the duty of every one of us to contemplate it day and night. And true contemplation is that in which proper methods also have been used for the establishment of Ramarajya. It should be remembered that in order to establish Ramarajya no

¹ The letter from "Members of the Executive Council of R.L.R. represented through Secretary, Colonel Bedy" is not reproduced here. It said that the revolutionaries had decided to give three years' time for "Gandhism" to succeed after which they would declare the "civil war of independence".

learning is necessary. The necessary talent is found in all—men and women, young and old, and in people of all religions. The only sad thing is that not all perceive its presence now. Cannot every one of us, if we want, today give proof of qualities such as truth, non-violence, propriety of conduct, bravery, forbearance, courage, etc.? The fact is we are under a delusion and for this reason we are not able to perceive what is in us, and instead we strive, in vain, to understand things that are beyond us. Undoubtedly this is a very sad thing. But even then I shall request the readers of *Hindi Navajivan* that in this great *yajna* which has been started in the country today they should be prepared to do their full share.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 20-3-1930

496. SPEECH AT KARELI

March 20, 1930

It should not be difficult to get 5,000 volunteers out of a population of 2,75,000. If all the officials of the four hundred villages resign we would not be required to go to jails to achieve our goal. But circumstances are not yet favourable for that. We can manufacture salt on the banks of Mahi near its mouth. But Sardar Vallabhbhai has asked me to go to Jalalpur for the purpose. If I and my troop of volunteers get arrested, every volunteer should begin manufacturing salt. The people of Baroda State may also come into the British territory and make salt. Meanwhile, all should put their hands to the production of khadi and work to stop consumption of liquor.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 23-3-1930

497. LETTER TO GANGADEVI SANADHYA

KARELI,

Thursday [March 20, 1930]¹

CHI. GANGADEVI,

I received your letter. Take good care of your health and render what service you can. Whatever the doctors may say, you must not even think of including in your diet anything except milk and fruit.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2533

¹ The date has been inferred from Gandhiji's presence at Kareli.

498. LETTER TO ABDUL KADIR BAWAZEER

GAJERA,
March 21, 1930

BHAI IMAM SAHEB,

I think about you every day. How shall I describe your love? I feel extremely happy to see that you have risen very high. The Ashram is yours and I need not entrust it to your care. Take care of your health. Qureshi¹ has been doing fine work. I observe that everyone is pleased with him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 6645

499. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

March 21, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

If you do not write letters, how can you call yourself a secretary? I do not expect anything from Mahadev at this time. He can get no time. Though he is a secretary, he is not doing a secretary's work but is doing some other work more important than a secretary's. You have not risen beyond being a secretary. I expect reports about people who are ill. I also wish to hear about the activities there. You may also write about anything else which you may think about. How is Ba's health? How is your health? Do you study hard? Do you card? Do you spin? Do you write the diary? And the life-sketch?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1795

500. SPEECH AT GAJERA²

[March 21, 1930]³

You should be firmly convinced that you have performed a meritorious deed by bringing the *Antyajas* in your midst and have

¹ Gulam Rasul Qureshi, addressee's son-in-law

² Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"

³ Gandhiji was at Gajera on this date.

taken a step forward towards swaraj. You can see from the dress and behaviour of the two Brahmins who sang “*Raghupati Raghava Rajaram, Patitapavana Seetaram*”, that they are not new-fashioned Brahmins, that they are persons who would not gamble, eat meat or be guilty of licentious conduct. They are Brahmin teachers who are well-versed in the *Gita*, know Sanskrit and fully understand their responsibilities. They do not regard it as a sin to live with the *Antyajas* or with those who belong to other religions, but rather look upon it as a sin not to do so. Hence, you should be convinced that you are not guilty of irreligious conduct.

When Shri Ramachandra left Ayodhya and arrived on the banks of the Ganga, King Nishad rowed him across to the other bank, and offered him fruits and vegetables to eat. Who was Nishad? He was regarded an *Antyaja*. When Bharata met him, he embraced him and congratulated him on having served Shri Ramachandra in his hour of need. There is an *Antyaja* family which has also joined our group.

Besides the 60 crores of rupees that go out of the country every year by way of payment for the foreign cloth that we import, millions more are sent out of the country. During the days of the Gazni, Ghori, and the Mogul Empire, the wealth of the country stayed within it, but under this Government, the pensions of all officers are sent out of the country. How can one rest when the country is being robbed in this manner?

There are three hundred districts in India and in all these districts the Collector reigns supreme. It is truly a matter of shame to them and to all of us, if we only stop to think, that these three hundred men should rule over 30 crores of us.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1930

501. SPEECH AT ANKHI¹

[March 21, 1930]²

I have received a complaint that villagers do not supply provisions or water to the police officers or other Government officers who happen to come here. We are not guilty of any violence in doing so; however, whether these officers happen to be Indians or Britishers, if they are really dying of hunger or thirst, it is not our dharma to let them perish in either manner. The dharma in obedience to which I act and which has made an outlaw of me teaches me that if Dyer and O'Dwyer, whose deeds, which were the very incarnations of cruelty, I

¹ Extracted from “Swaraj Gita”

² The date is from *Prajabandnu*, 23-3-1930.

had termed as “Dyerism”, shoot me and if I am still conscious and come to know that one of them has been bitten by a snake, I would go running to them to suck out the poison. I have done such things in the past. In South Africa once I was beaten by a certain person¹ and when I regained consciousness, I beseeched the Government to release him. However, if an officer approaches us with arrogance which derives from the office he holds, he would get neither food nor drink, neither a bed, nor matches nor even fodder for his horse.

A potter is not born in order to fetch water for others. Even if we happen to lose our hands, we shall no longer salute the Government. We shall ourselves settle all our disputes and, when a new era begins, washermen, barbers and other workers will be ready to serve those who serve the people. However, in a democracy, there will be no distinctions of high and low. Even a Brahmin will become as much of a public servant as a Bhangi.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-3-1930

502. MESSAGE TO MAHARASHTRA

AMOD,
March 22, 1930

I am extremely glad to hear that in Maharashtra both wings of the Congress have come together and have decided to take part in the fight for swaraj. I hope in this religious fight Maharashtra will take the foremost place.

The Bombay Chronicle, 24-3-1930

503. INTERVIEW TO YUSUF MEHERALLY

[AMOD ,
March 22, 1930]²

Q. What part do you expect the youth movement to play in the present struggle?

A. The Youth League can do a great deal. They can supply recruits in large numbers in the civil disobedience campaign. They can, moreover, help to carry the message of independence to every nook and corner of the land. They can usefully picket foreign cloth and liquor shops.

¹ Mir Alam; *vide* “My Reward”, 22-2-1908.

² According to the source this was published in the *Vanguard*, 22-3-1930. Gandhiji, however, arrived in Amod on the evening of the 22nd.

Those of its members who are unable to participate actively in the present campaign can render good service in the realm of social reforming, popularizing khaddar and swadeshi articles, in pushing forward prohibition propaganda, etc.

Indeed at this juncture great things are expected from the youth of the country and I have no doubt they will fully rise to the occasion.

Q. Will you advise students to leave schools and colleges immediately?

A. Yes. I wish to point out that the present appeal to the students differs from that of 1921. In the latter case, the students were asked to quit their Government-controlled educational institutions and join national educational institutions. The present call is: Suspend your studies and join in the fight for freedom. When victory is won and you happen to be alive, you will resume your studies in schools of our own Government. For to my mind it is a fight to the finish. The greatest service that the youth can now render is to empty schools and colleges and swell the ranks of satyagrahi volunteers.

Q. Would you advise Youth Leagues to call out even those students whose examinations are a month or even a week ahead?

A. Yes. If the students themselves feel the call they should come out at once. As I said, I consider it a fight to the finish. If they have not the faith, they won't do it.

Q. Would you approve of the suggestion mooted in Youth League circles that the houses of "blackleg" M.L.C.'s who have not resigned their seats and those of selected other officials be picketed, and they be harassed in other ways as much as possible?

A. I should say no. During the N.C.O.¹ days three specific instances of this type came to my notice. They did no good. I know they did harm.

Q. Would you suggest any method by which the Muslims could be still more attracted to the Congress fold and protected from the pernicious propaganda of communalists?

A. The best way to increase Muslim interest in the Congress is for Congressmen to serve them. Convince them that the Congress is as much theirs as anybody else's. My present programme—the breaking of the salt laws—should appeal to all the communities in India, for it affects them all alike. I am an optimist. I have no doubt that soon the Congress will stand higher in the affections of the Muslims than it ever did before. The masses are sound at heart. They only require a correct and courageous lead. I repeat that the best way of winning over the Mussalmans is by seeking occasions

¹ Non-co-operation

of service and assuring them that the resolution of the Congress on the communal question means what it says.

Q. In case you are not arrested in the next few days, are the other Provinces not to embark on satyagraha?

A. If I am not arrested till I reach Jalalpur, I expect that the Provinces will be free to start civil disobedience soon after I have committed the breach of Salt Act.

The Hindu, 25-3-1930

504. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

[Before March 23, 1930]¹

CHI. MIRA,

I have your two letters. No time to say anything. I notice that everywhere they say you have taken charge of the Ashram. This needs contradiction.² I am trying to think out something.

I hope those [who] were stung have now recovered.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5387. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9621

505. LETTER TO KUSUM DESAI

AMOD,

Before prayer, March 23, 1930

CHI. KUSUM,

I have your letter.

If Narandas and Gangabehn permit you, come and spend a day. I hope you know that we reach Broach on Wednesday. You should get this letter on Monday. You would have got it today, but I had no time at all to write.

It is foolish of you to feel sorry that you could not get up at three. How can you help if your body is not strong enough? Besides, everything depends on God's will. It is enough if you do not remain complacent. I know that you are striving hard. I have no time to write more.

I have of course written to Dudhibehn.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1796

¹ On the back of the letter is noted "March 23, 1930", which appears to be the date on which it was received by the addressee.

² Vide "Notes", 27-3-1930, sub-title, "Mirabai Not Manager".

506. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

BUVA,
Sunday, March 23, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

You seem to have taken a vow not to write to me. I know that you are submerged in work. That is precisely why I must have a letter from you. You should not work so much that you may fall ill. Speak less loudly and spare your throat.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—5: Ku. Premabehn Kantakne, p. 9

507. SPEECH AT BUVA

March 23, 1930

Although I make strong speeches and have set out to violate the law, the Government dare not arrest me. Why are you afraid of such a Government? The Government took Shri Sen Gupta to Rangoon and sentenced him to about 10 days' simple imprisonment. Should we not conclude from this that as compared to 1857 and 1919, it has lost some of its strength? I have only 80 volunteers with me. Even then the Government cannot arrest me. What then could it do if there were 80,000 volunteers? Hence Hindus and Muslims, men and women, should participate in this struggle.

[From Gujarati]

Gujarati, 30-3-1930

508. SPEECH AT SAMNI¹

March 23, 1930

To date, at least 80 persons have handed in their resignations. It will be regarded as cowardice to hand in one's resignation and then to withdraw it. There is no compulsion to resign. It is advisable to give up the post of Headman, looking upon it as something base, dirty and filthy. In the Ashram, classes have been started to train up women in fifteen days. Dadabhai's grand-daughter² is a teacher there. The women of Samni should also come forward. If you cannot do so, will you not at least produce khadi? Nowadays a large number of people

¹ The meeting was held at 9 p.m.

² Khorshedbehn Naoroji

wear khadi. But if those who make it go to jail, who will continue to produce khadi? You should therefore produce khadi.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

509. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SAMNI,

Monday [March 24, 1930]¹

CHI. MAHADEV,

I send seven articles in this packet. It is about 10 p.m. now. I have revised the articles, but you should revise them further if necessary. I do not think I have left out anything. I am sending with this some letters for Ashram inmates. See that you do not forget to pass them on to the persons concerned and do not lose them.

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I wished to write to the women there, but all the available time was taken up by *Young India* and rest. There are three loose letters and two envelopes.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11484

510. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

TRALSA,

March 25, 1930

CHI. MIRA,

I have just sent a p.c. to Nonami.

You will see a paragraph² I have devoted to you in *Young India*.

Give me your latest time-table. I have suggested to Narandas that Keshu may be asked to lead the prayer. He sings well. He has an excellent ear for music and his Sanskrit pronunciation is perfect. Is the women's prayer recited daily?

I am taking my journeyings very well indeed. But over 15 have become disabled. They expect to be all right by tomorrow. They are all in Broach which we reach tomorrow morning.

I am feeling sleepy now.

Love.

BAPU

¹ Gandhiji was at Samni on this date.

² Vide "Notes", 27-3-1930, sub-title, "Mirabai Not Manager".

[PS.]

If the 5 young men who came to me were repentant and undertook to abide by the rules, I did contemplate their being taken.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5389. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9623

511. LETTER TO PRABHUDAS GANDHI

TRALSA

Tuesday, March 25, 1930

CHI. PRABHUDAS,¹

I have your letter. Your anger is meaningless. The *Gita* teaches us restraint. At the same time, it says that it is not possible for a man to change his nature. So far as possible, restrain your temper and be satisfied with that. It is enough if you never try to deceive yourself. If you can master your health you will be able to do so many other things. You have done the right thing in holding the childrens' prayer in a separate courtyard. I had sent you that information while I was on tour of U.P.² and therefore have nothing to say against it. There are two advantages in having separate prayers for the children. The prayers of the grown-ups can be conducted with more seriousness and we will be able to pay more attention to the prayer for the children.

Keep on writing to me.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 32942

512. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

Tuesday [March 25, 1930]³

CHI. BRIJKRISHNA,

I have your letter. You must give up all worry. Your achievement lies in your effort.

"Never, O loved one, does the doer of a good deed meet with a sad end."⁴ Look up the meaning. Keep doing whatever you can. Go to Morvi if your health is not satisfactory, there is no harm at all in going. Keep on writing to me as long as I am free. Learn the

¹ The letter is in a different hand but the subscription is by Gandhiji.

² In September-October, 1929.

³ The letter was received by the addressee on March 26, 1930.

⁴ *Bhagavad Gita*, vi. 40

pronunciation of the *Gita* verses from Krishnadas.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2378

513. DRAFT RESOLUTION FOR A.I.C.C.

[*March 25, 1930*]¹

This meeting of A.I.C.C. endorses the resolution² passed by the Working Committee giving full authority to Gandhiji in the matter of civil disobedience and congratulates him and his companions and the country on the march begun by him on 12th instant,³ in pursuit of his plan of civil disobedience. The Committee hopes that the whole country will respond to the action taken by G. and his band in a manner befitting the occasion .

The A.I.C.C. hereby authorizes the Provincial C.C.s to undertake such civil disobedience as to them may seem proper and in the manner that may appear to them to be most suitable. The committee, however, hopes that so far as is possible the Provinces shall concentrate on a civil breach of the Salt laws. The committee trusts that whilst preparations may be fully made civil disobedience for Poorna Swaraj shall not start till Gandhiji has reached his destination, actually committed a breach of the Salt laws and given the word to the other Provinces through this committee or he has been earlier arrested.

In the purview of the A.I.C.C. time has arrived for all educational institutions whether Government-owned, aided or national to suspend their literary activities and devote their whole attention to the campaign for liberty.

The A.I.C.C. congratulates Sardar Vallabhbhai, Sjt. Sen Gupta on their arrest and notes with satisfaction that their arrest instead of weakening has strengthened the national resolve to reach the goal without any delay.⁴

From a copy: Gandhi-Nehru Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

¹ The meeting of the A.I.C.C. was held on March 25, 1930.

² *Vide* "Never Faileth", 20-2-1930.

³ *Vide* 1st footnote to "Parting Message at Chandola", 12-3-1930.

⁴ *Vide* also "Official Pettiness", 20-3-1930 and "Mountain in Labour", 27-3-1930.

514. SPEECH AT PUBLIC MEETING, TRALSA

March 25, 1930

Mahatmajī said he heard that some Muslim friends had complained that he and his party did not pass through their villages. If he was invited he would surely have included such villages in his programme but his present tour was such that he could not go to any village uninvited and he could not force the villagers to receive him.

In Dandi, a Muslim has invited me and I will be putting up in his bungalow. Satyagraha will commence from the Muslim friend's house. My Muslim friends should not, therefore, feel aggrieved. I only want their blessings so that I may achieve success in my religious fight. Muslims and Hindus both want that this tax should go as both consume equal quantity of salt and both feel the pinch. Only when they are able to get the tax abrogated, will they get enough strength to get swaraj. They must know that crores are being sent away to England by various means.

Making a passing reference to the Sarda Act, Gandhiji said they need not be afraid of that Bill. He could not think of the Government interfering in such things but the people also should understand that nothing is gained by marrying their children of tender age.

This is not the time for marriages when this fight is going on. They must not put any restraint on their sons but all this abysmal ignorance is due to our bondage and dependence.

The Bombay Chronicle, 26-3-1930

515. LETTER TO SUSHILA GANDHI

Wednesday, March 26, 1930

CHI. SUSHILA,

I have your letter. I also read your letter to Manilal. I will not, therefore, rag you in this letter.

I can justify your point of view. And I believe that you wish to keep Sita at Akola. You, too, must then stay there. She should live where you do, and you should live where she does.

But I do not believe that you cannot bring up Sita in the Ashram as you would wish to do. If you use your imagination, you will realize that you will get nowhere else the atmosphere you have in the Ashram. Old and young, all absorb imperceptibly a great deal from the moral atmosphere surrounding them. There is only a half-truth in your belief that the children there are ill-mannered. In the Ashram we try to make the children independent-minded. They are not punished

physically and, therefore, they seem to have become ill-mannered. But I am sure that the ultimate result will be good. However, if you decide to stay in the Ashram and to keep Sita there, you must observe the following rules:

1. You should not leave Sita unattended to do any work.
2. You must take a promise from anyone to whom you may entrust Sita that he or she will give her nothing to eat.
3. Sita should be fed at fixed hours.
4. If possible, she should be kept on milk and fruit only.
5. [You] must take some exercise every day.
6. If you or Sita do not keep good health, you should run away from the place.

You should follow these rules disregarding opposition from anybody. If you do not have the strength of mind to do that, I think it will be difficult for you to stay in the Ashram. Do come and see me at Surat.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4767

516. *SPEECH AT BROACH*¹

March 26, 1930

Chandubhai has asked for my blessings. But who am I to give blessings? I have myself come to seek blessings. I hope that by the time I reach Dandi the blessings I am receiving at every village on this march will have added up to such a mountain that even this monster of a Government will cower at the sight.²

A Muslim youth has sent me questions on the Hindu-Muslim problem. One of them is: “Do you expect to win swaraj through your own single effort or assisted merely by the Hindus?”

I have never dreamt that I could win swaraj merely through my effort or assisted only by the Hindus. I stand in need of the assistance of Mussalmans, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, Jews and all other Indians. I need the assistance even of Englishmen. But I know too that all this

¹ A summary of the speech was published in *Young India*, 3-4-1930, under the heading “Hindu-Muslim Question”, with the following note from Gandhiji: “The speech delivered at Broach on 26th ultimo deals with the communal question and is rather important. A full summary is therefore given below.” In what follows, the *Young India* version has been collated with the Gujarati report.

² The following thirteen paragraphs are from *Young India*.

combined assistance is worthless if I have not one other assistance, that is, from God. All is vain without His help. And if He is with this struggle, no other help is necessary.

But to realize His help and guidance in this struggle, I need your blessings, the blessings of all communities. The blessings of thousands of men and women belonging to all communities that have attended this march are to me a visible sign of the hand of God in this struggle.

I know that there are occasions when the hand of God has to be traced in the curses of men. But this is not such an occasion. Today I am doing what the nation has been yearning for during the past ten years. Have I not been rebuked for delaying civil resistance? Have not friends angrily said, "You are stopping the progress of the nation towards its goal? You have only to say, 'Let there be civil resistance', behold ! there is swaraj." There is some truth in the taunt. Full civil resistance does mean swaraj. But I was staying my hand. I had no confidence in myself. I was straining my ear to listen to the still small voice within, but only up to yesterday there was no response. It was in Lahore I had told a journalist that I saw nothing on the horizon to warrant civil resistance. But suddenly, as in a flash, I saw the light in the Ashram. Self-confidence returned. Englishmen and some Indian critics have been warning me against the hazard. But the voice within is clear I must put forth all my effort or retire altogether and for all time from public life. I feel that now is the time or it will be never.

And so I am out for battle and am seeking help on bended knees from this white beard¹ as also the little girls. For in this battle even they can help; and thank God, they are eager to do so. I have insistent letters from them demanding enlistment.

Thus the answer to the Muslim youth's question is complete. I need the help of all races and from all climes.

A satyagrahi has no power he can call his own. All the power he may seem to possess is from and of God. He therefore moves towards his goal carrying the world's opinion with him. Without the help of God he is lame, blind, groping.

Ever since 1921 I have been reiterating two words, "self-purification" and "self-sacrifice". God will not assist him without these two. The world is touched by sacrifice. It does not then discriminate about the merits of a cause. Not so God. He is all-seeing. He insists on the purity of the cause and on adequate sacrifice therefor.

¹ Gandhiji here pointed towards Abbas Tyabji.

The question was put by a Mussalman representing a powerful interest. But had a little Parsi girl representing but a hundred thousand Parsis asked the question, I should have given the same answer and said: "Without the help of Parsis there is no swaraj." I am thankful to be able to say that I have had during the march abundant proof of the blessings of these communities. I have read friendliness in the eyes and in the speech of the Mussalmans who along with the rest have lined our route or attended the meetings. They have even given material aid.

Yet I know that I have not the Ali Brothers with me. Maulana Shaukat Ali will no longer have me in his pocket. Do not think, I do not miss him. I hold no distinction between him and blood brother. His resistance therefore can only be short-lived. If truth is in me, the Brothers must capitulate. They cannot long keep out of the battle. I crave too the assistance of Englishmen. It was neither empty formulonor a touch of vanity that prompted me to send an English friend with my letter to the Viceroy. But choosing Reginald Reynolds as my messenger, I sealed the bond between them and me. For my enmity is not against them, it is against their rule. I seem to be born to be an instrument to compass the end of that rule. But if a hair of an English head was touched I should feel the same grief as I should over such a mishap to my brother. I say to them as a friend: "Why will you not understand that your rule is ruining this country? It has got to be destroyed even though you may pound us to powder or drown us. We must declare what we feel."

The second question is: "Under swaraj how many seats will Mussalmans, have in the legislatures? " What answer can I return to such a question? If I were Viceroy of India I should say to the Mussalmans, Sikhs, Christians, Parsis, etc. "Take what you like, the balance will go to the Hindus," It is true that the Sanatani Hindu will never let me become Viceroy. The fact is that I am unfit to do such accounting. But it should be sufficient to know that the Congress has pledged itself not to accept any communal solution that does not satisfy the parties concerned. I am bound by that pledge. For the Congress all are one. They are all Indians and therefore their freedom is guaranteed. No more can be expected by any community.

Civil resistance will merely give the power to the nation to assert her will. But when the time comes for its assertion, the document embodying the will will have to be sealed by all the communities. Thus without the co-operation of all communities, there is no Independence.

But what should we do meanwhile? We must at least be true to

the salt we eat. Her starving millions are the salt of India's earth. To be true to them we must free the salt from a tax which they have to pay equally with the rich and in the same proportion as the rich. In our ignorance we have been paying this inhuman imposition. Having realized our folly we will be traitors to the starving millions if we submit to the exaction any longer.

Who can help liking this poor man's battle? The cruel tax is no respecter of persons. It is therefore as much the interest of the Mussalman as of the Hindu to secure its abolition. This is a fight undertaken in the name of God and for the sake of the millions of the paupers of this country.¹

Who does not approve of a struggle to do away with a salt tax amounting to Rs. 6 crores? What a great hardship it is for a poor Muslim if he cannot get salt. Is there any Indian who will not participate in this struggle to get this tax repealed?

This struggle is being carried on in the name of God. It is being carried on for the benefit of the poor and the needy and not for the sake of the wealthy. And is there anyone who will keep away from a struggle for the needy?

I have answered the questions. Shri Chandubhai has vehemently asserted that the Broach District will contribute the largest share in this struggle and, although the people of this district may lose their lives, they will not fail to serve the people. I hope that the men and women who have assembled here will fulfil Chandubhai's hopes. If all of them get themselves enrolled, Shri Chandubhai's hunger will be satisfied and I shall consider that I have received more than what I had asked for.

I pray to God, in Whose name I began: may He grant you the ability to understand what I have told you and the strength to act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 30-3-1930

517. SPEECH AT ANKLESHWAR

March 26, 1930

By merely saying that a government is "foreign", no idea is conveyed as to its nature. It may be that though a government is foreign, the plight of the people under it may not be so miserable. Although Rajpipla is an Indian State, I would regard it as "foreign"

¹ What follows has been taken from *Navajivan*.

since it has such a large number of liquor booths.

One can understand the Government levying a tax on ghee. Liquor or cigarettes can also be taxed. This Government is, however, so cunning, arrogant and inhuman that it levies a duty on an item which is consumed by the poorest of the poor. We are lucky, at any rate, that there is no tax on the air we breathe! There is a tax on water and the tax on salt amounts to 1,400 per cent. When people develop the strength to abolish the tax that is levied on salt, we shall not have to hear the complaint that there are so many liquor booths. The wealthy consume liquor, but they do not pay Rs. 25 crores for it; this amount comes from the pockets of the poor.

Resignations have been received from Headmen. I do not, however, trust these people as some of those who have resigned have informed the Collector that they were compelled to do so. Moreover, where one person has resigned, another has taken charge. If there is such a scramble for this office, we should find out whether those who have resigned have actually relinquished charge.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

518. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

[After March 26, 1930]¹

CHI. MIRA,

Your reference to Reynolds is instructive. You must come closer to him and not let him feel lonely. There is something wrong in his resistance to the wheel. He must see the truth lying behind it. The wheel is not an Eastern institution. At one time it was common to mankind. When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman? But you know how best to make him feel thoroughly at home. He may be as Western as he can be and yet should be able to feel at home in the Ashram. There must be something wrong with it, if he cannot do so. All things are possible with love.

Totaramji is all you describe him to be.

You must cope with the noise. Confer with Narandas.

My health seems to be excellent. I have put on 2 lb. weight. All have. We were weighed in Broach.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 5383. Courtesy: Mirabehn; also G.N. 9617

¹ Gandhiji was at Broach on March 26. The letter was evidently written some time after.

519. MOUNTAIN IN LABOUR

The mountain was in labour in Rangoon and it brought forth a ridiculous mouse. A powerful Government put a distinguished son of India, who was suffering from a dangerous illness, under the strain of an utterly unnecessary prosecution, and spent public money. The ostensible reason was that Sjt. Sen Gupta had delivered, whilst he was passing through Burma, two speeches the like of which are delivered every day from a thousand platforms all over the country without being noticed by the Government. The prosecution could find no witness who was affected by the "seditious" performance. The magistrate was apologetic for having to deliver the judgment he did. Had he been in an environment of freedom he would have discharged the distinguished prisoner and reprimanded the Government for bringing a frivolous complaint before him.

Sjt. Sen Gupta is none the worse for the prosecution. It has enhanced his popularity, and his resolute refusal to defend himself or to answer any questions has furnished an additional proof of the courage for which he has always been known.

But this judgment has a deeper meaning. If Sardar Vallabhbhai was really guilty of the crime imputed to him, he deserved a severer punishment; if Sjt. Sen Gupta was guilty of sedition he deserved exemplary punishment, not mere ten days. If disaffection is a crime and the section has any reality about it, I who have made of sedition a religion should have been tried and heavily punished long ago.

Let no one think that lighter punishments are being awarded or I am being left alone because the Government is afraid of anything. The real reason is deeper and perhaps creditable to the Government. They are ashamed of punishing people for holding opinions and publicly expressing them. They are sensitive to the world opinion rising against them for such conduct. The Rangoon magistrate felt constrained to say that inasmuch as there was in Sjt. Sen Gupta's speech no incitement to violence, he saw no reason to award a penalty befitting the crime of sedition. Section 124A is really concerned with violence. The authors of the section probably never conceived the possibility of anybody harbouring sedition and yet having no trace of violence in him. This reluctance or even incapacity to punish heavily or even to prosecute in the absence of violence is an eloquent tribute to non-violence. He who runs may see that if the campaign that has hitherto remained wholly untainted by violence retains its character, victory in the near future is a certainty. Not only will the salt-tax go, but the other difficulties in our progress towards swaraj will also vanish like smoke, in the pure air of non-violence.

Young India, 27-3-1930

520. 'RENDER UNTO CAESAR'

An unknown English friend has thought it worth while cabling to me that in launching upon civil disobedience I am going against the teaching of Jesus: "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's". Another, an Indian Christian, writes from the Punjab somewhat in the same fashion and, forsaking charity, pours abuse upon my devoted head for my action. He says further that whereas he considered me to be a good man formerly, he is now utterly undeceived. I can reassure this friend that civil disobedience is no new thing with me. I began to preach and practise it in 1906. His regard for me therefore was evidently from ignorance, if his present dislike of me is wise. But I have learnt from the New Testament, as also from other sources, that if one wishes to walk in the fear of God, one should be indifferent about popular praise or blame.

Now for the question. As I hold my conduct to be in utter agreement with universal religion and as I hold the New Testament teaching in great esteem, I should not like it to be justly said of me that I was going against the teaching of Jesus. "Render unto Caesar" was quoted against me before too. I have not read into the celebrated verse the meaning that my critics have sought to put into it. Jesus evaded the direct question put to him because it was a trap. He was in no way bound to answer it. He therefore asked to see the coin for taxes. And then said with withering scorn, "How can you who traffic in Caesar's coins and thus receive what to you are benefits of Caesar's rule refuse to pay taxes?" Jesus's whole preaching and practice point unmistakably to non-co-operation, which necessarily includes nonpayment of taxes. Jesus never recognized man's authority as against God's. He who disregarded the whole host of priesthood, which was in those days superior to kinghood, would not have hesitated to defy the might of emperors had he found it necessary. And did he not treat with supreme disdain the whole of the farcical trial through which he was made to pass?

Lastly, let me warn honest friends against running into the trap of literalism. The "letter" surely "killeth", it is the "spirit" that "giveth life". In the present case I find no difficulty in reading into the text a satisfactory meaning. But it would matter little to me that some text should confound me, if there was no mistaking the spirit of the whole teaching of a book respected as among the world's religious scriptures.

Young India, 27-3-1930

521. DUTY OF DISLOYALTY

There is no halfway house between active loyalty and active disloyalty. There is much truth in the late Justice Stephen's remark that a man to prove himself not guilty of disaffection must prove himself to be actively affectionate. In these days of democracy there is no such thing as active loyalty to a person. You are therefore loyal or disloyal to institutions. When therefore you are disloyal you seek not to destroy persons but institutions. The present State is an institution which, if one knows it, can never evoke loyalty. It is corrupt. Many of its laws governing the conduct of persons are positively inhuman. Their administration is worse. Often the will of one person is the law. It may safely be said that there are as many rulers as there are districts in this country. These, called Collectors, combine in their own persons the executive as well as the judicial functions. Though their acts are supposed to be governed by laws in themselves highly defective, these rulers are often capricious and regulated by nothing but their own whims and fancies. They represent not the interests of the people but those of their foreign masters or principals. These (nearly three hundred) men form an almost secret corporation, the most powerful in the world. They are required to find a fixed minimum of revenue, they have therefore often been found to be most unscrupulous in their dealings with the people. This system of government is confessedly based upon a merciless exploitation of unnumbered millions of the inhabitants of India. From the village Headmen to their personal assistants these satraps have created a class of subordinates who, whilst they cringe before their foreign masters, in their constant dealings with the people act so irresponsibly and so harshly as to demoralize them and by a system of terrorism render them incapable of resisting corruption. It is then the duty of those who have realized the awful evil of the system of Indian Government to be disloyal to it and actively and openly to preach disloyalty. Indeed, loyalty to a State so corrupt is a sin, disloyalty a virtue.

The spectacle of three hundred million people being cowed down by living in the dread of three hundred men is demoralizing alike for the despots as for the victims. It is the duty of those who have realized the evil nature of the system however attractive some of its features may, torn from their context, appear to be, to destroy it without delay. It is their clear duty to run any risk to achieve the end.

But it must be equally clear that it would be cowardly for three hundred million people to seek to destroy the three hundred authors or administrators of the system. It is a sign of gross ignorance to

devise means of destroying these administrators or their hirelings. Moreover they are but creatures of circumstances. The purest man entering the system will be affected by it and will be instrumental in propagating the evil. The remedy therefore naturally is not being enraged against the administrators and therefore hurting them, but to non-co-operate with the system by withdrawing all the voluntary assistance possible and refusing all its so-called benefits. A little reflection will show that civil disobedience is a necessary part of non-co-operation. You assist an administration most effectively by obeying its orders and decrees. An evil administration never deserves such allegiance. Allegiance to it means partaking of the evil. A good man will therefore resist an evil system or administration with his whole soul. Disobedience of the law of an evil State is therefore a duty. Violent disobedience deals with men who can be replaced. It leaves the evil itself untouched and often accentuates it. Non-violent, i.e., civil, disobedience is the only and the most successful remedy and is obligatory upon him who would dissociate himself from evil.

There is danger in civil disobedience only because it is still only a partially tried remedy and has always to be tried in an atmosphere surcharged with violence. For when tyranny is rampant much rage is generated among the victims. It remains latent because of their weakness and bursts in all its fury on the slightest pretext. Civil disobedience is a sovereign method of transmuting this undisciplined life-destroying latent energy into disciplined life-saving energy whose use ensures absolute success. The attendant risk is nothing compared to the result promised. When the world has become familiar with its use and when it has had a series of demonstrations of its successful working, there will be less risk in civil disobedience than there is in aviation, in spite of that science having reached a high stage of development.

Young India, 27-3-1930

522. VOLUNTEERS' PLEDGE

The A.I.C.C has framed a brief pledge for volunteers. It had necessarily to be the simplest possible. We may not expect hundreds of thousands to sign meticulous pledges. Beyond therefore signing the Congress creed, which includes non-violence and truth as I translate the expression 'peaceful and legitimate', and beyond the undertaking to obey orders, the pledge contains nothing more. Later on, when the whole mass of people join, there will be no pledges. There will then be many silent nameless heroes; if there will also be some bad or weak men. Let it be also understood that the pledge is an

application. It does not entitle the applicant to be admitted for the mere signing of the form. Let it be remembered too that the old stringent forms are in no case superseded. The present form is devised for the emergency. The responsibility of recruiting officers is indeed great. The form in no way means that we have now said goodbye to communal unity, khaddar, or removal of the evil of untouchability and drink and drugs. It means that these things are an integral part of the Congress. Only in bringing into the Congress fold thousands of men and women for the fight for swaraj we present to them a simple formula in the certain belief that those who are controlling the Congress will not, in any shape or form, water down the integral parts of the Congress programme. The present plan is based upon implicit trust in the Congress organization being run with absolute honesty. Lastly it should not be forgotten that these volunteers do not become Congress voters.

Young India, 27-3-1930

523. SOME SUGGESTIONS

The resolution passed by the A.I.C.C. at its Ahmedabad meeting throws the burden on me of giving the signal for starting civil disobedience all over the country, assuming that I am kept free till I reach Dandi. The reason is obvious. The A.I.C.C. wishes to take every reasonable precaution against mishaps. In the event of my arrest, it would be dangerous to stop the movement. Before my arrest, the A.I.C.C. will not anticipate me. So far as I can judge now, the workers may assume that the date for making an all-India start will be the 6th of April. It is the day of commencement of the national week. It is the day of satyagraha that in 1919 witnessed a mass awakening unknown before. The seven days that followed witnessed some dark deeds on our part and culminated in the inhuman Jallianwala massacre. If all goes well I should reach Dandi on April 5th. April 6th therefore appears to me to be the most natural day for commencing satyagraha. But the workers, while they may make preparations, must await the final word.

The release of the embargo however does not mean that every province or every district is bound at once to commence civil disobedience although it may not be ready and although its First Servant does not feel the inner urge. He will refuse to be hustled into action if he has no confidence in himself or in his immediate surroundings. No one will be blamed for inaction, but blame will most decidedly descend upon the shoulders of him who instead of controlling the surroundings is carried away by them.

What we all are after is mass civil disobedience. It cannot be made. It must be spontaneous, if it is to deserve the name and if it is to be successful. And there certainly will be no mass response where the ground has not been previously tilled, manured and watered. The greatest precaution has to be taken everywhere against an outbreak of violence. Whilst it is true, as I have said, that civil resistance this time will continue even though violence may break out, it is equally true that violence on our part will harm the struggle and retard its progress. Two opposite forces can never work concurrently so as to help each other. The plan of civil disobedience has been conceived to neutralize and ultimately entirely to displace violence and enthrone non-violence in its stead, to replace hatred by love, to replace strife by concord.

The meaning then of not suspending the fight in spite of any outbreak of violence simply is that votaries of non-violence will allow themselves, will even seek, to be consumed in the flames if any should rise. They will not care to remain helpless witnesses either of the organized violence of the Government or of the sporadic violence of an enraged group or nation. The workers will therefore take, in each province, all precautions humanly possible and then plunge into the fight even though in so doing they run the greatest risks imaginable. It follows that everywhere there will be willing submission to the judgment of those who may be in their own provinces known for their belief in non-violence as an article of faith for the purpose of gaining Purna Swaraj.

There has been talk of disobeying other laws. The proposal has not attracted me. I believe in concentrating attention upon the salt laws. Salt mines are to be found almost everywhere. The idea is not to manufacture salt in salable quantities but through manufacture and otherwise to commit a deliberate and open breach of salt laws.

The *chaukidari* tax laws have been suggested for possible disobedience. This tax does not in my opinion comply with the conditions that the salt tax fulfils. The idea is to disobey such laws as are bad for all time as far as can be seen today. We do not want the salt tax even under swaraj. *Chaukidari* tax is perhaps not such a tax. We may need *chaukidars* even under swaraj. If such is the case, it may be wise not to touch that tax so long as we have other taxes or other laws to combat.

Then there are the forest laws. I have not studied them. I must therefore write with reserve. There can be no doubt that we do not want our forests to be destroyed altogether or wood to be cut uneconomically. There is a need, I have little doubt, for mending these laws. There is greater need perhaps for humaner administration

of these laws. The reform may well await the establishment of swaraj. Nor so far as I am aware has there been any popular education about the grievances arising out of these laws or their administration .

Closely allied to the forests are grazing areas. I do not know that regulations governing their use are so irksome as to be a just grievance.

Much better from my standpoint is the picketing of liquor shops, opium dens and foreign-cloth shops. Though picketing is not by itself illegal, past experience shows that the Government will want to suppress all effective picketing. That does not much matter. We are out to resist it wherever we can, consistently with our creed. But I fear the unscrupulous behaviour of liquor dealers and the ignorant wrath of foreign-cloth dealers. I should like public opinion to consolidate itself more fully around these two evils and would like workers to undertake more systematic education of the dealers as also of their customers. We have to eradicate both the evils some day or other. Wherever, therefore, workers have confidence in their ability to carry on picketing without taking undue risks of the type I have mentioned, they should start the campaign, but in no case because they must be doing something when the word is given for action and because they do not see their way to take up the salt laws. It seems to me to be the safest thing to take up the latter for the time being; what I have said above is merely by way of caution. Wherever workers feel that they have the real inner call for action and are themselves free from violence, they are at liberty, as soon as the word is given, to take up such civil disobedience as they may consider necessary and desirable, subject of course to the A.I.C.C. control.

Meanwhile between now and the 6th of April the provinces should lose no time in making their preparation for mobilization.

Young India, 27-3-1930

524. NOTES

SCARCITY OF KHADDAR

There is naturally nowadays a run on khaddar and letters are being received at the A.I.S.A. office that there is going to be shortage of khaddar in the near future. This is as it should be. The remedy is for full khaddarites to cut down their requirements, for converts to buy only what they need and for all to help to manufacture more khaddar. Just as there never can be scarcity of bread if there is an ensured supply of wheat, so need there be no scarcity of khaddar if there is an ensured supply of cotton. There is no danger of the supply of the cotton running out. The tragedy consists in the people needlessly believing that khaddar cannot be manufactured in our

villages and streets as food is prepared in every home. People need not take up the spinning-wheel if they will take up the *takli* and begin spinning at once. They have then to go to the ordinary weaver and coax him to weave their yarn. If there is a proper awakening of national consciousness, the weavers will not look askance at hand-spun yarn as many of them undoubtedly do today. For such organization of khaddar on a large scale, there must be a real yearning for it among the people. Everyone will not take part in civil disobedience, but everyone can take part in the manufacture of khaddar. Let the reader know that the leaders in the civil disobedience campaign all over the country are, in the vast majority of cases, derived from confirmed khaddarites. Their withdrawal from khaddar manufacture will tend seriously to tell upon the output of khaddar unless people take to self-spinning and self-help generally.

MIRABAI NOT MANAGER

I observe that papers persistently report that Shrimati Mirabai Slade is managing the Ashram as its head in my place. This is not true. The Ashram has been now for a long time under the control of a managing board of which Mahadev Desai is the Chairman, Imam Saheb Bawazeer the Vice-Chairman and Narandas Gandhi the Secretary. Mirabai became head of the sanitary department as other women took up other departments in order to relieve the men joining me in the march. She is also taking her due share in teaching the infant class and rendering such other service as may be required. What she will ultimately be, no one can tell, she least of all. Suffice it for the reader to know that she has thrown in her lot with the Ashram and me for all time to come. Her desire for serving India is an overmastering passion. It was a privilege to receive her in the Ashram. Over four years of closest contact have not diminished the affection she evoked in me when I knew nothing about her parentage, and knew her only through her two reticent letters which I had received when she first applied for admission. No member of the Ashram has striven more strenuously than Mirabai to observe the rules of the Ashram and to realize its ideals. But she is not the head of the Ashram.

Young India, 27-3-1930

525. THE LAW OF THE SWORD

A teacher writes:¹

Reading this letter, one is reminded of the story of the wolf and the lamb. The wolf wanted to eat up the lamb anyhow and was only

¹ The letter is not translated here. The correspondent had criticized the system of land revenue introduced by the British in India.

looking for an excuse. Unable to find a better it accused the lamb's forefathers of some guilt and ate it up. If one has land, what concern is it of the Government to investigate who the rightful owner of the land is? The Government is hungry for money and it collects the money by the strength of the sword. In the Council the bureaucracy allows lengthy debates. But there is always behind the debates the assumption that ultimately there will be no decrease in land revenue that will accrue to the Government whoever might be the rightful owners of the land.

Therefore, the real question before us is how we are going to meet this power of the sword. Shall we do it with the sword? If we have to fight the sword only with the sword, we shall remain in slavery for years and years to come; because, whatever kind of government there may be, the strength of the sword of the crores of farmers who pay land revenue cannot increase in a day. To establish the farmer's ownership of the land, there is only one way; and that is to teach him the *mantra* of satyagraha. This is a power which is inherent in everyone. The farmer has only to be aware of this power. If a farmer could realize that by peacefully resisting injustice his land could be prevented from being seized by anyone, he would never fall a victim to injustice. Today, the whole of India is taking lessons in the school of satyagraha. It would be good if peasants were to join this school. Then the intricate question of the ownership of land would be solved by itself.

[From Hindi]

Hindi Navajivan, 27-3-1930

526. MESSAGE TO HINDUSTANI SEVA DAL

SAJOD,

March 27, 1930

I expect the volunteers of the Hindustani Seva Dal to stand by their pledge of non-violence under every conceivable circumstance.

The Hindu, 29-3-1930

527. LETTER TO MRIDULA SARABHAI

ANKLESHWAR,

March 27, 1930

CHI. MRIDU,

I have received your letter. I was of course intending to write to you, but some work or other kept coming up and writing to you got postponed.

The newspaper report was incorrect. Only Sumangal Prakash was really ill. The members of the Anand Mandal gave him very good treatment. Others stayed on merely to take rest. There is no such thing as opening a camp for the sick. Had it been so, I would have sent for you first. I feel that it will not be long before women too plunge into the struggle. I have no doubt at all that God will fully nourish your desire to serve. Khurshedbehn will be most probably coming to meet me. If you wish, you may come here at that time.

Blessings from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original: C. W. 11178, Courtesy . Sarabhai Foundation

528. SPEECH AT PRAYER MEETING, SAJOD¹

[March 27, 1930]²

It is deplorable that we do not listen to one another. If someone listens to everyone's advice, everyone will finally stop advising him. Each one of us should become humble and carry on. No one should find fault with others but each should seek out and rid himself of his own shortcomings. None should arrogantly believe that because everything has gone on well so far, we have as good as arrived at Dandi. Who knows what will happen tomorrow or the very next moment? On the night prior to the coronation, Shri Ramachandra and the people were under the impression that it would take place the following morning, but God's ways are inscrutable. Hence we should not fail to remember God every moment. When setting out from the Ashram, the condition was laid down that those who wished to leave should do so before the march began. Today I go further and say that those who wish to leave before we reach Dandi may do so. It is all right even if I alone stick on. I shall keep smiling. If the world criticizes me, I shall join in that criticism and conclude that I merit the charge of being stupid. However, despite this, I shall fight alone and continue to prepare salt.

From today, the first batch will form the rear and the line will begin with the batch which is at the tail end now. Those who are unwell or weak or are bothered by dust may go ahead and rest at the next halt or may follow later. If crowds of people try to rush in, we should make up the rear of the line. We shall have no difficulties if we

¹ Extracted from "Dharma Yatra"

² The speech was delivered one day after Gandhiji and party left Ankleshwar, which was on March 26.

do so. Perhaps they, too, will understand and make things easy for us.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

529. *SPEECH AT SAJOD*

March 27, 1930

Tomorrow morning the tour of the Broach District will be over, and it will be proper to sum up my impressions at this place. If we are to depend for swaraj on what has been done so far, it will take us very long to win it, because it cannot be secured by mere attendance at meetings or by large numbers joining the civil disobedience movement against the salt tax. The achievement in the field of constructive work is very meagre in other districts indeed, but here also it is just as poor. We have not achieved complete boycott of foreign cloth and have not succeeded in popularizing khadi. The entry in the column for the quantity of khadi produced is nil. You have a rich crop of cotton in this district, but you put it to no use yourselves. Consumption of liquor has spread widely. Even in these circumstances, however, I have the hope that this movement will bring about a great awakening among us. The use of khadi is spreading widely in the whole of India. If, in consequence of this, there is shortage of khadi, you can even help in producing more of it. After I leave this place they may or may not let me reach Dandi, but take it from me that the salt tax is gone. If you start doing all that I have suggested, I believe we shall have stormed and won not merely the fort of the salt tax but many other forts as well. As I have the blessings of you all, this monstrous salt tax—no adjectives can be strong enough to describe it—is bound to be abolished. If you produce and spread the required climate by boycotting foreign cloth, we will win the next fort. That is, we shall win Rs. 60 crores. Through liquor and opium we have been throwing away Rs. 25 crores for the privilege of becoming mad. That third fort also we will certainly win, but only if you give up drinking. Rs. 60 crores for foreign cloth, Rs. 25 crores for intoxicants and Rs. 6 crores for the salt tax—if we save all this money our faces will beam with lustre and swaraj will be won in no time. The salt tax is as good as gone, and hence those of you who do not wish to join the present movement should all co-operate and help in these two matters. I request all brothers and sisters here to give up foreign cloth and wear khadi. Understand what your true duty is.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

530. SPEECH AT MANGAROL

March 27, 1930

Let us be under no delusion. As long as we accept the presence of God's hand behind all things, we may keep up our courage and self-confidence and believe the abolition of salt tax a certainty. So far we had been untrue to our salt, but now we must be true to it. It was only on the 12th that we started talking about breaking the salt law. But we have been speaking of two or three other things since 1920. If you remember, according to the Bezwada Congress programme, we were to have two million spinning-wheels working and to boycott all foreign cloth. How much of that have we accomplished? This is a painful, shameful thing. The same can be said about the drink habit. Liquor is being freely consumed. In regard to these two, we believe that we shall be able to enforce them only when we have captured power. But take it from me that the power to remove this Government will drop into our hands when we do away with the evils of foreign cloth and liquor. If we mean to work, here is work for us. All men in this village eat salt; let them manufacture salt for their own use.

Even children should openly steal salt, as it were. Let us burn foreign cloth and buy khadi to wear in its place, or manufacture it with our own hands. At the same time, we should see the licence-holders running liquor booths and persuade them to close the booths. We shall then enjoy fighting for swaraj and become really interested in swaraj. We shall win it only when we do all these things. The fight may start even before the 6th of next month. It only awaits my arrest. No sooner do they arrest me than you should start making salt. When I am arrested, you may do with only a loin-cloth but wear no foreign cloth at all. I repeat even today my old slogan: swaraj hangs by the hand-spun yarn and the khadi woven from it.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

531. LETTER TO SHANTIKUMAR MORARJEE

RAYMA.
March 28, 1930

CHI. SHANTIKUMAR,

You are often in my thoughts. Father's watch, which is always hanging from my waist, constantly reminds me of him. The enclosed is among the letters which Mahadev has sent to me to see. I pass it on to you, as it contains a reference to Father. It need not be returned.

I hope you maintain your peace of mind even in the midst of this calamity. Has the burden now lightened somewhat? Do write to me. If you wish the letter to reach me during the march, it may be sent to Surat. If sent to the Ashram, it will be forwarded to me.

Is grandmother at peace with herself? Do not fail to write to me. God bless you.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 4717. Courtesy: Shantikumar Morarjee

532. *SPEECH AT RAYMA*¹

March 28, 1930

I cannot live in a district where salt cannot be prepared. So although I am conscious of the affection you have all shown me I have to proceed to Dandi. Although I find it difficult to leave this district, I must go to Dandi and break the law. If on the 12th we can oppose this tax with the blessings of all, Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis, we may take the law as abolished. All of you, Hindus and Muslims, should unite and start making large quantities of salt on the 6th. If the Government chooses to do so, it can even levy a tax on the mud that is dug out of the ground; so why should we pay this tax that it levies on salt? Just as poor women go about selling *babul* twigs which we use for cleaning our teeth, let us all set forth and sell salt to everyone. Shall we not even do this much for the poor millions? History has no instance of a tax as cruel as the salt tax. However, we shall not secure swaraj as soon as the salt duty is abolished. We have to become alert and do other things. We have to get rid of foreign cloth. It is not enough that we wear khadi made in the Punjab. Every one of us should spin for himself and have cloth made out of that yarn. It is our stupidity that we do not all—from children to old men—engage ourselves in this simple and beautiful task. This bespeaks disloyalty towards our country. We can win swaraj immediately by getting rid of foreign cloth and liquor. After having won independence for India, we shall carry out our tasks from the seat of office. Hence by participating in this salt satyagraha and by accomplishing these two other objectives—the latter by those who cannot participate in the struggle itself—you should demonstrate the fact that the Broach district is wholly engaged in India's freedom struggle.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 30-3-1930

¹ Delivered at 3.30 p.m.

533. SPEECH TO VOLUNTEERS¹

[March 28, 1930]²

This is the last week of our pilgrimage. At its very beginning, let us all wash away our sins. We have come across a river while crossing the boundary of each district. We regard a river as sacred. A river is after all an external sign of purification. We should become pure even with its help, we should become humble. We have looked upon Dandi as Hardwar. Let us become worthy of entering a place as holy as Hardwar.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

534. SPEECH AT UMRACHHI³

March 28, 1930

If a man wishes to undertake a march at the age of sixty-one, he should go to the Himalayas, so that he can at least attain *moksha*, at least have *darshan* of God. But I have learnt an opposite dharma. I want to have this *darshan* through this march only. After having had *darshan* of you, I beg you also to participate in it. This is so because so long as we do not succeed in overthrowing the Satanic Government that exists in the country, we are all participants in it. Such participants will not attain *moksha* even if they go to Dhaulagiri. The *darshan* of God is fraught with difficulties. He dwells in the hearts of thirty crores of people. If you wish to catch a glimpse of Him there, you should establish total identification with their hearts. These thirty crores include all the skeletons of Orissa, Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, men and women. We shall continue to be atheists and not believers so long as we do not achieve this unity with every section of the community. Hence I thought to myself that even at the age of sixty-one, I must not rest in peace. How can there be any rest for me so long as this Empire is not destroyed? Until today I held my peace; I used to listen to and suffer hosts of friends. I was afraid lest people take to the wrong path. What if people did not listen to me? I felt, however, that I was a coward. This was a weakness of my spirit. What right did I have to distrust people?

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

¹ Extracted from "Dharma Yatra"

² Gandhiji made these remarks when he and the party crossed the river Keem into Surat district, which was on March 28.

³ Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"

535. SPEECH AT BHATGAM¹

March 29, 1930

I have been asked to deliver a sermon. I have little fitness for the task. But tonight I propose to make a confession and turn the searchlight inward. You may call this introspection a sermon if you like.

India in general and you in particular are acquainted with one part of my nature. Moreover, more than in any other part of Gujarat, in this district are concentrated workers who have come in closest touch with me. They know this habit of mine from personal experience.

I am plain-spoken. I have not hesitated to describe the mountain-high faults of the Government in appropriate language. And I have not hesitated often to picture as mountain-high our faults appearing to us as trifling. You know, the common rule is to see our own big lapses as tiny nothings. And when we do realize our blemishes somewhat, we at once pass them on to the broad shoulders of God and say He will take care of them; and then with safety thus assured we proceed from lapse to lapse. But as you know I have disregarded this rule for years. So doing, I have hurt the feelings of many friends and even lost some of them. Tonight I have to repeat the painful operation.²

I have already told the group of people who are accompanying me that this is the last week of our march. As we shall reach our destination next Saturday, we shall not have to march any further. But we shall be faced with another task. During this last week we shall have to go through Surat district.

Only this morning at prayer time I was telling my companions that as we had entered the district in which we were to offer civil disobedience, we should insist on greater purification and intenser dedication. I warned them that as the district was more organized and contained many intimate co-workers, there was every likelihood of our being pampered. I warned them against succumbing to their pampering. We are not angels. We are very weak, easily tempted. There are many lapses to our debit. God is great. Even today

¹ This appeared in *Young India* under the title "Turning the Searchlight Inward" with the following note from Gandhiji: "At Bhatgam (Dist. Surat) on 29th ultimo I delivered an introspective speech which moved both the audience and me deeply. As it turned out to be an important speech, I give a free and somewhat condensed translation below."

² The paragraph that follows has been translated from *Navajivan*, 6 4-1930.

some were discovered. One defaulter confessed his lapse himself whilst I was brooding over the lapses of the pilgrims. I discovered that my warning was given none too soon. The local workers had ordered milk from Surat to be brought in a motor lorry and they had incurred other expenses which I could not justify. I therefore spoke strongly about them. But that did not allay my grief. On the contrary it increased with the contemplation of the wrongs done.

In the light of these discoveries, what right had I to write to the Viceroy the letter in which I have severely criticized his salary which is more than 5,000 times our average income? How could he possibly do justice to that salary? And how can we tolerate his getting a salary out of all proportion to our income? But he is individually not to be blamed for it. He has no need for it. God has made him a wealthy man. I have suggested in my letter that probably the whole of his salary is spent in charity. I have since learnt that my guess is largely likely to be true. Even so, of course, I should resist the giving of such a large salary. I could not vote Rs. 21,000 per month, not perhaps even Rs. 2,100 per month. But when could I offer such resistance? Certainly not if I was myself taking from the people an unconscionable toll. I could resist it only if my living bore some correspondence with the average income of the people. We are marching in the name of God. We profess to act on behalf of the hungry, the naked and the unemployed. I have no right to criticize the Viceregal salary if we are costing the country, say, fifty times seven pice, the average daily income of our people. I have asked the workers to furnish me with an account of the expenses. And the way things are going, I should not be surprised if each of us is costing something near fifty times seven pice. What else can be the result if they will fetch for me from whatever source possible, the choicest oranges and grapes, if they will bring 120 when I should want 12 oranges, if when I need one pound of milk, they will produce three? What else can be the result if we would take all the dainties you may place before us under the excuse that we would hurt your feeling if we did not take them? You give us guavas and grapes and we eat them because they are a free gift from a princely farmer. And then imagine me with an easy conscience writing the Viceregal letter on costly glazed paper with a fountain pen, a free gift from some accommodating friend! Will this behove you and me? Can letter so written produce the slightest effect?

To live thus would be to illustrate the immortal verse of Akho Bhagat, who says that “stolen food is like eating unprocessed mercury”. And to live above the means befitting a poor country is to live on stolen food. This battle can never be won by living on stolen

food. Nor did I bargain to set out on this march for living above our means. We expect thousands of volunteers to respond to the call. It will be impossible to keep them on extravagant terms. My life has become so busy that I get little time to come in close touch even with the eighty companions so as to be able to identify them individually. There was therefore no course open to me but to unburden my soul in public. I expect you to understand the central point of my message. If you have not, there is no hope of swaraj through the present effort. We must become real trustees of the dumb millions.

I have exposed our weaknesses to the public gaze. I have not yet given you all the details, but I have told you enough to enable you to realize our unworthiness to write the letter to the Viceroy.

Now the local co-workers will understand my agony. Weak, ever exposed to temptations, ever failing, why will you tempt us and pamper us? We may not introduce these incandescent burners in our villages. It is enough that one hundred thousand men prey upon three hundred millions. But how will it be when we begin to prey upon one another? In that event dogs will lick our corpses.

These lights are merely a sample of the extravagance I have in mind. My purpose is to wake you up from torpor. Let the volunteers account for every pice spent. I am more capable of offering satyagraha against ourselves than against the Government. I have taken many years before embarking upon civil resistance against the Government. But I should not take as many days for offering it against ourselves. The risk to be incurred is nothing compared to what has to be incurred in the present satyagraha.

Therefore in your hospitality towards servants like us, I would have you to be miserly rather than lavish. I shall not complain of unavoidable absence of things. In order to procure goat's milk for me you may not deprive poor women of milk for their children. It would be like poison if you did. Nor may milk and vegetables be brought from Surat. We can do without them if necessary. Do not resort to motor-cars on the slightest pretext. The rule is, do not ride if you can walk. This is not a battle to be conducted with money. It will be impossible to sustain a mass movement with money. Anyway it is beyond me to conduct the campaign with a lavish display of money.

Extravagance has no room in this campaign. If we cannot gather crowds unless we carry on a hurricane expensive propaganda, I would be satisfied to address half a dozen men and women.¹

It will be said that in that case reports will not appear in

¹ The paragraph that follows has been translated from *Navajivan*, 6-4-1930.

newspapers. I wish to tell you once and for all that this campaign will not succeed through newspaper reports, but with the assistance of Shri Rama. And, no light is necessary when we are near Him; neither are pen and ink and such other accessories required, nor even speech. An appeal can be made to Him even if one has lost one's limbs.

We may not consider anybody low. I observed that you had provided for the night journey a heavy kerosene burner mounted on a stool which a poor labourer carried on his head. This was a humiliating sight. This man was being goaded to walk fast. I could not bear the sight. I therefore put on speed and outraced the whole company. But it was no use. The man was made to run after me. The humiliation was complete. If the weight had to be carried, I should have loved to see someone among ourselves carrying it. We would then soon dispense both with the stool and the burner. No labourer would carry such a load on his head. We rightly object to *begar* (forced labour). But what was this if it was not *begar*? Remember that in swaraj we would expect one drawn from the so-called lower class to preside over India's destiny. If then we do not quickly mend our ways, there is no swaraj such as you and I have put before the people.

From my outpouring you may not infer that I shall weaken in my resolve to carry on the struggle. It will continue no matter how co-workers or others act. For me there is no turning back whether I am alone or joined by thousands. I would rather die a dog's death and have my bones licked by dogs than that I should return to the Ashram a broken man.¹

I admit that I have not well used the money you have given out of the abundance of your love. You are entitled to regard me as one of those wretches described in the verses sung in the beginning. Shun me.

Young India, 3-4-1930

536. LIMITS OF BOYCOTT

In my speeches during this march I have said quite a lot about boycott. I have no idea how the newspapers have reported those parts of my speeches. It is necessary to consider and lay down the limits of boycott here as the subject is an important one. As this struggle is a sacred, truthful and non-violent one, that is to say, as it is a religious struggle, it is absolutely essential that no mistake should be made consciously or otherwise. Even the minutest error committed cannot

¹ Gandhiji here says: "Turning to the women, I concluded and nearly broke down as I finished the last sentences."

but harm it.

Boycott has been working in two ways: one is directed against the Government officials and the other against those who do not respect public opinion—for instance, Headmen and such other persons.

It is necessary, indeed it is our duty, not to bow to the official when he visits our village and not to go and pay homage to him. Non-co-operation implies that we should not attend to this official's needs and provide no facilities to him. A bullock-cart-owner should not put his cart at his disposal. The potter should not fetch drinking water for him, the grocer should not provide him with any provisions, and the Headman should not give him a mattress belonging either to the village or to himself. This is so because the official expects these facilities by virtue of his office. The purpose behind not providing these facilities is not to impose any hardship on him but to put an end to his authority and it may also involve an element of civil disobedience.

What if the official is dying of hunger or suffering pain and no one is there to attend on him? At such a time, even at the cost of personal inconvenience, we should serve him. For instance, if his car breaks down, and he is in need of food, we should provide him food and not expect any money in return if he does not happen to have any. Supposing he is suddenly taken ill and there is no one to attend on him, we should nurse him with as much care as we would show in nursing our own relatives. We bear him no ill will as a human being. We hate his administration. The Government has not so far become insane, as it has not had to put up with much inconvenience in carrying on the administration. However, once it is really inconvenienced, there is every possibility of its becoming so and transgressing all bounds. It is possible that when this does take place, its officials will be ordered forcibly to exact anything they need from the public. At such a time full use could be made of boycott as explained above. At such a time we realize that boycott is surely our dharma. The official assumes that by virtue of his office the people are obliged to provide all facilities for him. People would be said to have set themselves free only when they can disprove this belief and in the process put up with any hardships that they may have to face. They will be said to have triumphed when they do not yield to such force. Today boycott can be regarded as being extremely simple. However, even when Government officials receive permission to commit robbery and the people, despite the fact that they have been rendered penniless, do not voluntarily give even a twig to be used as a toothbrush, they will be

regarded as having carried out their duty of boycott. However, it should be borne in mind that even when this does occur, if the official is placed in a difficult situation and the authorities do not come to his rescue, we should attend to his needs. This should be considered an occasion for practising the same towards a friend and an enemy. For a satyagrahi there are no enemies in this world, he cannot have any, he should not regard anyone as such. He would boycott even his own son or father if either of these two happened to be an official. For a satyagrahi, there should be no distinction between his own relatives and those holding no such relationship. He would never do to others what he would not do to his own relatives. Let us now take the case of a Headman. Although the entire village wants him to resign, he does not have the courage to do so, or he does not wish to do so out of self-interest. He should not be boycotted on this ground. Such boycott would amount to coercion. Compelling the Headman to resign would amount to making him forcibly perform a meritorious deed. But there can be no use of force, so far as our dharma is concerned. A democratic form of government can never be established by getting anyone to do something by force. To use such force on this nation which is half-dead would be a great sin and, considering the matter solely from the point of view of expediency, we shall see that we shall never be able to serve our purpose by the use of such force. Whether we succeed or not, such force is nothing but violence. Whether the Headman resigns or not is for him to choose. It would be a good thing if he did so yielding to public opinion, but force cannot be used against him if he does not resign. But he cannot exercise his authority; he cannot make the people do anything whatsoever for him by virtue of his authority. He has a dual role to play: he is an official and he is a villager. He will not get any services as an official; as a villager he has a right to get provisions, etc., which he wants. To refuse him these amounts to compelling him to resign. A satyagrahi cannot do so.

The people have a right to carry on a limited social boycott of those who defy public opinion and at times it becomes their duty to do so. Society should not honour a Headman who clings to his office for selfish reasons; in other words, although it would meet its daily requirements, it would sever all other connections with him; people would not attend marriages in his home, decline invitations to dinners from him and although they would share his sorrows, they would refuse to share in his enjoyments. There should be neither bitterness, nor ill will nor violence in such boycott. What should we do if the Headman happens to be our own brother? We should give him the treatment that we would expect from society for ourselves.

We have now considered three types of boycott:

1. boycott of officials because of their office;
 2. boycott through use of force of such persons as Headmen;
- and
3. limited boycott of such persons as the Headmen who refuse to respect public opinion.

The first type of boycott deserves to be practised; it is our dharma to do so. Only those who have courage should practise it. It is well to remember that such boycott may result in occasions when we shall have to put up with extreme hardships. At present the Congress does not ask for such boycott. This latter has already begun in certain parts of Gujarat as the Gujaratis are used to it and have developed a good ability to practise it. It is the special dharma of Gujarat to do so in view of Sardar Vallabhbhai's imprisonment. However, those who cannot continue to carry it on at the critical hour should not do so as there is no harm in their not practising it. It will be harmful, however, if it is given up once it has begun.

The second type of boycott involving the use of force is always to be eschewed, as it involves violence, and there is every possibility of its doing great harm to the people.

The third, that is, limited boycott, is well worth practising. In every task which the satyagrahi undertakes, he has himself to bear suffering but he must never make the opponent suffer. The former is helpless if in the course of his own suffering or his practising his dharma, the opponent has to suffer or put up with inconvenience.

At present what I ask of the people is civil disobedience of the salt law. If nothing more can be done, let everyone sit quiet but it will be both dangerous and harmful if they retreat after having taken a step forward.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1930

537. ABOUT HEADMEN AND MATADARS

Since so many Headmen and Matadars have handed in their resignations, the need has arisen to write something about them. I have heard so many rumours concerning these resignations that I myself have doubts about their veracity. If the resignations have been tendered without pressure, they are indeed very valuable. However, as compared to the services of Sardar, against whose imprisonment they are a protest, they have little value. The Gujarat for which Sardar Vallabhbhai has sacrificed his all—any sacrifice that Gujarat may make will not be too great. Although Sardar has sacrificed his all for

Gujarat, his ultimate goal is swaraj. Hence Gujarat should make all possible efforts for it.

Let us examine the office of Headman from this standpoint. I did not understand its implications before as clearly as I do now. The Headman is the policeman or the Headman. It is through him that the Government collects the revenue and it is through him that it exercises its authority. Mamlatdars and other officers would become ineffective without him. It is not just anyone who is appointed a Headman, but only one who carries weight in the village. A register of such persons is maintained in Government offices and they are known as Matadars. It is from among these persons that Headmen are appointed by rotation for a period of five years. The Government pays a certain sum annually to these Matadars, amounting to about four or five rupees as allowance. A Headman gets a sum of thirty to fifty rupees every year as *nazarana*¹. I use the word *nazarana*. No one regards it as salary. The amount received by the Headman is not of any great consequence to him, as ordinarily he is a well-to-do person. While considering what term should be used for this amount given to him, I called it *nazarana*. The Amir of Afghanistan also receives a *nazarana*. However, I am aware that there is a great deal of difference between the *nazarana* received by the Amir and that given to the Headman. While the former consists of a large sum, the latter is a small one. There are other differences also. Nevertheless, the purpose underlying both these payments is to gain a hold upon the recipients.

Why do Headmen and Matadars get committed in this manner? It is certainly not for the purpose of enjoying an empty office, but because the office will enhance their prestige and because they can use their status in order to get money out of it. This cannot be done with honesty. It necessarily involves dishonesty. Hence, the office of Headman implies that by accepting this office the person concerned ceases to be the village *mahajan* and protector, and preys upon the villagers. It is not my intention to say that all Headmen are like this. But this is a conclusion I have reached after talking to a large number of Headmen.

Such Headmanship and Matadarship should be given up not for the sake of Sardar or swaraj, but rather for the sake of one's dharma and morality. These two classes of persons can make a significant contribution to the movement for self-purification that is on in the country at the moment. Others may advance the excuse that they have to earn their livelihood, but this does not apply in the case of these Headmen and Matadars. For them, it is like giving up titles. It is for

¹ Allowance or bounty

this reason that I have described this situation as a garbage heap and the description is fitting. May the Headmen and the Matadars save themselves from this.

[From Gujarati]
Navajivan, 30-3-1930

538. *LETTER TO SUMANGAL PRAKASH*

March 30, 1930

CHI. SUMANGAL,

I have your letter. You should both come to Surat on Tuesday. Anyone at the station will direct you to the place of our stay. We shall all be reaching Surat late at night.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. SUMANGAL PRAKASH
SEVASHRAM
BROACH, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Hindi: Sumangal Prakash Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

539. *SPEECH IN OLPAD TALUK*¹

[On or before *March 30, 1930*]²

I feel that in this struggle for freedom, the contribution of women will exceed that of men. Even today, women are making a far greater contribution to the Charkha Sangh. It is the women who operate the one lakh or one lakh and a half spinning-wheels that are plying in fifteen hundred villages. It is on account of the skill of women that we can get the fine khadi made in Andhra. I tell you that it is absolutely true to say that swaraj is tied to a strand of yarn. These are the words of Brahma. Hence, whether we wish to boycott foreign cloth through the means of khadi or through mill-made cloth, it is women who are the spinners. Therefore, it is women who will play a larger part in the non-violent struggle for swaraj and children of the future will say that it was their mothers and sisters who had played the more significant role. You are capable of doing this. However, you should not touch a spinning-wheel if you do not know what compassion is.

¹ Extracted from "Swaraj Gita"

² Gandhiji entered Olpad Taluk on March 28 and left it on March 31, 1930, but the 31st was Silence Day for him.

Even in the cause of prohibition, if young girls come forward in the same manner as Mithubehn, you can make Olpad a dry area. If men approach drunkards, the latter will resort to obscene language; however, if young girls approach them and question them as to why they drink, ask them what indeed they are up to, whether it befits them under the influence of drink to fail to recognize a mother or a daughter, than on hearing such words steeped in affection, even the worst of drunkards will hang his head in shame and he will possibly burst into tears, and will take a vow in the name of Rama to give up liquor. But do Indian women have this moral fervour, this courage and this benevolence? However, I can provide this courage. Who will cast an evil eye on you if you walk straight on with the name of God on your lips? Be convinced at heart that purity itself is a shield.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 6-4-1930

540. SPEECH AT SANDHIYER

March 30, 1930

I would like to congratulate yet another Talati who has handed in his resignation. Today, it is your special duty to cast away Government offices, regarding them as filth or refuse. You should practise your special dharma although you be imprisoned, hanged or have to starve. The Headmen of this place are especially loyal and ask others not to resign. They talk of unrealistic things. I humbly request them to hand in their resignations. You must carefully go through the article on this subject entitled “Limits of Boycott”¹ in *Navajivan*, and act on it after understanding its implications. As we are practising non-co-operation against the Government, to that extent we shall have to boycott it.

Let me not talk of salt now. The tax is unjust and evil and has a long history behind it. The Government will not be able to say whether the imposition of this tax is moral or immoral. However, look upon it as already abolished. I make this statement depending upon your courage to fight. Swaraj will not be won as soon as this tax is abolished. Other tasks will have to be accomplished after this is done.

Cloth merchants of Bombay have come here today. They have realized the importance of the boycott of foreign cloth far more than they did in 1921. My thoughts are directed only towards furthering the growth of Indian villages and Indian merchants. The latter have now realized that this struggle is as much for their benefit as for that

¹ *Vide* “Limits of Boycott”, 30-3-1930.

of the poor. They alone are going to be the cloth merchants in independent India. Today theirs is an inhuman occupation, whereas under swaraj it will become a divine one. What then can merchants contribute to this struggle? They say that they will import goods from Japan and not from England. However, there are two great drawbacks in doing so. In the first place, it is not because of our enmity towards the British that we refuse to buy their cloth. We wish to eschew doing so as the Britishers want to extract money from the poor masses of India by means of trade. We should not even dream that by foreign cloth we refer to British cloth. Although you have been engaged in business so long, you have been unable to understand their cunning methods of carrying on business. Perhaps you do not know how they conquered Delhi. They are able to get all they want from even the smallest hole. That is how they captured Kashmiri Gate and became masters of Delhi. The Government of the East India Company won only after this. All this is tragic history. We should not allow a single loophole for foreign cloth through which they may make entry. No one can surpass them in betrayal. If you permit Japanese goods to be imported, Britishers will send their goods *via* Japan. They can do so even by giving a commission to the Japanese. Hence if you allow even a single yard of cloth to be imported from abroad, bale after bale will soon be coming in. It is the business community of India that is responsible for India losing her independence and it is through the strength of this community alone that it has to be regained. Hence those who have already put in orders should bear in mind that their cloth will be lying about like unused goods. We shall get rid of even these through our self-sacrifice. Now let us take the other subject of prohibition. Shrimati Mithubehn has sacrificed so much for this. Let us all join in this cause. If all this can be achieved, we can save Rs. 60 crores on foreign cloth, Rs. 25 crores on liquor and opium, and Rs. 6 crores on salt. However, in order to do so we should have the capacity for self-sacrifice, the capacity to unite and act as a group, intellectual capacity and the capacity to think. If all this is there, swaraj is near at hand.

You are aware of the virtues of my colleagues as scavengers. Now today I wish to talk of women volunteers. One of them is the grand-daughter of Dadabhai. She arrived today. She went to the village of Sayan and asked for brooms. She found the entire village filthy. Dadabhai's grand-daughter did not approve of the filth, so she started to sweep it away. The people who had not recognized her at first then recognized her and accorded her a very warm welcome. I do not speak of this example in order to give it publicity, but because it is worthy of imitation by all volunteers. Village sanitation is very

essential today. Hence we are going to clean filthy villages. We have learnt from this lesson that she has brought swaraj near to us. I wish to sacrifice our women too. I wish to remind you that we have to effect self-purification. On the one hand we should practise civil disobedience, while on the other we should become progressively purer. May God give you the ability to understand all this.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

541. SPEECH AT DELAD¹

March 30, 1930

As has been said in the *Gita*, that which tastes bitter at first but is finally sweet is wholesome. Hence, although I was agitated yesterday and still am, I have not lost my peace; the fiery words of love which I had directed towards my friends, companions and the assembly were not regarded by them as such. Instead of the dazzling lights of yesterday I see small, dim lights of hurricane lanterns.

Yesterday I did not find the outer and inner peace which I find in today's assembly. There was an artificiality in yesterday's lights. I found no affinity between those lights and our rural life. Such lights are a consequence of contact with cities, but vast numbers of villages are hundreds of miles removed from cities or railway lines. Our idea is to serve such villages. You do not even know those villages. Perhaps there are no such villages in Gujarat. But then, is Gujarat the whole of India? It is only a fraction of India. What is Gujarat as compared to Bengal, Bihar and the United Provinces? While travelling through the last-mentioned province, one does not come across even one light at night; one only hears the barking of dogs. In comparison with the houses of Gujarat, houses there seem like ruins; one feels like crying and saying, 'O God! are there such houses in India!' And the people there are like skeletons. They cannot even get a mattress in the severely cold winters. They bolt the doors and just lie down covering themselves with rags. I remember those villages. Could we afford to have such lights in those villages? If a wealthy person were to give me five lamps for such villages and I were to take them there I would be committing *adharma* and be party to the sin to that extent. At places where the houses are like rubbish heaps and people are suffering from want of food and water, if anyone gives me the money I would first of all have wells dug and get their houses repaired, I would give them cows and spinning-wheels and, if it is convenient, also get gardens laid

¹ Extracted from "Dharma Yatra"

out. But I would certainly not take money for lights. Despite this, I am aware that because of the absence of light, about 20 lakh persons die of snakebite in such villages according to Government's figures. And there must be many others who are not accounted for! There are neither medicines nor lights to save their lives; however, I shall not dare to take such a lamp even there. That would amount to adding to their needs. That will be like giving *churma*¹ to a person who is fasting. Once anyone has added to his needs, he would go to any lengths to satisfy them. While millions of persons do not get even half a *roti* and enough of inferior salt, I ask myself while I eat what right I have to eat even this much. However, owing to attachment as also in the hope of doing service, I continue to take milk.

We have to consider our dharma. We want to face the might of a *rakshasi* empire, and this cannot be done either by looking upon it with contempt or by shouting loudly; it can only be done through the path of non-violence. Ahimsa may appear to be blind and crippled or clad in rags, but when God-given strength is added to it, the opponent loses his strength before it, he becomes paralyzed. We have to work with such a power, and this cannot be done with lights. I have hurt my companions by dispensing with these lights. They felt that without these the people would become restless. However, in my opinion, there was no need for such fears. The message that I am conveying to you at the moment does not appear to you to be a harsh one. Lights could not have brought about this result.

[From Gujarati]

Navajivan, 13-4-1930

542. LETTER TO REGINALD REYNOLDS

Unrevised

March 31, 1930

MY DEAR REYNOLDS,

I have been daily thinking of you and thinking of writing to you too. But time would not permit my writing. Today I must begin the day after the morning prayer with this.

I did not like your writing in the *Chronicle*.² It is not ahimsa. *The Indian Daily Mail* did not deserve the notice you took of it. If the notice had to be taken, the way was bad. Why should you spoil a good case by bad adjectives? And when you have a good cause never descend to personalities. Yours is a case where the saying 'Resist not

¹ Kind of sweet

² Replying to a "particularly vicious attack on Gandhiji", the addressee had written to *The Indian Daily Mail* "in a sudden explosion of anger".

evil' applies. It means: 'Resist not evil with evil.' You have neutralized the evil writing of the *I.D.M.* by a writing of the same kind. That you had a good case makes no difference. The *I.D.M.* writing was a piece of violence. You have supported your good case with counter-violence. So you see, what I want to emphasize is not merely bad manners. It is the underlying violence that worries me. Is this not quite clear to you? If it is, I would like you to promise to yourself never to write any such thing without submitting it to someone in whose non-violence you have faith. If you have realized the fundamental truth of what I have said, you will even partially mend the evil by apologizing to Wilson by writing a private note somewhat after this style: "Although I hold your charges and innuendoes to be wrong, I feel that I ought not to have adopted towards you the language I did. I want to follow Christ. I own that my conduct was not Christian. I had no right to judge you. I would feelsomewhat relieved if I could have a line from you to say that you had accepted my apology."¹

You have undertaken at the call of duty a great task. I do not want you to damage it on the threshold of your career.

Your writing in *Young India*² was unexceptionable.

If my argument does not convince of course you will go on as you have begun. I know you are well able to take care of yourself. My concern was merely to elucidate the principle we hold in common.

How are you getting on? Are you keeping good health and insisting on getting what your body may need?

What is this paragraph about your engagement, etc.! Is it all true? Is your mother correctly reported?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 4532. Courtesy: Swarthmore College, Philadelphia

543. *LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*

DELAD,

March 31, 1930

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have your letter. I have not wired, as I do not think there are any Pathans at Dandi and, if there are, we shall cope with them. The

¹ The addressee send an apology and informed Gandhiji accordingly. *Vide* also "Letter to Reginald Reynolds", 4-4-1930.

² The article "Modern English Mythology" appeared in the issue of March 27, 1930.

advent even of good and true friends from the Frontier will cause complications. I want to present at Dandi, if I am allowed to reach it, the one issue without any avoidable complications. Things seem to be shaping very well indeed in Gujarat.

I am surprised that they have already arrested so many in Rae Bareli. I feel you are right in confining your attention to the salt tax for the time being. We shall know during the next fortnight what more we can or should do.

Unless you hear from me to the contrary, please take 6th April as the date for simultaneous beginning.

It is now nearing 10 p.m., so good night.

BAPU

A Bunch of Old Letters, p. 85

544. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

Silence Day [About March, 1930]

CHI. KANTA,

I do think of you often. I have built great hopes on you. Are you getting letters from Brother? Where is he? What are you doing? Has Krishna gone home? Write all details.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Hindi original: Chandrakanta Papers. Courtesy: Gandhi National Museum and Library

545. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

[About March, 1930]

CHI. NARANDAS,

I don't worry at all, since you are not likely to feel any burden. I know that guests will continue. Please look after them. Dissuade anyone who may wish to follow me.

Shri Mullick is the Municipal Engineer. He will go there in a day or two and advise you on how to increase the supply of water. Show him the Chandrabhaga¹ also. I have talked to Shri Mullick about Parner-kar. Get acquainted with him and introduce Parnerkar to him also.

What is Purushottam doing? Will he go for a change of air? If he had keen will, I would certainly have taken him with me. If you

¹ A rivulet near the Sabarmati Ashram, now dried up

think it is necessary to consult me about anything, please do so.

Blessings from

BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro—Narandas Gandhine, Part I, p. 273

546. *LETTER TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI*

March 31, 1930

BHAI KASTURBHAI,

I thank you for your letter. All of you brothers may surely come. We will talk about each other's joys and sorrows.

Vandemataram from

MOHANDAS

From the Gujarati original : S.N. 33142

547. *SPEECH AT CHHAPRABHATHA*

April 1, 1930

Every day people tell me, "Today you will certainly be arrested." However, the tiger does not appear! The newspapers claim that I have become impatient at the Government not arresting me. This is partially true as it had been decided that while Sardar should remain free, I should court arrest. However, now that Sardar is in prison, I shall remain free. If we wish to secure the release of Vallabhbhai, we can only do so by carrying on this struggle.

Choryasi took full advantage of the last fight of Sardar, so you must make your full contribution to this movement. The Government has acted on the principle that all places will get the rainfall of swaraj in equal measure. We certainly have the strength to secure his release. If we were determined, we might say, from a superficial glance at the villages, that swaraj was round the corner. I am not however a person who will thus deceive himself. For the present I am trying to gauge the situation.

On inquiring about spinning-wheels I found a single one here. If matters are in such a state, we cannot secure Sardar's release. We have to go forward in all directions. At present we have set out to get the salt tax abolished. We shall tire out the Government by making salt at any number of places. However, all this can be achieved only when you put into practice the aphorism that 'swaraj lies in a strand of yarn'. The saying that it is easy to secure swaraj will only be proved true when 30 crores of people start wearing khadi and develop all

aspects of swaraj, giving due consideration to rural problems. Swaraj is within our grasp if we practise this simple and easy duty. Consider how the bridge on the river Keem was built in a single night. If people act voluntarily in accordance with their capacities in this manner, swaraj is not difficult to secure. I thank all the wealthy capitalists of Bombay and Ahmedabad who have come here and contributed large amounts. I see the blessing of God in the fact that all sections of the community are helping this movement.

[From Gujarati]
Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

548. *SPEECH AT SURAT*

April 1, 1930

There is no alternative but for us to do something about our troubles and sufferings and hence we have thought of this salt tax. You may say it is a godsend. It is so beastly and inhuman that through salt the Government taxes even little children and young girls. I have read the texts in which it is claimed that those who would carry on administration must find ways to collect taxes from all members of the public. I have gone through the holy books of Islam, Hinduism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. All these state that women and the poor should at no time be taxed. If we go through the rules of war, we shall find that they lay down that old persons, children and women should be left untouched in war. The same is applicable to this tax. Muslims, Hindus, Parsis—all consume salt in like quantities. The Government has, however, found a device whereby all have been taxed at an equal rate. This is an inhuman law, a Satanic law.

I have not heard of such justice anywhere in the world; where it prevails, I would call it inhuman, Satanic. To bow to an empire which dispenses such justice is not dharma but *adharma*. A man who prays to God every morning at dawn cannot, must not, pray for the good of such an empire. On the contrary while praying or saying the *namaaz* he should ask God to encompass the destruction of such a Satanic empire, such an inhuman government. To do so is dharma. Although I have been saying this openly for the last twenty days, the Government has left me and my colleagues free. I admit that this is a familiar trait in this Government. I have been calling this Government inhuman till today. I admit however that I do not believe even for a fraction of a second that it does not have power or authority. It has an army, it has gun-powder and it can, by merely moving a finger, destroy someone like me. But it cannot readily transgress the limits it has set for itself. It is ashamed of itself before the world. I have never

in my dreams or waking moments desired and not a single one of my colleagues or the thousands of persons who have come into contact with me has ever desired, that either the King or any of the officers of this Empire should be destroyed even though we call the Empire-tyrannical. This is for it something new and it does not know how to deal with it.

Today, on the banks of the Tapi, I wish to tell you the very same thing that I said on the banks of the Sabarmati on the eve of my departure. Would the Government have left even one of us free if we had said that we wanted to throw so much as a pebble at officers? Some people say that I want to be arrested. I do not regard it as my dharma to get arrested; but I am not afraid of it and I am giving you the *mantra* that none of you should be afraid. I want that you should not be afraid of being arrested or hanged while you do your duty. I wish to convert prison into a palace. If I wished to be imprisoned I would commit theft, practise deceit, resort to assault and abuse. I would then certainly be arrested, no one would spare me. The Government would not then say 'the Mahatma is dead; we shall not arrest him'. If the Government does arrest me, while in prison I will pray to God to bring about a change of heart in this Government and eradicate the sentiment which it has developed and which does not befit a human being. Sooner or later, it has no alternative but to arrest me and if it does not do so the whole of India will flare up within a short while. It is difficult for the Government either to imprison me or to leave me at large. Hindus, Muslims, Parsis—all should do their duty. When all of us start doing so, it will be beyond the power of the most tyrannical Government to arrest us.

Then there will hardly be any talk about arrests. Laws will get broken fast. One today, another tomorrow. And, when laws are destroyed, how can the Empire continue to function? Headmen and Talatis should resign. They should know that it is God alone who provides us our daily bread. What difference does it make whether or not you get Rs. 37 as a Talati? Mill workers—of whom I happen to be one—earn fifty rupees. However, although they can threaten mill-owners to go on strike, the latter do not dismiss them. They cannot do without the workers. If a Talati seeks employment in a mill and works faithfully, he can earn Rs. 50 or more if he shows good work. It will be the easiest thing for him to earn Rs. 37. Even if he happened to be a cripple, he could earn a living through spinning. Earning a livelihood is no problem to one who is prepared to work. What will the Government do when Talatis and Government servants are no longer afraid? Will it send for troops from England and entrust to them the work of Talatis and Headmen? What action will it take

when Hindus, Muslims and Parsis all refuse to co-operate with it? It will be able to do nothing. All its limbs will become immobilized. In this manner, swaraj will be in our pocket without any effort, without a single person having to go to jail. But whom shall I teach all this?

You find khadi coarse and expensive. You wish to appear naked while I wish to clothe you. It seems to have become a dharma today to appear naked in spite of the clothing that is worn. It is a *rakshasi* dharma, it is only under this Empire that going naked becomes a dharma. We wear clothes to cover our bodies. If you wish to go about naked, why clothe yourselves? Under this Empire, going naked is no crime at all. You may therefore remain so. If you do wish to clothe yourselves to cover your bodies, what better material than khadi can I offer you? Why do you wish for anything else? You are ashamed to wear clothes woven out of yarn spun by your mothers and sisters who are starving at home.

Today you must understand the dharma of the boycott of foreign cloth, because it is impossible to give up British cloth while still using Japanese material. If we attempt to do so, we shall not be able to achieve either of our objectives—we shall not be able to do away with British goods and Japan will start ruling over us instead of Britain. Then again, you may claim that cloth from both countries could be boycotted by using mill-made cloth. Mills have existed now for fifty years. Nevertheless there has been no boycott. Why? I have been shouting repeatedly that boycott is impossible without khadi. You could practise boycott with the help of khadi and the textile mills. But it is impossible today to carry on boycott depending on mills alone. Maybe it can be done in fifty or a hundred years. If you intend to do so through fighting and bloodshed that is a matter about which I know nothing, it is beyond my conception, it is something which I have renounced. If the women of Surat come to Mithubehn's assistance, prohibition can be accomplished in Surat district in no time. And what is so attractive about that trade? Those who run liquor dens can earn a living from some other occupation.

Whatever may happen in India, I am resolved that either I shall die offering civil disobedience or I shall win swaraj. I, therefore, called these people together and set out on this march. If I am alive tomorrow, I shall start out from here after receiving your blessings. I invite those who care to accompany me.

It is a blessing that Hindus and Muslims here are, for the present, united and are not quarrelling. I was afraid that since I am tired of the fighting, I might not like to go to a place where these two communities were fighting and if I did go there, that I would

die. So I wrote to the workers not to take me to the city in order to kill me, but to let me reach Dandi. I was informed, however, that for the present they were as good as united and that there were no quarrels between them. I do not believe, however, that Hindus and Muslims have become one yet. Why should there be any ill feeling, any distrust, or any fear of one another even for a fraction of a second between them? Can there be a worse government than the present one? There would be about a lakh officers in this country. What will you do with the remaining 299.9 million people? How will you account for them? To what purpose will you fight against one another? Give me a seat in the legislative assembly only if there is any left after giving them to Muslims, Parsis, Christians and all others. You may consider the salt tax as abolished if you are true to your salt. Even poor, needy Muslims are its victims. We can fight amongst ourselves after it is repealed. The religious books of both Hinduism and Islam regard liquor as something sinful. The Zoroastrians do not read their religious texts carefully. They should read what they say about liquor.

Please give me your blessings and pray to God that He may grant my wishes. Postpone the settlement of your disputes till after the salt tax is repealed. What strength you will gain if you do so! If this tax is repealed we shall save six crores of rupees. Then adding 25 crores to be saved by prohibition and 60 crores from boycott of foreign cloth—it makes a total of Rs. 91 crores. Take it as a present. If you refuse it, you will be answerable not to me but to God. May God grant you the wisdom to understand all this and to act accordingly.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

549. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

Wednesday [April 2, 1930]¹

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. You have been doing very good work. If it is very necessary for you to go to Bombay for the sake of your sister, you may. But you should remember that such occasions will arise again and again. You and I can give no help in such matters. We cannot attend to two things at a time. When you are faced with such problems, you may consult Nathji. I am here today; tomorrow I may not be.

¹ *Bapuna Patro-6*: G. S. Gangabehnne gives April 1 as the date, which was a Tuesday.

I cannot say when they will arrest me. Here, too, there are rumours every day. So great is the power of non-violence that they do not have the courage to arrest me.

So long as you maintain good health, I am not particular about your eating fruit.

I am writing this before the morning prayer.

Blessings from

BAPU

From the Gujarati original: C.W. 8744. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

550. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

April 2, 1930

CHI. PREMA,

I have your perfect letter. You do not mention in it your having received my letters, but I presume that you have received them.

I have not received the pansy,¹ but I shall take it as received. Your rearing the plant with love is as good as presenting the flower to me. Giving it physically is mere ceremony.

Is it true that you beat children? Mirabehn has gently complained to me that you do.

I hope you take care of your health.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 6667. Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

551. LETTER TO CHANDRAKANTA

April 2, 1930

CHI. CHANDRAKANTA,

Received your letter. Brother came away to Surat yesterday. He walked today. His health has improved. There is no cause for worry. You have done well in restraining yourself from coming. Those who come here to meet me are truly guilty of a lapse. But what can they do? They cannot control themselves.

Blessings from

BAPU

¹ The addressee had planted a few pansies near where Gandhiji slept at the Ashram. They flowered after Gandhiji had set out for Dandi.

[PS.]

You are doing wonderful work.

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

552. LETTER TO TRILOKCHANDRAJI

Wednesday, [April 2, 1930]¹

MUNISHRI TRILOKCHANDRAJI,

I feel that you need not join the satyagraha but should propagate its teaching to all in clear terms.

It will not be necessary to keep a watch as you suggest when the satyagraha becomes widespread. The latent power of truth and non-violence will act like electric current and keep the people under control.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[From Gujarati]

Jainprakash, Margashirsha, 1987

553. SPEECH AT DINDOLI

April 2, 1930

We were told that it was doubtful whether Congress workers would be allowed to halt here at all. I must say, however, that so far we have received nothing but warm welcome everywhere. Both the factions in this village have united in looking after us well and have been equally warm in welcoming us.

There is the hand of God in this struggle. That is why one finds today that people have ceased to be enemies and become friends of each other. It is all the grace of God. In the Privy Council, disputes are not settled for generations together. You must free yourselves from that snare. We are carrying on this struggle against those who are riding on the backs of others. We have to free our millions of the

¹ According to the source Gandhiji replied to the addressee's letter which was given to him in the morning before he left Surat during the Dandi March. This was on April 2, 1930, which was a Wednesday.

burden which the white man has placed on them. But first we ourselves have to get off the backs of the poor. If anyone says that the Government will cease to function if the salt tax is repealed, I will say that such a person is not true to his salt. From the fact that a larger quantity of salt is sold when the tax rate is lowered, we can conclude that it is the poor who suffer the most from this tax. In the past the poor used to get even clothes. And in the past the workers in villages got everything in kind in exchange for their labour. However much the Government may try, can it ever make these foreign rags cheaper than khadi?

I congratulate the Headman for the other bit of news given me. I also congratulate the village which has such a courageous Headman. Those who have not yet resigned should do so and cease to be afraid of the Government. I am surprised a person like me who cannot wield even a tiny stick can make such a mighty Empire tremble. However, if Rama dwells in your hearts, it is easy to shake the foundations of not one but twenty empires more powerful than this one. Like the old lady at the charkha you should earn honest money.

[From Gujarati]

Prajabandhu, 6-4-1930

APPENDIX I

VICEROY'S STATEMENT¹

I have just returned from England where I have had the opportunity of prolonged consultation with His Majesty's Government. Before I left this country I said publicly that as the King-Emperor's representative in India I should hold myself bound to tell my fellow-countrymen, as faithfully as I might, of India's feelings, anxieties and aspirations. In my endeavours to discharge that undertaking I was assisted by finding, as I had expected a generous and sincere desire, not only on the part of His Majesty's Government but on that of all persons and parties in Great Britain, to hear and to appreciate everything that it was my duty to represent.

These are critical days, when matters by which men are deeply touched are in issue and when, therefore, it is inevitable that political feeling should run high, and that misunderstandings, which would scarcely arise in conditions of political tranquillity, should obtain firm foothold in men's minds. I have, nevertheless, not faltered in my belief that behind all the disquieting tendencies of the time, there lay the great mass of Indian opinion, overflowing all divisions of race, religion, or political thought, fundamentally loyal to the King-Emperor, and, whether consciously or not only wanting to understand and to be understood. On the other side I have never felt any doubt that opinion in Great Britain, puzzled as it might be by events in India, or only perhaps partially informed as to their true significance, was unshaken in its determination that Great Britain should redeem to the full the pledges she has given for India's future. On both countries the times have laid a heavy and in some ways a unique responsibility, for the influence on the world of a perfect understanding between Great Britain and India might surely be so great that no scales can give us the measure either of the prize of success or, the price of failure in our attempts to reach it.

In my discussions with the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State, it was inevitable that the principal topic should have been the course of events in India. It is not profitable on either side to discuss to what extent, or with what justification, the appointment of a Parliamentary Commission two years ago has affected the general trend of Indian thought and action. Practical men must take facts and situations as they are, and not as they would have them be.

Sir John Simon's Commission, assisted as it has been by the Indian Central Committee, is now at work on its Report, and until that Report is laid before Parliament it is impossible, and even if it were possible, it would in the view of His Majesty's Government clearly be improper, to forecast the nature of any constitutional changes that may subsequently be proposed. In this respect every British party is bound to preserve itself complete freedom of action. But what must constantly engage our attention, and is a matter of deep concern to His Majesty's Government, is the discovery of means by which, when the Commission has reported, the broad question of British Indian constitutional advance may be approached in co-operation with all those who can speak authoritatively for opinion in British India. I would venture to recall some words which I used in addressing the

¹ *Vide* 1st footnote to "All-Parties Leaders' Joint Statement", 2-11-1929 & "Draft Resolution for Congress Working Committee", 18-11-1929.

Assembly eight months ago in reference to the then existing political situation. "On the one side," I said, "it is judgment on the problem as it would be short-sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India." We shall surely stray from the path, at the end of which lies achievement, if we let go either one or other of these two main guiding principles of political action.

But there has lately emerged, from a totally different angle, another set of considerations which is very relevant to what I have just stated on this matter to be the desire of His Majesty's Government.

The Chairman of the Commission has pointed out in correspondence with the Prime Minister, which, I understand, is being published in England, that as their investigation has proceeded, he and his colleagues have been greatly impressed, in considering the direction which the future constitutional development which may, at some future time, develop between British India and the Indian States. In his judgment it is essential that the methods, by which this future relationship between these two constituent parts of Greater India may be adjusted, should be fully examined. he has further expressed the opinion that if the Commission's Report and the proposals subsequently to be framed by the Government take this wider range, it would appear necessary for the Government to revise the scheme of procedure as at present proposed. He suggests that what might be required, after the Reports of the Statutory Commission and the Indian Central Committee have been made, considered and published but before the stage is reached of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, would be the setting up of a Conference in which His Majesty's Government should meet representatives both of British India and of the States, for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would later be the duty of His Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament. The procedure by Joint Parliamentary Committee conferring with delegations from the Indian Legislature and other bodies, which was previously contemplated and is referred to in Sir John Simon's letter to myself of 6th February 1928, would still be appropriate for the examination of the Bill when it is subsequently placed before Parliament, but would, in the opinion of the Commission, obviously have to be preceded by some such Conference as they have suggested. With these views I understand that His Majesty's Government are in complete accord. For, while they will greatly desire, when the time comes, to be able to deal with the question of British Indian political development under conditions the most favourable to its successful treatment, they are, with the Commission, deeply sensible of the importance of bringing under comprehensive review the whole problem of the relations of British India and the Indian States. Indeed, an adjustment of these interests in their view is essential for the complete fulfilment of what they consider to be the underlying purpose of British policy, whatever may be the method for its furtherance which Parliament may decide to adopt.

The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August 1917 to be that of providing for the gradual development of self-governing institutions, as an integral part of the British Empire. As I recently pointed out my own Instrument of Instruction from the King-Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans laid by Parliament in 1919 should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among His Dominions. Ministers of the Crown,

moreover, have more than once publicly declared that it is the desire of the British Government that India should, in the fullness of time, take her place in the Empire in equal partnership with the Dominions. But in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919, I am authorized on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the attainment of Dominion Status.

In the full realization of this policy, it is evidently important that the Indian States should be afforded an opportunity of finding their place, and even if we cannot at present exactly foresee on what lines this development may be shaped, it is from every point of view desirable that whatever can be done should be done to ensure that action taken now is not inconsistent with the attainment of the ultimate purpose which those, whether in British India or the States, who look forward to some unity of all India, have in view.

His Majesty's Government consider that both these objects, namely, that of finding the best approach to the British side of the problem, and secondly, of ensuring that in this process the wider question of closer relations in the future between the two parts of Greater India is not overlooked, can best be achieved by the adoption of procedure such as the Commission has outlined. When, therefore, the Commission and the Indian Central Committee have submitted their reports and these have been published, and when His Majesty's Government have been able, in consultation with the Government of India, to consider these matters in the light of all the material then available, they will propose to invite representatives of different parties and interests in British India and representatives of the Indian States to meet them, separately or together as circumstances may demand, for purpose of conference and discussion in regard both to the British-Indian and the all-Indian problems. It will be their earnest hope that by this means it may subsequently prove possible on these grave issues to submit proposals to Parliament which may command a wide measure of general assent.

It is not necessary for me to say how greatly I trust that the action of His Majesty's Government may evoke response from and enlist the concurrence of all sections of opinion in India, and I believe that all who wish India well, wherever and whoever they are, desire to break through the webs of mistrust firmly assured that the course of action now proposed is at once the outcome of a real desire to bring to the body politic of India the touch that carries with it healing and health, and is the method by which we may best hope to handle these high matters in the way of constructive statesmanship.

31st October, 1929

IRWIN
VICEROY AND GOVERNOR-GENERAL

India in 1929-30, pp. 466-8

APPENDIX II

LETTER FROM JAWAHARLAL NEHRU¹

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE,
52 HEWETT ROAD, ALLAHABAD,

November 4, 1929

MY DEAR BAPUJI,

I have thought well for two days. I can take, I think, a calmer view of the situation than I could two days ago but the fever in my brain has not left me.

Your appeal to me on the ground of discipline could not be ignored by me. I am myself a believer in discipline. And yet I suppose there can be too much of discipline. Something seems to have snapped inside me evening before last and I am unable to piece it together. As General Secretary of the Congress I owe allegiance to it and must subject myself to its discipline. I have other capacities and other allegiances. I am President of the Indian am intimately connected with the youth movement. What shall I do with the allegiance I owe to these and other movements I am connected with? I realize now more than I have ever done before that it is not possible to ride a number of horses at the same time. Indeed it is hard enough to ride one. In the conflict of responsibilities and allegiances what is one to do except to rely on one's own instincts and reason?

I have therefore considered the position apart from all outside connections and allegiances and the conviction has grown stronger that I acted wrongly the policy underlying it. I am afraid we differ fundamentally on that issue and I am not likely to convert you. I shall only say that I believe the statement to have been injurious and a wholly inadequate reply to the Labour Government's declaration. I believe that in our attempts to soothe and retain a few estimable gentlemen we have ruffled and practically turned out of our camp many others who were far more worth having. I believe that we have fallen into a dangerous trap out of which it will be no easy matter to escape. And I think that we have shown to the world that although we talk tall we are only bargaining for some tit bits.

I do not know what the British Government will do now. Probably it will not agree to your conditions. I hope they will not. But I have little doubt that most of the signatories—excluding you of course—will be quite prepared to agree to any modification of the conditions which the British Government might suggest. In any event it is quite clear to me that my position in the Congress will become daily more and more difficult. I accepted the presidentship of the Congress with great misgivings but in the hope that we shall fight on a clear issue next year. That issue is already clouded and the only reason for my acceptance has gone. What am I to do with these "Leaders" Conference"? I feel an interloper and am ill at ease. I cannot have my say because I am afraid of upsetting the conference. I repress myself and sometimes the repression is too much for me and I break out and even say things which I do not wholly mean.

I feel I must resign from the Secretaryship of the A.I.C.C. I have sent a formal

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Jawaharlal Nehru", 6-11-1929 and "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", 8-11-1929.

letter to Father, a copy of which I enclose.

The question of the presidentship is a far more difficult one. At this late hour I do know what I can do. But I am convinced that I was a wrong choice. You are the only possible president for the occasion and the year. I cannot be president if the policy of the Congress is what might be described as that of Malaviyaji. Even now if you agree there is a possible course which does not necessitate a meeting of the A.I.C.C. A circular might be sent round to A.I.C.C. members saying that you are agreeable to accepting the presidentship. I would beg of them to excuse me. This would be a formal matter as of course all the members, or nearly all, would welcome your decision with joy.

An alternative course is that I should declare that in view of the circumstances, and also in view of the difficulty of choosing another president now, I shall not retire now but immediately after the Congress is over. I shall act as the chairman and the Congress can decide what it likes regardless of me.

One of these two courses seems to me to be necessary if I am to retain my physical and mental health.

As I wrote to you from Delhi I am not issuing any public statement. What others say or do not say does not worry me very much. But I must be at peace with myself.

Yours affectionately,

JAWAHARLAL

[PS.]

I am sending a copy of this letter to Father. I feel a little lighter after writing this letter. I am afraid it will trouble you a little and I do not want to do so. I feel half inclined not to send it to you just yet but to wait for your arrival here. Ten days more will no doubt lessen my agitation and give me a better perspective. But it is better that you should know how my mind has been working.

A Bunch of Old Letters, pp. 74-5

APPENDIX III

*LETTER FROM VALLABHBHAI PATEL*¹

Personal

SARDARGRIHA,

BOMBAY

November 11, 1929

PUJYA BAPUJI,

I have been here for the last two days. Vithalbhai is also here. I sent you a wire after having had a long talk with Mr. Jinnah.

The Working Committee is meeting on the 16th. We wish its final resolution does not result in a complete break. Ultimately, it is for us to do what we like. But before it is finally decided to close the door upon all future negotiations or before the original Delhi statement is amended, it would be fair to invite to a meeting all those who have signed it. Before any resolution is passed, yourself, Jinnah, Motilalji, Vithalbhai and Sapru should confer together or Jinnah and Vithalbhai

¹ *Vide* "Telegram to Vithalbhai Patel", on or after 13-11-1929.

should be given an opportunity to discuss the matter with you personally. There would be no problem if the Working Committee is to adhere to the Delhi manifesto. But in view of the subsequent debate in Parliament, if we choose to break off with the Government, I see no harm in postponing such a decision for a few days. Besides, it will be proper that another opportunity of looking at the manifesto is given to those who have signed it. Mr. Jinnah and Vithalbhai wish to discuss a few things with you some time.

According to Mr. Jinnah, the Conference can be summoned in July. If an announcement is made about the personnel and general amnesty to our liking, can this be regarded as evidence of a change of heart? Another important matter would remain to be settled, namely, the Government should announce before we decide to attend the Conference that it has to frame a scheme for Dominion Status. This needs to be discussed with you since there could be no two opinions that under the present circumstances no government would make any such announcement. Mr. Jinnah wishes also to know in what other manner we can be reassured. He for one thinks that if these three things are settled, we get practically everything that we seek; and in that case, he is prepared to do whatever he can in respect of the fourth matter. He is quite convinced of the good faith of the Labour Government as well as the Viceroy, and thinks that this opportunity should on no account be missed. He is prepared to play his part to the best of his ability.

We shall decide the venue when I have your reply to my wire.

Vandemataram from
VALLABHBHAI

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 15568

APPENDIX IV

LETTER FROM DR. M. A. ANSARI¹

JAORA,
February 13, 1930

MY DEAR MAHATMAJI,

I wrote to you from Delhi last Monday. The letter was dictated in a hurry in a few moments snatched during a very strenuous day. It naturally did not express all that I wanted to tell you. Further, I was hoping I would be able to get away from here in time to be with you on the 14th or the 15th. I find, however, to my disappointment, that my patient here is suffering from peritonitis and is so very ill that I cannot even mention my leaving her. Indeed, it does not seem possible to get away from here for another week or ten days. I am, therefore, writing to you as the next best thing to my being with you in person at such a critical moment. I feel I owe it to Pt. Jawaharlal, Pt. Motilal, yourself, and your colleagues in the Working Committee, who have got the reins of the Congress in their hands and are leading the country, to tell you frankly what I feel about your policy and programme in relation to the present situation in the country. I would try to be as brief as possible, but you would excuse me if this letter becomes somewhat long in spite of my efforts to curtail it.

Hindu-Muslim unity is not only one of the basic items in our programme, but

¹ *Vide* "Letter to Dr. M. A. Ansari", 16-2-1930.

according to my firm belief and conviction, *the one and only* basic thing. I would have liked to trace the whole history of our efforts to achieve unity, but I would take up the most recent history, viz., from autumn of the year 1927. You would remember how the Unity Conference at Simla failed in spite of every effort made there. I felt after its failure that it was not possible to have agreement between extreme communal groups, but that it was feasible to have a workable agreement between Nationalist Hindus and Nationalist Mussalmans. I, therefore, urged Srinivasa Iyengar, the then President of the Congress, to convene another Peace Conference at Calcutta under the aegis of the Congress, and in more suitable surroundings than the Simla Conference. The Calcutta Conference brought about an understanding between the Congress and the Mussalmans of all shades of opinion, as evidenced by the warm welcome given to the Pact even by such Mussalman as Sir Mohd. Shafi, Sir Zulfiqar Ali, Dr. Muhammad Iqbal and many others. This Pact, with certain modifications suggested by you, was passed by the Madras Congress and was agreed to by Pt. Malaviya. I have not the slightest doubt that if we had stuck to it we would have gradually overcome the opposition of the Hindu Mahasabha, and Hindu-Muslim unity would have been an accomplished fact by now. But, we wanted to be more just and fair and in our effort to do justice and bring greater harmony and unity in the shape of the Nehru Report at Lucknow, followed closely by the Sikhs. But, at the Calcutta Convention, it was the Hindu Mahasabha which completely did the work of destruction. I cannot help expressing that the speech made by Mr. Jayakar and subsequently the attitude in the Committee taken by Pt. Malaviya, Dr. Moonje, and Hindu Mahasabha friends destroyed all chances of understanding. Prof. Jatindra Lal Bannerji's motion for the reservation of seats for 45 per cent Hindu minority in the Bengal which was carried in the Convention and only withdrawn at my special appeal and request was a painful revelation. Pt. Motilal's cold reception to Mr. Jinnah, whom I had succeeded after a great deal of effort in persuading to come and see Panditji at his house, was also a great disappointment. After that, the communalist Mussalmans got the chance and the Muslim attitude hardened [as] shown by the absurd resolution passed at the All-Parties' Muslim Conference at Delhi and subsequently the fourteen points of Mr. Jinnah.

The year 1929, in spite of the great influence and efforts of Panditji, yourself and Pt. Jawaharlal, did not see the constructive programme advance and the quota fixed in May last year was not completed by most of the Congress Committee. The Sikh situation was, in the mean time, going from bad to worse.

In such circumstances when I read the advance copy of the Viceroy's statement of November 1st,¹ I considered it a godsend (as the telephonic message sent by me to Panditji and received by Jawaharlal would bear out). I, at once, took Vallabhbhai with me and met you at Meerut. We found you less enthusiastic, more cautious, but on the whole, taking a very favourable view of the announcement. At the Conference held in Delhi on November 1st, you would remember I pressed for certain parts of Dr. Sapru's statement to be embodied in yours. The reason was that I found myself in agreement with him. I was representing not only my own personal views, but, those of a group consisting of Messrs Khaliqzaman, Tasadduq Ahmed Sherwani, Rafi [Ahmed]

¹ Vide "Viceroy's Statement", 31-10-1929; the statement was issued on October 31, 1929.

Kidwai, Dr. Mahmud, and a few others. At Lahore, I expressed the same views in the Working Committee. When asked by Panditji, to give my opinion on the 22nd of last December in Delhi, I told him that owing to our internal dissensions, unpreparedness and weakness, I would advise him not to let the Conference with the Viceroy break up, but to utilize it to the fullest advantage. Panditji characterized my observations as based on weakness. I repudiated the charge, but our conversation ended. When I heard that the Conference between you and the Viceroy had ended without any agreement, I was disappointed. At the meeting of the Working Committee held in Lahore last December and on one or two subsequent occasions, I expressed similar views but with the exception of Mrs. Naidu, I did not find support. I have felt that the situation has been mishandled both by the Viceroy and our own representatives. The Viceroy was obviously very much shaken by the bomb outrage, and was not in his normal frame of mind. For I do not see how even with the limited powers given to him he could have failed to give you the necessary assurance for a scheme of Dominion Status to be the basis of discussion at the Round Table Conference. I cannot, for the life of me, imagine after reading and re-reading the statements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, what else could be the basis of discussions at the Round Table Conference if not a scheme of Dominion Status. It may be a very incomplete scheme which would form the basis; even our own scheme presented in the Nehru Constitution was not a scheme of complete Dominion Status. The final decision would be matters for adjustments, understandings and bargains, as it is bound to be at any time. But, at any rate, it would have given us the chance of placing the demand of India before the British on communal matters, they would have been obliged to concede our demand of Dominion Constitution to a very great extent. This has been my view all along and is my view today.

I did not feel that it would be in the interest of the Congress [for me] to resign from the Working Committee at Lahore and express my views in the All-India Congress Committee or in the open Congress. I felt that there were already sufficient divisions in the Congress and one more division would not have improved the situation. Out of loyalty to the Congress and my personal devotion to you. Pt. Motilal and Jawaharlal, I kept quiet. But I deliberately refused the General Secretaryship and the membership of the Working Committee, and took the risk of being misunderstood rather than say or do anything to injure the Congress. At the same time, not being in sympathy with the policy and programme of the Congress, I could not be one of its executive. The same reason led me to resign from the Presidentship of the Preventive. Indeed, the only thing possible for me and those who think like me was to drop out of the Congress Executive. And whilst not opposing the policy and programme of the Congress or doing anything to injure it by our actions or words, to remain as one of its camp followers. So far as I am aware, Mrs. Naidu, Rangaswami Iyengar, Pt. Harkaran Nath Misra, Choudhary Khaliquzzaman, R. A. Kidwai, T. A. K. Sherwani and a few other leading Congressmen (whose names I may not mention) hold similar views.

You are taking a great responsibility on yourself by declaring war against the Government today. The situation today is quite the reverse of what it was in 1920, when you started the campaign of non-co-operation. I would briefly compare the

situation in a comparative table as under; of course, it is not complete, but I am giving only the salient features:

1920	1930
(1) Great dissatisfaction against the Government, owing to war-time promises, owing to war-time promises not having been kept. Dissatisfaction against Rowlatt Act, Martial Law, and Khilafat wrongs.	(1) Large number of people believe in the goodwill of Labour Government and sincerity of Labour Government and sincerity of the Viceroy, rightly or wrongly.
(2) Highest water-mark reached in Hindu-Muslim unity.	(2) Lowest water-mark reached in Hindu-Muslim unity.
(3) Sikhs entirely with the Congress.	(3) Sikhs almost entirely against the Congress.
(4) Complete unity inside the Congress. Great enthusiasm amongst the workers and the rank and file.	(4) Disunity in the Congress (Revolt against its mandate), diversity of purpose, complete lack of enthusiasm amongst the workers. Lukewarmness among the rank and file.
(5) Complete non-violent atmosphere and yet breaking of violence in Chauri Chaura.	(5) Obvious existence of violence, even large number of leading Congressmen believing in it and the certainty of violence breaking out.

Like Harishchandra you seem to be bent on keeping the word given by you at Calcutta, irrespective of consequences. I feel as if you are deliberately offering yourself as a sacrifice. I earnestly submit to you for your consideration that to the demand made at Calcutta there has been a response. It is not satisfactory from our point of view. But, it is all that the Government can make, and certainly, it cannot be said that there has been no response. I, therefore, urge that the question of keeping your word in case of no response to the Calcutta offer does not arise and, therefore, the idea of keeping your word at all costs is not morally justifiable and certainly it is not politically expedient.

I hope I have made my position quite clear to you. Holding the views stated above and feeling that the real test of our preparedness lies more in the results achieved with regard to the enrolment of members and volunteers, collections of funds, and above all, in the achievement of Hindu, Muslim and dependence Day, it is my conviction that the country is not the least ready for starting a campaign of civil disobedience in any shape or form, and it would do an incalculable damage should you decide to embark on such a campaign now or in the near future. I would, therefore, earnestly urge you and the members of the Working Committee to desist from doing

so. I believe, that if you could see the wisdom of passing a resolution asking the Congress organization for intensive preparation including H.M.S. understanding, but, in the mean time, postponing the campaign of civil disobedience for the present, until you find yourself ready and obliged to start civil disobedience, it would meet the present situation much better and give a chance to those countrymen of ours who are thinking of participation in the London Round Table Conference.

I wish you to share this letter with Pt. Jawaharlal and Pt. Motilal Nehru. I hope this would find you in the best of health.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

M. A. ANSARI

Ansari Papers. Courtesy: Jamia Millia Library

APPENDIX V

PENAL SECTIONS OF THE SALT ACT¹

SEIZURES, DETENTION SEARCH AND ARREST

Section 39 of the Bombay Salt Act which is practically the same as Sections 16-17 of the Indian Salt Act (XII of 1882), empowers any Salt-revenue officer to do the following among other things:

1. To enter any place where illicit manufacture is going on;
2. "In case of resistance, break open any door and remove any other obstacle to his entry upon or into such land, building, enclosed place or premises";
3. To take possession of or destroy salt illicitly manufactured;
4. "To seize in any open space, or in transit, any article which he has reason to believe to be contraband salt and any package or covering in which such article is found and the other contents, if any, of such package or covering in which the same is found, and any animal, vessel or conveyance used or intended to be used in carrying the same";
5. "To detain and search and, if he thinks proper, arrest any person, whom he has reason to believe to be guilty of any offence punishable under this or any other law for the time being in force relating to salt revenue, or in whose possession contraband salt is found".

THINGS LIABLE TO CONFISCATION

Section 50 of the Bombay Salt Act (in which Sec. 12 of the Indian Salt Act is incorporated) lays down that

"All contraband salt, and every vessel, animal, or conveyance used in carrying contraband salt and

¹ *Vide* "Penal Sections of the Salt Act", 6-3-1930.

All goods, packages and coverings in or among which contraband salt is found, and every apparatus, implement, utensil or material employed for the manufacture, excavation, collection, or removal of salt without a licence or for the purpose of utilizing natural salt or salt-earth contrary to any of the provisions of this Act or any rule made thereunder shall be liable to confiscation.”

ADDITIONAL PUNISHMENT FOR REPETITION OF OFFENCE

Section 10 of the Indian Salt Act (Act XII of 1882) lays down that

“Any person convicted of an offence under Section 9, after having been previously convicted of an offence under that section, or Section II of the Inland Customs Act, 1875, or under any enactment repealed by that Act, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months, in addition to the punishment which may be inflicted for a first offence under Section 9, and every such person shall, upon every subsequent conviction of an offence under Section 9, be liable to imprisonment for a term which may extend to six months in addition to any term of imprisonment to which he was liable at his last previous conviction.”

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 41 of the Bombay Salt Act makes it “incumbent on every village officer” to do the following among other things:

1. To communicate to some salt revenue officer of the rank of a Sarkarkun or a Daroga any information concerning offences under the Act;
2. “To interpose for the purpose of preventing and to prevent, by the use of all reasonable means within his power, the commission of any such offence”.

Section 48A lays down among other things that any salt-revenue officer,

“who is guilty of cowardice shall on conviction before a magistrate be punished with imprisonment which may extend to three months, or with fine which may extend to three months’ pay, or with both.”

Young India, 6-3-1930